

REVERBERATION

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06 page

A weekly echoing the mood of the people, comes to you on every Monday

PM Modi to inaugurate Kanpur Metro on Dec. 28

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the completed section of Kanpur Metro rail project on December 28.

He will also inaugurate the Bina-Panki multiproduct pipeline project and attend the 54th convocation ceremony of IIT Kanpur.

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO), in a statement, said: "Improving urban mobil-

contd. page-5



Chief Secretary visits Shaheed Dweep; takes stock of functioning of various Departments



Shaheed Dweep, Dec. 26

The Chief Secretary, A&N Administration, Shri. Jitendra Narain visited

Shaheed Dweep and held a meeting today with officials of various Departments of the

contd. page-5

DEFENCE OF ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS EXERCISE (DANX-21)



Port Blair, 25 Dec:

Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC) conducted the third edition of Defence of Andaman and Nicobar Islands 2021 (DANX-21), a multi domain, multi

service exercise spanning over five days from 20th to 24 Dec 21. The exercise saw participation of all the four components of ANC along with assets and accretional forces ex-Army, Navy and Air Force

in validating rapid response capabilities of the command in a network centric environment.

The exercise commenced with

contd. page-5

Two positive cases detected during test conducted on incoming flight passengers

Port Blair, Dec. 26

During the RT-PCR test conducted on 429 passengers who arrived here yesterday, two positive cases have been detected. Today, 12

flights with 2121 passengers arrived, out of which, 1672 were vaccinated with both doses while RT-PCR test was conducted on 449 passengers (includes 15 international travel-

lers) and the reports are awaited.

During RAT conducted on 152 passengers bound for North & Middle Andaman at

contd. page-2

TSUNAMI MEMORIAL SERVICE AT AIR FORCE STATION CARNICOBAR



Port Blair, Dec 26:

Air Force Station Carnicobar organised a memorial service as a mark of respect to the 122 departed souls who lost their lives when Air Force Station Carnicobar was struck by the devastating Tsunami on 26 Dec 04. During this solemn ceremony, the personnel of the

Station paid tribute to the supreme sacrifice made by the air warriors and their families. Air Cmde P Maheshwar, Vayu Sena Medal, who was the Chief Operations Officer of Air Force Station Carnicobar on that ill-fated day presided over the ceremony and placed a wreath as a mark of respect.



EDITORIAL

Make haste to meet the deadline for card tokenisation

The RBI has yet again deferred card tokenisation plans amid industry's unpreparedness and subsequent concerns about business disruption. It wanted merchants and payment aggregators to purge saved credit and debit card data from their systems from 1 January 2022, allowing data storage only in tokenised format. The guidelines were first issued in 2018, but their implementation has been deferred since, and will now have to be complied by June 2022.

Digital transactions average six billion a month, or an estimated `14.15 lakh crore in 2020-21. Consequently, online scams too are on the rise with card frauds shooting up 34% in the last three years. Worryingly, merchants storing cardholders' data are sharing them with third parties, while reports of big banks selling data on the dark web are alarming users.

Notwithstanding the 'security shields' of payment aggregators, their weaknesses were grossly exposed when 10 million active users' data of one leading player was compromised recently. Given India's data protection bill is still in the natal ward, RBI's data security measures attempt to minimise vulnerability, keeping critical financial information secure from breaches via tokenisation. Even if tokens are breached, original card details will remain protected, while it's impossible to reverse engineer or decrypt tokens that are randomly generated by algorithms. Clearly, tokenisation shields businesses from the negative financial impact of data theft, but for smooth implementation, multiple players must collaborate, which is what is proving to be a challenge.

Industry bodies have opposed the move citing business disruption. CII estimates that 20-40% of online merchants would lose revenue due to disruption. Others fear that buy-now-pay-later and cash back schemes will see an abrupt end, while businesses fear promotions based on prior purchase history will cease, leading to customers' flight. Lastly, lenders worry about an increase in cash payments over the short-term, undoing hard-earned efforts on digitisation. While RBI's pause to ensure tokenisation doesn't inconvenience customers is encouraging, businesses and other stakeholders must make haste to meet next year's deadline even at the risk of foregoing short-term gains for the larger good.

