

## ZOOMING AIRFARES

### Citizens seek resumption of chartered flight services

ROOPA LALL

PORT BLAIR, NOV 12/--/The reduction of flight frequency due to repair of the runway and increase in number of tourist footfalls to these islands, prices of air tickets have increased manifold. With the month of December packed with Christmas festival and New Year celebration, stimuli is increasing over resumption of chartered flight services from Port Blair to other connected cities in mainland.

Students, studying in various colleges and universities in mainland as well as islanders returning home to be with friends and families for the celebration, the exorbitant airfares charged by various airlines seem to be set to spoil their festival this year. Parents wishing to proceed to the mainland to meet their sons and daughters during the seasons are too harried. Leave alone those needing medical treatment in the mainland, other, not available in these, trust factor of course on the local



administration, said one frequent traveler.

"Introduction of chartered flight between Port Blair, Chennai, Kolkata and Vizag will come as a huge respite for the islanders. The tourist season has led to

surging air fares in the sectors. Currently the airfares are surging at more than Rs 10,000/- for a one-way trip to Kolkata or Chennai. Many islanders intending to visit their native places in mainland have now cancelled their plans due to soaring fares. The administration should take

prompt steps to resume the chartered flights in the sectors in the interest of the islanders," said some islanders.

"Soaring airfares has made life miserable for the common man here. It cost about Rs 4000 to 5000/- to travel to Dubai or Malaysia. But for Port Blair, the fares have touched almost Rs 10,000/- for a one-way ticket. Promises made by the administration and elected political leaders have fallen flat on all counts. Our children studying in mainland eagerly awaiting for the festive season to come back to Port Blair for vacations have been left dejected. So steep are the airfares that they are unable to avail the flight service this year. We're terribly disappointed as we won't be able to celebrate the festival with our children this year. The UT administration should take decisive steps and take up the issue with the Central Government to provide respite for the islanders from surging airfares as also ensure resumption of the chartered flight services," said some others. (File Photo)



**A speeding car hit a motorcycle at Sippighat on Saturday afternoon leaving serious injuries to the bike rider. (Pix RoopaLall)**

### Students of TGCE perform nukkadnatak on drug awareness



PORT BLAIR, NOV 12/--/ A nukkadnatak on the theme "Social awareness on cyber-crime and prohibition of drugs" was performed in the auditorium of Government Senior Secondary School, Wimberlygunj by the students of Tagore Government College of Education. The growing cases of cyber-crimes and drug menace in the islands is a grave concern for the islanders and sensing the gravity of the situation, Tagore Government College of Education, Port Blair under their "Annual Community Living Camp" initiative, organized this nukkadnatak as a mean to propagate the message of cyber-crimes and drug abuse to a hall full of students. A total of more than 100 students of Tagore College led by their faculties conducted this programme. This programme was attended by the entire school faculties, along with more than 300 students, general public and PRI's of Gram Panchayat Kaniyapuram. The nukkadnatak was choreographed by the faculties, along with students of Tagore College and was jointly organised by Mr. P. Abdul Basheer of Nai Manzil (NGO). Mr. P. Abdul Basheer who is also the elected Pradhan of Gram Panchayat Kaniyapuram expressed his gratitude in his vote of thanks speech where he congratulated the team of students from Tagore college for putting up this amazing nukkadnatak to impart awareness to the young students. He further added that such nukkadnatak should be performed in every educational institution and also in the nook & corner of the islands so that a larger objective is met. After the conclusion of the programme, the Principal and teachers lauded the performance of the entire team and expressed their sincere gratitude to the Pradhan of Gram Panchayat Kaniyapuram.

### Science models displayed by students at Keralapuram School exhibition drew appreciation

DIGLIPUR, NOV 12/--/The visitors to the exhibition held at Govt. Secondary School Keralapuram, were enthralled by the creative models showcased in the exhibition. Applauding the students for their work, the chief guest, the Deputy Education Officer, Mr. R.P. Pandey said that the "Rashtriya Avishkar Abhiyan" is a National programme, which aims at providing opportunities to the students to showcase their talents. He said that money should not be an

obstacle, that's why financial assistance is also provided to the students to develop their models in Science, Mathematics, Art and craft. This exhibition is an example of the success of this Abhiyan, he said. Congratulating the school, Mr. Pandey said that the exhibition is an example of its successful endeavour, in bringing out the hidden talent of the children of this rural region. (Contd. on page-6)



### 69th All India Cooperative Week celebration from 14th Nov

PORT BLAIR, NOV 12/--/ The 69th All India Cooperative Week will be celebrated from 14th to 20th Nov 2022 by the Andaman & Nicobar State Coop. Union, in association with the Cooperative department of the A&N Administration, NABARD, NCUI and other Cooperative Societies in these Islands. The

cooperative week celebration will be held in accordance with the guidelines received from the National Cooperative Union of India, New Delhi, and the Apex body of Cooperative Movement in India. The main theme of this year's Cooperative Week is "India@75: Growth of Cooperative and future ahead".

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- SRK stopped at Mumbai airport with his team over luxury watches — PAGE 6
- Pakistan, England and the promise of an epic T20 World Cup final — PAGE 7

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## Gujarat polls: Cong promises 10 lakh jobs, 300 units free electricity, LPG cylinder at Rs 500, unemployment allowance

**AHMEDABAD, NOV 12 /--/** Ten lakh jobs in government and semi-government departments, free medical treatment of up to Rs 10 lakh, LPG cylinder at Rs 500 and 300 units of free electricity every month are some of the key promises that the Congress made in its manifesto for the Gujarat elections.

In the manifesto released on Saturday, the grand old party, which has been out of power in the state for more than two decades, also promised unemployment allowance of Rs 3,000 per month, Rs 2,000 pension to divyangs, widows, senior citizens and needy women, and waiver of loans of up to Rs 3 lakh of all fishermen, among other things. Rajasthan Chief Minister and Congress's senior observer for Gujarat polls Ashok Gehlot released the manifesto at the state party headquarters here in the presence of other party leaders. Elections to the 182-member Assembly in Gujarat, where the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is currently in power, will be held in two phases - on December 1 and 5 - and the counting of votes will be taken up on December 8.

The Congress's manifesto committee chairman Dipak Babaria said the party interacted with nearly 65 lakh people before preparing this poll document. "As suggested by party leader Rahul Gandhi, we will form a commission for the implementation of our manifesto and turn it into a government document after the Congress forms a government in the state. We will maintain the sanctity of our manifesto," Gehlot said after unveiling it. He also said that the New Pension Scheme will be discarded in Gujarat and the Old Pension Scheme will be implemented in its place if the party is voted to power. In the manifesto, the party promised to fill nearly 10 lakh vacant posts in government and semi-government departments, provide LPG cylinder at a subsidized rate of Rs 500 and 300 units of free electricity every month, free medical treatment of up to Rs 10 lakh in government-run hospitals, scholarships of up to Rs 20,000 to the needy students, a slash of 25 per cent in the fees presently charged by schools and colleges. "Congress will give a pension of Rs 2,000 to divyangs, widows, senior citizens and needy women. Salaried class, as well as other professionals covered under Income Tax, will be exempted from paying professional tax," Babaria said. The party will waive loans of up to Rs 3 lakh of all fishermen and Rs 1,000 crore will be allotted for the upkeep of cow and cattle shelters, he said. With a view to ending corruption and irregularities in government recruitments in the state, the Congress will bring a special act and set up fast-track courts to deal with such cases, he added. (PTI)

## Kerala govt sends ordinance to axe Guv as Chancellor to Raj Bhavan

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, NOV 12 /--/** The CPI(M)-led government in Kerala on Saturday sent its ordinance to remove the Governor from the post of Chancellor of universities in the state, to the Raj Bhavan for approval, days after the cabinet had taken a decision in this connection. Raj Bhavan sources confirmed that the ordinance to replace the Governor as Chancellor of varsities and appoint eminent academicians in that role, has reached its office for the assent of Arif Mohammed Khan.

However, it is unlikely for the Governor to promulgate the ordinance soon as the tussle between him and the state government over the issue is yet to die down, sources added. The Pinarayi Vijayan headed government on Wednesday had decided to come out with the ordinance, a move opposed by both the Congress and BJP. The opposition parties have alleged that the cabinet decision was aimed at turning universities in Kerala into "Communist centres". Meanwhile, ministers P Rajeeve and V Sivankutty expressed hope that the Governor would promulgate the ordinance without any delay. When journalists pointed out the Governor's recent reported statement that he would

send the ordinance to the President, Law Minister P Rajeeve said he does not think that a person upholding a constitutional post would say so without even seeing the document. "I have not seen his interviews completely. But I don't think that a person holding a constitutional position would say so. Those holding a constitutional position cannot approach any matter with prejudice. So, if he had said that he would send it to the President even before seeing it, that means he is prejudiced," the minister said. As per the Constitution, it is the Governor who should promulgate the ordinance and it is his right to take any decision in this regard, he said. The Constitution is supreme and everyone should act in accordance with its rules and principles, the Law Minister added. Minister V Sivankutty accused the Khan of taking a stand creating hurdles not only in the education sector but also in the overall development arena of the southern state. The language that Khan used against the Chief Minister was not appropriate for the top position that the former holds, he claimed. People of the state were concerned about the stand taken by the Governor as development initiatives were affected as he goes after controversies, the minister added. (PTI)

## Upcoming decade is going to be a 'Techade': Sitharaman

**BENGALURU, NOV 12 /--/** Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday said that the coming decade will be a "Techade", and technology is going to drive us.

Delivering the keynote address at YourStory's 13th Edition 'Techsparks' here, she also stressed on frugality and scalability of innovation. ".... technology driven innovators are the ones we need, who are going to look at local solutions which are affordable and have scaling up probabilities," Sitharaman said. She said that unless solutions are cost-effective and scalable, that typical thing about India innovation is not going to be there, and without these features, things cannot be

achieved as aspired. Noting that the coming decade is going to be a "techade", and technology is what is going to drive us, the Minister said, "in technology is not just going to be looking at some fundamental things you are going to change, but to do some things using several of those, which are yet not available for many of the parts of the world." Digital skeletal networks which are available in India are not available elsewhere, Sitharaman said. In India, digital fundamental infrastructure is created with the



government, for it to be used for public good. This kind of government coming out and creating a digital public good, with a futuristic approach is not available in many of the countries, she said, adding "when we talk about techade, we are not talking off the cuff." Recalling that there was a time when people spoke of global standards, Sitharaman said India today sets standards and the global benchmarks have been seen being achieved in India during and

**CHENNAI, NOV 12 /--/** An all-Legislative party meeting, chaired by Tamil Nadu chief minister MK Stalin on Saturday, said it rejected the 103rd Constitutional Amendment providing 10 per cent EWS quota by the Centre, saying it created caste discrimination among the poor.

The meeting, boycotted by Principal opposition AIADMK and its ally BJP, urged the State government to register its opinions when a review petition is filed. The ruling DMK had announced it would file a review petition against the November 8 five-judge Supreme Court Bench upholding the 10 per cent reservation for the economically weaker sections (EWS).

The quota was upheld 3-2 by the Bench "We reject the 103rd Constitutional Amendment providing 10 per cent reservation to castes that have progressed since it is against the social justice

envisioned by the Constitution, against various apex court verdicts, and for creating caste discrimination among the poor," the all-party meeting resolved. "When a review petition is filed in the Supreme Court in this connection, we request the Tamil Nadu government to also strongly place its opinions to ensure social justice and equality," the resolution read. While the participating parties supported poverty alleviation schemes, "we will not allow the basic values of social justice concept to be shattered." Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Higher Education Minister K Ponmudy said those who attended the meeting extended support to the issue.

DMK's allies -- Congress, Left parties, MDMK, and Viduthala Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) -- besides NDA constituent Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK)

participated in the meeting. He questioned the absence of the AIADMK, pointing out that its stalwarts, the late chief ministers MG Ramachandran and J Jayalalithaa, always stood for social justice. The meeting was convened by the State government to discuss the next course of action in the wake of the November 8 ruling. In his address, Stalin said the Constitution had mandated social and educational backwardness as the measure for reservation. Taking on critics of reservation, he said those who had complained of compromise in merit were now welcoming the 10 per cent quota.

"I don't need to elaborate on the subtlety. Neither do I want to talk about the political benefits aimed in this. Whatever may be their (BJP-led NDA) intention, reservation based on economic status is contrary to social justice, contrary to the Constitution,"

Stalin said. In fact, when earlier demands were made to include the word 'Economically' in the first Constitutional amendment over the reservation, neither the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru nor the then Law Minister B R Ambedkar were in favour. Their opposition's stand should not be construed as impeding the poor among the forward castes.

