

**FREE AYANAR TRADERS**  
Opening  
BEST PRICE

**NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)**

**SAFETY MEASURES**

**Thought for today**  
**The Price of freedom is always Responsibility.**

**7-days home quarantine must for passengers reaching LA**

Port Blair, Jan 19: In view of the rising Covid cases in South Andaman District, new guidelines have been imposed for passengers reaching Little Andaman from Port Blair. All passengers must mandatorily quarantine at homes for a period of seven days. They should not leave the designated premises under any circumstances, till final clearance is obtained.

## Priyanka Gandhi's Strategy for Uttar Pradesh - And the High Stakes for Her

### UP Election: Priyanka Gandhi Vadra has pledged 40% of Congress party's candidates for the 403-seat Uttar Pradesh assembly will be women.

New Delhi, Jan 19: An actress jailed for protesting Prime Minister Narendra Modi's controversial citizenship law, the mother of a rape survivor, and a beauty pageant winner. These are the women leading once-dominant Congress party as it seeks to reinvent itself in a hotly contested state election. The slew of female candidates in Uttar Pradesh is part of a new campaign led by Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. With a catchy slogan "I'm a girl and I can fight", the campaign underscores the growing importance of women voters in the world's largest democracy.

Ms Vadra has pledged 40% of Congress party's candidates for the 403-seat state assembly will be women. She has met that promise in the first list of candidates her party announced for the state polls that will be carried out in seven phases starting from Feb. 10. The election



results will be released March 10. "If you have suffered in the past, you have to fight and grab power to fight for your rights," Ms Vadra said in a video posted on Twitter last week. Congress party's list of candidates is a new kind of politics, she added.

India is no stranger to powerful female politicians. Ms Vadra's grandmother and former prime minister, Indira Gandhi, towered over the country's politics for decades, while West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee and former Uttar Pradesh chief minister Mayawati have wielded considerable power. While political parties have courted female voters, it hasn't translated to greater numbers of women law makers. India was ranked 147th of 193

nations last year on the percentage of women in its lower house - Lok Sabha, according to data released by Inter-Parliamentary Union.

During the 2017 polls in Uttar Pradesh, when the BJP leader Yogi Adityanath swept his party to victory, less than a tenth of the candidates fielded across party lines were women. They saw little success with only 39 clinching seats then, according to a tracker by Ashoka University.

Uttar Pradesh is seen as a major indicator of national mood ahead of the next general election in 2024. Congress party won just seven seats in the last state polls as it has struggled to gain traction since the BJP came to power in 2014. The women fielded by Congress party are diverse. Sadaf Jaffer, the actress who was jailed for her role in demonstrations

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## 12th National Voters' Day to be celebrated in A&N Islands through online mode on Jan. 25

Port Blair, Jan 19: The 12th 'National Voters' Day' will be celebrated by voting in A&N Islands on January 25, 2022 together with the rest of the country as per the instructions of the Election Commission of India. In this connection, a meeting was held under the Chairmanship of the Chief Electoral Officer, A&N Islands, Shri Binay Bhushan in the Mini Conference Hall of the Secretariat to discuss and finalize various



activities to be carried out with the ensuing 'National Voters' Day' celebrations in islands. At the See...Page 02

## Bairagi raises vital issues before CS

Gurudas Biswas

Port Blair, Jan 19: The State Principal in all Senior Secondary & Secondary Schools of these Islands, Regular Payment to Self Help Group who work for providing Mid Day Meals in schools, Shortage of Teachers in Schools across Islands, after listening to all

the issues the matter was immediately conveyed to Secretary Education Smti Angel Bhatia Chauhan and she assured that all the issues will be addressed positively. The second discussion See...Page 02

## "Afraid PM Might Inaugurate This": Rahul Gandhi on China's Illegal Bridge

### The construction of the bridge across the Pangong gives Chinese forces the ability to quickly mobilise soldiers to either bank of the Lake.

New Delhi: Rahul Gandhi, for the second day in a row, took a swipe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, this time over reports of China constructing a bridge on the Pangong Tso Lake in Ladakh near the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

The former Congress chief had questioned the Prime Minister's silence on the same on January 4 as well. This time he tagged a picture with arrows showing the alleged Chinese bridge on Pangong Tso Lake, which is extremely close to the LAC.

"China is building an illegal bridge in our country. The PLA's spirits are increasing due to the silence of the PM. Now it is a fear



that PM may not reach to inaugurate this bridge too," said the 51-year-old leader throwing shade at the Prime Minister.

The construction of the bridge across the Pangong gives Chinese forces the ability to quickly mobilise soldiers to either bank of the Lake. The bridge, which is 8 metres wide, lies just south of a Chinese army field base on the North Bank of Pangong where Chinese field hospitals and troop accommodations were seen during the standoff between Indian and Chinese troops in 2020.

Satellite images from January 16 indicate that Chinese

See...Page 02

## 3 Navy Sailors Killed In Explosion Onboard Destroyer at Mumbai Dockyard

### INS Ranvir was on cross-coast operational deployment from the Eastern Naval Command since November 2021 and was due to return to base port shortly.