Coast Guard A&N conducts walkathon

Port Blair, Dec. 26

As part of 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrations, to commemorate the 75th anniversary of India's Independence, the Coast Guard under the aegis of HQ Andaman and Nicobar Command conducted a walkathon on Dec. 23. The walkathon was flagged off by Inspector General D Rajaputhran, Commander Coast Guard. The participants covered a distance of 5 Kms from Panipat Road

till Marina Park.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from Coast Guard personnel as well as children from different schools in Port Blair. In addition to spreading the message of 'Fit India Campaign', attention of the general public was also drawn towards the importance of maintaining healthy and hygienic living standards, a Coast Guard communiqué received here said.

Two positive cases....

from page-1
Ferrargunj, no positive case has been detected. At Mohanpura Bus Terminus, test was conducted on 57 passengers and all were found negative. At Phoenix Bay Jetty, 5 passengers were tested with RAT and all were found negative, a press release from the Directorate of IP&T said.

Health secretary to brief Election Commission on Omicron surge as 5 states prepare for polls

PTI: As the Election Commission prepares for assembly polls in five states early next year, its top brass is slated to interact with Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan on Monday.

The commission is likely to seek updates from Bhushan on the COVID-19 situation and the emergence of Omicron, the new coronavirus variant, sources said on Sunday.

The terms of Goa, Punjab, Uttarakhand and Manipur legislative assemblies are ending on different dates in March next year while the assembly's term in Uttar Pradesh will end in May.

The Election Commission (EC) is expected to announce election dates next month.

The commission may also seek suggestions from Bhushan on improving its COVID-19 protocol for poll campaigning, polling days and



the dates of counting.

On Tuesday, the chief election commissioner (CEC) and fellow election commissioners are scheduled to visit Uttar Pradesh to take stock of the poll preparedness in the state.

An Allahabad High Court bench of Justice Shekhar Yadav had on Thursday urged the government and the poll panel to consider postponing the Uttar Pradesh assembly elections for a month or two and banning all political rallies

amid fears of an impending third wave of COVID-19.

When asked about the observation, CEC Sushil Chandra had said in Dehradun on Friday that the EC will be visiting Uttar Pradesh next week and "an appropriate decision as required by the situation will be taken after we review it".

The commission has already visited Punjab, Goa and Uttarakhand as part of its pre-poll stock-taking exercise.



ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ADMINISTRATION

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Port Blair, dated the 26th December, 2021

CIRCULAR

Andaman & Nicobar Administration has initiated a campaign "CATCH THE POLLUTER" thereby conducting an enforcement drive against the polluting vehicles and strict penal actions are being taken against the polluting vehicles. As per Rule 115 (7) of the Central Motor Vehicle Rules, 1989, it is mandatory for all the vehicle owners who are plying their vehicles on road to carry a valid "Pollution under control" Certificate.

However repeated requests have been received from motor vehicle owners to grant one time relaxation and give time to get their vehicles checked for PUC certificates.

Considering the long queues of the vehicles at the Pollution Testing Centre and request of motor vehicle owners, it has been decided by the Competent Authority to grant 15 days relaxation to all the vehicle owners to get their vehicles checked for PUC Certificates. All vehicles shall get their vehicles checked for pollution level before 11.01.2022 and carry a valid PUC certificate while plying on the roads. Beyond the specified date, if any vehicle is found plying without having a valid PUC Certificate and flouting the pollution norms, stringent penal action will be taken as per Section 190 of Motor Vehicle Act, 1988.

However the "CATCH THE POLLUTER" drive against polluting vehicles shall continue and if any vehicle is found polluting, then such violators shall be penalised as per rules.