"We will not prevent any scheme for the poor as witnessing the smile on the poor person's face is the policy of Anna," or CN Annadurai, the late DMK founder and former Chief Minister, Stalin said. He wondered how those with an annual income of Rs 8 lakh can be categorised as poor to avail of the quota for EWS. "If this amendment is accepted, the very social justice concept will wither away with time. They will remove the 'socially and economically backward' (clause) and bring 'economically' everywhere. That

is why we opposed this in Parliament and voted against it," he said. Whether the Communists or the Congress, they have always accepted and supported the Dravidian movement's policies in Tamil Nadu, Stalin said.

The Congress had earlier claimed credit for the EWS quota. The AIADMK, which had boycotted the meeting, charged Stalin with duplicity on the matter, saying the Congress-led UPA had first set up a Commission in 2006 to look into reservation based on economic criteria. The then UPA formulated the law, and UPA constituent DMK's Ministers had signed in support, claimed AIADMK organising secretary D Jayakumar, in a statement. "This law has been passed by the BJP government in Parliament in 2019," he said. The EWS does not include the SC/ST and OBCs. Tamil Nadu has the highest reservation of 69 per cent. (PTI)

## Ready for polygraph test, should be conducted 'face-to-face' with Kejriwal, Jain: Chandrashekhar

**NEW DELHI, NOV 12 /--/** Jailed conman Sukesh Chandrashekhar has said he was ready to face a polygraph test but demanded that it should be conducted "face-to-face" with Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and AAP minister Satyendar Jain and the process be telecast live.

In a statement issued through his lawyer, Chandrashekhar also insisted that his allegations were true. "The polygraph test (should) be conducted as a face-to-face confrontation conducted in the presence of all the three together and the process be telecast live so that the whole country can watch the 'pandora's box' of reality of Mr Kejriwal and Mr Jain unfold in the open," he said in the statement dated November 11. On Tuesday, BJP MP and the party's former Delhi unit chief Manoj Tiwari demanded a televised lie detector test for Kejriwal, Jain and

Chandrashekhar. Earlier this week, Chandrashekhar wrote to Delhi Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena alleging that he was receiving threats to withdraw his complaints against Kejriwal and AAP



Sukesh Chandrashekhar

leaders Jain and Kailash Gehlot, and sought transfer to a jail outside the city. Chandrashekhar had earlier written to Saxena seeking a CBI probe against Kejriwal and others for alleged threat and corruption. He had alleged that Jain extorted Rs 10 crore from him in 2019 in exchange for his safety in prison. Chandrashekhar later issued a press release alleging that he had delivered Rs 50 crore to Jain at his farmhouse in Asola in

2016, after which Kejriwal and others met him at a hotel for dinner. Earlier in the day, Kejriwal said the BJP should make Chandrashekhar its national president as he was speaking the same language as the saffron party. During a press conference, Kejriwal alleged that the BJP had brought Chandrashekhar into its fold as a star campaigner. "The BJP demands my lie-detector test and even Sukesh Chandrshekhar makes the same demand.

They speak the same language. He is fully trained to join the BJP now," Kejriwal said. The Delhi chief minister went on to add, "I have heard that Modiiji's roadshows are not drawing crowds. They should bring Sukesh Chandrshekhar to those roadshows. He has so many stories of how he cheated people that the crowd will just come to watch and listen to his stories. In fact, he should be made the BJP's national president." (PTI)

## Modi, Adityanath have defeated 'deceit of appeasement politics', says Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi

**NEW DELHI, NOV 12 /--/** Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath have defeated the "deceit of appeasement politics" with their determination for development with dignity, senior BJP leader Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi said on Saturday.

Addressing a conference organised by the Uttar Pradesh BJP Minority Morcha in Rampur, Naqvi said despite all the conspiracies, India's culture, tradition and the Constitution have not allowed the threat of "unity in diversity" to be weakened in any circumstances. "Many obstacles came in the way of inclusive development, but our strength of unity in diversity has ensured the country moved forward on the path of prosperity," he was quoted as saying in a statement released by his office. Everyone should work with a pledge for progress and not with "rage for revenge," he said. The former minorities affairs minister said the politics of "arrogance of power and posts" never lasts long. "Welfare and well-being of

the common people should be our devotion to make the common people a precious partner of progress and prosperity," he said.

Naqvi said the Modi government has set an example before the country by replacing



"politics of the privileged" with "prominence to people". The "MY (Modi-Yogi) factor", which is synonymous with inclusive empowerment, has replaced the previous "MY factor", which was used by the corrupt, criminal, and communal forces as their "safety cover", Naqvi said, in a reference to the Muslim-Yadav support base of the Samajwadi Party. Modi and Adityanath have defeated the "deceit of appeasement politics" with the "determination to development with dignity", he said. UP Deputy chief minister Brajesh Pathak; UP Ministers of State Baldev Aulakh and Danish Azad Ansari, Rampur Lok Sabha MP Ghanshyam Lodhi; UP Minority Commission chairman Ashfaq Saifi; BJP Minority Morcha national general secretary Sabir Ali; among others, were present on the occasion. (PTI)

## 'Lotus' will bloom everywhere in Telangana: Modi

**HYDERABAD, NOV 12 /--/** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday took apparent potshots at the ruling TRS in Telangana, saying the party which the people trusted the most has allegedly betrayed them, and asserted that the lotus (BJP symbol) would bloom everywhere in the State. The Prime Minister's statement comes ahead of the 2023 Assembly elections wherein the BJP is seeking to challenge the K Chandrasekhar Rao-led TRS government. Modi, who addressed BJP workers at the Begumpet airport here soon after his arrival for a visit to the State, said he regrets that the people who flourished and got power in the name of Telangana have pushed it backward. "The government and the leader here continuously do injustice to the capacity of Telangana and the talent of Telangana people. The party which the Telangana people trusted the most, the same party has done the biggest betrayal to Telangana," he said, without naming TRS. However, the lotus starts blooming in circumstances when there is darkness, he said.

In an obvious reference to the TRS frequently attacking him, Modi said he remains unperturbed by such alleged abuse and appealed to the BJP activists in the State to not worry about it. He appreciated the BJP activists for remaining committed to service and keeping up the fight in the face of alleged tyranny. Referring to the recent bypoll to Munugode Assembly where BJP stood second, he said the way the people of the constituency showed confidence in the party was, according to him, unprecedented. The BJP workers have brought the entire Telangana government to one Assembly segment (Munugode), he said. People's blessings are with the party, he said. "In recent times, whatever bypolls were held, the message is loud and clear that the sunrise is not far in Telangana. Darkness will vanish. Lotus will bloom everywhere in Telangana," Modi said, referring to the BJP's successes in Dubbak and Huzurabad Assembly bypolls during the last two years. Superstitions are being practised in the city, known for its presence of information technology, he said and opined that superstitions decide the governance, in what seemed to be a



anger against corruption and family politics in Telangana. "I assure the people of Telangana today. Those who loot the poor will not be spared," he said. Some people are trying to unite to save themselves from action and form an alliance of the corrupt, but people of Telangana and the country are watching this, and understand what is happening, he said. Corruption and family politics is the biggest enemy of the poor and development, and the BJP is fighting against them, he said. He spoke about the NDA government's efforts in direct benefit transfer to the beneficiary removing corruption in the process.

Modi spoke about the government's welfare schemes, including free ration and free vaccination drive. He said the Telangana government talked about building double-bedroom houses for poor but it did not let houses to be constructed under the PM Awas Yojana. "Today, Telangana wants positivity, progress that only BJP can give," he said. Chandrasekhar Rao did not receive the Prime Minister at the Begumpet airport. Ruling TRS MLC K Kavitha alleged that the Prime Minister came empty-handed without announcing anything concrete for Telangana. "Today Prime Minister Modi came to our State. He came empty-handed... Other than delivering empty words, he doesn't do anything good for us," said Kavitha, daughter of Chandrasekhar Rao. (PTI)



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being welcomed by people, in Visakhapatnam on Saturday

## Compromise with terrorist act: Cong on Modi govt's silence on release of Rajiv case convicts

**NEW DELHI, NOV 12 /--/** The Congress on Saturday alleged that the Modi government's "silence" on the Supreme Court order directing the premature release of the six remaining convicts in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case is a "compromise with the terrorist act".

The Supreme Court on Friday directed the premature release of six convicts, including Nalini Sriharan and R P

Ravichandran, serving life sentence in the case.

A bench of Justices B R Gavai and B V Nagarathna said the judgement of the top court in the case of A G Perarivalan, one of the convicts in the case, is equally applicable in their matter. Congress general secretary in-charge organisation K C Venugopal said there shouldn't be any sympathy towards terrorists. (PTI)



# Double engine’ diminishes federalism

BHOPINDER SINGH

Even though the word ‘federation’ is not explicitly mentioned in the Constitution, Article 1 states, “India, that is Bharat, shall be a Union of States”. At Independence, given the reality of a fragmented India prior to the British Raj, a strong Centre was imagined to strengthen the core while providing adequate division of powers between the Union government and the states, keeping in mind the scale, sheer diversity, and the urgency to institutionalise democratic instincts. The principal architect of the Constitution, Babasaheb Ambedkar, had noted, “The Indian Constitution is a federal Constitution in as much as it established what may be called a dual polity which will consist of the Union at the Centre and the states at the periphery, each endowed with sovereign powers to be exercised in the field assigned to them, respectively, by the Constitution”.

Subsequently, the Seventh Schedule, dealing with the division of powers between the Union (List I), State (List II) and the Concurrent (List III) lists, was made. The real value of federalism in India can be gauged from the empowerment it afforded the

diverse regions and ethnicities within, to preserve personal/regional liberties, and deny the plausibility of majoritarianism, i.e., disallowing one government or group to dominate all powers. The federal spirit embedded in the Constitution has played an invaluable role in walking the talk of ‘unity in diversity’ in India.

But since Independence, all political parties have done their bit to diminish the constitutional spirit of federalism. Even the doyen of Indian democracy, Jawaharlal Nehru, cannot escape blame for starting the trend with the dismissal of the Kerala state government in 1959 by invoking Article 356. Nehru regrettably used it eight times, but Indira Gandhi an unprecedented 50 times! The use of Article 356 declined in the 1990s, but the federal spirit continued to be disrupted as other creative means were triggered by the Centre to usurp powers, and it has been especially so in the last eight years.

States’ autonomy has been greatly curbed with the arbitrary approach to Good & Services Tax (GST) disbursements, and by encroachment on state subjects like agriculture, education, police, etc., without the mandated consultative mechanisms.

Central executive actions that nipped away at the autonomy and sentiments of regions and minorities were packaged as nationalistic ‘masterstrokes’. Even in the purely political realm, horse-trading of elected legislators (often using the dual ‘carrot and stick’ tactics) to jump ship, has reached a crescendo – an open and brazen plan to make India Opposition-mukt Bharat has been proudly presented. Effectively, India’s historical federalism has now come to be equated with systemic weakness. This is both disingenuous and opportunistic.

With this backdrop, to suggest ‘double-engine sarkar’, i.e., same party ruling at Centre and in the state, is craftily wily as it is aimed at achieving even further usurpation, centralisation and majoritarianism. It is tantamount to appropriation of the complete power structure – a doomsday scenario for any democracy. Inherent in the promise of ‘double engine’ is the unsaid seduction of special privileges, as also the coercive blackmail of depriving a region should it not opt

for alignment with the partisan dispensation at the Centre. Like all things political, it is not explicitly stated but clearly implied. The easy-to-understand concept and accompanying underpinnings extracts the desired

response from the electorate, who buy into the simplistic logic and apparent benefits/threats of ‘double engine’. The fact that it did, or did not, lead to quantifiable benefits of governance in the states which already have ‘double engine’ governments, e.g., Uttar Pradesh, is immaterial as facts are no longer the reality, perception is!

The ‘double engine’ expression was first used six months after the BJP had won the Lok Sabha elections in 2014 when Haryana and Maharashtra state Assembly elections were at stake. It was repeated subsequently, given its political appeal, and today as Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat are set to vote, ‘double engine’ is being brazenly posited yet again. As electioneering gathered pace, with the top central leadership descending on the states several times to announce mega

projects just weeks and days before the states were to go under the model code of conduct, the spiel of only ‘double-engine sarkar’ making possible ‘faster approvals for projects’ was put forth.

The ‘double engine’ bait is part-inducement (like the much-criticised ‘freebies’ galore) and part-threat (that if voters didn’t vote for the same party – the BJP – project approvals, grants, etc., would not be forthcoming to Opposition-ruled states), clearly diminishing fair play and federalism.