New Delhi: Three naval personnel died of injuries caused by an explosion on board Indian Navy's destroyer ship INS Ranvir. "In an unfortunate incident today at Naval Dockyard Mumbai, three naval personnel succumbed to injuries caused by an explosion in an internal compartment onboard INS Ranvir," a Defence Ministry release said. No major material damage has been reported, it added.

Sources say the explosion



## Budget 2022 expectation: Standard deduction hike, income tax relief for saving for kids' education

New Delhi: The standard deduction for salaried tax payers after being abolished in financial year (FY) 2018-19 onwards at Rs 40,000, in lieu of removal of tax exemption for transferral allowance of Rs 19,200 and medical reimbursement of Rs 15,000. The deduction limit was later enhanced to Rs 50,000 from FY 2019-20. The amount of the deduction is significantly low given the periodic cost of inflation over the years and the living expenditure of salaried individuals in current times. The household expenditure has been further adversely affected since

the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic on account of increased medical cost and work from home expenses like cost of furniture, electricity, Internet, etc. Thus, there is a need to consider increasing the current standard deduction limit of Rs 50,000 to at least Rs 75,000. This will provide some financial cushion to individuals to sail through these unprecedented times. Further, many countries like the US, UK, Canada, Ireland etc. have introduced certain tax breaks on Covid-19 related medical expenditure (like medical supplies, See...Page 02)

## SC to consider hearing PIL challenging use of EVMs in polls

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday agreed to consider listing of a PIL challenging the constitutional validity of a provision of the Representation of People Act which had led to the introduction of electronic voting machines (EVMs), instead of ballot papers, See...Page 02



## Big boost for A&N Islands Near Coastal Voyage (NCV) gets in-principle approval; Draft policy and negotiation likely to start

Port Blair, Jan. 19: In what can be termed as a major boost for Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the proposal of the Administration to allow seafarers holding Near Coastal Voyage (NCV) Certificate of Competency to travel to Southeast Asian countries such as Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia received in-principle approval and the drafting of the multilateral agreements to be executed with these countries through the Ministry of External Affairs along with negotiations for the same is likely to start shortly. The matter was

hanging fire for many years and after the 1997 agreement of BIMMS, where similar agreement with regards to NCV seafarers was reached between India, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Maldives and Sri Lanka, there had been no progress forward. In this regard, a virtual meeting on A&N Administration's proposal for notification of Ports of Ranong & Phuket of Thailand, Ports of Lankavi, Lumut and Klang of Malaysia, Northern Ports of Indonesia under Near Coastal

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## IGNOU ink MoU with MSDE

Port Blair, Jan 19: Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) and the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Government of India, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for linking vocational education and training to higher education for trainees attached to National Skill Training Institutes (NSTI), ITIs, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendras (PMKK) and Jan Shiksha Sansthan (JSS) for their up and mobility. Under



this MoU, 32 NSTIs, 3000+ ITIs, 500 PMKKs and nearly 300 JSS will be associated with IGNOU as Registration Centres, Examination Centres and Work Centres for hands on training. Students will now get an opportunity to join the See...Page 02

## PBGKR distributes mask, sanitizers to needy families

Port Blair, Jan 19: Port Blair Guru Ki Rasoi distribute Masks & Sanitizer's to needy families. Continuing to ensure that the people are secured and have necessary tools like mask and sanitizer to fight the coronavirus, team Port Blair Guru Ki Rasoi when approached by the local residents of Round Basti and briefed about the families who are not in state to buy mask and Sanitizer's, the team distributed 100 families with masks and sanitizer in the area. Shri Mandeep Grewal, President, PBGKR stated everyone should



follow all the protocols and rules strictly as implemented by the administration. All the norms are utmost important as it for keeping oneself protected and safe from the virus.

## Admission of new non-COVID cases at GB Pant Hospital restricted in view of COVID-19 situation

Port Blair, Jan 19: In the wake of increase in number of COVID-19 positive cases, admission of new non-COVID cases at GB Pant Hospital has been restricted. In order to decongest GB Pant Hospital, 3 Specialists, one each from

General Medicine, General Surgery and Orthopaedics will be available for OPD consultation at PHC Garacharama with effect from Jan. 19. Patients pertaining to the concerned discipline, who are seriously ill can avail this facility from PHC Garacharama instead of visiting GB Pant Hospital. Meanwhile, an exclusive 'Fever Clinic' has also been opened in GB Pant Hospital away from OPD complex to cater to patients having symptoms suggestive of COVID infection.

# EDITORIAL

## The Andaman Express

20 January 2022

### The cryptocurrency deception

In recent times, there has been a great euphoria about investing in cryptocurrencies. Let us first try to understand whether a crypto investment means an investment in a currency or an asset. For any instrument to classify as a currency, it must have the following features: One, it is a promissory note wherein the issuer is promising the bearer or the holder a value. Two, it is backed by a sovereign nation and, therefore, there is never a question of any default in executing the promise. Three, the printing of currency in either physical or digital form is always based on some tangible asset, like gold or a basket of goods. From the above, it is clear that cryptocurrency can never be a currency. Can crypto then be considered an asset? An asset is something that has a tangible value. Even if its immediate utility is intangible, an asset should have some tangible benefits.