(Signature)

Director (Transport)
F.No. MT/MVD/1-1/General/2019/9616

Yogi government's massive tech drive begins, to cover 1 crore youth



LUCKNOW: Giving a push to Digital India campaign and to link the youth of Uttar Pradesh with it, the UP government on Saturday launched a massive drive to distribute tablet and smart phones free of cost to one crore students of undergraduate and post graduate courses in the state.

While greeting the recipi-

ents for becoming part of technology-driven way of life and exhorting the youth to contribute to nation-building and making Uttar Pradesh top the list of developed states, CM Yogi Adityanath said the real worth of technology was realised during the pandemic.

"The importance of technology was felt during the pan-

demic. Children did not have the facility for pursuing online education and attend classes in dearth of means. It was then that we decided to connect at least one crore youth of the state with technology by distributing tablet and smartphones," he said.

In all, 40,000 tablets and 60,000 smart phones were distributed among the youth on Saturday. While addressing a huge gathering at Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana Stadium, the CM laced his speech with narratives suiting to the atmosphere of Assembly elections next year. He also claimed the rate of unemployment had come down from 18 per cent in 2017 to 4 per cent in 2021 in the state.

Grassroots democracy strengthened in Jammu and Kashmir: Jitendra Singh



PTI, JAMMU: Union Minister Jitendra Singh on Sunday said grassroots democracy has been strengthened in Jammu and Kashmir since holding of the District Development Council (DDC) elections, overdue for decades, was given top priority.

A big change in terms of inclusive development was now evident at the ground level that reiterates the government's mantra of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas' and in the principle of 'justice for all, appeasement to none', he said.

Elections to 280 DDC seats, 14 in each of the 20 districts, were held in eight phases in Jammu and Kashmir from November 28 to December 19 last year.

This was proof of the importance that the Narendra Modi government gave to strengthening the pillars of grassroots democracy in the Union Territory, Singh said at a convention on 'Good Governance Week' organised by the Kathua district administration.

He said a new political

culture has been set in the country that is based on "equality for all" without discrimination of any kind.

With this new political culture, all constitutional values and principles are being followed at every level, especially in governance, the Union minister said.

He said Prime Minister Modi took a personal interest in Shahpur Kandi Dam Project and it is only with his intervention that the work on this project resumed after 45 years.

Asserting that India has "more than 70 per cent of the youth population of the world", Singh said their dynamism and exuberance is required for making of the 'New India' in governance and civil services.

The prime minister has emphasised that development should not be restricted to a few places.

It should be taken to far-flung areas where the development was earlier only talked about but never done, he said.

Singh said the Shahpur-Kandi project, north India's first cable-stayed bridge Atal Setu, Jammu and Kashmir's first interstate bridge at Keerian-Gandyal, the new national highway from Lakhampur-Bani-Basohli-Doda via Chattargala Tunnel, centrally funded Government Medical College, engineering colleges among others have placed Kathua as one of the most enviable districts of India.

On the occasion, he also virtually laid the foundation of a 100-bed girls hostel under RMSA to be built at Government High School, Basoli, development projects under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, long vented causeways at Stoor and Badala and span type steel bridges at Mashka and Ghatti.

He also distributed cheques to the beneficiaries under the Ladli Beti Scheme and State Marriage Assistance Scheme.

MP demands to construct another 'Andaman House' at existing vacant plot of Andaman at Pallikaranai locality of Velachery, Chennai, Tamil Nadu

Port Blair, Dec 26:

Considering the ever growing demand for rooms at Chennai from Islanders, the Member of Parliament of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Mr. Kuldeep Rai Sharma has requested the Hon'ble Lt. Governor of Andaman and Nicobar Islands to direct the Andaman PWD to complete this project as soon as possible so that it brings relief for Islanders visiting Chennai.

In a letter addressed to the Hon'ble Lt. Governor, ANI, the Member of Parliament mentioned that Andaman and Nicobar Islands have two 'Andaman House' buildings at Anna Nagar and KK Nagar areas of Chennai, Tamil Nadu. These 'Andaman House' buildings were constructed or taken on lease for the convenience of people of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, who visit Chennai for various reasons like Education, Treatment, Jobs, Sports events, Transit, tour etc.