While promoting their partisan policies and their claimed outcomes is certainly par for the course, the ‘double engine’ theory is predicated on emotive notions and not facts. ‘Double engine’ only facilitates the sort of tearing hurry seen in pre-decided policies and laws pertaining to sensitive domains like agriculture, cooperatives, banking, etc., and then slamming them down the road of implementation, without the dignity of consultations or necessary debates. When implementation fails, fingers are pointed at the Opposition to make them look like “spanners in the wheel of development”. From demonetisation to the debilitating pandemic lockdown at four-hours’ notice, to the misuse of investigative agencies – the ‘masterstroke’

megalomania of striking suddenly may impress many about the purported intent and purpose of the government but the long-term impact is always less than welcome. Federalism is about respecting the ‘other’ while ‘double-engine’ is about obliterating the ‘other’.

Federalism is directly related to liberalism, and as the political and social environment become less liberal, consultative or inclusive, federalism will be an automatic casualty. Most institutions of checks-and-balances are already politicised, beholden and partisan in their outlook, it is only a matter of time before unilateralism gets normalised. Globally, federalism in democracies becomes weakened whenever the ‘cult of strongmen’ prevails, as that leads to centralisation of everything. ‘Double engine’ is yet another means of usurpation. It may not be illegal but it surely diminishes the last vestiges of opposition and vital dissent in a democracy. This is not the sort of strong central government that the founding fathers of India’s independence and Constitution envisaged. (The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. The views expressed are personal.)



## Will hire best lawyers to fight in SC for restoration of Articles 370, 35A: Bukhari

SRINAGAR, NOV 12 /--/ Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party chief Altaf Bukhari on Saturday said the party will hire the country's best lawyers to fight in the Supreme Court for the restoration of Articles 370 and 35A.

Addressing a public meeting at Sher-e-Kashmir cricket stadium here, Bukhari also demanded that Jammu and Kashmir's statehood be restored. On August 5, 2019, the Centre revoked the special status granted to the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 of the Constitution and divided it into two union territories -- Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh. It also abrogated Article 35A which allowed the state to define its permanent residents.

"We cannot restore Articles 370 and 35A on our own. The issue is in the Supreme Court and I promise you we will hire the

best lawyers of the country to fight for their restoration even if we have to spend crores of rupees," Bukhari told the gathering. "Our state, as it existed on August 5, 2019 (before the Centre's decision), should be restored. This is what the people want. They want me to take this up with the prime minister and the home minister," he said.

Bukhari further said the JKAP will constitute a team that will visit various jails in Jammu and Kashmir and outside to collect details about youths languishing there and the cases against them. Then, he said, the JKAP will meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah and seek the release of these youths. "We want an opportunity for them to start their lives afresh," he said. Bukhari appealed to the people to support him to start a "new politics" which has no place for violence and discrimination. (PTI)

## World Pneumonia Day was observed

PORT BLAIR, NOV 12 /--/ The childhood pneumonia continues to be the topmost infectious killer among under-five children, contributing to 16.2 percent of under-five deaths in India. World Pneumonia Day was observed today with an aim to accelerate action against Childhood Pneumonia by generating awareness on protection, prevention and treatment aspects, to enhance early identification and care seeking behaviours (management) among parents and caregivers; and also to promote Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV) and awareness generation on indoor and outdoor pollution. SAANS (Social Awareness & Action to Neutralize Pneumonia Successfully) campaign will ensure health system strengthening and community awareness towards childhood pneumonia. The SAANS campaign from 12th November, 2022 to 28th February, 2023 will carry the tagline 'Pneumonia nahi, tohbachpansahi' which clearly establishes the positive impact of a Pneumonia Free Childhood. Meanwhile, the general public have been requested to extend their co-operation to ANMs and ASHAs during community approach for early identification of cases of childhood pneumonia and early management of pneumonia in under-five children.

## Road leading from Garacharma Junction to NTS Junction closed for vehicular traffic

PORT BLAIR, NOV 12 /--/ The District Magistrate, South Andaman District has notified for the information of all concerned that the road leading from Garacharma Junction to NTS Junction has been closed for all the vehicles movements (except for essential service) for 20 Days w.e.f. 07/11/2022. Hence, all

the traffic/vehicle movement (except for essential service) through the road from Garacharma Junction to NTS Junction will be closed for 20 Days and the traffic has been diverted from NTS Junction via Bimblitan and Calicut.

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## Kejriwal launches WhatsApp number for people to pledge contribution towards yoga teachers' salaries

NEW DELHI, NOV 12 /--/ Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday issued a WhatsApp number for people to pledge their contribution towards the salaries of yoga teachers under the 'Dilli Ki Yogshala' programme.

During a press conference here, Kejriwal also accused Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena and the BJP of "ruining the lives" of Delhiites by trying to stop the yoga classes and other works implemented by the Aam Aadmi Party government in the capital. Kejriwal said those willing to contribute need to send a message on 7277972779 confirming their willingness to contribute and also mention the number of teachers they wanted to fund. Each yoga teacher under the scheme is paid Rs 15,000 per month. "Whosoever wants to fund the salaries can send a



message on the number saying they want to contribute for one or two teachers... We will then give them the name of the

teacher and ensure that they directly hand over the cheque to that teacher," the chief minister said, adding the contribution has to be in multiples of Rs 15,000. Accusing LG Saxena and the BJP of trying to the government's measures, Kejriwal said, "It was very painful when they stopped the yoga classes. Nearly 17,000 people were attending those classes.

They said they won't pay the salaries of yoga teachers. Who stops people from doing yoga? It is a sin." The government had on November 1 claimed that the LG had not approved the extension of 'Dilli Ki Yogshala' after October 31, but said the government will ensure that the yoga classes did not stop. Sources in the LG Secretariat had, however, said Saxena's office did not receive any file seeking permission for the extension of the programme beyond October 31. During the press conference, Kejriwal recalled how he received messages from people saying they were ready to provide monetary support for the classes. Asserting that two crore people of Delhi were one family, the chief minister hoped that they will come forward to support the teachers. (PTI)

## Musical concert marks 75 years of Indo-Dutch relationship at NGMA

NEW DELHI, NOV 12 /--/ Celebrating 75 years of diplomatic relations between India and the Netherlands, the Embassy of the Netherlands and the National Gallery for Modern Arts (NGMA) organised a musical concert, "Song of Water", on Friday evening here.

The 75-minute original composition by Indo-Dutch couple, sitar maestro Pandit Shubhendra Rao and cellist Saskia Rao-de Haas, was followed by a curated walk through the exhibit of works of iconic Indian artist Nandalal Bose. Marten van den Berg, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to India, noted that The Netherlands and India share cultural relations that go back over 400 years, "building people-to-people connections which also involved mutually enriching cultural exchanges". "Culture and creative sectors play a very important role in connecting people and building

sustainable communities through inspiring environments. Both India and the Netherlands have a remarkable connection with water. Rivers and the sea are deeply intertwined with the essence and soul of the countries. Artists from both countries are essential to this relationship," he said.

The unique mix of cross-cultural music and visual art is a coming together of six different artworks from the two richly diverse countries. From the flow of the Ganga in India to the sea in the Netherlands, from Raja Ravi Verma to Piet Mondriaan, from Jacoba van Heemskreck to Amrita Sher Gill, from Jozef Israels to Jamini Roy the paintings of the legendary masters were brought alive by the music of the two artistes. "As artists, Saskia and I always try to bring something new into our music. The beauty and joy of creating something new is such an exhilarating journey &

for sure, this project has been one of the most satisfying experiences. To bring together beautifully two streams of art in a very unique way was our dream and we are indeed happy to be able to do this. We hope to tour this all over the world since arts unite people like nothing else can," Rao said.


The artiste couple noted that as composers they have always been inspired by nature and for "Song of Water", they have taken inspiration from the universal source of life, water. "We explore the meaning of water in India and the Netherlands through the lens of artworks with subject matter that connects to the soul of each country: the Ganga in India and the sea in the Netherlands. 'Song of Water' breaks the boundaries set by conventional art presentations: exhibitions in a museum and concerts in a concert hall, Saskia Rao-de Haas said. (PTI)

## Caste consciousness is greater today than in 1950s: Tharoor


MUMBAI, NOV 12 /--/ There is greater consciousness of caste in Indian society today compared to the decade after independence, Congress MP and author Shashi Tharoor said here on Saturday. Speaking during a discussion on The lost legacy of Ambedkar at the Tata Literature Festival, he said now every caste is

conscious of its identity, and this "identity label has become a marker for political mobilization." Tharoor's book "Ambedkar: A Life, a biography of Dr B R Ambedkar, was launched during the program. Ambedkar wanted to completely destroy the caste system and he will probably be horrified to realize that, if anything, the

caste system is more and more entrenched in the political parties, he said. To a question from the audience, Tharoor, the third-term MP from Thiruvananthapuram, noted that the political parties which are against discrimination or untouchability nonetheless seek votes in the name of caste. (PTI)



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Harry S Truman

## Guv vs Govt: An ugly tug-of-war

Reports of ugly tug-of-war between the governor and the chief minister often hog the headlines. It's nothing new. But, what indeed is new this time is the spate of reports of friction involving the two high offices. For instance, Kerala, where the Left Democratic Front is in power, has brought about an ordinance to remove its governor, Arif Mohammed Khan, as chancellor of universities in the state. Khan was ousted by the Kerala government as the Chancellor of the Kerala Kalamandalam deemed university. The move came following the ongoing tussle between the Kerala Governor and the state over the functioning of the state universities and the appointment of the Vice Chancellors in the state universities. Khan has stated that the recent Supreme Court judgements in connection with the VC appointments are so clear the state will not be able to exert any kind of pressure on him. Khan has been in the news for his opposition towards the Kerala government. Telangana has been complaining too; about the perceived prejudicial conduct of its governor who has responded by alleging that her phone is being tapped at the behest of the Telangana Rashtra Samithi government. The stint of the then West Bengal governor, Jagdeep Dhankhar, was marked by tussle with the government led by Mamata Banerjee. Maharashtra, when it was under the Maha Vikas Aghadi regime, had been witness to tensions between the offices of the governor and the government as well.

This time round, a southern confederation of states seems to be emerging — against their respective governors. In Tamil Nadu, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam has written to the president, alleging unconstitutional conduct on the part of its governor, R N Ravi. The DMK has charged the Raj Bhawan with being rather slow in giving ascent to bills passed by the assembly. His differences with the DMK government on the national eligibility cum entrance test exemption bill as well as his endorsement of the three-language policy have widened the rift.

Governors are meant to be apolitical. But, the country's political history is replete with examples to prove that the office has often been used the Centre, which appoints governors, to arm-twist states especially if the ruling party happens to be from the rival camp. In fact, both the Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party are guilty of this. So the governor versus government conflict is only to be expected, especially in states where opposition parties are in power. In a significant development, the Supreme Court in the judgement on November 10, ordered that a Vice Chancellor should have a minimum teaching experience of 10 years as a professor in a university and his or her name should be recommended by a search-cum-selection committee of not less than three persons and the VC should be selected from among them based on their qualification and eligibility. This came against the backdrop of the demand for the resignation of the VCs of nine state universities in Kerala by Governor Khan, in his capacity as Chancellor of the state-run Universities, triggering a political controversy. The VCs were asked to step down following violation of the rules of the University Grants Commission (UGC).

# After U.S. Midterm, Democrats should do some soul-searching

## REFLEX ACTION

Branko Marcetic

vacated by Patrick Leahy, the socialist independent will now have two key allies in the upper chamber. (Fetterman endorsed Sanders for president in 2016, and Sanders in turn endorsed him for Senate this year).

There were other bright spots for the party in Ohio, though, with longtime Democratic incumbent Marcy Kaptur hanging on to her House seat in the face of a tough challenge, similarly longtime Republican incumbent Steve Chabot losing his House seat to Cincinnati city councilmember Greg Landsman, and state representative Emilia Sykes winning a tough open seat race against a Trump endorsee. In all, Democrats won five of fifteen Congressional seats in the state, though Republicans triumphed at the state level. The party likewise did surprisingly well in gubernatorial races, flipping the governor's mansions in Massachusetts and Maryland, and hanging on to those in Wisconsin, Maine, Minnesota, New Mexico, Illinois, Kansas, Oregon, and Michigan, where Democrats now also control both legislative chambers for the first time in forty years. Nevada is too close to call, as is Arizona, where election denier Kari Lake started publicly suggesting the results could be fraudulent right before she began narrowing her rival's lead. Republican governors have won in Georgia, Texas, and, of course, Florida, while New York's hard-right GOP challenger Lee Zeldin made a surprisingly good showing in the liberal state. Meanwhile, Democrats consolidated their hold on Colorado, where the GOP had hoped to eat into the party's strength in a state that had been reliably red until Barack Obama's first campaign in 2008.

