

## THE GREAT DISCONNECT

### Inadequate mobile connectivity 'disconnects' Karmatang villagers

KARTIK

MAYABUNDER, DEC 3/--/BSNL, the State owned Telecom department has failed to provide mobile net in remote villages of Karmatang in Mayabunder region. While the country is rejoicing in the launch of 5G services, many of

Global System for Mobile network (GSM) antenna has been shifted to a 4 meters high steel pipe. As the height of the pipe is not sufficient, mobile network remains unavailable in Karmatang-10, Karmatang-9 villagers in Mayabunder. Due to poor signal, villagers have to travel up to 5 km to



the remote corners of the islands are still deprived of basic services. For villagers of Karmatang-10 and Karmatang-9 under Rampur Panchayat in Mayabunder zone, digital services still remain a day dream. According to villagers, BSNL about two year ago installed one GSM antenna in a cotton tree. Now the

make calls. Ambulance and Fire services available for emergencies in the villages are not accessible due to lack of mobile network. Students are reported to have been facing difficulties in studying as they cannot access the internet. There is a BSNL office at Mayabunder but villagers are upset due to lack of adequate response

### IN A TIME MACHINE TO THE STONE AGE

by BSNL officials. Villagers of Karmatang have submitted several representations to the BSNL office. But despite repeated pleas for installation of a new mobile tower to enhance the network, BSNL has been ignoring the pleas of the villagers. Due to apathy of the departmental officials, residents in these villages are forced to stay away from the digital services. Karmatang has a popular beach frequented by tourists. But due to lack of mobile network, the tourists too are feeling off the grid visiting this spot. Tourists are experiencing difficulties due to a lack of proper mobile connectivity in the area. "The tourists visiting this popular tourism spot frequently complain of having to cut their visit short due to a lack of mobile connectivity. Mobile connectivity is a basic need in today's world, and amenities like good mobile and internet should be offered in such places," said a tour operator.

## Navy Day celebrations today, ANC plans host of activities



PORT BLAIR, DEC 3/--/ Indian Navy Day is celebrated every year on Fourth of December with utmost zeal and patriotic fervour. It commemorates the decisive victory in 'Operation Trident' during 1971 Indo-Pak War, wherein ships of the Indian Navy successfully attacked ships and shore defence installations at Karachi harbour. During the 1971 operations, the Indian Navy inflicted devastating losses on Pakistani shipping carrying critical stores for war sustenance efforts.

(Contd. on page-6)

## Seminar on International Day for Elimination of Violence against Women

PORT BLAIR, DEC 3/--/ A seminar on 'Introduction on International Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women' and other schemes of Social Welfare under the aegis of Directorate of Social Welfare Department, A & N Administration was held for the students and staff of Khalsa Public Senior Secondary School, Port Blair respectively on Friday. Smt Sangeeta Majumdar, Cyber Cell, CID spoke on the topic Cyber Crime, Social networking. Insp. Rasheeda, SHO, AHTU on Anti Human Trafficking. Ms. Sneha Nair Clinical Psychologist (NMHP) on Mental Health, Impact of alcohol and drugs.

(Contd. on page-6)



## Beach cleaning by Ration Rasheed Foundation



PORT BLAIR, DEC 3/--/ Mr. Abdul Rasheed, Director, Ration Rasheed Foundation, along with its members in collaboration with Panchayat staff of Beodnabad constituency organized a beach cleaning drive at Rangachang Beach No. 5. Local residents of Burmanallah, along with Pradhan, Sarpanch and Panchayat Secretary also took part in this Swachh Bharat initiative with members of Ration Rasheed Foundation. Mr. Rasheed also emphasized on the importance of keeping the beach clean to the local fishermen of the area for protection of aquatic life. He followed the cleaning drive, by donating a wheelchair to a physically challenged resident Mr. Velladurai, aged 72 years old of Anna Nagar under Gram Panchayat Beodnabad. The family of Mr. Velladurai had all praise for Mr. Rasheed, for helping him to become more independent.




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# Navy to open all branches for women from next year: Navy Chief

**NEW DELHI, DEC 3 /--/** The Indian Navy is looking at opening all its branches for women from next year, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral R Hari Kumar said on Saturday.

Addressing a press conference a day ahead of the Navy Day, Admiral Kumar also said that the first batch of around 3,000 'Agniveers' has been inducted and it included 341 women. In December last year, Navy officials said 28 women officers were deployed on board around 15 frontline warships, including aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya, and the number is set to go up. "The first batch of Agniveers have already reported.

About 3,000 Agniveers have joined out of which 341 are women. This is a landmark event for us because for the first time, the Navy is inducting women sailors. We have been inducting women officers for about the last 16-17 years, but this is for the first time that we are inducting women sailors," Admiral Kumar said. He said the Navy will open all its branches to women officers from next year. "Come next year, we are looking at women officers being inducted across all branches and not just seven or eight branches that they are restricted to as of today. Next year onwards, all branches will be opened for women officers as well," the

Navy Chief said.

The Navy celebrates December 4 as Navy Day to commemorate its daring



R Hari Kumar

attack on the Karachi harbour and its decisive victory in the 1971 Indo-Pak

war. "It has been our effort to constantly query and challenge the 'status-quo' to ensure that the Navy remains on an aspirational and dynamic trajectory into the future," the Chief of Naval Staff said. He said that while the past year has been "operationally busy and satisfying" for the Navy, it has also been transformational in many ways. "The most notable aspect was commissioning of India's first indigenous aircraft carrier INS Vikrant on September 2. Without a doubt, it was a seminal event in the history of the nation and the Navy," he said. He said INS Vikrant's commissioning was a manifestation of sustained

efforts of generations of naval leadership, planners, designers, yard workers and industry partners. "The ship will remain the torch bearer of Atma Nirbhar Bharat, inspiring our future generations towards self-reliance," Admiral Kumar said. He said that at the same time, Vikrant's commissioning was also marked by another momentous change, as the Navy adopted a new Naval Ensign. "This change, reflecting the larger National intent to shed colonial vestiges, was brought about in a swift and decisive manner reflecting the Navy's organisational agility and responsiveness," the Navy Chief said. (PTI)

## India never favours war, violence: Defence minister

**BENGALURU, DEC 3 /--/** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday said India neither troubles others nor does it spare those who trouble the country.

India never favoured war and violence but it cannot remain neutral to injustice and oppression, Singh said. "We all believe that India is a country which had always been peace loving. War and violence were never our nature. India neither attacked any other country, nor it occupied even an inch of any other



country's land.

This is India's character," the Defence Minister said. Singh was speaking at the Gita Dana Yajna organised by the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) at its magnificent Rajadhiraja Govinda temple in Vasantapura in Bengaluru.

"The world should also know that India doesn't like war and violence, but staying neutral to the injustice and oppression is also not part of our character," he said without elaborating.

The Union Minister explained the circumstances that led to the Battle of Mahabharata. It was on the battlefield of Kurukshetra where Lord Sri Krishna delivered his epic lecture which came to be known as Srimad Bhagwad Gita, he said.

The defence minister told the gathering that the Pandavas, the central character of the Hindu epic Mahabharata were ready to settle for five villages after spending years in exile but the Kauravas were not ready to part with land measuring the cusp of a needle.

This denial had led to the battle, which ended by establishing the victory of virtues. "That's why I often say that India never troubles others but if someone troubles us, India will not spare them.

This is the message of Bhagwad Gita," Singh said. He also told the audience that the content of Gita makes it eternal and universal.

Reading Bhagwad Gita and imbibing it in life makes a person fearless, he added. The ISKCON Bengaluru has decided to donate one lakh copies of Bhagwad Gita through-out this month, apart from organising cultural and religious events.

Karnataka chief minister Basavaraj Bommai, former chief minister B S Yediyurappa and ISRO chairman S Somanath were among the dignitaries who were present on the occasion. (PTI)



Former President Ram Nath Kovind being presented a memento by Acharya Kishor Kunal during his visit to Mahavir temple, in Patna on Saturday

## Gehlot vs Pilot: As Cong gears up for Bharat Jodo Yatra, 2 groups fight for dominance in hoardings

**KOTA, DEC 3 /--/** Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot and his former deputy Sachin Pilot may have put up a united front before AICC general secretary (organisation) K C Venugopal, but their supporters are reportedly showing one-upmanship on the ground ahead of the Bharat Jodo Yatra.

Supporters of the two leaders are competing in Hadoti to highlight their dominance, which is visible from the hoardings in the region. This has also led to blame games between leaders of the two factions. Pramod Sharma, who contested the 2019 Lok Sabha elections from the Congress in Jhalawar, alleged that the Pilot camp has been attempting to weaken Gehlot's influence. Sharma targeted Jhalawar district in-charge minister Pramod Jain Bhaya alleging that he was weakening the party's roots by leading a separate group of local people, and thereby sidelining efforts of the party's other workers. "The particular group (Bhaya's group) is going ahead everywhere only with Sachin Pilot. In many posters and hoardings that have put up, pictures of Pilot, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra are occupying the maximum space, while those having Ashok Gehlot's picture prominently are lesser," Sharma said. He also claimed that pictures of the party's national president Mallikarjun Kharge and former president Sonia

Gandhi were confined to small circles in the hoardings.

Another local leader involved in the arrangements said the conflict between Gehlot and Pilot does not seem to end soon and this is clearly reflected in the hoardings. However, both the factions are believed to maintain calm during the yatra because of Venugopal's recent intervention between the two leaders, a Congress Seva Dal worker in Jhalawar's Chanwali said. Jhalawar district Congress president Virendra Singh Gurjar, who is working under Pramod Bhaya for the yatra, however, said there was no infighting as far the event was concerned. Gurjar, who is considered as a seena Pilot loyalist, told PTI on Saturday that party workers prepare the banners with photos of leaders of their choice. He said only three things were dominant in all the advertisements - pictures of Rahul Gandhi, the party's name and its symbol.

He said all party leaders and workers were eager to welcome Gandhi in Rajasthan. PCC member Suresh Gurjar, who contested the last assembly election from Khanpur and is believed to be a Pilot loyalist, also denied groupism and dominance of a particular faction. He said both Gehlot and Pilot were their leaders and their pictures were displayed prominently in all the advertisements brought out in connection with the yatra. The yatra will enter Jhalawar from Madhya

Pradesh on Sunday evening. On Monday morning, Gandhi will start the Rajasthan leg of the yatra from Kali Talai area, which comes under BJP leader Vasundhara Raje's constituency Jhalrapatan. Raje has been representing Jhalrapatan since 2003 while her son Dushyant Singh is serving as the MP from Jhalwar constituency for the third time. The yatra will enter Kota on Tuesday.

Kota-Bundi is the parliamentary constituency of Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla. Parliamentary Affairs Minister in Gehlot government Shanti Dhariwal also hails from Kota. Dhariwal was among three Congress leaders who had been issued notices for discipline after they refused to attend the Congress Legislature Party meeting on September 25 and held a parallel meeting instead.

Meanwhile, preparations for the yatra are in final stages in Jhalrapatan's Chanwali village. Three groups covering around 45 bighas of land have been prepared for night stay of the leaders on Sunday. Of these, the middle ground is meant for Rahul Gandhi's convoy, consisting of approximately 20 vehicles, while the first ground is for the state-level Congress workers and the third one for local party workers. Around six to eight state ministers and several senior party workers have reached Jhalawar to review the preparations. Gehlot, too, took stock of the preparations on Friday. (PTI)

## Yogi Adityanath calls for Congress 'mukt' Gujarat, cites UP example

**AHMEDABAD, DEC 3 /--/** Uttar Pradesh chief minister and senior BJP leader Yogi Adityanath on Saturday appealed to people to rid Gujarat of Congress which he said would solve all problems.

He was addressing a rally in support of the BJP contestant in Khambhat town of Anand district on the last day of the campaigning for the second and final phase of the



Gujarat Assembly elections. Out of the total 182 seats, polling for 89 seats was held on December 1. The remaining 93 constituencies will vote on December 5. The counting of votes will be taken up on December 8. Adityanath dubbed both Congress and Aam Aadmi Party as a "threat to security and a barrier to development". "Mahatma Gandhi had once said the Congress party should be disbanded once India achieves Independence. Now it is your responsibility to do that. A 'Congress-mukt' Gujarat will solve all your problems," he said. (PTI)

## Prez stresses on maximum use of technology to make education accessible to children with disabilities

**NEW DELHI, DEC 3 /--/** President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday stressed on the maximum use of technology to remove language-related barriers in education and to make education more accessible to children with disabilities.