He said that for people who hail from Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana Chennai is the main transit point and they require rooms at Chennai for transit journey, while going to their homeland and also during their return journey. Patients and students require rooms at

Chennai for longer duration.

He added that other than that thousands of Islanders visit Chennai on a daily basis but there are only 22 rooms available for Islanders at KK Nagar Guest House and only 4 rooms + some dormitories are available at Anna Nagar Guest House, which are grossly inadequate for Islanders visiting Chennai.

The Member of Parliament pointed out that on an average there are nearly 50 applications for rooms in Andaman House at Chennai in a day but there are only 26 rooms available in total. Other than this a large number of people visiting Chennai do not even apply for rooms, knowing fully well about the shortage of rooms in Andaman House Buildings and they have to stay in private hotels and rooms, paying exorbitant rates.

He pointed out that nearly 25 years back Andaman and Nicobar Administration had purchased 1.02 hectare of prime land at Pallikaranai locality of Velachery, Chennai, Tamil Nadu for construction of third Andaman House. The prime land is hardly 750 mtrs away from Velachery Railway Station. In the year 2007 a compound wall was erected around the said land but after that no construction works

were carried out in the said land.

The Member of Parliament mentioned that he strongly believes that if this third Andaman House is constructed, it will bring great relief for Islanders visiting Chennai, especially students and patients, who have to stay for a longer duration and for multiple times in Chennai and have to pay a huge amount to hotels and other accommodations.



Member of Parliament Demands Ship for Car Nicobar Island via Hut Bay

Port Blair, 23 Dec:

The Member of Parliament of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Mr. Kuldeep Rai Sharma has requested the Chief Secretary to direct the Shipping Department to schedule Ship for Car Nicobar via Hut Bay atleast once or twice a month.

In a letter addressed to the Chief Secretary the Member of Parliament mentioned that due to the non-availability of ships for Car Nicobar via Hut Bay, a lot of people from Nicobari Community are unable to visit Car Nicobar to meet with their family members.

He added that there are thousands of Nicobari brother and sisters at Little Andaman Island, who have a strong link with Car Nicobar but presently due to unavailability of connecting ships, they are forced to come to Port Blair and wait for several weeks to get a ship for Car Nicobar and they have to undergo similar hardship in their return journey. For this

journey from Little Andaman to Car Nicobar and vice versa via Port Blair they have to incur heavy expenditure and go through tremendous mental agony.

The Member of Parliament pointed out that there are hundreds of Nicobari brothers and sisters in Little Andaman who have been waiting to visit Car Nicobar since more than the last one year.

He mentioned that occasional ships to Car Nicobar via Hut Bay are also required to supply fresh vegetable, fish and meat from Little Andaman to Car Nicobar Island, where a large number of tribal population and government servants and their families reside.

The Member of Parliament said that such connecting ships will also open up business opportunities for poor farmers and other small business owners of Little Andaman, who have already suffered heavy financial loss during this pandemic time.

Teachers urged to apply for A&N Teacher's Award through online portal

Port Blair, Dec. 24

It is once again informed to all the eligible teachers and Heads of School of Andaman & Nicobar Islands to apply in maximum number for Andaman & Nicobar Teachers Award-2021. They can apply online on <https://teachersaward.andaman.gov.in> or through

www.education.andaman.gov.in upto Jan. 19, 2022 by clicking 'Register' tab on Homepage. For eligibility and evaluation scheme they can go through the gazette notification available on the portal in 'Announcement & Notification' column, a press release from Directorate of Education said.

PRESS RELEASE

Mr. Vishal Jolly, National Executive Member BJP, Member of Home Ministry Advisory Committee, Govt. of India & Former State President BJP A & N has requested the Chief Secretary, A & N Administration for providing Ship service from Port to Chennai and back for Pilgrimages.