Frost and Ramirez each ran on flagship policies backed by socialists like Medicare for All and the Green New Deal. Both Casar and Lee, meanwhile, were members of the

Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), with Lee among the first wave of socialist insurgents to win office back in 2018. Both have ended up somewhat estranged from the organization over the course of this election cycle though, in Casar's case for moving to the centre on Israel and Palestine, while Lee has left the organization entirely. Her race was particularly significant, given that she was running in a purple district, and that she faced not one but two big money onslaughts from AIPAC, in both the primary contest she narrowly won and now the general election she cruised to victory in.

Meanwhile, several major ballot measures have passed that continue to suggest that, beyond the fortunes of individual candidates, Americans even in red states support the policies favoured by the Left. South Dakota finally expanded Medicaid, Nebraska raised its minimum wage to \$15 an hour, Illinois voted to ban right-to-work, and New Mexico voted to pour more money into public education, while California, Michigan, and Vermont all enshrined abortion rights in their state constitutions. Kentucky and Montana voters, meanwhile, rejected attempts to ban abortion at the state level. As it stands, Democrats are within striking distance of just barely holding on to the Senate, while Republicans are looking at, at best, a slim House majority, which would be a headache for a GOP leadership that would have to contend with both the leverage of its extremist minority and that of House progressives, and which will severely hamstringing their postelection plans to attack labour organizing and slash social spending. That they've managed to fail so badly at a time of profound voter unhappiness and with a historically unpopular president from the other party may be a sign of just how unpopular and fringe the party's retrograde social agenda and continued attachment to Trump absurdities around election fraud and the like really are.

But it should also spark some soul-searching from the Democrats, who are already treating a projected loss of the House as a victory. If the party was able to capitalize on GOP extremism to this extent under these conditions, one can only imagine how they might have done with an actual economic message and accomplishments to back it up. (IPA)



A roadside vendor displays split bamboo products for sale in Kolkata on Saturday--Arijit Ganguly

# Benefit of quota has to go to really economically deprived people

## FOCUS

Prakash Karat

A Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court has, by a split verdict of 3 to 2 upheld the validity of the 103rd constitutional amendment which provided reservation for economically weaker sections (EWS) from within the general category. The CPI(M) had supported this constitutional amendment in parliament in January 2019.

This amendment was to enable reservation of upto a maximum of 10 per cent for EWS in the general category, i.e., those sections who do not fall in the backward classes and Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribe categories. The CPI(M) had raised the demand for provision of some quantum of reservation for the poor belonging to the general category at the time of the implementation of the Mandal Commission for OBC reservation in 1990.

While the CPI(M) fully supported 27 per cent reservation for OBCs, it advocated some quota on the basis of economic criteria for the poorer sections among the general category. The Party felt that such a provision would soften the sharp polarisation which took place with the anti-reservation agitation. Having a class

approach, the Party had also wanted an economic criteria within the OBC quota, so that the really deserving from these sections could avail of the quota. This was later accepted by the Supreme Court in the form of "creamy layer".

While upholding reservation for "socially and educationally" backward castes, which is based on centuries of an oppressive caste order, the CPI(M) is also concerned with uniting the working people and poor of all castes and communities. This is the way the existing exploitative socio-economic system can be fought. It is to forge the unity of the poorer sections of all castes and to overcome the divisions that the CPI(M) advocated providing some quantum of reservation for the poorer sections within the general category. Obviously, this cannot affect the percentage

of existing quota of OBCs, SCs and STs. The EWS quota has to be carved out of the general category.

The Party had, however, criticised the criteria set by the Modi government through an office memorandum to define who is an EWS. For the central government quota in jobs and education, the EWS meant a family who is having an income of less than Rs 8 lakh per year, provided they do not own more than five acres of agricultural land, or, above 1,000 square feet of residential area or a residential plot of 100 square yards in a notified municipality.

This means that people who are not poor could avail of the EWS quota. The limit for income tax exemption is Rs 2.5 lakh per annum. Above this, one has to pay income tax. Similarly, owing five acres of

agricultural land does not make one poor. Thus, the purpose of the EWS reservation gets defeated by keeping its ceiling and limits high and wide enough. The Supreme Court is yet to go into this issue as there are petitions challenging this office memorandum.

The application of the EWS quota is left to the states for state level jobs and education. The LDF government in Kerala set up a commission to decide on the criteria for EWS and extent of the quota. The Justice Sasidharan Nair Commission recommended that those with a family income of below Rs 4 lakh and who do not hold more than 2.5 acres of agricultural land should be eligible for EWS reservation. The Kerala cabinet approved these recommendations in 2020 and 10 per cent reservation in jobs and education is being implemented in Kerala now. The criteria adopted for defining EWS addresses the poorer sections within the general quota.

The central government should immediately revise the criteria for defining the EWS if the benefit of quota is to really go to the economically deprived. (IPA)

Conventional Crossword							
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28					29		

ACROSS				DOWN			
1	Pretended	2	Stringed instruments	3	Limb	4	Rubeola
5	Not fast	6	Rhythmic swing	7	East	8	Marry
10	Region	9	Dutch cheese	15	Annoys	17	Smoothly polite
11	Anger	16	Landed property	18	Proverb	19	Facial features
12	True skin	21	Brag	20	Frank	23	Male swan
13	Cover	23	Headwear	24	Curved	25	Regret
14	Venomous ill-will	24	Rub out	25	Ooze		
16	Brawn	26	United				
18	Landed property	27	Narcotic				
21	Brag	28	Curved				
23	Headwear	29	Ooze				
24	Rub out						
26	United						
27	Narcotic						
28	Curved						
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SUDOKU : 3694								
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Yesterday's Solution 3693								
8	7	9	3	1	5	6	2	4
5	3	2	6	4	9	7	8	1
6	4	1	2	7	8	9	5	3
4	9	5	8	2	6	3	1	7
7	8	3	9	5	1	2	4	6
2	1	6	4	3	7	5	9	8
1	6	7	5	8	2	4	3	9
3	5	8	7	9	4	1	6	2
9	2	4	1	6	3	8	7	5

Yesterday's Cross Word Solution 1702								
C	A	P	T	O	R		D	O
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R	E	P		A	V	E	N	G
	M	E	T	R	E		D	R
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## Imran Khan's party says Sharif government trying to 'cover up' assassination attempt on him

LAHORE, NOV 12 /--/ The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Saturday dismissed the federal government's claim that



the assassination attempt on party chief Imran Khan was a work of a "lone wolf", stressing that the Shehbaz Sharif-led administration with the help of its "handlers" were trying to cover up the crime. "The Punjab government (of PTI-PMLQ) has formed a joint investigation team (JIT) to probe the high-profile case of the assassination attempt on Imran Khan in the Wazirabad area of Punjab. And facts

will come fore when it completes its investigation," party's Punjab President and Health Minister Yasmin Rashid told PTI. "The Shehbaz government is trying its best to cover up the crime through the agencies under him (like Intelligence Bureau)," Rashid said. Reacting to a report by an "anonymous intelligence agency" presented to the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) led coalition government into the assassination attempt on the ousted prime minister, Rashid said: "No one can be fooled by such cover-up attempts of the government." "An FIR should be registered against the three high-profile persons on the complaint of Imran Khan," the PTI member said. The 70-year-old cricketer-turned-politician suffered bullet injuries in the right leg on November 3 when two gunmen fired a volley of bullets at him and others mounting on a container-mounted truck in the Wazirabad area of Punjab province, where he was leading a protest march against the Sharif government. He underwent surgery for bullet injuries at the Shaukat Khanum Hospital in Lahore owned by his charitable organisation. Local English daily The News reported on Saturday that the intelligence agency report submitted to the federal government "does not find any conspiracy involved" and terms it a "lone-wolf" attack. "The gunshots by the pistol were followed by SMG (sub-machine gun) fire by some unknown deputed for security purposes in the rally. No other associate of the assailant has been ascertained so far. Eight bullets hit the container top, and six bullet holes were found, whereas two bullets brushed aside the container wall. One assailant opened fire on the container carrying Imran Khan and other leaders," the report added. Thirteen persons, including Imran Khan, sustained injuries, whereas an individual died on the spot. Mohammad Naveed, the assailant who was arrested from the spot, confessed that he wanted to kill Khan as "songs were played in his long march during the Azan time". On the other hand, the PTI chairman said the man (Naveed) who tried to assassinate him was a trained shooter and not a religious fanatic as opposed to what the authorities were trying to portray. In an interview with German state-run international broadcaster DW, Khan said the suspected assailant's profile did not match that of a religious fanatic. He did not even say his prayers. The social media guys have done all the background checks of where he lived etc. This was not a religious fanatic, this was a trained shooter, Khan said, adding that there were two shooters instead of just one. (PTI)

## Biden says climate efforts “more urgent than ever” at summit

SHARM EL-SHEIKH, NOV 12 /--/ President Joe Biden, speaking on Friday at an annual international summit on climate change, urged world leaders to double down on their resolve to fight global warming, saying Russia's invasion of Ukraine reinforces the need to phase out fossil fuels. We can no longer plead ignorance to the consequences of our actions, or continue to repeat our mistakes, Biden said. The president's brief attendance at the United Nations climate conference, known as COP27, was largely a victory lap as he emphasised new spending on clean energy initiatives that will change the paradigm for the United States and the rest of the world. But Biden glossed over how he's pushed for more oil and gas production to bring down costs that have been politically troublesome at home, and fuelled the invasion of Ukraine by allowing Russia to fetch higher prices for its energy exports. This gathering must be the moment to recommit our future and our shared capacity to write a better story for the world," Biden said.



Biden spent just three hours in Egypt, including a meeting with the country's autocratic leader, President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi, before continuing on an around-the-world trip. He arrived Saturday morning for his next stop in Cambodia, where he would participate in a meeting of Southeast Asian leaders, and then Indonesia for the annual Group of 20 summit of the world's largest economies. Biden left Washington late on Thursday buoyed by a stronger-than-expected showing by the Democratic Party in Tuesday's midterm elections, earlier congressional passage of the largest climate investment in US history and Russian military setbacks on the Ukrainian battlefield. At the climate conference, Biden discussed a new supplemental rule that will crack down on methane emissions, expanding on a similar regulation his administration released last year. Methane is a potent greenhouse gas that contributes significantly to global warming. Biden also spotlighted one of his key domestic successes the Democrats' massive health care and climate change bill known as the Inflation Reduction Act. The US commitment of some USD 375 billion over a decade to fight climate change gives Biden greater leverage to press other nations to fulfill their pledges to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and shift the global economy toward cleaner energy sources. (AP)

# Scientists repurpose cancer immunotherapy technique for variant-proof Covid treatment

WASHINGTON, NOV 12 /--/ Scientists have adapted what is typically a cancer therapeutic technique, CAR-T cell therapy, for the purpose of eliminating the SARS-CoV-2 virus, according to a study.

The team of scientists at the non-profit biomedical research institution, The Jackson Laboratory for Genomic Medicine, led by Derya Unutmaz, demonstrated several immuno-based strategies to explore the treatment and prevention of Covid-19. The first immunotherapy method in the study, published in Clinical and

Translational Immunology, focused on the spike protein present in SARS-CoV-2 and the receptor on the host cell, angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 (ACE2). The spike protein is the molecule on the surface of the virus that is responsible for infecting healthy host cells. The protein enters the cell via the ACE2 receptor, allowing the viral RNA to begin its takeover. In the Unutmaz study, T cells were engineered with anti-spike and anti-ACE2 CAR-T cells to target either the spike protein or the ACE2 receptor, with high specificity and efficiency across various infected cell types. The

second immunotherapy method provides an antibody-based means for preventing Covid-19 infection. T cells were engineered with a bispecific antibody fused with ACE2 to activate the patient's own T cells to destroy infected cells that present the SARS-CoV-2 Spike protein on their surface. Rather than having cells, modified outside of the body, kill the infected cells, ACE2-bispecific therapy activates the healthy T cells within the individual to target Spike + cells post-infection. Unlike most present therapeutics, ACE2-bispecific modified cells take advantage of the ACE2 receptor to target the

different presentations of the Spike protein across all SARS-CoV-2 variants, including Delta, Omicron, and more. The ACE2-bispecific therapy can, therefore, provide more efficient elimination of variants with more powerful ACE2 binding. It can also act as a decoy to block viral entry into cells, offering a possible preventative strategy, the study said.