She presented the National Awards for the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities for 2021 and 2022 here on the occasion of International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Addressing the gathering, the President said that according to an estimate of the United Nations, more than one billion people in the world are persons with disabilities. It means almost every 8th person in the world has a disability in some form or the other. More than two per cent of India's population are persons with disabilities. Therefore, it becomes the responsibility of all to ensure that the persons with disabilities can lead a dignified life independently. "It is also our duty to ensure that they get a good education, stay safe in their homes and society, have the freedom to choose their career and have equal employment opportunities," she said.

qualities. There are innumerable examples in which our divyang brothers and sisters have achieved impressive feats in many fields on the strength of their indomitable courage, talent and determination. Given enough opportunities and the right environment, they can excel in every field," she said. She said education is key to the empowerment of every individual, including



persons with disabilities. "We should make maximum use of technology in order to remove language related barriers in education and to make education more accessible to children with disabilities," she said. She said she was happy to note that the conversion of NCERT textbooks for classes 1 to 6 into Indian sign language for hearing-impaired children has been done. She said that it is an important initiative to include hearing-impaired students in the mainstream education process.

The President said the government is taking several steps for the empowerment of

divyangjan. She said inculcating self-confidence in divyangjan is very important to empower them. "People with disabilities have talents and abilities just like normal people, and sometimes more than them. To make them self-reliant, it is only necessary to instil in them self-confidence," she said. She urged all sections of the society to motivate the divyangjan to become self-reliant and move ahead in life. She said that when divyang people would make their effective contribution by joining the mainstream, then the country would move forward on the path of development at a faster pace.

The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment gives away the National Awards for the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities every year to individuals, institutions, organisations, state/district, etc. for their outstanding achievements and work done towards empowerment of persons with disabilities. The applications short-listed by the screening committees were considered by the national selection committee in its meeting held on November 2 and recommended 25 awardees for the year 2021 and 29 awardees for 2022. (PTI)

## AAP introduced 'Lalu model' in Delhi, bungled crores in name of workers' welfare: BJP

**NEW DELHI, DEC 3 /--/** The BJP on Saturday alleged the AAP government introduced the "Lalu model" in a new avatar in Delhi and bungled crores of rupees by enlisting fake names as beneficiaries under the construction workers' welfare board.

It is "Delhi's Lalu model," alleged Union minister Anurag Thakur at a press conference here, a day before the Municipal Corporation of Delhi polls. An immediate reaction was not available from the Aam Aadmi Party on the issue. Rashtriya Janta Dal supremo Lalu Prasad Yadav was convicted in the fodder scam of Bihar and was in jail in cases related to it.

"There (Bihar), cattle feed was gobbled up, here (Delhi) labourers' right were denied," Thakur claimed and alleged that Kejriwal and "his friends" bungled crores in the name of welfare of construction workers in Delhi. The Anti-Corruption Branch (ACB) of the Delhi government has found that "ghost" workers were disbursed funds to the tune of Rs 900 crore by the AAP government's Labour department, official sources had said earlier.

In 2018, the ACB had registered a case after they found bogus registration of employees under the Delhi Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board. "Kejriwal has presented Lalu's model in a new form. It has been found that there were fake names, addresses and mobile numbers of persons registered as construction workers. Even 'kachori' sellers and taxi drivers were enlisted as employers," Thakur said, showing a bundle of papers. Official sources had earlier said a preliminary inquiry by the ACB found "fraudulent disbursement" of funds to the tune of Rs 900 crore to "bogus and ghost" workers by the Labour department of the Delhi government.

"There are names of people in the lists from UP and Haryana. Who is responsible for bungling the funds of the construction workers in Delhi," the minister said, reading out names and their addresses. "There were liquor scam, classroom construction scam, bus scam and now this one. I wonder how Arvind Kejriwal is able to sleep at night," Thakur said giving a slogan "Bhrashtachariyon ka yaar hai, Kejriwal gunahgar hai" (Friends with the corrupt, Kejriwal is guilty).

Sources had earlier said a random survey of registration papers by the ACB showed that 424 out of 800 were fake. Over 17 lakh persons have been registered with Delhi Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board (DBOCWWB) as construction workers. The Kejriwal government had provided financial assistance of Rs 5,000 each to registered construction workers to help them during lockdown imposed due to Covid. Even last month, the Delhi government had announced a relief of Ra 5,000 each to registered construction workers as relief due to pollution-related ban on construction activities in the city. (PTI)

## Amid Karnataka CM's remarks on border row, NCP slams Maharashtra govt, BJP and Centre for 'eerie silence'

**MUMBAI, DEC 3 /--/** The Nationalist Congress Party on Saturday questioned the "eerie silence" of the Maharashtra government, the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Centre on the "uncalled for" statements made by Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on the border dispute between the two states, which it claimed brought the differences to the fore again.

Bommai had recently sought a merger of "Kannada-speaking" areas in Maharashtra's Akkalkot and Solapur and had also said some villages in Jat taluka in Sangli district wanted to join the southern state.

A day earlier, he said the visit of Maharashtra ministers Chandrakant Patil and Shambhuraj Desai to Belgaum was not good in the given situation. Maharashtra and Karnataka have been involved in a long-standing border dispute, with the former seeking administrative control of Marathi-speaking Belgaum and some other villages of the neighbouring state.

"Why is an eerie silence being maintained by the Central government, BJP and CM of Maharashtra on the uncalled for statements made and issues raised on the border row by Karnataka CM Basavaraj Bommai," NCP national spokesperson Clyde Crasto asked in a statement. "Firstly, he (Bommai) made statements on the sub-judice border issue, which led to disturbance of peace in both the states. (PTI)

## TN CM announces hike in pension to differently-abled, says govt committed to their welfare

**CHENNAI, DEC 3 /--/** Tamil Nadu chief minister M K Stalin on Saturday announced an increase in pension for the differently-abled including the visually challenged people from Rs 1,000 to Rs 1,500 and said his government is committed to the welfare of all sections of people, particularly, the marginalised. The chief minister said the State-level expert and high level committees are working towards providing technology based framework that would enable the differently-abled

persons in government and private sectors to work independently without support. "There is no necessity for the differently-abled persons to go to office to work. We are going to create an ambience that would facilitate working from home," he said in his address on the occasion of the International day of persons with disabilities celebration held by the government here. A new initiative is on under the auspices of the Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation to upskill them

and provide employment opportunities and the scheme covers providing laptops with loaded relevant softwares. The initiative is covered under the 'Naam Mudhalvan' (I am the first) State scheme. He said that it is the goal of the government to see that the differently-abled people should not face any difficulty. Not even a single person with disability should have any grievance and even if an initiative is going to benefit a single differently-abled person, it should be done, he said. Stalin said the pension



M K Stalin

given by the revenue department would be raised to Rs 1,500 from Rs 1,000, effective January 1 for 4,39,315 differently-abled pensioners including the visually impaired. The move would entail an annual additional expenditure of Rs 263.58 crore. He referred to the exclusive pathway set up by the Greater Chennai Corporation to provide easy access to the Marina beach here to the differently-abled persons. It is their right and it is the government's pathway of love, he said.

The differently-abled people should be given due respect and providing barrier free access to them begins at home (Accessible Home). The disability is in respect of only the human body and is not about their intelligence or skills. He cited the inspiring hardwork of several differently-abled persons including noted the Paralympic champion Mariyappan Thangavelu. He said the state government is dedicated to the welfare of all sections of people, in particular the marginalised

and government would continue to work towards fulfilling their needs. His father, former Chief Minister M Karunanidhi coined the Tamil word 'Matruthiranalgal' (differently-abled) and gave a new hope, created a separate department for their welfare and held that portfolio as well. Stalin recalled and said similarly he is helping the department. State Ministers including P Geetha Jeevan (Social Welfare) K Ponmudy (Higher Education) and top officials participated. (PTI)



# A Different Form of Nationalism In Iran people were not protesting against the nation, but against the dispensation of the day

BHOPINDER SINGH

National anthems have been defined as, "a song, as of praise, devotion or patriotism". The words of the national anthem are freighted with emotions, rationalities, and centralities of the fundamentally held beliefs that underlie such a nation state. At its essence, it ought to be all-encompassing, all-inclusive, and timeless given its expected echo of civilisational truths, traditions, and values that it seeks to represent. Perhaps along with the territorial sovereignty and the symbolism of the national flag itself, it represents the most sacred manifestation and expression of the land and its people. Also Read - If Congress Tumbles, It Has Bharat Yatra To Dream About But the change of political destiny and narrative in the foundational expression and life of a nation state can also change that ideal permanency of symbols like flag, constitution, or national anthem. It certainly changed with the Iranian Revolution in 1979. A national project of rewriting history, imagery and aspired values ensued, and the Three-Coloured Flag

with the Royalist emblem of the Lion and the Sun of the Pahlavi dynasty gave way to the one with the more austere and religiously inspired 'Tawhid' at the heart of the flag, with takbir written 11 times each in Kufic script. Also Read - 75-Years of Self-Governance Expectedly the national anthem which had earlier espoused the monarchical rooting i.e., Sahansahe ma zende bada (Long live our King of Kings), too had to reflect a revisionist outlook. By 1990 the national anthem of the Islamic Republic of Iran was changed yet again but the Sorood-e Melli-e Jomhoori-e Eslami-e Iran (national anthem) retained its religion-inspired anchorage. Lyrics like Payamat ey Emam, esteqlal azadi, naqse mast. Sahidan, picide dar guse zaman faryadetan. Payandemani o javedan. Jomhuriye Eslamiye Iran seamlessly conflated religion to the essential underpinning of Islamic Iran. Also Read - We The People Importantly before the 1979 Revolution, unlike the clerical order in the Gulf Sheikdoms, many influential Ayatollahs in the Shiite religious city of Qom were known for their moderate, secular and

progressive outlook on society and particularly for women's rights. Unfortunately, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini who had initially promised 'a democratic political system', soon weeded out other theologians like Mohammad Kazem Shariatmadari, and Hassan Tabatabaei Qomi. Also Read - COP-27: Act Now, Tomorrow is Too Late Even though women had wholeheartedly supported Ayatollah Khomeini's movement to oust the ineffectual Shah of Iran, Khomeini reneged on many of his earlier promises (including hypothesizing on a Women Head of State) post the 1979 Revolution. Soon laws governing divorce were revoked, polygamy was inadvertently encouraged, forced-veiling became the norm. Yet the civilisational power and spirit of the Iranian women ensured that despite the ensuing odds, they broke various glass-ceilings in workspace by entering new domains and in record numbers. As the Iranian-born Janet Afary, feminist activist and researcher of history and religious studies, notes, "the newly established regime of Ayatollah Khomeini moved quickly to repress feminists,

ethnic and religious minorities, liberals, and leftists – all in the name of Islam". A new constitution, flag and anthem that legitimised the post-1979 leadership emerged, and the Iranian identity sought to disassociate itself formally from all political and governance persuasions that preceded the 1979 tumult. Nationalism had new calling cards. Earlier this year, when Jina Mahsa Amini was killed and Iran erupted in a unprecedented revolt with cries of 'Jin, Jiyan, Azadi' (woman, life, freedom) – an old civilisational impulse of the dignified Iranian civilisational was to return to the forefront. Jina Mahsa Amini was a classical 'other' (even her first name 'Jina' was not registered or referred to by officials owing to disallowances by the powerful clerical order) and yet the women of Iran were collectively raising their voice for the said 'other', in unison. Jina Mahsa Amini was a 22-year-old woman from an ethnic-minority

(Kurdish) and sectarian-minority, as opposed to belonging to the majoritarian stock. Nationalism for the revolting Iranians had suddenly become more inclusive towards all its identities, and was not only composed of the restrictive and discriminative and majoritarian instinct, as was officially posited earlier. The people were not protesting against Iran, but against the dispensation of the day and their interpretative definition of duties, 'normalcy' and exclusionary tactics that tantamount to denialism, to many of its citizens. It wasn't even against religion as much as it was against the forced illiberality of the state and the diminishment of the proverbial 'others', in the name of religion. Primary symbols of the dispensation's identity (not that of civilisational Iran or its cultural and historical identity) were attacked by the rioters, including setting fire to the ancestral home of

the post-1979 founder of the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Khomeini! With this backdrop, when the Iranian footballers stayed silent in protest when their national anthem was played before their first match in the Football World Cup, a question arose if that move was anti-national and had they shamed their nation? The fact that not a single member of the Iranian team sang the National Anthem (a wholly voluntary decision, whilst knowing the consequences of their move), says something of palpable national mood beyond the officials speak. That they played to the best of their abilities and even managed to defeat a much higher ranked team i.e., Wales, in the second match, is reflective of the Iranian team's efforts and commitment. Though following the expected threats of consequences and asymmetric pressure from the conservative authorities, the Iranian team did half-heartedly sing their national anthem in the second game against Wales, however the message of protest and support for the societal cause back home, had already been made. Had the Iranian players crossed a

line with their visible defiance and brought shame and indignity to their motherland and its cherished symbols, or had they only brought shame onto a repressive and exclusivist dispensation that did not behoove the civilisational depth of the long-standing Iranian identity? Like all authoritarian regimes, the current Iranian dispensation leans on 'manufactured nationalism' (not liberal patriotism) to invoke a toxic admixture of pride, fear and fury to suppress all forms of public dissent and protest. A vital part of this project is to denigrate and punish the 'others' (in this case, a women of ethnic minority) for ostensibly disrespecting symbols like the national anthem. It is a deliberate slam effected on minorities, intellectuals, free press, secularists etc., all of whom seek to posit an alternative

expression of nationalism, as opposed to the religio-inspired puritanism and national identity, especially in a vivid civilisational land like Iran. So, as the final line of the current Iranian national anthem expresses the hope that the Islamic Republic of Iran will survive forever, it is only in opposition to that specific construct of governance type that the Iranian protesters are up in arms against, and not to the timeless land called Persia or Iran. The notions of nationalism for the Iranian protestors are no longer as small-spirited, regressive and discriminative as their dispensation of the day would like it to be, to perpetuate their own regime. (The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. The views expressed are personal.)