In his letter he wrote that Sabarimala and Om Shakti Pilgrimages is going on, the devotees from Andaman and Nicobar Islands also wish to join the Pilgrims at Sabarimala and Chennai respectively. Therefore a ship service from port Blair to Chennai in the 1st Week of January 2022 and returning ship may be provided in the mid of January 2022 will enable the poor devotees to perform Pilgrimage at low cost as the rate of flights are soaring high, he added.

**Garbage Complaint 24x7
call now 03192-231179
PBMC Control Room**

Chief Secretary's 'Catch the Polluter' campaign getting citizens support & catching speed; six visuals received from citizens on Whatsapp

Port Blair, Dec. 24

The Chief Secretary, Shri Jitendra Narain's 'Catch the Polluter' campaign is getting citizens support and catching speed. The Campaign has been launched to check automobile pollution in A&N Islands. Under the campaign, checking against polluting vehicles has been intensified by Transport Depart-

ment and penalty of Rs 34500/- has been imposed on violators who were found plying polluting vehicles. Moreover, the Department received six visuals of polluting vehicles today from citizens and the Department promptly took action against the violators. They were fined for violating the pollution norms. Meanwhile, all motor vehicle owners

have been advised not to ply motor vehicles violating the pollution norms. General public have been once again appealed to send photos or short videos of polluting vehicles to Whatsapp numbers viz. Transport Department (9531905403)/ Police Department (9531892228), a press release from Transport Department said.

Fifth edition of 'Pariksha Pe Charcha 2022' Children studying in classes IX to XII along with teachers and parents can participate in the prog.

Port Blair, Dec. 24

To celebrate the Utsav of Examination, the fifth edition of 'Pariksha Pe Charcha 2022', the unique interactive programme of Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi with students, teachers and parents will be held in virtual mode adhering to COVID-19 protocols in February 2022. This event is being organized for the fifth consecutive year by the Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education.

Children studying in classes from IX to XII, teachers and parents can participate in the 'Pariksha Pe Charcha' programme. An online creative

writing competition will be conducted at <https://www.mygov.in/> on various topics during the period from Dec. 28 to Jan. 20, 2022 for selection of 18 participants from A & N Islands. Suggested topics can be obtained from the Office of Zonal Officers, Secondary & Senior Secondary Schools across Islands. Selected participants will receive certificate signed by Director (NCERT) and a special PPC kit comprising of Exam Warriors Book in Hindi & English written by Hon'ble Prime Minister.

The competition is the mode through which students, parents and teachers are invited to frame their questions

to be addressed to the Hon'ble Prime Minister. Selected questions, shortlisted by NCERT, may feature in the programme. The participants who asked questions in the previous editions of Pariksha Pe Charcha have been invited by Media channels to appear in their programmes. In the same line, this year's chosen few may get an opportunity to interact with media.

In this regard, all the students from classes IX to XII, teachers and parents of A & N Islands are informed to go through the above link and participate accordingly, a press release from Directorate of Education said.

SAKHI SAHELI CAFE INAUGURATED

Port Blair, Dec:

Turning the corona adversity into an opportunity the SHG (Self Help Group) under ANIRLM members launched "Sakhi Saheli Cafe" at Mahua Beach, Kodyaghat under CD Block Prothrapur in a brief function which was attended by the Director (RD) and other officials of the Rural Development department.

Addressing the gathering the Director (RD) appreciated the group efforts taken by the SHG members and motivated them to set more examples in becoming self-reliant and ensured maximum handholding support from the Department.

This cafe is a small start-up by the Rural SHG ladies of ANIRLM (Andaman Nicobar Islands National Ru-

ral Livelihood Mission) for earning their livelihood, as the income generated through the cafe would empower them financially. And by this, they can look forward to a better future.

Prior to the opening of this cafe, the SHG ladies were given training on food processing, cake baking etc. Also, they were given assistance from the Department in getting a Food License so that they can operate freely and consumers receive quality healthy eatables. Since the cafe is located in a tourist spot, the main attraction being the sunset view, it will cater to a good number of tourists and this will help in showcasing their food products. There is also a plan for taking Sakhi Saheli Cafe on "Wheels" which is expected in the upcoming days.

ing days.