Both the proposed Covid-19 CAR-T cell and ACE2-bispecific-based therapies offer promising potential strategies for future Covid-19 treatment and prevention, according to the study. (PTI)

# Jaishankar meets Ukrainian counterpart, discusses recent regional developments, ways to end Russia-Ukraine conflict

PHNOM PENH, NOV 12 /--/ External affairs minister S Jaishankar on Saturday held a meeting with his Ukrainian counterpart Dmytro Kuleba and both the leaders discussed recent developments in the region, nuclear concerns and ways to end Russia's war on Ukraine.

Jaishankar met Kuleba on the sidelines of the ASEAN-India summit here in the Cambodian capital. "Pleasure to meet FM @DmytroKuleba of Ukraine. Our discussions covered recent developments in the conflict, the grain initiative and nuclear concerns," he tweeted. Jaishankar's meeting with Kuleba came days after he went on a two-day visit to Russia amid growing global concerns over increasing hostilities between Russia and Ukraine. It was Jaishankar's first visit to Moscow after Russia launched its invasion of Ukraine in February. Jaishankar is accompanying Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar who is leading the Indian delegation to the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit and the 17th East Asia Summit here. Ukraine Foreign Dmytro Kuleba took to Twitter and said that he discussed bilateral cooperation and ways to end Russia's war on Ukraine. "My Indian counterpart @DrSJaishankar and I met to



External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar meeting his Ukrainian counterpart Dmytro Kuleba, in Bali on Saturday

discuss bilateral cooperation and ways to end Russia's war on Ukraine. I emphasized that Russia must immediately cease deadly attacks, withdraw all troops from Ukraine, and commit to peace. We also focused on global food security," Kuleba tweeted.

India has not yet condemned the Russian invasion of Ukraine and it has been maintaining that the crisis must be resolved through diplomacy and dialogue. Since the Ukraine conflict began

in February, Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to Russian President Vladimir Putin as well as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy a number of times. During their bilateral meeting in October on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation in the Uzbek city of Samarkand, Modi pressed Putin to end the conflict in Ukraine soon, saying "today's era is not of war" even as he called for finding ways to address

the global food and energy security crisis. In a phone conversation with Zelenskyy on October 4, Modi said there can be "no military solution" and that India is ready to contribute to any peace efforts. India has also said the suspension of the Black Sea Grain initiative is expected to further exacerbate food security, and fuel and fertiliser supply challenges faced by the world, particularly in the global South. Russia suspended the initiative

after an attack on its ships in the Ukrainian port of Sevastopol in the Crimean peninsula.

The Black Sea Grain Initiative is the agreement on the resumption of Ukrainian grain exports via the Black Sea amid the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war. The initiative resulted in the export of more than nine million tonnes of grains and other food products out of Ukraine. During his visit to Moscow from November 7 to 8, Jaishankar held wide-ranging talks with his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov and Deputy Prime Minister Denis Manturov. On the Ukraine conflict, Jaishankar referred to Prime Minister Modi's message to President Putin in September and underlined that the global economy is simply too inter-dependent for a significant conflict anywhere, not to have major consequences elsewhere. "We are seeing growing concerns on energy and food security from the conflict that is coming on top of severe stresses created by two years of Covid. The Global South, especially, is feeling this pain very acutely," Jaishankar said in Moscow. "India, therefore, strongly advocates a return to dialogue and diplomacy. We are clearly on the side of peace, respect for international law and support for the UN Charter," he added. (PTI)

## Nobel laureate Venki Ramakrishnan awarded UK's royal Order of Merit

LONDON, NOV 12 /--/ India-born Nobel laureate Professor Venki Ramakrishnan has been awarded the prestigious Order of Merit by Britain's King Charles III in recognition of his distinguished service to science.

The 70-year-old UK-based molecular biologist is among six appointments made to the historic order by the late Queen Elizabeth II before her death in September and the first to be appointed by Charles. The Order of Merit is an exclusive mark of honour conferred by the British sovereign. His Majesty The King has been pleased to make six new appointments to the Order of Merit. Appointments to the Order are made in recognition of distinguished service to the armed forces, science, art,



Professor Venki was born in Chidambaram in Tamil Nadu and studied biology in the US before moving to the UK where he is the Group Leader of the leading research hub MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology at Cambridge University. He received the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 2009 for his work on ribosomal structure and was knighted by the Queen in 2012. He was President of the UK's Royal Society from November 2015 until November 2020. Ironically, the first [Royal Society] Fellows to come into contact with India were colonisers

like Robert Clive and Warren Hastings, or colonial administrators like Thomas Macaulay and Richard Temple. They certainly did not regard Indians as their equals in any way, and would frankly have been astonished that one day, someone born in India would go on to become a fellow, let alone a President of the Society, Prof. Venki noted in his farewell address to the Royal Society two years ago. He is also a Foreign Member of the Indian National Science Academy. More recently, he has been using electron microscopy to visualise ribosomes in action in higher organisms. This work has advanced human understanding of how the ribosome works and how antibiotics inhibit it. In the

past, he has also worked on histone and chromatin structure, which helps understand how DNA is organised in cells. The Order of Merit, founded in 1902 by King Edward VII, is conferred on individuals of exceptional distinction in the armed forces, science, arts, and literature, or for the promotion of culture based on the personal choice of the monarch.

It is restricted to 24 members at any given time and the other new recipients this week include: broadcaster Baroness Floella Benjamin, architect Sir David Adjaye, nursing expert Dame Elizabeth Anionwu, University of Oxford professor Margaret MacMillan and geneticist and biologist Sir Paul Nurse are the other recipients of the honour. (PTI)

## Bahrain websites attacked as it holds parliamentary election

DUBAI, NOV 12 /--/ Bahrain voted on Saturday in a parliamentary and local election just hours after hackers targeted government websites in the island kingdom that is in the midst of a decade-long crackdown on dissent.

The Interior Ministry did not identify the websites targeted, but the country's state-run Bahrain News Agency could not be reached online nor could the website

for Bahrain's parliament. Later, Bahrain's election website could not be accessed from abroad, though the news agency's website had been restored. Websites are being targeted to hinder the elections and circulate negative messages in desperate attempts that won't affect the determination of citizens who will go to the polling stations, the Interior Ministry said. Screenshots taken by

internet users showed a picture after the hack claiming it was carried out by a previously unknown account called Al-Toufan, or 'The Flood' in Arabic. Social media accounts associated with Al-Toufan said the group targeted the parliament's website due to the persecution carried out by the Bahraini authorities, and in implementation of the popular will to boycott the sham elections. (AP)

## Vice Prez Dhankhar meets Cambodian PM, discuss bilateral ties



Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar and Cambodian Senate President Samdech Vibol Sena Pheakdey Say Chhum, exchange greetings during a meeting, in Phnom Penh on Saturday

PHNOM PENH, NOV 12 /--/ Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar and Cambodia Prime Minister Hun Sen on Saturday held discussions on ways to further enhance bilateral ties, including in areas like human resource, de-mining and development projects.

Both leaders also witnessed the exchange of four agreements in the areas of culture, wildlife and health. The agreements were signed on the sidelines of the ASEAN-India Summit here. Addressing the summit, Dhankhar said he extended warm appreciation to the Cambodian Prime Minister for the country's very successful chairmanship of the ASEAN Summit. The four agreements that were exchanged include cooperation in the field of health and medicine, and in biodiversity conservation and sustainable wildlife management, which will lead to the reintroduction of tigers in Cambodia. Agreements were also exchanged between the IIT, Jodhpur and the Institute of Technology, Cambodia in the field of research, development and application of technology for digital documentation of cultural heritage.

A financing agreement was also exchanged for the conservation and preservation of Wat Raja Bo Pagoda paintings in Siem Reap, Cambodia. (PTI)

## India, ASEAN countries promise to boost cooperation against terrorism

PHNOM PENH, NOV 12 /--/ India and ASEAN countries vowed to establish a comprehensive strategic partnership and enhance cooperation against terrorism after Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar addressed the 19th ASEAN-India Summit here on Saturday.

Dhankhar is in Cambodia for his three-day visit. This year marks the 30th anniversary of ASEAN-India relations and is being celebrated as the ASEAN-India Friendship Year. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is an international organisation that has 10 member countries in Southeast Asia: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. The ASEAN member states and India sought to strengthen cooperation on cybersecurity by establishing new dialogue platforms between India and the ten-member bloc. In a joint statement, they acknowledged the deep civilisational linkages, maritime connectivity, and cross-cultural exchanges between Southeast Asia and India which have grown stronger over the last 30 years, providing a strong foundation for ASEAN-India relations. Before addressing the summit, Dhankhar and Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen held discussions on ways to further enhance bilateral ties, including in areas like human resources, de-mining and development projects.

In the joint statement, India and ASEAN nations declared to enhance cooperation in the digital economy through a series of regional capacity-building activities in digital transformation, digital trade, digital skills and innovation, as well as Hackathons. They also said that they would enhance cooperation in smart agriculture including the exchange of best practices in the use of new technologies to develop a future-ready, resilient, and sustainable food supply. "We will explore cooperation such as city-to-city

partnerships between ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN) and Smart City Mission of India by fostering exchanges of best practices and capacity-building to help build cities that are resilient, innovative, well-connected, and technologically advanced," the statement read. It said that ASEAN and India will strengthen healthcare for their people by increasing collaboration in public health, including in areas of research and development and public health emergency. They sought to expedite the review of the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) to make it more user-friendly, simple, and trade-facilitative, and work together to forge resilient supply chains, explore cooperation on a single window platform to enhance trade facilitation and integration.

They also said that they would further enhance ASEAN-India cooperation in the space sector including through the establishment of tracking, data reception and processing stations in Vietnam and Indonesia, and encourage cooperation between ASEAN and Indian space industry players, including in new areas of collaboration. The member states of ASEAN and India decided to revive tourism and related industries which have been severely hit by the Covid-19 pandemic through effective implementation of the ASEAN-India tourism work plans. On November 13, Dhankhar will participate in the 17th East Asia Summit which comprises the ten Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states and its eight dialogue partners - India, China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Australia, New Zealand, the United States and Russia.

At the East Asia Summit, leaders will discuss ways to further strengthen the East Asia Summit mechanism, as well as matters of regional and international interest and concerns including maritime security, terrorism and non-proliferation. (PTI)



## Nalini, 4 other convicts in Rajiv Gandhi assassination case walk out from prisons

CHENNAI, NOV 12 /--/ NaliniSriharan, her husband and three other convicts in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case were released from Tamil Nadu prisons on Saturday evening. Immediately after she was released from the special prison for women in Vellore, Nalini went to the Vellore central prison from where her husband V Sriharan alias Murugan was released and became emotional upon seeing him. Murugan, along with Santhan, both Sri Lankan nationals, were taken in a police vehicle following their release to the special refugee camp in Tiruchirappalli in the state. Two other Lankan nationals -- Robert Payas and Jayakumar -- released from the Puzhal prison here, were taken to the special refugee camp in Tiruchirappalli to be lodged there. Earlier, another convict who was set free in May earlier, Perarivalan, along with his mother Arputhammal received the duo at the Puzhal prison. (PTI)

## Tremors in Delhi NCR

NEW DELHI, NOV 12 /--/ Tremors were felt in Delhi-NCR and some other northern states Saturday night. The earthquake measuring 5.4 was epicentred in Nepal 212 km southeast of Joshimath in Uttarakhand. The region shook again at 7.57 pm, three days after a 6.3-magnitude earthquake epicentred in Nepal left six people dead in the neighbouring country. This is the third earthquake to hit Nepal in a week. There was no immediate report of any damage. (PTI)

## Science models...

From page-1 He called upon the students to develop confidence among themselves. He said that he finds no reason why after putting up such wonderful innovative projects, the students hesitate to express. He urged the students to sharpen their communication skills in parallel. The guest of honour, the Principal of Subhashgram School, Mr. N. Nehru too had special words for the students of this rural pocket. He said that the students are very talented and they can compete at any level. The Jury member, Mr. Peter Arockiasamy after visiting the exhibition, said that some of the projects developed by the students to transform the theoretical concepts learnt in the classes, into real life situations, reflect their in-depth understanding of the subject. At the same time the models depicting the menace of air pollution and its remedy, show their sensitivity towards saving Environment. He hoped that the working models of G. Bhavan and Kumari Shilpi Das would inspire other students in many ways. The Principal of the Institution, Mr. B. V.R Reddy sharing his experiences said that presently the school is a cluster Resource Centre for 16 schools, which belong to the villages having poor or average socio-economic backgrounds. This institution strives to provide quality Education opportunities to the students from Ram Krishna Gram to the remote Lamiya Bay Village. The school was established way back in the year 1958, and during this journey it has produced many alumni, who have been serving different sectors of the society, holding prestigious positions. Some of them have the distinction of serving the Islands, as the Directors of the Government departments, the proud Principal Shri BVR Reddy informed. More than 60 models were displayed in the Exhibition, of which the best ones will be selected for the zonal level competition and later will represent the district and the state level Exhibition to be held at Port Blair next month.