## 2-days workshop on "Climate Change in Sustainable Development for School Teachers" concludes

PORT BLAIR, DEC 3/--/ The Department of Home Science, JNRM, in association with the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), Andaman and Nicobar Islands organised a two-days capacity building workshop on "Climate Change in Sustainable Development for School Teachers" from 1st to 2nd December 2022. The valedictory function for the seminar was held on Friday in seminar room, JNRM and Mr. Abhishek Bhukal, Director (Education) graced the occasion as chief guest. Addressing the gathering, pointed out that the equilibrium should be maintained between the environment and development as we have been equipped with the various technological intervention to ease our job and fail to recognise the byproducts and emissions through them. The pattern of climate change is affecting the agriculture and allied sectors for which establishment of watch

groups with institutional capacities to carry out research is required, he said. Mr. S Bhuvarahan, Deputy General Manager, NABARD, Port Blair spoke on the methods of mitigation and adaptation of climate change in Andaman & Nicobar Islands. To create awareness to the local corners of Andaman the implementing agencies should locate the vulnerable areas and through scientific intervention that need to be addressed, he told. Shri S Bhuvarahan said that the people should be encouraged to use the substitute for petrol with renewable energy sources. The innovation and creativity should be imbibed and encouraged by the teachers community to the students. Formation of knowledge networks by JNRM among the existing knowledge institutions relating to climate science will facilitate suitable policy framework, he

opined. Dr.H.K.Sharma, Principal, JNRM encouraged the research in the areas of climate change since this will have an impact on important socio-economic sectors like



Nidhi Shekhawat, Assistant Professor of Home Science welcomed the gathering. Smt. Poonam Ajay Singh, Resource Person, Department of Home Science moderated the entire programme and Ms. P.Bhuvaneshwari, Resource Person served as Rapporteur. Altogether 80 participants like teachers from various schools, students and faculty members of JNRM took part in the two days workshop. The resource persons Dr.C.Sivaperuman, Officer-in-Charge, ZSI spoke on Climate Change and Island Ecosystem, Dr.Avijit Roy, Deputy Director (Health) spoke on Climate Change and Human & Environmental Health, Dr. R. Jayakumara Varadan, Scientist, ICAR-CIARI spoke on Climate Change and Sustainable Agriculture Systems, Shri.A.Gopal, Project Officer, CPREEC spoke on Climate Change effect on Mangrove Ecosystem in

ANI, Dr.K.Venkatesan, HoD, Home Science spoke on Policy Framework on Climate Change, International Protocols and Action Plan, Dr.Kandimuthu, Assistant Professor in Economics, JNRM spoke on Energy Economics, Energy Audit and Climate Change, Dr.Santosh Kumar Jha, Assistant Professor, Dept of Botany, JNRM spoke on Climate Change Knowledge and Education through

NEP, Mr.Denis Giles, Editor-in-Chief, Andaman Chronicle spoke on Role of Media in Sensitizing Climate Change, Dr.Vivek Kumar Sahu, Assistant Professor, Dept of Zoology, JNRM spoke on Climate Change and Biodiversity, Dr.S.Balaji, Professor, Dept of Coastal Disaster Management, Pondicherry University (Brookshabad Campus) spoke on Climate Change impact on Disaster and its Management.

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*The perfect bureaucrat everywhere is the man who manages to make no decisions and escape all responsibility*  
**Brooks Atkinson**

## Delhi breathes cleaner air this winter

This winter, Punjab and Haryana saw less farm fires. This is good news and credit goes to both policy framers and agriculture scientists. Farm fires are down by 30% and 48% over last year in Punjab and Haryana respectively (this may be Punjab's lowest farm fire count since 2012). Delhi's average Air Quality Index (AQI) for November was 321. While this still puts average AQI for November in the 'Very Poor' category – it is bad enough to affect most people with prolonged exposure – Delhi's air quality this November was the second-best since 2016. What explains this relative improvement in Delhi's air quality this year? October was also the second best. But, this could also be attributed to the weather in Punjab and Delhi rather than more effective pollution management by governments of the two regions. The key, therefore, is sustaining these gains next year and the years after – to ensure that the practice of paddy stubble burning, which is nothing less than social malpractice, is eradicated.

A concerted attempt is needed by Punjab and Haryana officials to deter farmers from setting fields on fire. This brings to the forefront a political dimension as well. AAP winning the Punjab assembly elections has ensured that the Punjab government cannot duck accountability for farm fires, which hurts Delhi the most. Similarly, BJP helming Centre and Haryana have ensured both governments are on the same page. Every year from September to December, air pollution becomes a big issue due to stubble burning. During this time, the NCR areas of the four states including Delhi are the worst affected by this phenomenon. NASA satellites have observed in October-November large clouds of smoke and heightened fire activity in northwestern India from farmers burning crop stubble. That was because tens of thousands of farmers across north India set fire to their fields at the start of every winter to clear crop stubble from recently harvested rice paddies.

The practice is one of the key drivers of Delhi's annual smog problem and persists despite efforts to persuade farmers to use different clearing methods. A surge of smoke, caused by these fires, often contributes to a sharp deterioration of air quality across the region, including in Delhi-NCR. The anti-farm-reforms agitation and the Punjab elections had turned the fightback against stubble burning into a nonstarter; the last two years. Both in-situ straw management through super-seeders, which plough the straw back into the soil, and ex-situ baling of the straw for sale to biogas plants, industries with captive power plants, and fodder suppliers, were heavily promoted this year. Super-seeder machines gaining in popularity over the previous generation of happy-seeders is a promising development. Innovations that make these machines better and faster and more fuel-efficient can win over the holdout farmers too. ICAR's bio-decomposer appeared to not find much favour, given the short window between kharif harvest and rabi sowing this year, but it's just as promising.

Interventions to reduce stubble burning and the pollution it causes need to be focussed on just six districts of Punjab — Barnala, Sangrur, Patiala, Moga, Ludhiana and Fatehgarh Sahib — a new research by scientists from Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in the United States has advised. These six districts should be focussed upon as they contribute 40 per cent of India-wide exposure to fire-related PM2.5, according to the research just published in the journal 'Nature Communications'. While figures from the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) indicate that the paddy stubble burning related fire count has been lower this year when compared to previous years in Punjab and Haryana, scientists say the fire count is yet to be correlated with the figure of the area that has been burnt this year.

# Bengal's new Governor may be different from Dhankar

## REFLEX ACTION

**Tirthankar Mitra**

as skeletons tumble out of its cupboard. Senior state saffron camp leaders have been rapped on their knuckles by senior party leader Satish Dhond after he came across that the outreach of his party men towards the masses falling short of the goal. The reprimand had come at a time when the protests and processions against Trinamool dispensation have been stepped up. Dhond had been on the lookout for the organisational lapses which made the saffron party stumble and fall in the state Assembly elections last year after having been tipped to sweep it.

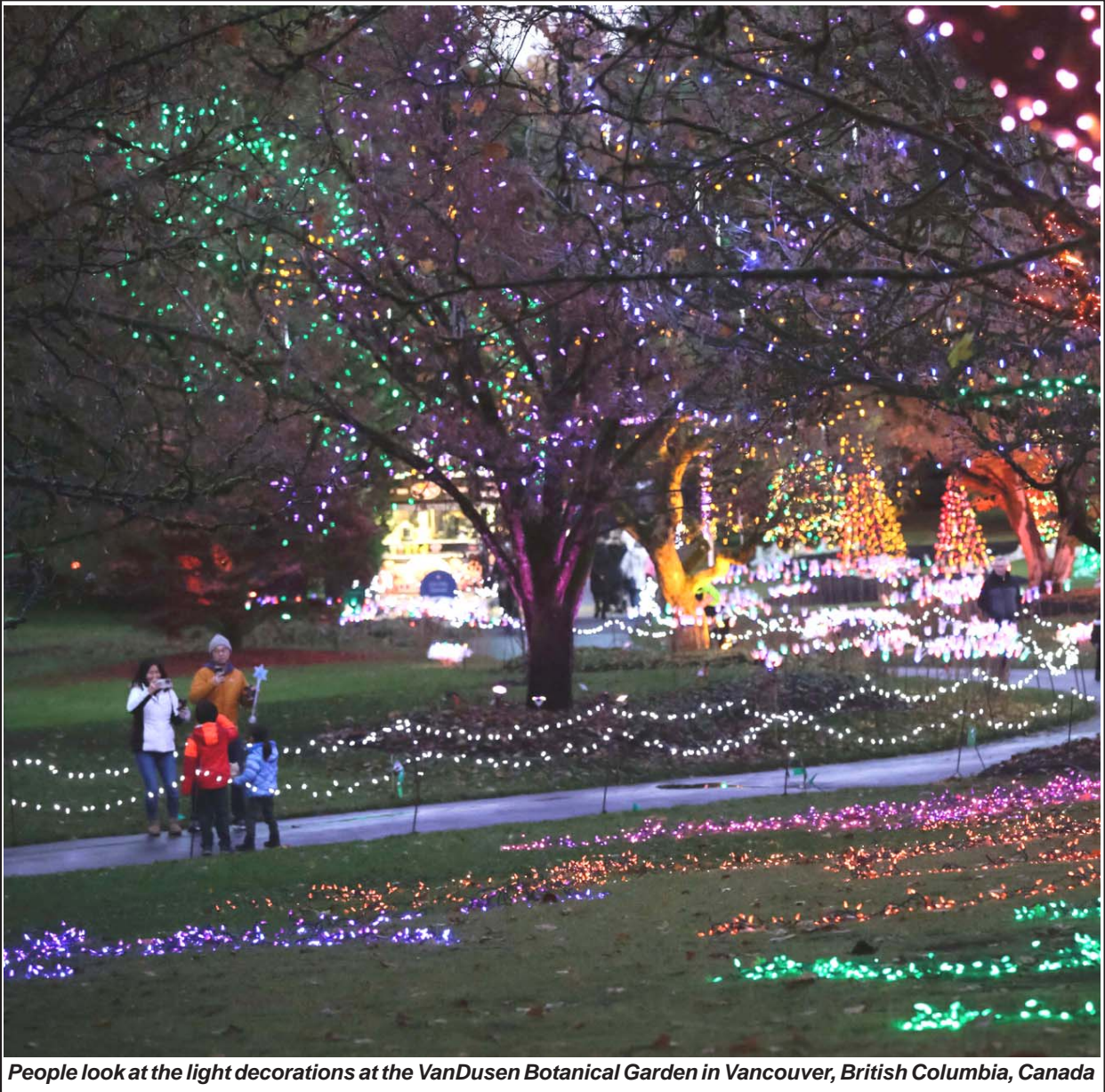
Seeking to script a prescription for recovery, Dhond has stumbled on to unpleasant facts which include that several BJP MLAs are conspicuous by their absence in their constituencies. The surprise was laced by embarrassment when it came to light that these MLAs sought to bite more than they can chew. For some of these legislators of the saffron camp who are infrequent visitors in their own constituencies aspire to contest in 2024 parliamentary elections. Apart from these MLAs, the Lok Sabha aspirants seeking the party's nomination also include senior organisational leaders, who have been detected to be lacking people's support. It is not that the MLAs in question are sitting idle. They are more active outside their respective constituencies cultivating persons of influence for nomination to the 2024 parliamentary election, according to reports of district chiefs placed at the meeting.