The cryptocurrencies being promoted currently — bitcoin, litecoin, ethereum — are nothing but gaming points. Whenever a discussion on cryptos takes place, promoters talk of blockchain technology. This technology is just a technique to account for transactions and has nothing to do with cryptocurrencies, except that the cryptocurrencies' digital exchange is being maintained in blockchain format. In other words, the points which are earned through a gaming application are stored and transferred through blockchain technology. However absurd it may seem, even the points earned in a game of ludo can be presented as cryptocurrency if they are stored and sold by blockchain technology by the persons monetising these points. Therefore, cryptocurrencies have absolutely no value and cannot be considered an asset. Mining and solving the nth root of an equation are euphemisms for gaming points. While working at the CBI and subsequently, the Enforcement Directorate, I had come across frauds like multi-marketing schemes, chit funds or deposit frauds. These schemes were disguised as timeshare schemes, gold and land investments, and promised hefty returns. These pyramid schemes were carried out over a long period to evade the law. Nevertheless, fraud could still be established, the trail of funds could be traced and the perpetrators identified. Crypto promoters have taken fraud to another level with a little scope of getting caught — as there is nothing that anyone is promising. One part is the persons or persons releasing the game or the equation from which bitcoins or cryptocurrencies are to be mined, the other is the exchanges through which these points — cryptocurrencies — are traded. These so-called cryptocurrencies have acceptability only as long as they are linked to the normal currency of a country. Unfortunately, millions are falling for this fraud globally. Criminals, particularly drug syndicates, will simply use the garb of crypto to siphon and launder their illegal proceeds. The recent aggressive promotion of cryptocurrencies on print and visual media would perhaps prove to be the undoing of their promoters. It is only a matter of time before financial fraud prevention enforcement agencies like the CBI and ED catch up with them. But millions may lose their hard-earned money by then. The advertisements and promotional activities can, in fact, be important evidence linking people with this fraud. Sensing the impending ban and investigation into crypto deals, their backers have already started developing a new jargon — non-fungible tokens or NFTs.

### Uttar Pradesh...

Against a religion-based citizenship law is now a Congress spokeswoman. Another candidate Poonam Pandey, led a protest for wages by women farm labourers who are helping India to achieve its vaccination targets. The rape survivor's mother has promised to work for the poor in her district if she is elected. Her daughter's rapist, a former powerful legislator, has been found guilty for sexual assault as well as murder and was sentenced to life in prison. For Ms Vaidya, who in 2019 formed the Congress party, the gambit is crucial. Her party has seen its star decline in Uttar Pradesh over the last two decades. It remains to be seen if the BJP and its rival for power in the state, the Samajwadi Party, see this as a serious challenge. So far the BJP fielded 10 women out of 107 candidates while Samajwadi Party is putting forward one female candidate from its alliance with a regional party. "When one party promises, other parties try to match it," said Sudha Rai, a professor at the Centre for Political Studies at Jawahar Nehr University in New Delhi. "It doesn't take away the fact that the Congress party hardly has an organizational structure and works on the ground," she said. "So how far it will help in reviving the party is very questionable."

### Rahul Gandhi...

construction workers are using a heavy crane to help link the bridge's pillars with concrete slabs upon which the tarmac will be laid. Rahul Gandhi and the Congress have been critical of the government's handling of the border situation with China in eastern Ladakh, but has also seen bloody clashes between the Indian and PLA troops lately.

China has been involved in border conflicts with India also in Arunachal Pradesh where it has built enclaves in areas not

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physically patrolled by the Indian Army.

Yesterday, Rahul Gandhi walked on a ditch that had PM Modi stop his virtual address at the World Economic Forum (WEF) summit in Davos on Monday and start over.

"Isha Jhoothi teleprompter bhi nahin jhuta pay (not even the teleprompter could handle such lies)," Rahul Gandhi tweeted.

A rush of tweets from BJP handles blundered the glitch on the Davos organisers.

# 'Marriage not sufficient reason to deny wife right to prosecute husband of rape'



New Delhi, 19<sup>th</sup> Dec, 2022: The Delhi high court, hearing a clutch of petitions seeking to criminalise marital rape,

### Budget 2022...

testing kits etc.) and work from home expenditure, including home office set-up. However, no such deduction/exemption has been introduced in India yet. Hence, enhancing the limit for standard deduction would allow some financial flexibility to the individuals for incurring the aforesaid expenditure. Further, the benefit of standard deduction could also be made available to taxpayers opting for the concessional optional regime under section 115BAC of the Income-tax Act, 1961 as well. Standard deduction is a deduction allowed from gross salary income for salaried individuals and

### SC...

for polls in the country. A bench headed by Chief Justice N V Ramana heard the submissions

### Big boost...

Voyage (NCV) was held today under the Chairmanship of the Union Home Secretary. The Chief Secretary, A&N Administration, Shri Jitendra Narain & Senior Officers attended the meeting. Although the Administration has

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the section 80C limit of Rs 1.5 lakh annually. Such deduction encompasses various other tax saving investments/expenditure (such as Employees' Provident Fund, Public Provident Fund, principal repayment of housing loan, children's tuition fee, National Savings Certificate, etc.), leaving limited headroom for claiming deduction for higher education savings. A separate deduction for the education savings of Rs 1.5 lakh at the minimum would be a welcome move in this regard. To ensure that there is no misuse of such funds, the account proceeds

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of lawyer M.L. Sharma, who filed the plea in his personal capacity, and said that he would consider

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beentrying to resolve the issue for many years, the proposal has finally been agreed to by the Ministry of Shipping, the DG Shipping, the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Home Affairs who have shown a positive

listing of this case. Sharma said Section 61A of the Representation of People Act, which permitted the use of EVMs, was not passed by Parliament and hence cannot be imposed.