# Abuses are my nutrition: Modi

## PM slams TRS in Telangana for family politics



Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the launch of multiple development projects, in Visakhapatnam, on Saturday. Andhra Pradesh CM Nara Chandrababu Naidu is also seen

HYDERABAD, NOV 12 /--/ Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday made the "family politics" jibe at the ruling TRS in Telangana and said the state needs a government that works for all families and not just one.

Seeking to make light of criticism from his adversaries, Modi said the "two-three kg" of abuses he receives everyday keep him going to serve people as such words are the "nutrition" that turns the harsh remarks into positive energy. "The agenda in politics should be service-oriented. But in Telangana the mandate of those who got mandate—their entire focus is to abuse Modi. Sometimes people ask me, Modiji, are you not tired. Yesterday I was in Delhi in the morning then Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and now in Telangana. People ask me whether I don't get tired," he said at a public meeting here. "Then I will tell them that daily I consume two-three kg of abusive words. And God has created me in such a way, God has blessed me in such way that all those abusive words are processed and converted as nutrition in my system. It becomes positive energy which will be helped to serve the people," the Prime Minister said. Modi further stated that some people, out of disappointment, depression and fear have 'exhausted' the dictionary to abuse him. He asked his supporters not to be concerned with such abusive language as the rival was left with nothing other than such words. "Don't worry about it. I for the past 22 years received a variety of abusive words. Just laugh at them, have tea. The Lotus will bloom. go with that happy feeling," he said. The BJP is making all efforts to challenge the ruling TRS

*I consume two-three kg of abusive words. And God has created me in such a way, God has blessed me in such way that all those abusive words are processed and converted as nutrition in my system. It becomes positive energy which will be helped to serve the people*

— Prime Minister Narendra Modi

in the 2023 Assembly polls. Lotus is the party's symbol. Those who abuse him day and night and also keep on searching for new abusive words, the Prime Minister said.

"I want to tell them, whatever quantity of abusive words you use against Modi, I will digest all of them. You abuse BJP, no problem. We grew like that. But if you abuse the people of Telangana, then it becomes give and take," he warned. Training his guns against the K Chandrasekhar Rao-led TRS, Modi said the party on which people reposed faith has betrayed them. Modi, who addressed BJP workers at the Begumpet airport here soon

after his arrival for a visit to the State, said he regrets that the people who flourished and got power in the name of 'Telangana' have pushed it backward. "The government and the leader here continuously do injustice to the capacity of Telangana and the talent of the people of Telangana. The party which the Telangana people trusted the most, the same party has done the biggest betrayal to Telangana," he charged, without naming TRS. However, the Lotus starts blooming in circumstances when there is darkness, he reiterated. In an obvious reference to the TRS frequently attacking him, Modi said he remains unperturbed by such criticism and appealed to the BJP activists in the State to not to worry about it. He appreciated the BJP activists for remaining committed to service and keeping up the fight in the face of alleged tyranny. Referring to the recent by-poll to Munugode Assembly where BJP stood second, Modi said the way the people of the constituency showed confidence in the party was, according to him, unprecedented. The BJP workers have brought the entire Telangana government to one Assembly segment (Munugode), he said. People's blessings are with the party, he said. "In recent times, whatever by-polls were held, the message is loud and clear that the sunrise is not far in Telangana. Darkness will vanish. Lotus will bloom everywhere in Telangana," Modi said, referring to the BJP's successes in Dubbak and Huzurabad Assembly by-polls during the last two years. The Telangana chief minister did not receive the Prime Minister at the Begumpet airport. (PTI)

## Structure of legal profession feudal, patriarchal and not accommodating of women: CJI

NEW DELHI, NOV 12 /--/ Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud on Saturday said the structure of legal profession is "feudal, patriarchal and not accommodating of women" and there is a need to have a democratised and merit-based process for entry of more women and marginalised sections of society.

Justice Chandrachud, who took charge as CJI on Wednesday, said there are numerous challenges before the judiciary and first among them is of expectation as every social and legal matter and a large number of political issues come within the

people belonging to marginalised sections," he said. The CJI said the live streaming of court proceedings was a new experiment that gave an insight into what technology can do to transform the legal system and said proceedings of high courts and district judiciary should also be live streamed. "One of the greatest dangers in a Constitutional democracy is the danger of being opaque. When you open up your process you generate a degree of accountability, transparency and generate a sense of responsiveness to the needs of the citizens," he said. "When I speak of live streaming, I do not speak of live streaming on the big ticket cases. We need to live stream the proceedings of the High Court but also of district judiciary because the interface of the common citizen is first and foremost with the district judiciary," the CJI said. On the issue of comparison between the Indian Supreme Court and the US Supreme Court, CJI Chandrachud said it is important not to equate the apex



jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. "One thing which we need to understand is that the judiciary has a feeding pool. The feeding pool which determines who enters the judiciary is largely dependent on the structure of the legal profession. "The structure of the legal profession even today across India is feudal, patriarchal and not accommodating of women," the CJI, who is known for expressing candid views, said at the Hindustan Times Leadership Summit. "So when we talk of having more women in the judiciary, it's equally necessary for us to lay building blocks for the future by creating access to women now. The first step is entering the chambers of senior lawyers which is an old boys club," he said.

"How do you gain access to chambers by tapping your connections? Until we have a democratised and merit-based access to the entry point in the legal profession we will not have more women and will not have more

court here with that of other developed countries because "we have a uniquely Indian structure for our institutions". "When you compare us with the US Supreme Court which hears a total of over 180 cases a year or the UK Supreme Court which hears 85 cases a year we have a Supreme Court where every judge hears about 75 to 80 cases on Monday and Friday while 30 to 40 cases on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. That gives you the reach of the work which the Supreme Court does. "Many of the cases which we deal with do not necessarily come in newspapers or cases which are considered significant enough to be dealt with on social media. These are routine cases.

"So the question is should a Supreme Court judge in which the country has invested so much be dealing with small cases like pension and maintenance. My answer is yes because that is indeed the role of the Supreme Court," he said. (PTI)

## Nearly 66 per cent polling in Himachal as voters brave cold, trudge through snow

SHIMLA, NOV 12 /--/ Himachal Pradesh recorded a voter turnout of nearly 66 per cent on Saturday, the Election Commission said citing provisional polling figures till 5 pm for the assembly elections, a crucial test for the BJP hoping to beat precedent and return to power as well as for the Congress looking for electoral revival.

From capital Shimla to the icy heights of Spiti, people across the state voted braving cold and in the higher reaches of mountains trudging through snow to elect a new state government. Voting began at 8 am on a slow note but picked up as the day progressed and the sun warmed the winter chill. In the first hour, around five per cent turnout was recorded, while by 11 am, it was 17.98 per cent. It notched up to 37.19 per cent by 1 pm and 55.65 per cent till 3 pm. Till 5 pm, a 65.92 per cent turnout was recorded, according to provisional polling data released by the Election Commission (EC). The highest polling of 72.35 per cent was recorded in Sirmour district followed by 68.48 per cent in Solan and 67.67 per cent in Una and 67.5 per cent in Lahaul and Spiti. The high-altitude district of Lahaul and Spiti had recorded 21.95 per cent, the lowest, till 1 pm, but polling was brisk as the sun came out.

The poll panel said that among the 68 assembly constituencies in the hill state, Shillai recorded the highest 77 per cent turnout while Sarkaghat recorded the lowest 55.40 per cent. Seraj constituency in Mandi

district from where chief minister Jai Ram Thakur is contesting and Sujanpur recorded 74 per cent polling, according to the provisional figures.

Dropping temperatures and advancing years failed to dampen the enthusiasm of centenarians as many of them came out to vote, with 105-year-old Naro Devi exercising her franchise in Churah in Chamba and 103-year-old Sardar Pyar Singh in Shimla. There are over 1.21 lakh people above 80 years of age in the hill state with as many as 1,136 centenarians.

The EC had made special arrangements for the elderly and persons with disabilities at polling stations across the state. The commission said Chasak Bhatpri, an 83-year-old woman, was among those who cast their vote in the remote Bharmaur

constituency in Chamba despite heavy snow. "Bharmour is the farthest in the state being at a distance of 14 km from the nearest road head. Seeing huge response from the voters despite heavy snow," the EC said sharing her picture in snow. Himachal Pradesh was home to 106-year-old Shyam Saran Negi, India's first voter, who died a few days ago after casting his postal ballot for this election. In an early morning message to voters, Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged them to enthusiastically participate in the "festival of democracy" and register a voting record. In a tweet, Modi also greeted young voters who will be exercising their franchise for the first time. As voting began, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday said the

state will vote for the return of the old pension scheme and employment. "Himachal will vote for OPS, Himachal will vote for employment and Himachal will vote for 'Har Ghar Lakshmi'," Rahul said in a tweet in Hindi. "Come, vote in large numbers, and make your valuable contribution to the progress and prosperous future of Himachal," the former Congress chief said, appealing to the voters of the hill state. Rahul is in Maharashtra undertaking the party's 'Bharat Jodo Yatra'. Restoration of the old pension scheme, 300 units of free power, a Rs 680-crore StartUp fund, one lakh jobs and Rs 1,500 per month for women between 18 to 60 years are among the promises the Congress made in its manifesto for the Himachal Pradesh polls. (PTI)



Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur gets his finger marked with indelible ink after casting his vote for Assembly elections, at a polling station in Mandi district

## SRK stopped at Mumbai airport with his team over luxury watches

MUMBAI, NOV 12 /--/ Bollywood actor Shah Rukh Khan and five members of his team were stopped for an hour at the Mumbai airport by Customs officials for not paying Customs duty for six luxury watches as the payment facility was not operational in the early hours of Saturday, an official said.

The incident occurred at 12.30 am after Khan landed at the airport from Dubai in a chartered flight, the official said and added that the payment counter at the General Aviation Terminal (GAT) was not operational in the early hours. During the



screening of the baggage of Khan and his team members, officials found six expensive watches in one of the bags, he said. The expensive watches are worth Rs 17.86 lakh as per Customs' evaluation, he said. The bag containing watches was carried by Khan's bodyguard Ravi Shankar Singh, the official said.

As the screening process was on, Khan and his team were stopped at the GAT- a VIP terminal- for at least an hour, he added. After some time, Khan, his secretary Pooja Dadlani, and three other members of

the team were allowed to go, he said. As the Customs duty payment counter at the GAT was not operational in the early hours, Customs officers took Ravi Shankar Singh with them to Terminal -II of the airport, where Rs 6.88 lakh was paid towards Customs duty for the watches, he said. Though the challan was in the name of Ravi Shankar Singh, the duty was paid on behalf of Khan, the official said. After the procedure to pay Customs duty was over, Singh was allowed to go in the morning, he said. (PTI)



## I am more excited than nervous: Babar

MELBOURNE, NOV 12 /- / Pakistan captain Babar Azam is "more excited than nervous" as he stands on the cusp of emulating the iconic Imran Khan. Pakistan take on England in the summit clash of the T20 World Cup at the MCG on Sunday.

"I'm more excited than nervous since we've performed well in our last three matches," Babar said on Saturday.

"It is no doubt that pressure exists but it can only be suppressed with confidence and belief in ourselves. And for good results, it is pertinent that one must do so," the skipper said. He didn't hesitate in admitting that the pace quartet of Shaheen Shah Afridi, Naseem Shah, Mohammed Wasim Jr and Haris Rauf are his side's strength.

"England is a competitive team, their win to reach the finals against India was a proof of that. Our strategy is to stick to our plan and using our pace attack as our strength to win the final," he said. For Babar, equalling the class of 1992 (50-over World Cup winning team under Imran) will be an honour.

"Yes. I believe we couldn't start off well but we came back with great momentum. In the previous 3-4 matches, Pakistani team has played very well on both individual and team level. "We've been working really hard for this. It feels like a dream come true to reach the final." Babar and his opening partner Mohammed Rizwan would like to seize the initiative in the first six overs.

"Utilizing power play to grab as many wickets will be essential for the match. Even when you bat, you want to set a great pace for the upcoming batsmen.

"We will try to maintain and continuously build our momentum hence ensuring



Babar Azam at a press conference on the eve of the final

better performance," the skipper said. For Babar, it was the Almighty's will that the team is in the final.