The facts looking the state saffron camp leadership cannot be binned as Trinamool canards for they had come to light at a recent state unit meeting. Small wonder, Dhond had given vent to his ire which was

triggered by the finding that some of his party MLAs and leaders are sleeping on their job. It is a pointer to a question that asks whether most of the seats the saffron party lost last year was an outcome of the diminution of its organisational strength triggered by complacency following the impressive haul of bagging 18 seats in 2019 parliamentary polls. Not shy of calling a spade by any other name, Dhond lashed out at the MLAs and party leaders playing truant. At a top level meeting of the state unit at its Hastings party office, he pulled up the errant leaders and MLAs for not visiting their constituencies.

Dhond who is from BJP's national leadership had Howrah, Hooghly and Midnapur in his focus. Midnapur happens to be a stronghold of leader of the Opposition, Suvendu Adhikari. As Dhond who is BJP's joint general secretary (organisation) belled the cat, he found he was not crying in the wilderness. A senior leader pointed out that there exists little coordination between the party's MLAs and MPs. Party meetings are poorly attended, it was stated. The charge was underscored by former state chief and Kharagpur MP, Dilip Ghosh. Voicing his dissatisfaction, the veteran leader said that his meetings in the districts are drawing party activists in insufficient numbers. Since Ghosh is speaking of organisational meetings, it is pointer to the scanty number of activists at the level of mandals, an internal unit of BJP. Organisational weakness apart, internal dissension came to the fore at the meeting which Dhond attended. It was reported that five mandal committees cannot be formed at Haldia and Moyna assembly segments owing to disagreement between state party chief, Sukanta Majumdar and leader of the Opposition, Adhikari.

The situation has boiled down to saffron camp leaders finding internal dissension getting out of hand. The errant leaders are now apprehensive of facing the music when Dhond places his report before Union home minister, Amit Shah. (IPA)



People look at the light decorations at the VanDusen Botanical Garden in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

# India-UAE economic relations set to reach new high

## FOCUS

**P. Sreekumaran**

India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are all set to deepen their already warm relationship. The development is bound to have a beneficial bearing on India's relations with the other countries of West Asia.

Topping the list is a food security cooperation under the I2U2, a new West Asian quadrilateral initiative, including Israel and the US besides India and the UAE. The stage has been set for an agreement on food security cooperation in the wake of India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar's talks with UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Ali Nahyan this month. It may be mentioned that a delegation led by the CEO of ADQ, an active investor and a sovereign wealth fund located in Abu Dhabi, visited India in October this year for detailed discussions with the stakeholders.

On its part, the I2U2 leaders' summit, held in July had decided to harness private capital among the member countries for projects on agriculture, infrastructure, water, energy, transportation and digital connectivity. It is gratifying to note that bilateral relations between India and the UAE had registered an "appreciable growth" ever since the conclusion of a landmark Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) in February 18 this year. Subsequently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had

visited Abu Dhabi on June 28 on his way back home from Europe. He was welcomed by UAE Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Ali Nahyan. Incidentally, it was Modi's fourth visit to the UAE.

The headway made is visible in a 24 per cent increase in India's exports to UAE between April and September in 2022. While India's exports were in the region of USD 16 billion, imports recorded a 38 per cent rise to touch USD 28.4 billion in the same period. The bilateral talks also concluded that there was scope for further cooperation in the fields of energy, healthcare, defence, space, climate change, skills, fintech and start-ups.

The growing warmth in the ties between the two countries is evident in India's talks with UAE and Saudi Arabia to allow settlement of trade in Indian rupee. Reports have it that the Reserve Bank of India and the Finance Ministry are working on a mechanism to facilitate trade in the Indian currency.

If the talks fructify, it will be a major gain for Indian businessmen as UAE is a big market for India. There is a rub, however. Since India is a net importer from both UAE and Saudi Arabia, the

excess rupee management could prove ticklish. Incidentally, India's exports to UAE and Saudi Arabia posted a decline in October 2022.

Bilateral ties received a big boost when UAE became the highest contributor to Foreign Direct Investment in India from Gulf countries. UAE invested, between 2017 and 2021, nearly \$6,488.35 million in India. Saudi Arabia is also a significant contributor to FDI in India. India and UAE have a special relationship as close to 35 lakh Indians live there. Not surprisingly, remittances from UAE have recorded a five per cent increase in recent months. The break-up of major investment in India from Gulf countries is as follows: \$6488.55 million from UAE; \$3058.25 million from Saudi Arabia, \$223.49 million from Qatar; \$181.45 million from Bahrain, \$109.25 million from Oman and \$37.91 million from Kuwait.

Also, the period between June 2020 and December 2021 saw the return of Indian migrant workers from the Gulf countries. These included 1,52,126 from UAE, 1,18,064 from Saudi Arabia, 51,206 from Kuwait, 46,003 from Oman and 32,361 from Qatar. Available figures say

that the number of people who left India to work in Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, between June 2020 and December 2021 is 1,41,172. It may be mentioned that the RBI had, in July, announced a policy decision to allow trade settlements between India and other countries in rupee. The notification, issued on July 11, said that it had been decided to put in place an additional arrangement for invoicing, payments, and settlement of exports and imports in INR. This has been done to promote global trade with accent on exports from India and to support the rising interest of global trading community in INR.

Significantly, two Russian banks, Sber Bank and VTB, are the first foreign lenders which have secured the RBI's approval to open special Vostro accounts to trade in rupee. The RBI is learnt to have given approval to the HDFC Bank and Canara Bank to open special Vostro accounts for trade settlement in Indian currency with Russia.

Three other banks, Uco Bank, Union Bank and IndusInd Bank, have also managed to get approval for opening Vostro accounts. Vostro account maintains holding of the foreign entity in Indian banks in rupee. The advantage is that traders, irrespective of whether they are exporters or importers, can receive or make payments through this account. (IPA)

Conventional Crossword							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9		10				11	
12						13	
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16	17						
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	21	22					
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26			27				
28				29			

ACROSS				DOWN			
1	From a distance	2	Venom teeth	3	Liabie	4	Treat with
5	Given shoes	6		7	consideration	8	Prayer
10	Summit	11	Metal-bearing rock	12	One entertaining	13	Lair
14	Wrongdoing	15		16	Corroded	17	Main actor
18	Bondage	19		20	Sticks	21	Combined
22	Angry	23	Greek letter	24	Accustom	25	Prophet
26	Reddening agent	27	Lump on the skin	28	Chimed	29	Female sheep
29	Slender support	30		31	Cereal grass	32	

SUDOKU:3715						
3		1	8		4	6
		2				
	6			7		9
5	8					9
			3			
6						7
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1			7		2	4
						3

Yesterday's Solution 3714								
8	7	5	4	6	9	1	2	3
9	4	2	7	3	1	5	6	8
6	3	1	8	5	2	7	9	4
7	5	8	1	9	4	6	3	2
4	2	3	6	8	7	9	1	5
1	9	6	3	2	5	4	8	7
5	6	4	2	1	3	8	7	9
2	8	7	9	4	6	3	5	1
3	1	9	5	7	8	2	4	6

Yesterday's Cross Word Solution 1723									
P	U	T	T	E	R		V	O	W
O		I		V	A	L	I	D	
O	R	A	T	O	R		M	E	T
R		R	A	K	E				R
		A	P	E			C	I	T
R	U	S	E			S	O	N	
U				S	P	O	T		S
M	O	B		T	A	L	E	N	T
	W	A	V	E	R		N	I	
L	E	T		M	E	N	T	O	R

### DISCLAIMER

The views in the articles published here are absolutely the views of the author and The Echo of India does not stand liable for them.



## NTCC leaders interacts with Ranchi Community of SwarajDweep



**PORT BLAIR, DEC 3/--/** On 02nd December, 2022 The ANTCC President, Mr. R a n g a l a l H a l d e r a n d Chairman- Campaign Committee of ANTCC, Mr. TSG Bhasker and team, Chairman of Adivasi

Congress, Mr. Sebastian Tirkey met the Ranchi community people in SwarajDweep on Friday and interacted with them regarding the difficulties being faced by them. The Ranchi community

emphasizes that though they are Tribal's in their own native place, they don't have any status in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The ANTCC President promised the community people that he will take up

the issues to the appropriate authority. Mr. Sebastian Tirkey, Chairman of Tribal Congress of Andaman Nicobar Islands addressed the gatherings and listened to the issues being faced by the Tribals.

## ED seizes over 289 MTs Indonesian betel nuts in money laundering case

**NEW DELHI, DEC 3 /--/** Over 289 metric tonnes of "unaccounted" betel nuts worth Rs 11.5 crore were seized following raids at multiple premises in Nagpur and Mumbai as part of a money laundering probe against people involved in smuggling of its Indonesian variety, the Enforcement Directorate said here on Saturday.

The ED case stems from a CBI FIR of March last year where it was alleged that many Nagpur-based traders in connivance with various public servants indulged in "smuggling" of sub-standard betel nuts/areca nuts of Indonesian origin and falsely claiming the same to be originating from member countries of South Asia Preferential Trading Agreement (SAPTA) and South Asia Free Trading Agreement (SAFTA). This was done, the agency said in a statement, by using "fake" certificates of origin, and by using bogus and undervalued bills/invoices and thus "evading" Customs duty. The Indonesian betel nut is smuggled largely from across the Myanmar border. Probe found, it said, that there is a well organized syndicate of suppliers of Indonesian betel nut, commission agents, logistics providers, transporters, hawala operators and buyers who were smuggling this chewing item into India via the India-Myanmar border.

"Fabricated" domestic invoices were made and smuggled betel nuts were brought to Nagpur and Gondia districts of Maharashtra, it said. The agency said it seized unaccounted betel nut of 289.57 metric tonnes (MT) valued at roughly Rs 11.5 crore at Nagpur apart from Rs 16.5 lakh cash. (PTI)



*Lt. Governor, Admiral D K Joshi (Retd.) called on the Union Cabinet Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways and Minister of Ayush, Mr. Sarbananda Sonowal at New Delhi on Friday. During the meeting, they discussed proposals for developing A&N Islands as a regional ship building and repair hub in the Indo-Pacific and briefed about various developmental projects of A&N Administration in the Shipping sector.*

## Number of NRI courts in Punjab should be increased: Satnam Singh Chahal

**CHANDIGARH, DEC 3 /--/** The number of NRI courts in Punjab should be increased to ensure timely delivery of justice, said Satnam Singh Chahal, the executive director of North American Punjabi Association (NAPA), on Saturday.

He said the Punjabi diaspora is excited about the NRI meetings in Jalandhar, Mohali, Ludhiana, Moga and Amritsar announced by the Punjab government to solve their concerns. "This is the first time in the state that a government is trying to

solve issues and concerns of the Punjabi diaspora at their doorsteps. We will make sure that every participant is treated fairly and get his/her complaints addressed," Chahal said.

He said gang war is a cause of concern for the Punjabi diaspora and arms licenses should be granted to those NRIs who feel insecure. "Justice should not be delayed and the number of NRI courts should be increased to deliver justice in a time-bound manner," Chahal said. (PTI)

## Applications invited to avail subsidy benefits for deep sea fishing

**PORT BLAIR, DEC 3/--/** The Department of Fisheries, A&N Administration proposes to implement the components 'Support for Acquisition of Deep Sea Fishing Vessels (FRP/Steel) for Traditional Fishermen' of A & N Islands during the year 2022-23 under PMMSY.

The component on Assistance for acquisition of Deep Sea Fishing (FRP/ Steel) for Traditional Fishermen envisages subsidy @ 40% of the unit cost (120 Lakh.) with a ceiling of Rs.48.00 lakh for General Category and @ 60% with a ceiling of Rs.72.00 lakh for Schedule Tribe / Women and their Cooperative Societies towards support for acquisition of Deep sea fishing (FRP/ Steel) vessels for traditional fishermen.

Applications in prescribed format including Self Contained DPR (Two sets) have been invited from Traditional/ Artisanal Fishermen/ Fisher Women and their Societies/ Associations/ SHGs/ FFPOs for 'Support for Acquisition of Deep Sea Fishing (FRP/ Steel) vessels for traditional fishermen' in A&N Islands.

The Applicants who have already submitted the applications for 'Support for Acquisition of Deep Sea Fishing Vessels' may again re-submit the application in the prescribed format along with the self-contained DPR (2 sets). The applicant should be a Traditional / Artisanal fishermen and their Societies/ Associations / SHGs /

FPOs. Beneficiary should possess valid ownership certificate, Registration Certificate under the ReAL Craft, Fishing License and Biometric ID cards of Fishers/QR coded Aadhaar card.

The Governmental assistance is restricted to 1 unit per individual beneficiary; 2 units per group/society (of at least 10 members) in case of Groups of Traditional/Artisanal Fishermen i.e. Traditional/ Artisanal Fishermen SHGs/ Joint Liability Groups (JLGs)/ Traditional/ Artisanal Fisher Cooperatives etc. or those undertaken in a cluster/ area approach. However, a cluster/area may have multiple groups/societies. As far as FFPOs/Cs are concerned, the modalities of implementation and upper ceiling on the total units eligible for support would be decided by the CAC.