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and favourable response. In the next few months, through a multilateral agreement it is likely that this will come through. The matter as important as it will allow our seafarers to go to these countries, thus enabling easier

marriage between two parties cannot be sufficient reason to deny a wife the ability to prosecute her husband for marital rape. Arguing before a bench of Justices Rajiv Shakti and C Hari Shankar, senior advocate Rajsheshkar Rao submitted that a "rapist remains a rapist irrespective of the relationship" as he read out from the Verma Committee report which had recommended the criminalisation of marital rape. "Given the length and breadth of material that is before your lordships, I do not believe it is possible for anyone to say that there is any justifiable basis in thinking that the status of marriage between the two parties as being

sufficient to deny the wife the ability to prosecute her husband for the act of rape," he said. Senior advocate Rao, who concluded his arguments on Tuesday, told the court that it is time to bury the provision or exception in 375 Indian Penal Code which criminalises marital rape. Exceptions of section 375 IPC criminalises marital rape and mandates that sexual intercourse by a man with his own wife, the wife not being under 15 years of age, is not rape. The court was hearing PILs by NGOs RIT Foundation, All India Democratic Women's Association and two individuals who have sought striking down the exception in the

Indian law, saying that it discriminated against married women being sexually assaulted by their husbands. On Tuesday, the court asked the Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Chetan Sharma, for the union government, to be ready to advance their arguments. In response, the ASG told the court that an "informed consultation process" to examine the issue of criminalising marital rape has been "fast-tracked". The matter would continue on Wednesday.

### Voters' Day...

outset, the CEO informed about the theme for this year's NVD celebrations i.e. 'Making Elections Inclusive, Accessible and Participative'. He further stated that as per the instructions of the ECI, the National Voters' Day (NVD) will be celebrated keeping in mind the COVID appropriate behaviour and guidelines in place. All efforts will be made to celebrate the festival online mode, the CEO said. Mentioning that voters play a significant role in strengthening democracy, the CEO said that NVD pledge will be administered to all the people during the National Voters Day celebrations through online mode without fail. Various Departments/Organizations/Bodies will be encouraged to administer NVD pledge on the National Voters' Day, and the same can be uploaded on their social media handles/ website using hashtag #NVD2022, for which the copy of the pledge will also be circulated over WhatsApp groups.

The CEO stated that due to surge in COVID cases and the consequent restrictions imposed in social gatherings in A&N Islands, social media platforms will be used extensively to reach out to voters to create maximum awareness

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regarding NVD celebrations and its importance. Apart from this, the NVD theme & related messages in the form of posters and banners will also be prominently displayed in the offices of the CEO, A&N, AERO, the DEO, NMO Andaman and the AEROs of different Islands interacted with the CEO and informed about the activities chalked out by them to celebrate the NVD-2022 keeping in mind the COVID appropriate behaviour and guidelines in place.

It is mentioned that the total electors in A&N Islands as per final rolls on 05-01-22 w.r.t. 1.1.2022 are the following: 3,11,650, out of which 1,63,368 are male and 1,48,271 are female while the number of third gender is 11. In South Andaman District, the number of total electors are 2,05,960, out of which 1,08,631 are male and 97,318 are female while the number of third gender is 11. Similarly, in North & Middle Andaman District, the total number of electors are 79,617, out of which, 41,207 are male and 38,410 are female. In Nicobar District, the total number of electors is 26,073, out of which, 13,530 are male and 12,543 are female. Earlier, the Dr. CEO, Shri Kamlesh Kumar welcomed the gathering on the occasion.

### CS...

was held on the basis of old letter submitted in the month of November regarding Shipping service from Port Blair to Diglipur via Mayabunder and Line Ferry Service from Port Blair to Rangat via Shaheed Dweep, Swaraj Dweep, Strait Island and Long

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island was also discussed, after giving a patient hearing CS Sir assured of resolving the issue in coming days. Further discussion the issue a demand was placed for appointing Ultra Sound Technician in Swaraj Dweep Islands.