"...but this never stops us from hard work. Providing an opportunity is indeed divine but making good use of it is when the ball is put in our court.

"I'm thankful for where I stand today and I'll continue to work harder to achieve what lies ahead." Babar also admitted that he was under great pressure when he didn't score big in five group league games.

"Of course, great pressure is build upon you when you are under a spell of not scoring well. But here I'd like to commend the middle order, they stepped up and took the responsibility to achieve what me and Rizwan couldn't.

"Iftikhar, Shadab and Haris played extremely well. Although a youngster, Haris proved himself to be an asset in this event. Although I couldn't perform well but the rest of the team's performance kept me motivated," he added. Babar thanked Pakistanis across the globe for standing by the team in tough times.

"Pakistan as a nation has always been our team's backbone. They uphold us through their enthusiasm. I would again request them to support us and keep praying," he concluded. (PTI)

## Bali to be India's fielding coach in New Zealand

NEW DELHI, NOV 12 /- / Munish Bali has been named fielding coach for India's limited overs tour of New Zealand and will be part of the support staff headed by VVS Laxman.

With the Rahul Dravid-led support staff being given a break post the T20 World Cup, Laxman will be the head coach on the tour beginning November 18 in Wellington. India will play three T20s and as many ODIs. Bali, Hrishikesh Kanitkar (batting coach) and Sairaj Bahutule (bowling coach) will be part of the support staff in New Zealand. All three coaches are based at the National Cricket Academy which is headed by Laxman. Bali was also part of the India squad in Ireland and briefly in England earlier this year before the doing the home series against South Africa.

"All three will assist Laxman in New Zealand," said a BCCI official. (PTI)

## Greg Barclay gets second term as ICC chairman, Jay Shah to head F&CA committee

### Ganguly to remain ICC Cricket Committee head

MELBOURNE, NOV 12 /- / New Zealand's Greg Barclay was on Saturday unanimously re-elected as chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC) for a second two-year term. Besides Barclay's re-election, BCCI secretary Jay Shah was elected as the head of ICC's all powerful Finance and Commercial Affairs (F&CA) committee at the board meeting. Barclay was unopposed following the withdrawal of Zimbabwe's Tavengwa Mukuhlan from the process, and the ICC Board reaffirmed its full support to the New Zealander to continue at the helm.

"It is an honour to be re-elected as the Chair of the International Cricket Council and I would like to thank my fellow ICC Directors for their support," said Barclay on his re-appointment.

"Over the last two years we have made significant strides forward with the launch of our global growth strategy that provides clear direction to build a successful and sustainable future for our sport.

"It is an exciting time to be involved in cricket and I look forward to continuing to work closely with our Members to strengthen the game in our core markets as well as grow it beyond that, ensuring more of the world can enjoy cricket." Barclay, an Auckland-based commercial lawyer, was originally appointed as the ICC Chair in November 2020. He was previously the Chair of New Zealand Cricket (NZC) and was a director of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup in 2015. He being elected unopposed also means that he had the backing of the mighty BCCI in the 17-member board.

"I would like to congratulate Greg on his re-appointment as ICC Chair, as the continuity his leadership will provide is in the best interests of the sport. I therefore decided to withdraw my candidacy," said Mukuhliani. Shah will have the responsibility of heading ICC's most important committee. At the major financial policy decisions are



taken by the F&CA committee before it is ratified by the ICC board.

"Each and every member accepted Jay as the head of F&CA committee. This is an equally powerful sub committee apart from the ICC chair (Greg Barclay)," an ICC source told PTI on conditions of anonymity. It includes the revenue sharing among the member nations and also the various major sponsorship deals that the global body inks through the year.

The F&CA committee is always headed by an ICC Board member and Shah's election makes it clear that he will represent the BCCI on the ICC Board. The F&CA head's position used to be India's during the N Srinivasan era but during Shashank Manohar's



tenure as ICC chairman, the BCCI's power and might had significantly reduced. In fact during the Committee of Administrators' tenure, there was a point when BCCI didn't even have any representation in the F&CA committee. Former BCCI president Sourav Ganguly was a member of the F&CA committee till last year.

"India is a commercial hub of global cricket with more than 70 percent sponsorship coming from the region. It is imperative that an ICC F&CA should always be headed by BCCI," the ICC source said. Former India captain Ganguly, who completed his tenure as BCCI president last month, will remain the head of ICC's Cricket Committee. (PTI)

## History favours Pakistan, form is with England

MELBOURNE, NOV 12 /- / A determined Babar Azam will be aiming to secure his seat beside the great Imran Khan in Pakistan cricket's Hall of Fame as his team takes on a formidable England in the T20 World Cup final here on Sunday.

The passage of 2009 champions into the final could even beat a Hollywood thriller script as they were down and out after the first week of the tournament with morale

### T20 World Cup final

shattering defeats to arch-rivals India and Zimbabwe. Pakistan raised hopes of a dramatic comeback in the second week of a tournament with a win over South Africa and a prayer on their lips for some divine intervention. Just like in 1992, miracle happened when the Netherlands produced a performance for the ages to shock South Africa and out of nowhere, Pakistan were back in contention for a semifinal berth. Critics say that in cricket, you never know which Pakistan turns on a particular day and the semifinal performance against a well rounded New Zealand side showed that when it comes to playing edge of the seat 'Russian Roulette', the 'Green Machines' are second to none. But just like everyone wants a slice of '92 from Babar's team, the core of this current English team also has a date with history on this very Australian soil. Seven years ago in 2015, this was the country where

England's white ball cricket lay in tatters after they were dumped out of the competition at the group league stage by Bangladesh. The white ball cricket transformation started with horses for courses approach by the ECB, leading to a sea change in the mindset and intent of the English players. That fearless approach was on full display against India on Thursday.

The Shaheen Shah Afridis, Mohammed Wasim Jr. and the Harris Raufs will need way more than just inspiration to get past the likes of Jos Buttler, Alex Hales, Ben Stokes and Moeen Ali. These are all sought after practitioners of T20 cricket and all of them have abilities to silence the 80,000 odd Pakistan fans, just like they did with the bulk of the 42,000 Indian fans in Adelaide. Can Afridi do a Wasim Akram when Buttler is batting or Babar and Rizwan take the game deep in their own style like Imran Khan and Javed Miandad did in that 1992 final. Big matches always brings big performer to the centre stage and Stokes for one wouldn't mind a repeat of his 2019 Lord's performance to win the silverware. The weather forecast predicts that the final could be marred by rain on both Sunday and the reserve day, which is Monday. Unlike a normal T20 game which could be a minimum five-over contest, the event technical committee has kept provisions for minimum 10-overs a side contest with an early (3 pm Melbourne time) start on reserve



ALL EYES ON THE PRIZE: Who of Jos Buttler or Babar Azam will take the trophy home?.

## If we win tomorrow, it could inspire English football team in World Cup: Buttler

MELBOURNE, NOV 12 /- / England's Jos Buttler would be a proud skipper if his men can win the T20 World Cup final against Pakistan on Sunday and inspire their footballing counterparts to pull off an encore in Doha next month. Buttler, a champion batter, has lead his team to the summit clash in his maiden global meet as England skipper. Asked if the football team can take a leaf out of the cricket team, the soft spoken skipper said: "Yeah, I certainly hope so." "Sport is such a huge part of English culture, and getting behind teams in World Cups is certainly something I know happens a lot in England.

"Even though we're on the other side of the world, you can certainly feel that support," Buttler said on eve of the final against Pakistan. England are clubbed with Iran, Wales and USA in group B of the FIFA World Cup.

"The images you see of the Euros, obviously, nothing will compete with football in our country. Of course the game is going to be on free-to-air television, which is fantastic, will bring new eyes to the game," said the skipper-keeper. Buttler doesn't feel people will be watching on the big screen at Trafalgar Square at 8 am British Standard Time but the TV sets will be switched on as there is a renewed interest in cricket after their 2019 World Cup win.



Jos Buttler at a press conference on the eve of the final

"We saw the benefit of that in 2019 with some of the images of people watching that game and Trafalgar Square being packed out and stuff.

"I am not sure they'll be getting up at 8:00 in the morning to get to Trafalgar Square, but I am sure there will be plenty back home wishing us well, as we do to the other teams that

you mentioned who have got some big games ahead of themselves, as well."

Just like a shrewd captain, Buttler was effusive in his praise for Pakistani pacers, calling them potential future greats.

"Obviously, Pakistan is a fantastic team. I think they have a very long history of producing excellent fast bowlers.

"I'm sure by the end of their careers, some of the guys who we'll play against will go down as some of the best bowlers Pakistan have produced. That's a huge part of why they get to a World Cup final." Having played Pakistan in a seven match away series, Buttler is aware about the challenges.

"We expect a really tough challenge, as mentioned before. They're a team we've seen lots of in the recent past, and we've had some brilliant matches against them, played in a fantastic spirit, and I'm sure tomorrow will be no different," he said.

Buttler is big on team huddles in which he tries to send a few messages as per mood of the group.

"But the consistent message is always to take the game on. That's something we pride ourselves on as a group. We must try and play with a level of freedom and allow ourselves to express the huge amounts of talent that we have as a group." (PTI)

## Enjoyed opening batting more with Sachin than Sehwag: Sourav Ganguly

ABU DHABI, NOV 12 /- / Former Indian cricket team captain Sourav Ganguly on Friday said he enjoyed opening the batting with Sachin Tendulkar more than he did with Virendra Sehwag, as Sachin made him a better player.

He was speaking at realtors' apex body CREDAI's annual conference 'NATCON 2022' held here. In a rapid fire round moderated by Anarock Chairman Anuj Puri, Ganguly was asked, between Sachin and Sehwag, who he enjoyed opening the innings more with.

"Sachin was the most sane one and Sehwag was insane. So its Sachin. He actually also made me a better player," he said. "Sachin actually got me lift my game."

To another question, which living person he admired the most, Ganguly against chose to name the little master. "Sachin. He was special and I have seen



him up close. I have seen him hit in rib cage. Did not make a noise. Got runs. The next morning he had a double fracture in ribs. "I heard a sound and I went and asked him you are okay. He said he was fine. The next morning he had fractures. He was special," he said. On what was more challenging — test in Australia or test in England, he said Australia. Asked to choose between

what role he prefer to be in, captain of India and BCCI President, Ganguly chose to go with the cricket team. When asked to choose between India's win in Kolkata test in 2001 at home or India's win at Lords in Natwest Cup final in 2002, he said: "2001 win at home as it changed the team. It changed the belief in team."

Ganguly named Sri

day if needed. On a spicy deck like the MCG, the presence of Mark Wood would have been an advantage but the tearaway quick's back isn't holding up well. Despite the pasting he got from Hardik Pandya, Chris Jordan is a fine T20 bowler in his own rights and would like to use his extensive BBL experience to get the better of the Pakistani batters. If both batting units are taken into account, England with Hales, Buttler, Stokes, Phil Salt (in place of Dawid Malan), Harry Brook, Moeen Ali and Liam Livingstone look stronger on paper against Pakistan with Rizwan, Babar, Shan Masood, Mohammed Haris and Iftikhar Ahmed.

But on big days, it is not always the names that matter but also the mindset and temperament to last the distance. (PTI)

**Teams England:** Jos Buttler (captain), Alex Hales, Phil Salt, Harry Brook, Liam Livingstone, Adil Rashid, Moeen Ben Stokes, Moeen Ali, David Willey, Chris Woakes, Chris Jordan, Dawid Malan, Sam Curran, Mark Wood, Tymal Mills.

**Pakistan:** Babar Azam (captain), Mohammed Rizwan, Shan Masood, Iftikhar Ahmed, Mohammed Haris, Khushdil Shah, Asif Ali, Haider Ali, Mohammed Wasim, Naseem Shah, Haris Rauf, Shadab Ahmed, Mohammed Nawaz, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Mohammed Hsnain. Time: 1.30 pm IST.

## T20 World Cup Final: England and Pakistan could be crowned joint winners in case of washout

MELBOURNE, NOV 12 /- / England and Pakistan could share the T20 World Cup trophy as rain threatens to play spoilsport in the summit clash on Sunday as well as the reserve day at the MCG here. Currently there is a 95 per cent chance of rain in Melbourne on Sunday, with up to 25mm predicted to fall.

"Very high (near 100%) chance of showers. The chance of a thunderstorm, possibly severe, with heavy falls possible," a report in 'ESPNcricinfo' quoted the Bureau of Meteorology as saying. Unfortunately, the forecast for Monday — the designated reserve day — is similar with 95 per cent chance of rain and falls between 5 and 10mm. Tournament rules for the final state that at least 10 overs a side are needed to constitute a knockout stage match. If rain prevents play on both days then England and Pakistan will be forced to share the trophy.