The vessel should have onboard machineries/ fishing equipment including refrigerated storage facilities for undertaking deep sea tuna long lining and gill netting. Appropriate communication systems, AIS/transponders and other navigational equipment for safe navigation etc., as per the relevant regulations/ guidelines are mandatory onboard the vessels.

Deep sea fishing vessel should be considered as an alternative for replacement of the existing bottom trawler and the State/UT

shall ensure suitable disposal of old fishing boat (against which new one is replaced).

Beneficiaries will submit Self Contained Proposal (SCP) with relevant techno-financial details of the vessel. Installation of Bio-toilet shall be mandatory within the project cost.

The selected beneficiaries should construct Deep Sea Fishing Vessel (FRP/Steel) only through the boat building yards empanelled by Department of Fisheries, A & N Administration and Ministry of Fisheries & Animal husbandry & Dairying, Department of Fisheries, Govt. of India i.e. M/s Samundra Ship Yard Pvt. Limited for FRP DSFV and Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) for Steel DSFV respectively.

Interested applicants may contact the Directorate of Fisheries, Port Blair, Zonal Fisheries offices, South Andaman/N&M Andaman and Nicobar or nearest Fisheries Sub Stations for detailed terms & conditions of the scheme and design, drawing FRP/ Steel Deep Sea Fishing Vessel. They should submit the applications in prescribed format along with relevant documents to the respective Zonal Offices/ Sub Stations. The completed applications in all respect should reach the nearest Fisheries Zonal Office / Sub-Stations on or b e f o r e -----31st December, 2022.

## Patients visiting GBPH told to bring ABHA for faster registration in OPD

**PORT BLAIR, DEC 3/--/** The National Digital Health Mission (NDHM) was launched as a pilot in six UTs including Andaman & Nicobar Islands on 15TH August 2020. The scheme was later extended to the entire country on 27th September 2021, and renamed as Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM). Under the scheme, more than 4 lakh Health IDs have been created in these islands. The Health IDs created under Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission are now called Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA).

It has been decided to promote the use of ABHA for OPD registration of new and follow-up patients at GB Pant Hospital, Port Blair. The scan & share QR code solution of National Health Authority shall be adopted at the OPD Counter of GB Pant Hospital Port Blair to facilitate quick registration of the patients.

At present, manual entry of patient's demographics like Name, Age, Gender, Address and Mobile No is being done at the Registration Counter of GB Pant Hospital. This is a time consuming process, resulting in long queues for registration during the peak morning hours.

To mitigate this issue, a separate ABHA Counter has been setup at the OPD registration area of GB Pant Hospital. All new and follow-up patients visiting the OPD counter have been requested to carry their ABHA ID so that their demographic details can be scanned and printed on the OPD slip instead of manual entry. This will result in faster OPD registration.

Further, a QR Code Scan and Share Option is also available at the OPD entrance area of GB Pant Hospital which can be used by patients having any of the mentioned applications installed on their smartphone including ABHA app, Arogya Sethu, Paytm or eka.care available for IOS and Android. For more information, one may contact +919933262784.

## PRI members of GP Mannarghat happy for commencement of road project

**PORT BLAIR, DEC 3/--/** The Zilla Parishad Member, Mr. P Ummer, Panchayat Samiti Member, Mr. A Rajan, Pradhan, Smti. Sajida Banu and all PRI members of Gram Panchayat Mannarghat, South Andaman have expressed gratitude to Mr. Keshav Chandra, Chief Secretary, Mr. Kishore Kshirsagar Lakshman, Secretary APWD, Mr. Sunil Anchipaka, Deputy commissioner, South Andaman, Mr. Shivaraman Subramanian, CE, Mr. Tej Bahadur, SE, Mr. Subbaraj, EE, RCD and entire administration for commencement of tender process of long awaited project "Improvement & widening of SH-10 from Wimberlygunj to Wrightmyo under RCD Wimberlygunj".

### FINAL PRESS NOTICE

Whereas Shri. John Barla, Sanitary Mazdoor, S/o Agapit Barla, ward no. 13 have been unauthorizedly absenting himself from duty w.e.f 19/06/2017 without giving any intimation or taking prior permission and in this connection a Press Notice was issued vide no 1- 45/SS/Estt/1578 dated 16/08/2019.

Whereas a compliance report vide no SI-13/MC/94 dated 29/10/2021 received from the concerned Sanitary Inspector enclosing a copy of Reminder-I served to Shri John Barla, Sanitary Mazdoor. A Press Notice vide no 1-45/SS/Estt/MC/ 2046 dated 23/12/2021 was also released directing him to report duty within 07 days of publication of the notice but no response from the employee is received till date.

Shri John Barla, S/o Agapit Barla, Sanitary Mazdoor is once again directed to report for duty within 07 (Seven) days from the date of publication of this notice, with valid reason along with documentary proof, if any, for his unauthorized absence from duty failing which action under Sub-rule(1) of Rule 5 of the CCS (Temporary service) Rules, 1965 will be taken against him.

## Annual athletic meet of MGIS held with great enthusiasm



**PORT BLAIR, DEC 3/--/** The School's playground was overflowing with zeal, passion and excitement. The programme began with the arrival of the chief guest, Smti Smitha R, Secretary, Port Blair Municipal Council. The Principal extended a floral and formal welcome to the guests and dignitaries and shared a brief report of the School's sports activities and achievements of students. This was entailed by the hoisting of School Flag and declaration of the Meet Open by The chief guest, followed by the lighting of the flame by the School's Sports Teacher Mr. Edwin Moses. There after the school Head Boy Master Manish and Head Girl Ms. Uditia administered Oath to the School students. The students displayed a wide array of energetic and

bouncy sports events ranging from the Band display, March Past, track events, School drill, Aerobic Dance and Hoola Hoops. They mesmerized the audience with their energetic performances. The proud parents could be seen filled with happiness to see their child performing.

School's Chairman Mr. Nalin Gulechha, Secretary Mrs. Ranjana Gulechha and Principal Ms. Swapna CH, Parents and all the Teachers were present to raise the morale of the students. The Chief Guest awarded the medals and the certificates to the winners of the various sports events. The chief guest addressed the gathering. She emphasized the importance of sports in a child's life. She was delighted to see the tiny tots participating in the

Sports Event.

She also applauded the School Principal, Ms. CH Swapna for the school's outstanding achievements. The games organized for the Parents saw an impressive participation. At the end of the day, students departed with a clear smile on their faces. It was a day filled with sportsmanship, enthusiasm and memories to cherish. The Principal of this esteemed institution, Mrs. Ranjana Gulechha, Secretary MGIS thanked all the teachers for their cooperation and support and advised children to keep up their sportsman spirit. The Sports Day ended with the National Anthem.

The programme was co-ordinated and compared by Mr. Edwin Moses PET MGIS, Mr. Ganeshan and Ms. Vijiya.

## Mock drill on board ferry vessel



**PORT BLAIR, DEC 3/--/** In line with the continuous efforts of DSS for providing safe ship and safety of passengers, DSS conducted a Safety Mock drill on board MV Juhi on Friday. A large

number of local passengers availing the ferry services participated in the drill. A scenario of man overboard was created. Subsequent to the above created situation, an emergency alarm was raised by the vessel and all immediate precautionary measures were taken by the vessel for the safety of fellow passengers.

Proper look out were posted to locate the drifting person and the same was also informed to Afloat Communication Centre for shore

assistance. The Departmental Disaster Management Team along with Emergency Response Team was pressed into action and 2 rescue boats and 1 Disaster Management Boat was immediately deployed to incident site for assistance. The person went overboard was successfully rescued by the rescue team and initial first aid was given. The man overboard was immediately brought to Phoenix Bay Jetty for further medical assistance.

### AFFIDAVIT

By this deed I, the undersigned Sunanda Sur, previously called Sunanda Sur Halder, D/o Shri Ratan Sur, previously called Ratan Chandra Sur, doing House wife and resident of Bahadur Line-II, Ward No 11, Nayagaon, Port Blair, South Andaman District Solemnly declare:-

1. That for and on behalf of myself and remitter issue wholly renounce/relinquish and abandon the use of my former name/surname of Sunanda Sur Halder and in place thereof I do hereby assume from this date the my name/surname Sunanda Sur I and so that I and remitter issues may hereafter be called, known and distinguished not by my former name/surname, but assumed name/surname of Sunanda Sur.
2. That for the purpose of evidencing such my determination declare that I shall at all times hereafter in all records, deeds and writings and in all proceedings, dealings and transactions, private as well as upon all occasions whatsoever use and sign the my name of Sunanda Sur as my name/surname in place and in substitution of my former name/surname.
3. That I expressly authorize and request all persons in general and relatives and friends in particular, at all times hereafter to designate and address me, and remitter issues by such assumed name/surname of Sunanda Sur accordingly.
4. In witness whereof I have hereunto subscribed my former and adopted my name/surname of Sunanda Sur and I affix my signature and seal, if any, this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of December 2022.

Date: 02.12.2022  
Place: Port Blair

DEPONENT





Dr. Ashoke Roy, Director, RRCNE, (Centre) flanked in the left by Professor (Dr.) Anup Kr. Barman, Director, Medical Education, Assam, and in the right by Dr. Ranjan Choudhury, Advisor, Health Care Technology, NHSRC, New Delhi during the inauguration of the Consultation on 'A Sustainable Dialysis Care Ecosystem in the NER' in Guwahati today

**Only Sanatana Dharma followers should have stayed back after Partition: Giriraj**

BEGUSARAI, DEC 3/--/ Union minister Giriraj Singh on Saturday rued that at the time of "Partition based on religion", it was not ensured that "only



followers of Sanatana Dharma" stayed back in India. The firebrand BJP leader was venting his spleen over controversial remarks reportedly made by Assam leader Badruddin Ajmal, about the Hindu community, while reacting to the BJP's demands for a law for population control. "The country was divided in the name of religion. Had it been then ensured that only those who believe in Sanatana Dharma would stay back in India, we would not have to put up with abuses of people like Badruddin and (AIMIM chief) Asaduddin Owaisi", the Union Rural Development and Panchayati Raj minister told reporters in his Lok Sabha constituency of Begusarai. Maintaining that the country needed to control population growth, Singh also challenged "Badruddin and his ilk to speak up against China, which has for years had a strong population control law in place. (PTI)

**Kolkata Police books Paresh Rawal on CPI(M) leader's complaint**

KOLKATA, DEC 3/--/The Kolkata Police has booked actor Paresh Rawal under different sections of the IPC on a complaint filed by CPI(M) state secretary Md Salim, who alleged that he delivered "hate speech" against the Bengali community during an election rally of the BJP in Gujarat. A case has been registered against Rawal under IPC sections 153 (provocation with intent to cause riot), 153A (promoting enmity between different groups), 153B (propagates denial of rights to linguistic or racial groups), 504 (Intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of the peace) and 505 (statements intending public mischief), police said in a communication to Salim. Salim in his complaint to the Taltala police station on Thursday said he came across a video on various social media platforms featuring the actor giving a speech that could promote feelings of hatred against Bengalis. Sharing a copy of the communication by the Taltala police station officer-in-charge, Salim said he is "eagerly awaiting" the follow-up action by the Mamata Banerjee government. The police officer said in the communication that an investigation into the case was underway. Seeking the actor's prosecution, Salim claimed that Rawal had made an unsavoury reference to Bengalis linking gas cylinders with Bangladeshis, Rohingyas, Bengalis and fish. Rawal apologised on Friday following a huge backlash on the social media over his comments. "Of course, the fish is not the issue as Gujaratis do cook and eat fish. But let me clarify by Bengali I meant illegal Bangladeshi N Rohingya. But still if I have hurt your feelings and sentiments I do apologise," the 67-year-old actor and former BJP MP wrote on Twitter. Rawal had taken up the issue of gas cylinder prices, an emotive poll issue, at a BJP rally in Valsad district on Tuesday. "Gas cylinders are expensive, but their price will come down. People will get employment too. (PTI)



Netherlands beat USA 3-1 to qualify for quarter-finals in FIFA World Cup

NEW DELHI, DEC 3/--/The Indian Navy is looking at having a second indigenous aircraft carrier (IAC) and is set to procure a raft of other platforms including Predator drones from the US to bolster its overall military capability, Navy Chief Admiral R Hari Kumar said on Saturday in the backdrop of evolving regional security matrix and China's growing naval prowess. Addressing a press conference a day ahead of Navy Day, he said the plan to have a bigger indigenous aircraft carrier (IAC II) has been put on hold and the option of a repeat order of the recently commissioned IAC I (INS Vikrant) is being contemplated. The Chief of Naval Staff also said a timeline of 2047 has been set for making the force 'Atmanirbhar' (self-reliant) and highlighted various initiatives to meet the target including to indigenously produce a twin-engine deck-based fighter aircraft. Admiral Kumar also said that an exercise is underway in the force to shed the colonial past as "we strongly support the view that we have to get away from this 'Ghulami ki manskita' (slave

mentality). The Navy Chief also said that the Indian Navy is set to open all its branches for women from next year. On possible challenges from China, he asserted that the Navy keeps a strong vigil over movements of various Chinese military research and fishing vessels in the Indian Ocean Region. Listing initiatives to bolster the Navy's operational prowess, he said a draft cabinet note is being prepared for the proposed indigenous twin-engine deck-based aircraft, adding the plan is to have a prototype of the jet by 2026 while its production would start by 2032. The Navy celebrates December 4 as Navy Day to commemorate its daring attack on Karachi harbour and its decisive victory in the 1971 Indo-Pak war. Admiral Kumar said the Navy is contemplating whether to go for indigenous aircraft carrier (IAC) II or prefer a repeat order for the IAC I. The Navy has been making a strong push for having the IAC-II having a displacement of 65,000 tonnes which was estimated to cost close to Rs 50,000 with the envisaged specifications.