### IGNOU...

three-year degree programme of IGNOU and shall have easy access to obtain higher education. There shall be a Project Steering Committee with representatives from both MSDE and IGNOU to monitor and review the progress under this partnership. The MoU is initially for a period of 10 years subject to renewal on mutual agreement. This MoU is in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goal 4.4 and the NEP 2020 for increasing GER in higher education including vocational education to 50% by 2035. Sh. Rajesh Aggarwal, Secretary MSDE lauded the initiative and desired that the joint initiative shall be implemented at the earliest initially with 32 NSTIs declared as IGNOU centres in the initial stages. He further added that foreign language training, skill-based health care education, fashion design

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and few other courses can be implemented under this partnership. Prof. Nageshwar Rao, Vice Chancellor IGNOU thanked the Secretary MSDE for this initiative and assured that IGNOU shall provide all necessary support through its 21 Schools of Studies and 56 Regional Centres for successful implementation of the scheme. Prof. R.P. Das, Pro V.C., Prof. Satyankumar, Pro V.C., Prof. Umair Khan, Pro V.C., Smt. Anuradha Vemuri, Joint Secretary MSDE, Dr. B.K. Gupta, Director MSDE and Sh. K.B. Gupta, Director MSDE also spoke on the occasion.

The MoU was signed by Dr. B.K. Rao, Director MSDE and Dr. V.B. Negi, Registrar IGNOU. Dr. Srikanth Mahapatra, Director Regional Services Division, IGNOU conducted the programme.

### 3 Navy Sailors...

occurred around 4:30 pm and had nothing to do with weapons or ammunition explosion. A board of inquiry has been ordered to investigate the cause. "The ship's crew responded immediately and quickly brought the situation under control," the release said. In a statement, the Indian Navy said it extends condolences to the families of Master Petty Officer 1 (MCO) Krishan Kumar, Surinder Kumar MCPO II and AK Singh MCPO II, who died due to injuries caused by the unfortunate incident onboard INS Ranvir. "We fully stand with the families in this difficult

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time." INS Ranvir is an oncoast operation deployment from the Eastern Naval Command since November 2021 and was due to return to base port shortly. INS Ranvir, the first of the Ranvir class destroyers, was commissioned into the Indian navy on April 21, 1986. The ship was built in the former Soviet Union. Thereof Ranvir class ships in service protectors such as anti-aircraft and anti-submarine warfare for carrier task forces, low-flying aircraft and cruise missiles. The current Navy chief Admiral R Hari Kumar has commanded the ship earlier in his career.

## Scheduled international flights to remain suspended till February 28

New Delhi, 19<sup>th</sup> November 2021, India decided to resume scheduled international flights from December, but the outbreak of Omicron upset the plan. Regular international flights have remained suspended in India since March 23, 2020. Scheduled international commercial flights to and from India will remain suspended till February 28, Director General of Civil Aviation said in a fresh order on Wednesday. Flights under air bubble arrangements will not be affected, the DGCA said. The decision comes as the world is braving a fresh wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, driven by Omicron, the latest variant of the SARS-CoV-2.

In November 2021, the Centre decided to resume scheduled international flight operations from December 15. The emergence of Omicron threw a spanner in the plan and the government withdrew the decision to resume scheduled international flights days before January 15. Scheduled international flights have been suspended in India from March 23, 2020, two days before a nationwide lockdown was imposed in the country. The suspension was extended every month allowing emergency international travel under the air bubble agreements. India has air transport bubbles with Afghanistan, Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh,

Bhutan, Canada, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Iraq, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Maldives, Mauritius, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Oman, Qatar, Russia, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Tanzania, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, US and Uzbekistan. The agreements allow both-way air travel under some terms and conditions. No direct air travel is allowed to countries not covered under air travel bubble agreements. International air travel has come on the radar as Omicron, the variant first detected in South Africa on November 24, 2021,

travelled to India through international travellers. The first Omicron cases were international travellers which prompted Delhi, West Bengal to raise demand for banning international flights from countries worst-affected by Omicron. Flights under the air bubble agreements were not banned but India identified some countries as 'at-risk'. The list includes all countries of Europe, including the UK, South Africa, Brazil, Botswana, China, Ghana, Mauritius, New Zealand, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Hong Kong, Israel, Congo, Ethiopia, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Nigeria, Tunisia and Zambia.

## No foreign chief guest at R-Day as Covid-19 surges

New Delhi, 19<sup>th</sup> Jan, 2022: The Republic Day celebrations on January 26 will go ahead without any foreign leaders as a chief guest, the second year in a row that India's signature event has been affected by the fallout of the Covid-19 pandemic.

India had invited the leaders of the five Central Asian states — Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan — to be chief guests at the celebrations, though no formal announcement was made in this regard by any of the countries.

The rapid spread of the Omicron variant of the coronavirus in the past few weeks and recent violent protests in Kazakhstan, which resulted in the death of more than 220 people, were factors that went against the participation of Central Asian leaders, people familiar with the matter said on Tuesday.

A diplomat from a Central Asian state, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the leaders of the five states would be unable to participate in the Republic Day celebrations in-person. The diplomat added that the Central Asian states and India are now focusing on a virtual summit of the leadership of the six countries to mark the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations, though a date for this is yet to be finalised.

The possibility of booking an alternative chief guest was ruled out due to the paucity of time, the people cited above said.

Last year, India went ahead with truncated Republic Day celebrations without a chief guest after UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson called off his visit at the last minute because of the rapid spread of the variant of the coronavirus in Britain. It is extremely rare for

the Republic Day celebrations, seen as a high point in the country's diplomatic calendar, not to have a chief guest.

Prior to 2021, the last time the celebrations did not have a chief guest was in 1966, when Indira Gandhi was sworn in as prime minister on January 24 after the death of Lal Bahadur Shastri on January 11. There were also no chief guests at the celebrations in 1952 and 1953.