"The first priority will be to complete a shortened match on Sunday if required, meaning the overs will be reduced before the reserve day is activated," the report said.

"If the game has started on Sunday but can't be completed then it will resume on the reserve day from the position it was halted. Once the toss has taken place, the game is considered live." The match is scheduled to start at 7pm local time and if no play is possible, the game will spill over to the reserve day on Monday, when play would start at 3pm local time.

"If the reserve day is allocated, every effort will be made to complete the match on the scheduled day with any necessary reduction in overs taking place and only if the minimum number of overs necessary to constitute a match cannot be bowled on the scheduled day will the match be completed on the reserve day," the playing conditions read.

"If the match has started on the scheduled day and overs are subsequently reduced following an interruption but no further play is possible, the match will resume on the reserve day at the point where the last ball was played." (PTI)

## FIFA World Cup: Hosts Qatar name 26-man squad comprising home-based players

DOHA, NOV 12 /- / Qatar coach Felix Sanchez selected a 26-man squad World Cup on Friday exclusively made up of home-based players led by attacking trio Akram Afif, Almoz Ali and Hassan Al-Haydos.

The tournament hosts are playing at the World Cup for the first time and face Ecuador in the opening match on 20 November. Qatar will also meet Senegal and the Netherlands in Group A. Sanchez and his players have been staying together in near-lockdown since June while holding training camps in Spain and Austria. It is a similar approach to that of South Korea 20 years ago when the co-hosts made a shock run to the semi-finals of the 2002 World Cup. Sanchez, who learned his trade over 10 years with Barcelona's youth teams, guided Qatar to a 3-1 victory over Japan in the 2019 Asian Cup final for the country's first major international title.

"In 2019, it was difficult to imagine that Qatar could win the Asian Cup," Sanchez said recently in an interview with Spanish sports daily Marca.

"Obviously, I'm not talking about winning the World

Cup but to play at a good level against these three opponents is our challenge. Afterwards, it's football and anything can happen." (AFP)

**Full squad:**  
Goalkeepers: Saad Al-Sheeb (Al-Sadd), Meshaal Barsham (Al-Sadd), Yousef Hassan (Al-Gharafa)  
Defenders: Pedro Miguel (Al-Sadd), Musab Khoder (Al-Sadd), Tarek Salman (Al-Sadd), Bassam Al-Rawi (Al-Duhail), Boualem Khoukhi (Al-Sadd), Abdelkarim Hassan (Al-Sadd), Ismaeel Mohammad (Al-Duhail), Homam Ahmed (Al-Gharafa)  
Midfielders: Jassem Gaber (Al-Arabi), Ali Asad (Al-Sadd), Assim Madibo (Al-Duhail), Mohammed Waad (Al-Sadd), Salem Al-Hajri (Al-Sadd), Mostafa Tarek Mashaal (Al-Sadd SC), Karim Boudiaf (Al-Duhail), Abdulaziz Hatem (Al-Rayyan)

**Forwards:** Naif Al-Hadhami (Al-Rayyan), Ahmed Alaaeldin (Al-Gharafa), Hassan Al-Haydos (Al-Sadd), Akram Afif (Al-Sadd), Almoz Ali (Al-Duhail), Mohammed Muntari (Al-Duhail), Khalid Muneer Mazed (Al-Wakrah)



EA EXPERIMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL 2022

Emami Art is all set to host the Emami Art Experimental Film Festival 2022, inspired by its precursor, the 2020 online documentary film festival organised by the art body. It took place during the lockdown and despite several challenges, received positive feedback. Across 5 days of back-to-back cinema, Emami Art presented out-of-the-box films that re-define the language of cinema, spanning across narrative, aesthetic, and technological domains. The festival was a part of the EA Locus in Focus programme, aiming to bridge the gap between central and peripheral practices in contemporary art. The Emami Art Experimental Film Festival 2022 attempted to create an intimate network with the local makers and audience. Alongside the screenings, the sections were designed to create a discursive space that will spur new riveting conversations around the topics. Additionally, there were special screenings and talk sessions by experts. An exhibition with absorbing insights into film making was also be held onsite at the Emami Art Kolkata. Emami Art Experimental Film Festival 2022 consist of a Competitive Category of Films, 3 Curated Sections and 2 Special Screenings, said RichaAgarwal, CEO, Emami Art.



"HawaBodolerGaan": A watershed moment for Bengali Independent Music

In a first initiative by 26 Bangla singer/songwriters/composers who brought their latent musical faculties together to craft their maiden project which resonated with the ethos, turmoil, and joys of life and prevalent social milieu. Over the last couple of months after immense hard work, these incredibly talented bunch of Bengali independent musicians launched - "HawaBodolerGaan" an audio-visual series featuring 26 singer-song writers who shall perform 33 unreleased compositions and 7 cover versions of popular interpretation of popular songs. For the first time a unique social experiment was done on 41 listeners. "HawaBodolerGaan" audio-visual series features contributions from a varied range of artists active in Bengal's independent

music scene. This series, supported by Wind of Change resto café aims to provide Bengali singer- songwriters and musicians from all backgrounds the chance to create authentic soundscapes inspiring new creativity. Discerning audience of Bengali music can see the videos on a newly created YouTube channel titled 'HawaBodol'. AbhisekChakraborty, independent artist, and composer who has brought everyone together for this mammoth project, averred, "With this project the artists involved seek to re-imagine the cultural nexus between Bengali popular culture and music and showcase the undiscovered talent of Bengal in a contemporary art space. Film soundtracks may be more familiar to listeners, but

Bengal has a long history of showcasing the work of independent musicians in fields as diverse as classical folk, pop, and rock. The collective's goal is to use this legacy to establish a space in which up-and-coming artists can generate opportunities for themselves and their contemporaries to demonstrate their breadth of talent and dedication to their craft in front of a larger audience." AmitMandal, owner of Wind of Change resto café said, "It is exciting to see so many independent Bengali artists herald a new wave of creativity and engagement that will put Bengal's music firmly back on the music map of India. We remain committed to partner with them and provide everyone with an opportunity to achieve their ambitions."



To keep the viewers captivated with the remarkable realities of our world and present them with astonishing facts, Sony BBC Earth is back with an exciting lineup of content taking you to the world of science and technology. The channel is all set to present the viewers with an experience of the land of glaciers and geysers where the sun never sets in the show 'Iceland with Alexander Armstrong', gives them a chance to navigate through the British waters with 'Coastal Fishing with Robson Green' and introduces them to some of the biggest science mysteries with 'Science's Greatest Mysteries'. On a quest to discover all Iceland has to offer and witness erupting geysers, Alexander Armstong visits breathtaking glaciers and meets a man who bakes bread in boiling water in his show 'Iceland with Alexander Armstrong'. He also takes you through the buzzing streets of Reykjavik,

playing around and sampling the world's most disgusting dish. In the next series, Robson Green travels around the UK in 'Coastal Fishing with Robson Green'. Robson meets people who make their living from the sea and goes in search of the biggest, wildest, and tastiest fish in the British waters. Each episode in this series tackles one question and talks about the cutting-edge labs running mind-bending experiments with a team of dedicated scientists. Featuring stunning computer-generated imagery, the series brings lost worlds, ancient civilizations, and the far expanses of the universe to the screen in a grand visual format. Tune in to Coastal Fishing With Robson Green on November 7, from Monday to Friday at 10:00 PM, Science's Greatest Mysteries on November 21 from Monday to Friday at 08:00 PM, Iceland with Alexander Armstrong on November 28, from Monday to Friday at 10:00 PM, on Sony BBC Earth!

KFC Popcorn Bowl Made with Maggi: The Cult Collab!



that our fans always hoped for. And what a delicious recipe this partnership has resulted in! We are thrilled to offer KFC & Maggi fans the limited-edition KFC Popcorn Bowl Made with Maggi; that is sure to offer a finger lickin' good time, with a slurpy twist!" The bowl comes in two distinct much-loved flavours – with Chicken Popcorn & Veg Patty - and is sure to get you slurping & crunching. The Chicken popcorn bowl starts at INR 159/- while the Veg patty bowl starts at INR 129/- . This crunchy masala packed innovation will be available across all 600+ KFC restaurants in the country. You can get your bowl of happiness in a completely contactless & safe manner - through delivery, takeaway, KFC to your Car/Bike and during dine-in.

KFC India partners with Nestle to delight fans with the KFC Popcorn Bowl Made with Maggi. The two iconic brands have joined hands to create the one, the only, the crunchiest and slurpiest combo of KFC's signature Chicken Popcorn & Maggi noodles in one perfect bowl! Bringing together hot, steaming, deliciously masaledaar and so soslurpy Maggi noodles, with flavorful Chicken Popcorn, tender on the inside but unbelievably crispy on the outside, this limited time bowl of happiness is sure to add much crispiness to your undying love for Maggi noodles & KFC Chicken. Moksh Chopra, GM, KFC India said, "Both Maggi and KFC are iconic brands that consumers love and truly enjoy. The coming together of this epic collab was therefore very much on the cards, and perhaps something



JW Marriott Kolkata brings the chef of Phulay Bay, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve from Krabi, Thailand for the patrons of Kolkata to savour Southern Thai Cuisine. Phulay Bay, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve is the world's first property to embody the Reserve brand's pioneer's traits, philosophy, and distinct style and design. It presents Chef LaongdaoTohkhhot, or "Chef Aong", the Thai Sous Chef at Phulay Bay, who specialises in the unique cuisine of southern Thailand, with more than two decades of gastronomic experience, she has delighted many guests and dignitaries, including members of the Thai royal family. JW Marriott Kolkata and Phulay Bay have

collaborated for a Southern Thai pop-up at JW Marriott, Kolkata which is a one-of-a-kind experience for food enthusiasts of the city, to enjoy the best of the thai cuisines which is renowned for its intense flavours. Chef Aong prepares southern Thai seasonal and local foods with extraordinary expertise and attention to detail to produce mouth-watering and incredibly authentic dishes. "Hosting Chef Aong is both a pleasure and honour as we continue to showcase and collaborate with culinary maestros across the world. We look forward to hosting more such events for the food connoisseurs of the city", said SumeetSuri, General Manager, JW Marriott Kolkata.



Wedding season is fast approaching, and we all know how frustrating and difficult deciding what to wear can be. Let's be honest, who doesn't want their style to be absolutely on point? The moment you walk into an Indian wedding, you will be greeted with a blaze of pomposity, and your attire must be appropriate for the occasion! This wedding season, go dramatic and blingy with this Khaddi Georgette Benarasi from the house of Ummaira! Embellished with meenakaributtas and pure zari, this premium Khaddi Georgette Benarasi is among the gorgeous options to choose from this wedding season. This rich and opulent saree is an unmistakable number apt for weddings for both the bride and her entourage of elegant bridesmaids. Pair it with Ummaira's premium satin silk blouse infused with Moti, Ari, and Zardozi embellishments to keep those compliments coming. Don't forget to add a Kundan neckpiece to notch up your game in no time! Attending a Sangeet function? Well, looking regal while keeping things simple is no easy feat. Try on this look curated by Ummaira and get a head-turning silhouette effortlessly. We love how this pure satin silk drape glistens with the sparkling splendour of dawn while falling like dusk. Go for this stunning work of art with its slick, fashionable floral and moti embroidery, which radiates cheerful vibes. To up the glam factor of the ensemble, team this

beauty with a chic cocktail blouse from the house of Ummaira and add a pair of statement earrings. How could we overlook the elegance of conventional, time-honouredPaat silk sarees at an extravagant Indian wedding? Hand-woven to perfection, this gorgeous Part Silk drape from Assam is a timeless pick for every occasion and with the wedding season upon us. Pair the drape with Ummaira's pure silk cocktail blouse in a contrasting hue, accessorise with ethnic jewellery and flaunt your ensemble effortlessly! If you are looking for something simple yet classy, this digital printed satin crepe saree is for you! Woven with grace and refinement, this beauty of a drape is adorned with sequins and hand embroidery all over. The sleek purple piping border and handmade latkans lend a mesmerising look alongside the party number glamour. Pair it with Ummaira's custom-made moti-infused satin silk blouse featuring zardozi embroidery. Minimal jewellery, slick middle parting, keep the gajra as it is, and you're all set to rock the night! A gorgeous option for bridesmaid attire, this exquisite Kanjeevaram drape with a rani border in shades of blue exudes utter grandeur. It is entirely hand-woven with gold, silver, copper, zari, and resham thread.