"We are still working on what size it should be and what its capabilities should be. Right now we have put a hold on it because we have just commissioned INS Vikrant. We are quite happy with the ship. The way the ship performed in the trial," Admiral Kumar said when asked about the IAC II. India's first indigenously-built aircraft carrier INS Vikrant (IAC I) was commissioned in September. The aircraft carrier, with a displacement of 40,000 tonnes, was built at a cost of around Rs 23,000 crore. People familiar with the issue said the cost of building the IAC II was a major discussion point as there has been a view in the defence establishment that the Navy should focus on enhancing its fleet of submarines rather than spending close to Rs 50,000 crore on the aircraft carrier. "It (IAC I) was 'Atmanirbharta' (self-reliant) in full bloom. So we are also currently examining whether we should look at the repeat order of the IAC I instead of going for the IAC II to capitalize on the equities which are available to the country," he said. "It is right now at the discussion stage.

## Himanta announces additional Rs 5 crore for Assam Agitation Welfare Trust

GUWAHATI, DEC 3/--/Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday announced an additional Rs five crore for the Assam Agitation Welfare Trust. The trust was formed with an initial corpus of Rs five crore and with the chief minister's announcement of additional Rs five crore, the total amount at its disposal will be Rs 10 crore. A decision to this effect was taken at a meeting, chaired by the chief minister, to discuss matters related to future tasks as well as measures required for strengthening the trust, an official release stated. Sarma said the amount would be utilised to provide various relief measures to family members of martyrs of Assam Agitation and those grievously injured during the agitation. The chief minister also directed the Assam Accord Implementation Department to make an online database of those who were hit by bullets or were seriously injured during their participation in Assam Agitation. The state had witnessed a six-year agitation against illegal migrants from neighbouring Bangladesh which ended with the signing of the Assam Accord in 1985 between the Centre, state government and All Assam Students' Union (AASU) Minister of Assam Accord Implementation Department Atul Bora, Finance Minister Ajanta Neog, AASU chief advisor Samujjal Kumar Bhattacharjee, its president Dipanka Nath, Assam Chief Secretary Paban Kumar Borthakur attended the meeting. (PTI)



Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma addressing the meeting

## Police complaint lodged against Ajmal; parties link his comments to Guj polls

GUWAHATI, DEC 3/--/Police complaints were lodged in Assam on Saturday by Assam Jatiya Parishad (AJP) against AIUDEF MP Badruddin Ajmal for his purported comments targeting women and the Hindu community. AJP vice-president Dulu Ahmed filed the complaint at Hatigaon police station here and in Hailakandi by the party's chief convenor there. The police confirmed receiving the complaint and said investigation has been started in the matter. Ahmed demanded immediate action against Ajmal, a Lok Sabha MP, for his comments as it has led to "widespread reactions in the society and could ignite communal violence". He sought an enquiry against Ajmal and demanded stringent measures against him as per law. Ajmal in an interview to a media house on Friday had commented on women and Hindu men as well as Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, purportedly as a rejoinder to his remarks on love jihad. The AIUDF chief, who is revered as a 'maulana', courted controversy by reportedly advising Hindus to marry young to produce more children like Muslims. His political detractors linked his remarks to the Gujarat Assembly poll and alleged that the AIUDF supremo was toeing the BJP line to "rescue" the party, which is in power in the western state. The TMC even burnt his effigy here. The ruling

BJP roundly criticised the remarks attributed to the perfume baron. The saffron party spokesperson Ranjib Sarma said "Ajmal and his ilk view women as mere objects. The words he has used against our chief minister should be challenged by the entire civilized society." He also demanded that Ajmal be stripped of his 'maulana' title. Sarma also questioned the timing of the comments as it came on a day when a committee was formed by the Assam government to look into problems of Satras (Vaishnavite monasteries) submitted its interim report. The report pointed to largescale encroachment of Satra land mostly by migrant Muslims who form Ajmal's vote bank, the BJP spokesperson claimed. BJP legislator Diganta Kalita urged the Muslim community to stand up against Ajmal and maintained that people making such comments should be "socially and politically ostracised". State Congress president Bhupen Bora was quick to sniff a conspiracy between Ajmal and the chief minister in creating the "controversy". "Ajmal and Himanta Biswa Sarma are conspiring together to divert attention from the core issues facing the people and to keep them engaged elsewhere," he maintained. Leader of the Opposition in state Assembly Debabrata Saikia (Cong) also maintained that there is need to look into whether there is any

connection between BJP and AIUDF leading to Ajmal's comments. The Assam police should take suo moto cognisance against Ajmal for not only the remarks against women and a community, but also for the specific comments against the chief minister, he said. "It is strange that the Hindu organisations have not approached the police yet," Saikia added. Rajiv Dal general secretary Azizur Rahman questioned why Ajmal, who hails from a Bengali Muslim family, chose to speak in Hindi during the interview. "Gujarat assembly election is on and BJP's boat is sinking there. BJP needs religious polarization to save itself and it has enlisted Ajmal for its rescue. That's why he spoke in Hindi," he said. Rahman said that as a religious preacher Ajmal is aware of the high status women are accorded in Islam and yet he made the "disparaging remarks against them and equated them with child producing machines". The Trinamool Congress staged a demonstration in front of its office here and burnt an effigy of Ajmal. "We will not tolerate such comments against women and Hindus. Ajmal is saying these things at the dictates of BJP with an eye on the Gujarat polls. We demand his immediate arrest," the party's spokesperson Dilip Sharma said. (PTI)

**Bengal: 3 killed, several injured in blast near venue of Abhishek Banerjee's rally**

CONTAI, DEC 3/--/At least three people were killed and several others injured in a blast near the venue of senior Trinamool Congress leader Abhishek Banerjee's rally in West Bengal's Purba Medinipur district, police said on Saturday. The incident took place in Block 2 of Arjunagar in Bhupatinagar area, 1.5 km from Contai town where TMC national general secretary Banerjee's public meeting venue, a police officer said. "The blast was reported in a house around 11.15 pm on Friday and three bodies were recovered on Saturday morning. A few others are injured. The cause of the blast is yet to be ascertained and further investigation is underway. "The impact was so powerful that the mud house with a thatched roof was blown off in the incident," the senior officer of Bhupatinagar Police Station said. The three deceased were identified as Rajkumar Manna, who is reportedly a TMC worker, Deb Kumar Manna and Biswajit Gayen, he said. A forensic team later reached the spot and collected samples and a huge police team was deployed there. BJP national vice president Dilip Ghosh held the TMC responsible for the incident and said that "only bomb-making industry is flourishing in the state". (PTI)

## Seminar on International Day for Elimination of Violence against Women

From page-1 Smt G. Mini, Ld. Advocate on Dowry Prohibition Act, Domestic Violence Act, POCSO & JJ Act and Mr. Joshi Philip, State Institute of Education on Right to Education, Pre & Post Matric Scholarship. The School Principal, Dr. S. K. Jagpal greeted the dignitaries as well as proposed a vote of thanks for appraising the students as well as the teaching faculty about various aspects of Social Welfare Acts and Schemes respectively

## Plans on IAC II put on hold for now; examining option of repeat order of INS Vikrant: Navy Chief Admiral Kumar



We have not yet firmed up our mind nor have we taken it up to the government," Admiral Kumar said. He said the recent global events have amply underscored that this vision cannot be met in letter and spirit if the force remains dependent on others for its security needs. "Maintaining credible deterrence, while remaining ready to go into harm's way to protect, preserve, and promote our national interests

will remain our principal priority," Admiral Kumar said. "Our vision of being a 'combat ready, credible, cohesive, and future-proof force' underpins this aspect," he said. "To that end, the Government has clearly spelt out the need for AtmaNirbharta. The Indian Navy, on our part, has made an unequivocal commitment to be fully Aatmanirbhar by 2047," he said. (PTI)



## IMF says it fully supports India's G20 agenda

WASHINGTON, DEC 3 /--/ The IMF "fully supports" the G20 agenda of India, which is planning to use the ongoing global crises as an opportunity to seek consensus on issues that require urgent attention, a senior official from the international financial body has said.

India formally assumed the G20 Presidency on Thursday. "They (India) are putting together a collective agenda for a much more prosperous future," Ceyla Pazarbasioglu, Director of the Strategy and Policy Review department at the International Monetary Fund (IMF), told a group of reporters ahead of her trip to China and India next week. "They (India) plan to use the ongoing (global) crises as an opportunity to seek consensus on issues that really require urgent attention," she said on Thursday. Pazarbasioglu was apparently referring to the food and energy crises due to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war. The IMF "fully supports" the G20 agenda of India, she said.

The theme of India's G20 presidency is "One Earth, One Family, One Future." "This means that India is prioritising the need to set aside differences and work at the local level, the federal level, the international level," explained the IMF official. India, she said, played an important role in negotiating the G20 declaration in Bali, Indonesia. "As you know, we haven't been able to have a declaration or a communique in the past two ministerial meetings, they were chair summaries. I will not go into details on how many hours those took. But

so this was a major achievement, which included very strong language, that most members condemned the war in Ukraine," she said. The G20's Bali Declaration last month acknowledged differences among members on the Russia-Ukraine war but stressed that it was essential to adhere to international law, including the protection of civilians caught in conflicts.

The members of the grouping made it clear that they were against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and sought "peaceful resolution of conflicts." "Today's era must not be of war," the declaration said, echoing the remark made by Prime Minister Modi during his bilateral meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin on the margins of the SCO summit in September. In addition to continuing with the G20 agenda, India has also announced its set of priorities which are important for the global community, Pazarbasioglu said. "There are continuing efforts, be it on the debt side, be it on the tax side and other priorities," Pazarbasioglu said. At the same time, India has also identified its own initiatives that they want to showcase. "That's mainly the digital public infrastructure where India has been leading the way. That is very important for good governance, and that's very important in the current circumstances where we have a lot of inequality and concerns about just or transparent public revenues and spending," she said. "This digital public infrastructure will be a key theme of India's G20 presidency," she said. (PTI)

## Washington condemns shooting at Pak embassy in Kabul

ISLAMABAD, DEC 3 /--/ The United States has condemned Friday's attack on the Pakistani embassy in Afghanistan's capital in which a senior Pakistani diplomat escaped unhurt but one of his Pakistani guards was wounded.

The attack comes amid rising tensions between the South Asian neighbours over Islamabad's claims that anti-Pakistan government forces are organising terrorist attacks from hideouts in Afghanistan. Shots were fired at the embassy from a nearby building by an as-yet known assailant or assailants. Shortly after the shooting, Pakistan's Prime Minister Shabbaz Sharif took to Twitter, calling the attack an "assassination attempt" against Pakistan's head of mission in Afghanistan, Ubaid-ur-Rehman Nizamani. Pakistan repatriated the wounded guard by helicopter and he was being treated at a hospital on Saturday. The embassy attack came days after Pakistan's deputy Foreign Minister Hina Rabbani Khar flew to Kabul to hold talks with Afghan Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi on a range of issues, including the latest threat from Pakistani Taliban who recently ended a monthslong ceasefire with Pakistan and asked fighters to resume attacks across the country. In Washington, US

State Department spokesman Ned Price on Friday said the United States condemned the Embassy attack, telling reporters "we offer our sympathies and wish a quick recovery to those affected by the violence". The United States is "deeply concerned by the attack on a foreign diplomat and we call for a full and transparent investigation," Price said. The US charg d'affaires for Afghanistan, Karen Decker also condemned the attack on Nizamani in a tweet Saturday. "Outraged at attack on my diplomatic counterpart @PakinAfg, Ubaid Nizamani; I am grateful he is safe & wish a quick recovery to the brave security guard who was injured. I join the call for a swift, thorough and transparent investigation," Decker wrote. Muttaqi on Friday evening called Pakistan's Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari to condemn the "terrorist attack" targeting Nizamani, according to a Pakistani Foreign Ministry statement. Muttaqi assured Bhutto-Zardari that "the Afghan government will bring the perpetrators of this heinous attack to justice swiftly," the statement said.