Though no formal announcements had been made regarding this year's chief guests, Turkmenistan's foreign minister Rashid Meredov had hinted at this while participating in the India-Central Asia Dialogue in New Delhi on December 19. Meredov had said in his opening remarks at the meeting that the dialogue would be a "key event in the preparation process for the upcoming Central Asia-India Summit in January".

India's move to invite the Central Asian leaders was a follow up to the invitation extended to the leaders of the 10 members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) to be the chief guests at the Republic Day in 2018. The Central Asian states are perceived by India as part of the country's extended neighbourhood and their importance has increased following the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan.

In recent years, India has stepped up its efforts to boost connectivity and trade with the strategically important region. At the India-Central Asia Dialogue, these countries pushed for concerted action against all terror groups and stressed that Afghanistan soil must not be used for planning or executing terror attacks. They also pledged to provide humanitarian aid to the Afghan people.

# Government Changes Rules For International Roaming SIM Cards

The move aims to benefit Indians visiting abroad and also streamlines procedures in line with the other licences.

The Department of Telecom has revised no objection certificate rules for sale or rent of international roaming SIM cards to enhance customer protection, an official statement said on Tuesday. The move aims to benefit Indians visiting abroad and also streamlines procedures in line with the other licences. romotedListen to the latest songs, only on JoSaavn.com "The revised policy mandates the NOC holders to

make provision for providing information regarding customer care service, contact details, escalation matrix, itemised bills, information related to tariff plans, services offered, etc. Provision has also been made to strengthen Billing and consumer grievance redressal mechanism to facilitate time bound resolution of grievance by the NOC holders with provision for Appellate Authority in DoT," the statement



said. The revised terms and conditions have been finalised by the department after deliberations on the suo-motu recommendations of TRAI on sale or rent of international roaming SIM cards or global calling cards of foreign operators in India.

## SSC CGL Exam Notification 2022, Assistant & Other Vacancies, Apply Online @ ssc.nic.in

SSC CGL Exam Notification 2022 | Combined Graduate Level Examination | Various Vacancies | Last Date: 23.01.2022 | SSC CGL Recruitment Notification @ ssc.nic.in  
SSC CGL Exam Notification 2022: Staff Selection Commission (SSC) has released Combined Graduate Level Examination on 23.12.2021. As per SSC CGL exam notification (No. 3/6/2021-P&P-I (Vol.-I)), the commission has announced Group B & Group C vacant positions in different Ministries/ Departments/ Organizations of India. SSC CGL exams will be conducted to fill up the following posts such as Assistant Audit Officer, Assistant Accounts Officer, Assistant Section Officer, Assistant Inspector, Assistant Enforcement Officer, Sub Inspector, Superintendent, Research Assistant, Divisional Accountant, Auditor, Tax Assistant & Other posts. Online registration link is available from 23.12.2021 at www.ssc.nic.in. Candidates who willing to work under Central Government may apply online for SSC CGL exam 2021 notification. The last date to submit the online form is 23.01.2022.

Bachelor's Degree holders can apply for SSC CGL exam 2021. Applicants must have attained the prescribed age limit. SSC CGL exam consists of Tier I & Tier II (Computer Based Exam), Tier III (Descriptive paper) & Tier IV (CPTI/ Data Entry Speed Test). SSC CGL notification 2021 & apply online link for SSC recruitment are available at www.ssc.nic.in. Aspirants need to pay a fee via prescribed mode. CAJ/CMAT/ Degree in Law is desirable qualification to apply for this SSC CGL recruitment. Selected candidates will be appointed anywhere in India. Indicative syllabus & exam scheme are mentioned in official notification. More details of SSC CGL recruitment 2021 notification, syllabus, exam date, previous question paper, admit card, answer key, merit list, selection list, results and upcoming SSC exam notices will be uploaded at official website.

## CMRL Recruitment 2022, Apply B.E Vacancies @ chennaimetrorail.org

CMRL Recruitment 2022 | General Manager, AGM & Other Post | 10 vacancies | Last date: 07.01.2022 & 22.01.2022 | Download Application Form @ chennaimetrorail.org

CMRL Recruitment 2021: Chennai Metro Rail Limited invites applications from qualified and experienced personnel for the appointment to the post of General Manager, AGM, JGM, DGM, Manager, DM and AM. These 10 vacancies will be assigned through CMRL recruitment. Candidates must be Indian citizen and must have completed B.E/ B.Tech are eligible to apply for this General Manager and other post. Before final submission of application form, candidate must review their application form carefully. The closing date of filled application form for General Manager is 22.01.2022 and other should be 07.01.2022.

Central government job seekers may download the CMRL recruitment application form and Chennai Metro Rail recruitment notification from official website. The CMRL will conduct the interview/written test. Persons already working in Government/PSU organization should apply through proper channel. At the time of interview candidates should produce the NOC certificates. Candidates may send their filled application form along with the self-attested copies of certificates in support of educational qualification, experience certificate, birth certificates, community certificates and passport size photo and Bio data should be submitted to the proper channel. Belated application form will not be considered for after the due date of application.

Details regarding Chennai Metro Rail jobs like educational qualification, age limit, selection process, & How to apply are provided above. Check out the latest current job notification is available at Daily recruitment site.

## CAG Recruitment 2022, Apply 49+ Sr. Audit Officer & Other Vacancies @ cag.gov.in

CAG Recruitment 2022 | Sr. Audit officer & Asst. Audit Officer Post | 49+ vacancies | Closing Date: 21.01.2022 & 31.01.2022 | Download Application Form @ cag.gov.in

CAG Recruitment 2022: In this article, we have described the Latest Jobs of CAG Recruitment 2022 details. New Delhi has invited applications from eligible applicant for hiring 49+ vacancies. Post wise vacancy details are given below. Interested and eligible applicant should apply through online mode only. These 49+ vacancies will be allocated for the post of Sr. Audit officer, Asst. Audit Officer, Sr. Account Officer. Before final submission of application form, candidate must review their application form carefully. Selected candidate will get the pay matrix of level-8 & level-10. The last date to apply for the post of Sr. Audit Officer/Sr. Account Officer (31.01.2022) and other post should be (21.01.2022).

Appointment will be based on deputation basis. The period of deputation can be extended / curtailed as per candidate performance. Central government job seekers may download the CAG recruitment notification from official website. Recruitment process may be based on written test/interview. Experience in relevant field is eligible to apply. Candidates who satisfy the below condition may send their filled application form along with support documents/ certificates like bio data, photocopies, integrity certificate and vigilance certificate etc to reach the given below address. Read the below table to get the details of location, post name and organization name etc.

Details regarding CAG Sr. Audit officer & other jobs like educational qualification, age

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## IN CONVERSATION

## Covid may become endemic by March 11 if Omicron replaces Delta: Top Govt. Scientist



Port Blair, 19th Jan, 2022: Head of Indian Council of Medical Research's Epidemiological Department Samiran Panda has said that Covid will become endemic by March 11. "If we don't let our guards down and no new variant emerges, Covid will be endemic by March 11," he said. "If Omicron replaces Delta it will become endemic. If there is no

new variant catching up, there is a possibility that Covid may become endemic," he added. Our mathematical projection shows the Omicron wave will last three months starting December 11. "From March 11, we will see some respite. We need to wait two more weeks to say if Delhi and Mumbai have reached their peaks of Covid cases and if the worst is over. We

can't establish a trend like that in a few days," he said. "We can't say that right now even with the decline in cases and positivity [in Delhi and Mumbai]," he said. Panda added Delhi and Mumbai have a roughly 80:20 ratio for Omicron and Delta variants of coronavirus.

Different states are in different stages of the pandemic and the ICMR has also changed its testing strategy because of the epidemiological variations in the virus and the pandemic changing its course.

"We never asked states not to reduce testing. We asked for more directed and purposive testing. The pandemic has also changed its character and, hence, the testing and management strategies will change. Making guidelines available in local languages on home testing etc will

send out the right message," Samiran Panda said.

Speaking about the genomic sequencing, he said: "Genomic sequencing is a dynamic phenomenon. But genomic sequencing on a dead body to understand if he had Omicron is a simplistic argument. Many patients die of underlying conditions. Yes, we are studying infections in hospitals to understand the severity."

Dismissing speculation of a disconnect between ICMR and DCGI over Molnupiravir's exclusion from the government's Covid guidelines, he said: "Molnupiravir can be given to unvaccinated patients, but there is no guideline to administer it to pregnant women, lactating women, and kids. That's why it's not in the protocol."

## Vishal Jolly raises objections to proposed amendments in Grant-in-Aid rules

Port Blair, Jan 19: Shri Vishal Jolly, National Executive Member BJP & Former State President BJP-ANI raises objection against the proposed amendments in A&N Islands Grant-in-Aid to Panchayat Raj Institutions Rules, 2021 through a letter addressed to Lt. Governor, ANI, Chief Secretary, A&N Administration, Secretary, RD, PRI&ULB and Director, RD, PRI&ULB.

Shri Jolly raised the following preliminary objections with respect to the manner in which the proposed amendments have been introduced in the public domain: - He objected that the claims & objections were invited by making a small sized newspaper notice by indicating that the proposed amendments could be read on loaded from the A&N Administration's website. Whereas, it is well known to all that the network connectivity in our islands has still not improved in many islands and therefore, it was not possible for people or other stakeholders residing at those islands to go through the same, analyze the same and file their

respective objections, if any. Secondly, the most concerned stakeholders who would like to submit their claims and objections would be the elected members of Panchayat Raj Institutions, whereas it is a matter of fact & of record that there are no elected representatives as the local bodies elections were not held for the past more than one and a half years. Therefore, it is not right time to notify the proposed amendments and in my view let the same be published/notified only after the elections with respect to the Panchayat Raj Institutions are held, representatives are elected and bodies are constituted. This would enable the elected representatives to give their respective views, claims and objections, if any. Thirdly, in the normal course, any proposal for amendments must be published widely and his being an amendment to one of the most important grass root level democratic institutions, the amendments ought to have been published widely in all daily newspapers properly and the same