Bhutto-Zardari thanked Muttaqi and said the "Taliban government must prevent the terrorists from undermining relations between Pakistan and

Afghanistan," the statement said. It said Pakistan on its part reiterated its unwavering commitment to fight terrorism, saying "Pakistan will be undeterred by such cowardly attacks". Friday's shooting comes a day after Pakistan demanded Afghanistan's Taliban government prevent terrorist attacks being organized from their soil by Pakistani Taliban, who are hiding in Afghanistan. Pakistan made the request after a suicide bomber dispatched by the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) group blew himself up near a truck carrying police officers on their way to protect polio workers near Quetta, the capital of Baluchistan province. A police officer and three civilians were killed in Wednesday's attack. The Pakistani Taliban are a separate group but allied with the Afghan Taliban, who seized power in their country last year as the US and NATO troops were in the final stages of their pullout from Afghanistan. On Friday, Kabul's police chief spokesman Khalid Zadran said police had detained a suspect at the building from where the shots were fired Friday. Also Friday, a prominent politician and warlord, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, escaped unhurt in a separate attack in Kabul, his office said. (AP)

## Up to 11 per cent of Covid cases that needed hospitalisations had lung scarring: US study

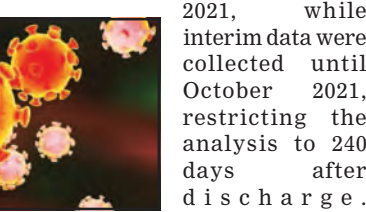
WASHINGTON, DEC 3 /--/ Up to 11 per cent of Covid cases that needed hospitalisation had lung scarring which may be irreversible and could get worse over time, according to a study conducted in the United States.

The study, published in the American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine, sought to determine the percentage of Covid-19 patients, with various degrees of severity, discharged from hospital who had a type of fibrotic lung damage, known as interstitial lung disease, that requires follow-up care. Interstitial lung disease refers to a broad group of diseases that are characterized by lung scarring, including idiopathic lung fibrosis. This scarring makes it difficult to breathe and get oxygen into the bloodstream. Lung damage caused by this may be irreversible and get worse over time. "We estimated that up to 11 per cent of hospitalised Covid patients had fibrotic patterning after recovery from the acute illness," said corresponding author Iain Stewart, an advanced research fellow (Rayne Foundation) at the Margaret Turner Warwick Centre for Fibrosing Lung Disease, National Heart and Lung Institute, Imperial

College, London. "Whilst many people experience prolonged breathlessness, the major implication of these findings is that a substantial number of people discharged from a Covid hospitalisation may also have fibrotic abnormalities in their lungs. These results should help concentrate efforts to closely follow at-risk patients. This follow-up should include repeat radiological imaging and lung function testing," said Stewart.

For some people, these fibrotic patterns may be stable or get resolved. For others, they may lead to long-term lung fibrosis progression, worse quality of life and decreased life expectancy. Early detection of progression is essential to improve outcomes, he said. The study authors examined evidence of abnormal lung patterns on follow-up CT scans from Covid-19 patients discharged from the hospital which could be suggestive of interstitial lung disease. The characteristics of the 209 study participants who had CT scans were applied to a wider post-

hospitalization cohort of almost 3,500 people without a CT to stratify the risk of residual lung abnormalities. Interim study participants were discharged from the hospital by the end of March 2021, while interim data were collected until October 2021, restricting the analysis to 240 days after discharge. Researchers identified patients with thoracic CTs from the PHOSP-Covid database.



The Post-Hospitalisation Covid-19 Research Study (PHOSP-COVID) is a consortium of leading researchers and clinicians from across the UK working together to understand and improve long-term health outcomes for patients who have been in hospital with confirmed or suspected Covid-19.

The primary outcome that the scientists sought to determine was the prevalence of residual lung abnormalities in Covid patients discharged from hospitals. Analyses were performed to determine participants' risk factors for residual lung abnormalities in those who did not

JAKARTA, DEC 3 /--/ A strong earthquake shook parts of Indonesia's main island of Java on Saturday, causing panic but only minor damage just two weeks after an equally powerful quake killed hundreds. The US Geological Survey said the magnitude 5.7 quake was centred about 18 kilometers (11 miles) southeast of Banjar, a city between West Java and Central Java provinces, at a depth of 112 kilometers (70 miles). One resident was injured in Selaawi village of West Java's Garut district, and at least four houses and a school were damaged, said Suharyanto, the National Disaster Management Agency head who goes by a single name. He said authorities were still collecting information about the damage. A magnitude 5.6 earthquake on Nov. 21 killed at least 331 people and injured nearly 600 in West Java's Cianjur city. It was the deadliest in Indonesia since a 2018 quake and tsunami in Sulawesi killed about 4,340 people. It also struck at a shallower depth of 10 kilometers (6.2 miles). Many in Garut are still haunted by the disaster that devastated Cianjur and set off landslides, the district chief, Rudi Gunawan, said in a television interview. "The earthquake has caused extremely panic among people amid monsoon downpour," he said, adding that his administration had alerted hospitals, health centers and ambulances to be ready to treat possible victims.

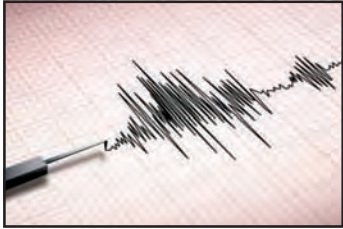
Apart from the one injured, by Saturday evening there were no other casualties reported from all 42 villages in Garut, one of the closest district to the epicenter, Gunawan said. Many houses suffered minor damage. Dwikorita Karnawati, head of Indonesia's Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysical Agency, said there was no danger of a tsunami but warned of possible aftershocks. The agency put a preliminary magnitude at 6.4. Variations in early measurements are common. High-rises in Jakarta, the capital, swayed for more than 10 seconds and some ordered evacuations, sending streams of people into the streets. Even two-story homes shook in Central Java's cities of Kulon Progo, Bantul, Kebumen and Cilacap.

Earthquakes occur frequently across the sprawling archipelago nation, but it is uncommon for them to be felt in Jakarta. The country of more than 270 million people is frequently struck by earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and tsunamis because of its location on the arc of volcanoes and fault lines in the Pacific Basin known as the "Ring of Fire." In 2004, an extremely powerful Indian Ocean quake set off a tsunami that killed more than 230,000 people in a dozen countries, most of them in Indonesia's Aceh province. (AP)

receive a CT scan. These risks were used to estimate prevalence in the overall population hospitalized by the end of March 2021. According to the authors, the study offered the largest assessment of the prevalence of residual lung abnormalities in hospitalized individuals to date and is consistent with findings from several smaller studies that demonstrate persistent radiological patterns and impaired gas transfer during the extended follow-up of patients with Covid-19.

At the time of this interim analysis, it is not possible to determine whether the observed residual lung abnormalities represent early interstitial lung disease with potential for progression, or whether they reflect pneumonitis that may be stable or resolve over time, the study said. Pneumonitis refers to inflammation in the lungs.

"The next phase of the study is a primary analysis, which will be performed at 12 months. At that time, we will also use linked electronic health records of hospital admissions and mortality data to support our analyses. We expect to have the final results in early 2023," it said. (PTI)



against Burma (Myanmar), the People's Republic of China, Cuba, Eritrea, Iran, Nicaragua, the DPRK, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan as Countries of Particular Concern under the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 for having engaged in or tolerated particularly severe violations of religious freedom," he said. Simultaneously, Blinken also placed Algeria, the Central African Republic, Comoros and Vietnam on the Special Watch List for engaging in or tolerating severe violations of religious freedom.

The US also designated al-Shabab, Boko Haram, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, the Houthis, ISIS-Greater Sahara, ISIS-West Africa, Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin, the Taliban, and the Wagner Group

based on its actions in the Central African Republic as "Entities of Particular Concern". "Our announcement of these designations is in keeping with our values and interests to protect national security and to advance human rights around the globe. Countries that effectively safeguard this and other human rights are more peaceful, stable, prosperous and more reliable partners of the United States than those that do not," Blinken said. Blinken said the US will continue to carefully monitor the status of freedom of religion or belief in every country around the world and advocate for those facing religious persecution or discrimination. "We will also regularly engage countries about our concerns regarding limitations

## US designates Pak, China, Myanmar and 9 others as 'countries of particular concern' for religious freedom violation

WASHINGTON, DEC 3 /--/ The United States has designated 12 countries, including China, Cuba, Eritrea, Iran, Nicaragua, the DPRK, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan as Countries of Particular Concern under the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 for having engaged in or tolerated particularly severe violations of religious freedom," he said. Simultaneously, Blinken also placed Algeria, the Central African Republic, Comoros and Vietnam on the Special Watch List for engaging in or tolerating severe violations of religious freedom.

The US also designated al-Shabab, Boko Haram, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, the Houthis, ISIS-Greater Sahara, ISIS-West Africa, Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin, the Taliban, and the Wagner Group

## 'India is a part of me': Google and Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai

WASHINGTON, DEC 3 /--/ "India is a part of me and I carry it with me wherever I go," Google and Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai said, as he received the prestigious Padma Bhushan award from the Indian envoy to the US. Indian-American Pichai was awarded the Padma Bhushan for 2022 in the

Trade and Industry category. The Madurai-born Pichai was named one of the 17 awardees earlier this year. He received India's third-highest civilian award in the presence of his close family members in San Francisco on Friday. "I am deeply grateful to the Indian government and the people of India for this immense honour. It is incredibly meaningful to be honoured in this way by the country that shaped me," 50-year-old Pichai said while accepting the award from India's Ambassador to the US, Taranjit Singh Sandhu. "India is a part of me. I carry it with me wherever I go. (Unlike this beautiful award which I will keep somewhere safe)," he said. "I was fortunate to grow up in a family that cherished learning and knowledge, with parents who sacrificed a lot to make sure I had opportunities to explore my interests," Pichai said. India's Consul General in San Francisco, T V Nagendra Prasad, was also present during the event. "Delighted to hand over Padma Bhushan to CEO @Google & Alphabet @sundarpichai in San Francisco. Sundar's inspirational journey from Madurai to Mountain View, strengthening India-US economic & tech. ties, reaffirms Indian talent's contribution to global innovation," Sandhu tweeted.

He said that Pichai represented the limitless possibilities of technology for transformation. "He has been making commendable efforts towards making digital tools, and skills accessible to across various segments of the society in different



parts of the globe," he said. Recalling Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of technology that combines 3Ss - speed, simplicity and service, Sandhu hoped that Google would make full use of the digital revolution happening in India. Pichai said that it had been amazing to return to India

many times over the years to see the rapid pace of technological change. The innovations created in India are benefitting people around the world - from digital payments to voice technology, he said. "I look forward to continuing the great partnership between Google and India, as we work together to bring the benefits of technology to more people," he said. Businesses are seizing the opportunities for digital transformation, and more people have access to the internet than ever before, including in rural villages, Pichai said. "Prime Minister Modi's Digital India vision has certainly been an accelerator for that progress and I'm proud that Google continues to invest in India, partnering with governments, businesses, and communities over two transformative decades," he said. "Every new technology that arrived at our doorstep made our lives better. And that experience put me on a path to Google, and the chance to help build technology that improves the lives of people all over the world," he said. On India taking over the G20 presidency, Pichai said: "It's an amazing opportunity to build consensus on strengthening the global economy by advancing an internet that is open, connected, secure, and works for everyone. That's a goal we share, and are committed to advancing with you." India formally assumed the G20 Presidency on Thursday. "I am grateful for the opportunity to do this work together and bring the benefits of technology to more people," Pichai said. (PTI)

## Indian-origin charity worker collects honour from Buckingham Palace

LONDON, DEC 3 /--/ An Indian-origin businessman and charity worker has collected his Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE) honour at an investiture ceremony at Buckingham Palace in London.

Mohan Mansigani, who is from north London, was conferred the honour for charitable services to healthcare in the late Queen Elizabeth II's 2021 Birthday Honours list in June last year. The trustee of the St John Ambulance charity collected the OBE from Princess Anne, the Princess Royal, St John's Ambulance Commandant-in-Chief (Youth). "I have been lucky enough to give something back to the country that has given me so much through my work at St John and the Migration Museum," said

Mansigani, who is also a Fellow of the UK's Institute of Chartered Accountants and joined St John Ambulance's board six years ago. "As the son of immigrants and as a boy from Islington, being honoured in this way is beyond my wildest dreams. I would like to dedicate this award to my wife Renu Mansigani who has selflessly taught young children human values over the last 20 years through the Mill Hill Sai Centre and is truly worthy of recognition," he said. Mansigani is known as a creative finance director with extensive private equity experience who has played a key leadership role in establishing Casual Dining Group, previously known as Tragus, which

operated popular UK restaurant brands such as Caf Rouge and Strada. "My father came to London in 1951 with the aim of supporting his family back in India, thinking that he would return as soon as he achieved this goal. In the event he stayed and, from humble beginnings, built a successful business and raised a young family," Mansigani tells St John Ambulance a charity providing first aid and emergency medical services primarily through volunteers. "I was the first in my family to go to university and went on to qualify as a chartered accountant. From there I had a career as finance director of a number of restaurant chains including Costa Coffee and Cafe Rouge," he said. (PTI)

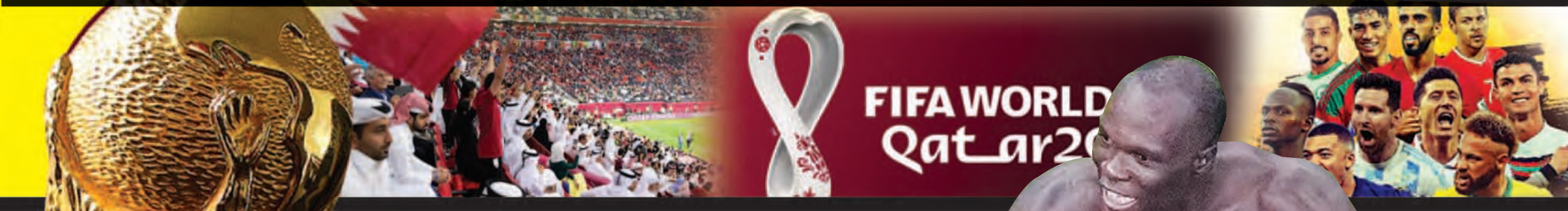
## Iranian state media: Construction begins on nuclear plant

CAIRO, DEC 3 /--/ Iran on Saturday began construction on a new nuclear power plant in the country's southwest, Iranian state TV announced, amid tensions with the US over sweeping sanctions imposed after Washington pulled out of the Islamic Republic's nuclear deal with world powers. The announcement also comes as Iran has been rocked by nationwide anti-government protests that began after the death of a young woman in police custody and have challenged the country's theocratic government. The new 300-megawatt plant, known as Karoon, will take eight years to

build and cost around USD 2 billion, the country's state television and radio agency reported. The plant will be located in Iran's oil-rich Khuzestan province, near its western border with Iraq, it said.

The construction site's inauguration ceremony was attended by Mohammed Esلمي, head of Iran's civilian Atomic Energy Organisation, who first unveiled construction plans for Karoon in April. Iran has one nuclear power plant at its southern port of Bushehr that went online in 2011 with help from Russia, but also several underground nuclear facilities. (AP)





# Cameroon stun Brazil but crash out of World Cup



**TODAY'S MATCH**  
(Round of 16)  
**France vs Poland**  
- 8.30 PM IST  
**England vs Senegal**  
- 12.30 AM IST

- Vincent Aboubakar was the hero for Cameroon once again as his header handed the Indomitable Lions their first win of the 2022 World Cup
- Cameroon braved the odds to stun World Cup favourites Brazil in their final group game in Qatar
- The win brings an end to Cameroon's unwanted record of failing to pick a win at the Mundial since 2002

**DOHA, DEC 3 /--/** Vincent Aboubakar headed in a stoppage-time winner and was then sent off as Cameroon claimed a memorable 1-0 victory over favourites Brazil at the World Cup on Friday, but still failed to go through to the last 16. Aboubakar, who had come in to captain Rigobert Song's team, connected with a cross from substitute Jerome Ngom Mbekeli to break the deadlock in the 92nd minute at Doha's Lusail Stadium. He was booked for removing his shirt in the wild celebrations that followed and, having already been cautioned, had to leave his teammates to see out the remainder of the game. They did so to record a famous win but Switzerland's 3-2 win over Serbia at the same time meant the Swiss advanced from Group G

along with already-qualified Brazil. Having won their first two matches in Qatar, Brazil topped the group and advance to a last-16 tie against South Korea when their many key players who were rested for this game will return. Coach Tite sent out a second-string side and the result was Brazil's first defeat in the group stage of a World Cup since 1998, when they were beaten by Norway. Tite's mind was on the knockout stage here as he made nine changes, including handing a start to 39-year-old Dani Alves, making him Brazil's oldest ever men's international player. The spine of Brazil's second-string side still featured Manchester City's Ederson in goal, Real Madrid's Eder Militao in central defence,

Fabinho of Liverpool in midfield, and Gabriel Jesus of Arsenal supported by Rodrygo up front. They also had the 21-year-old Gabriel Martinelli on the left and the Arsenal prospect was their standout performer. He almost scored the opening goal in the 14th minute when he leapt unmarked but saw his header tipped over by Cameroon 'keeper Devis Epassy. Martinelli also threatened in first-half stoppage time with a dribble across the edge of the area and a shot that Epassy turned behind. It was a piece of play reminiscent of Neymar, who is still recovering from the sprained ankle that forced him off in the opening 2-0 win over Serbia but watched the action here from just behind the Brazilian bench. The Brazil fans, who unfurled

a banner with a "Get Well Soon" message for Pele, cheered loudly when Neymar appeared on screens inside the enormous stadium. Needing a win, Cameroon almost went in front in first-half stoppage time when a Bryan Mbeumo header forced a flying save from Ederson. Brazil had won all seven previous meetings with African opponents at the World Cup, including beating Cameroon in 1994 and again in 2014, and Martinelli was their most likely source of a goal. He forced Epassy to tip over another strike that was arcing towards the top corner early in the second half, and the Cameroon shot-stopper -- continuing in place of Andre Onana who was dropped for unspecified disciplinary reasons -- turned a Militao shot

around the post moments later. Eager to study all his attacking options, Tite sent on the Flamengo duo of Everton Ribeiro and Pedro, but he also saw Alex Telles come off hurt in the second half. Telles is the third Brazil full-back to succumb to injury at the tournament after Danilo and Alex Sandro. At this rate Alves, a year short of his 40th birthday, will have a further role to play in Qatar. Most importantly Brazil will hope to have Neymar back soon but it remains to be seen if he will feature against South Korea on Monday. Aboubakar grabbed the late winner just when a goalless draw looked the most likely outcome, and Cameroon deserve huge credit for taking four points from such a difficult group even if they now go home. (AFP)

## Mbappe and Lewandowski face off as France take on Poland at World Cup

**DOHA, DEC 3 /--/** There is arguably no more thrilling player at this World Cup than Kylian Mbappe, who leads France into their last-16 clash on Sunday with a Poland side whose own hopes of pulling off a famous upset will depend to a large extent on Robert Lewandowski. It is a sobering thought that Mbappe, not 24 until later this month, may not yet be at the peak of his powers but he has already scored seven goals in 10



appearances at the World Cup. That tally includes one in the 2018 final when he was still a teenager as France beat Croatia in Moscow. His mission now is to help his country become the first to retain the World Cup since Brazil, with an even younger Pele, did so in 1962. Mbappe has already scored three times in Qatar, including a brace in a 2-1 victory against Denmark that secured qualification for the last 16, and there is a belief he is thriving as the undisputed star of Didier Deschamps' side. The situation is different to that of Paris Saint-Germain, where he shares the limelight with Lionel Messi and Neymar, and in that sense it may be that Karim Benzema's withdrawal due to injury on the eve of the tournament does no harm to French hopes. "Kylian has no ego,"

insisted Deschamps a few days ago, going against the perception of Mbappe in the context of PSG. "He is a decisive player for us and his performances put him in the spotlight. He is not 18 anymore. He has experience now." It wasn't just Mbappe -- who now has as many international goals as Zinedine Zidane -- that France missed as a second-string team lost 1-0 to Tunisia on Wednesday, a result that did not stop them topping their group. He will be back along with the likes of Hugo Lloris, Antoine Griezmann and Olivier Giroud as France and Poland meet at a major tournament for the first time since the 1982 World Cup. "Kylian is not the same player or person as in 2018," said Griezmann on Friday when asked about Mbappe's role in a squad hit by injuries to several key players before the tournament. "He is much more a part of the squad now. He speaks a lot and has fun. He knows that the media, fans and even his teammates will be watching everything that he does but he is beyond reproach." France are clear favourites for Sunday's game but there is the memory of what happened in the last 16 at last year's European Championship, when Mbappe missed the crucial penalty in a shoot-out defeat to Switzerland. Poland only just scraped through their group ahead of Mexico on goal difference and Lewandowski's strike -- his first World Cup goal -- in the win over Saudi Arabia was therefore crucial. "I'm aware it might be my last World Cup and I wanted to be able to say that I've played and scored at World Cups," he said after that game. (AFP)

## Ronaldo explains spat with South Korean player during Portugal loss



**Doha, Dec 3 /--/** Cristiano Ronaldo said he was involved in a verbal spat with a South Korean player who criticised him for failing to leave the field quickly enough when he was substituted during Portugal's 2-1 World Cup defeat on Friday. Portugal still topped Group H despite the result, which also sent South Korea into the last 16, but Ronaldo looked annoyed as he slowly walked off when his number went up in the 65th minute. "It happened when I was substituted. The Korean player was telling me to go off more quickly and I told him to be quiet, because he hasn't got any authority," Ronaldo told reporters. "If I wasn't going quickly

enough, it was up to the referee to say so. There shouldn't be any controversy, it was just in the heat of the moment." Portugal coach Fernando Santos said: "He was angry with the player from Korea and everyone saw that. "The player was insulting him, telling him to go away (get off the pitch) so that's why he was angry and everyone saw that. "I saw the interaction with the Korean player and have no doubt about it." South Korean midfielder Hwang In-beom attempted to play down the controversy. "I didn't see it, I was too tired," he said. "I was looking at the ground, so I didn't see it and I have nothing to say." (AFP)

## USA trail 0-2 at break

**DOHA, DEC 3 /--/** Memphis Depay opened the scoring for Netherlands, slotting the ball into the net with a shot from inside the box. Right on the cusp of half-time, Daley Blind swept in Netherlands' second to put his team 2-0 ahead. USA would be disappointed to be 0-2 down having produced a number of great attacking moves in the first-half.



## Top-order composition in focus as Shikhar Dhawan, KL Rahul jostle for opening spot

**MIRPUR, DEC 3 /--/** A consistent Shikhar Dhawan and a supremely talented KL Rahul will battle it out for the opener's slot even as a top-heavy Indian batting line-up will aim for transformation and show more intent against a gutsy Bangladesh in the three-match ODI series, starting this Sunday. Throw a fabulously consistent young turk Shubman Gill (rested for this series) into the mix, and coach Rahul Dravid will struggle to fit in all the boxes of this jigsaw puzzle called Indian top-order. The focus for the next one year will primarily be on ODIs and just like the T20Is, India's approach in the 50-over format needs a sea change. Sometimes having a plethora of options isn't actually a good headache to have as it creates more confusion

among the rank and file of the team. When there are similar skill set options, the coach tries to give everyone equal opportunities but it results in not having a settled line-up and this is not an ideal situation when a marquee event is round the corner. Currently, the Indian white ball squad is now going through that particular phase. A few years back, Rohit Sharma and Shikhar Dhawan were automatic picks as India's preferred ODI opening pair with hardly any questions asked or their spots being debated. But Dhawan's slow approach in the Powerplay overs and the emergence of Gill as a potent 50-over opener is bound to throw up possibilities. KL Rahul, during the last phase of Ravi Shastri's coaching stint played a few games in the middle-order but he

loves to bat at the top and has had a fair amount of success too. Ironically, the numbers in the face of it will not give a clear indication as to who should be Rohit's opening partner for the series. In the 19 ODI innings that Dhawan has opened for India in 2022, he had a poor strike-rate of 75.11. While between 2016-18, it used to be 101 and between 2019-21, it dipped but was still a steady 91. Rahul, who has five hundred and 10 fifties in 45 ODIs with a healthy strike-rate 85 plus and an impressive average of 45, looks a better candidate. For the opening match though, in case the team management wants to give rest to a jet-lagged Dhawan, who has flown all the way from Down Under to join the team in Mirpur, Rahul will certainly join Rohit at the top.

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