should have been displayed prominently in the newspaper itself and not in the website. Fourthly, let the amendments to one be published and not the entire rules which are not proposed for amendments. Furthermore, let the publication be made in a comparative tabular format highlighting the display in the present rules in one column and the proposed rules in the other column, so that a clear picture is made available to the stakeholders/ general public and they can know the changes or modifications which the administration has proposed. The stake holders, the general public should be clearly able to figure out the proposed amendments, in order to give their respective views. Fifthly, the administration should assign reasons for the proposed amendments and the reasons should be made public domain as to what were the reasons and objectives for which the administration has come up with a proposal for amendments. It also needs to be placed on records to who

proposed these amendments, why and by whom it was routed and for what reasons. Sixthly, the provisions contained only regarding the twist and turn i.e. Gram Panchayats and Zilla Parishads, where as recently it has been brought to our notice that the middle tier i.e. Panchayat Samiti is being reconstituted. Therefore, let the same include the provisions pertaining to Panchayat Samiti also. Lastly, on a bare reading of the overall provisions, it is almost understandable that the proposed amendment couldn't serve the purpose of absolute grass root democracy and strengthening the PRI system in these islands. It appears from various provisions of the proposed rules that the powers of Elected heads have been curtailed, restricted and combined with a view to enhance the powers of the Government officials. Accordingly, he requested that the above objections be considered categorically and the existing rules do not call for any interference and needs no amendments at all.

## OPEN SECRET



## SC not convinced as Centre says no starvation death even during pandemic, seeks data

New Delhi, 19th Jan, 2022: The Centre on Tuesday told the Supreme Court that due to "comprehensive policies and steps" taken by both Central and state governments, there have been no starvation deaths in recent times, even during the Covid pandemic, but the court remained unconvinced. The apex court pressed Attorney General K.K. Venugopal to be crystal clear, if he is making a statement that there are no starvation deaths in the country now, and also sought data to establish this claim.

In an affidavit, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food, and Public Distribution said: "Indeed, thanks to the progress made by the nation since independence and the comprehensive policies and steps taken by both state and Central governments, there have been no starvation deaths in the country in recent times, even during adverse situations like the pandemic."

During the hearing, a bench headed by Chief Justice N.V. Ramana, after the AG submitted that no state has reported starvation deaths, queried: "Are you making a statement that there are no starvation deaths in the country

now?" The bench, also comprising Justices A.S. Bopanna and Hima Kohli, further pressed: "Can we afford to say that there are no starvation deaths?"

At this, Venugopal reiterated states have not reported starvation deaths, and the states have to respond on this and added the fact about malnutrition cannot be denied. The bench then said: "Government of India should give us data on starvation deaths, latest information. Ask your officer to give us information." Asking the Centre to develop a model to implement the community kitchen scheme across the country, the court also emphasised that Centre should provide additional food grains to states to run it, and said the issue of "hunger has to be taken care of". "Hunger has to be taken care of to be satisfied and the poor people who are on the street and who are suffering because of that."

The top court was hearing a PIL, filed by social activists Anun Dhawan, Ishann Dhawan, and Kurjana Singh, seeking direction to the Centre for creating a national food grid, for people who do not fall under the public distribution



scheme. The petitioners had argued that it is high time states take steps to set up community kitchens. During the hearing, the bench said logistics will not be an issue for state governments, as community kitchens is a popular scheme. It added that "populantly-wise", every government will want to run this. The Chief Justice said: "I don't want to comment because this is election time... the governments are giving so many other welfare schemes."

He added that the governments can give something to the deprived to survive. The bench, citing state governments' response, said some of them have already established community kitchens and now they

seek funds, and some are ready to start but they need funds. Citing the Centre's affidavit, the bench said it does not indicate anywhere that governments are considering framing a scheme. "It does not say what fund you have collected and what you are doing etc. We wanted a uniform model from the Centre," it said.

Concluding the hearing, the top court asked the Centre to file its response on providing additional food grains to states and scheduled the matter for further hearing after three weeks. The top court also gave liberty to states to file affidavits on issues of malnutrition and starvation deaths.

## Vaccination drive continuing smoothly in isles

Port Blair, Jan 19: The vaccination drive is continuing smoothly in A&N Islands. As per data available, a total of 6,01,917 beneficiaries administered precautionary dose of vaccine so far stood at 3260. A total of 858 eligible beneficiaries were vaccinated in A&N Islands yesterday. 650

vaccinated in the age group of 15 to 18 years against the target beneficiaries of 23,000. The number of beneficiaries administered precautionary dose of vaccine so far stood at 3260. A total of 858 eligible beneficiaries were vaccinated in A&N Islands yesterday. 650

beneficiaries were vaccinated in South Andaman District, out of which, 165 beneficiaries were in the age group of 15-18 years while 85 beneficiaries were in the age group of 18-44 years. 137 beneficiaries were vaccinated in North & Middle Andaman District, out of which, 22

beneficiaries were in the age group of 15-18 years while 18 beneficiaries were in the age group of 18-44 years. 71 beneficiaries were vaccinated in Nicobar District, out of which, 10 beneficiaries were in the age group of 15-18 years while 8 beneficiaries were in the age group of 18-44 years.

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