It is well-known that the economic empowerment of women significantly contributes to their social empowerment. As such helping women to achieve economic independence by enabling them to have independent employment and income has been accorded the highest priority.

ANIRLM is providing support to the SHG women so that they can come up with innovative ideas, which will not only help in the development of these islands but will also help them in establishing their entrepreneurship. National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) scheme is focused on promoting self-employment and organization of rural poor.

DEFENCE OF ANDAMAN.....

from page 1

establishment of air dominance by Su-30 MRCAs and maritime strikes by Jaguar aircrafts. Para Commandos and MARCOS then carried out Combat Free Fall. The aim was to validate air dominance and maritime strike capability within the designated area of interest in Indian Ocean Region. Prior to amphibious landing operations, troops of the Army, Navy and Air Force were mobilised and transported by sea and air in close coordination with all agencies.

The training exercise culminated with the beach landing operations by Amphibious Brigade, Amphibious ships along with tanks, troop carrier vehicles and other heavy weapons. The logistic team demonstrated and validated the joint logistic system and its capabilities to respond to dynamic changes in operational situations and combat missions. The areas in which the exercise was conducted holds strategic significance for India and its policies in the Indian Ocean Region.

The exercise also validated joint capabilities of intelligence gathering from space, air, land and sea based assets, its synthesis, analysis and near real time sharing to achieve battle field transparency for quick decision making. The joint force executed multi-domain, high intensity offensive and defensive manoeuvres in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal. The Joint-services exercise fine-tuned joint war fighting capabilities and Standard Operating Procedures towards enhancing operational synergy. Lt Gen Ajai Singh, AVSM, Commander-in-Chief Andaman and Nicobar Command visited the exercise area in the Southern Group of Islands situated over 1600 Km South of Kolkata, to oversee the exercise and commended all ranks for their high level of operational preparedness. Post the culmination of the exercise the Commander-in-Chief Andaman and Nicobar Command applauded all Components for their synergistic planning and precise execution of the Command plans and urged everyone to focus on the take aways from the exercise as also to brainstorm maximum possible contingencies, for being fully prepared for any eventuality in future.



PM Modi to.....

from page 1

ity has been one of the key focus areas of the Prime Minister. The inauguration of the completed section of the Kanpur Metro rail project is yet another step in this direction. This completed nine-kilometre long section is from IIT Kanpur to Moti Jheel."

"Modi will inspect the Kanpur Metro rail project and undertake a metro ride from IIT Metro station to Geeta Nagar. The entire length of the Metro rail project in Kanpur is 32 kilometre and is being built at a cost of more than Rs 11,000 crore."

The Prime Minister will inaugurate the Bina-Panki multiproduct pipeline project. The 356-km-long project has a capacity of nearly 3.45 million metric tonne per annum.

Extending from Bina refinery in Madhya Pradesh to Panki in Kanpur, the project has been built at a cost of more than Rs 1,500 crore. It will help the region access petroleum products from the Bina refinery.

Modi will be the chief guest of the 54th convocation of IIT Kanpur. During the convocation, all students will be issued digital degrees through an in-house blockchain-driven technology developed at the institute under the National Blockchain project.

"The Prime Minister will launch the blockchain-based digital degrees. These digital degrees can be verified globally and are unforgeable," the PMO added.

Chief Secretary visits....

from page-1



Administration at Hawabill Nest, Shaheed Dweep and took stock of the activities carried out by the concerned Departments in the Island. The Chief Secretary asked Social Welfare Department to look into salary of Anganwadi workers, rent of Anganwadi building and supply of materials for food for Anganwadis. He asked for a report on unused land, encroached land and excess land lying with the Departments unutilized.

The Chief Secretary also reviewed the functioning of all Departments including ANIIDCO, Medical. He asked Doctors to be aware of the number of lactating mothers and pregnant women. The pending works by APWD and issue of dumping of waste and construction materials at different sites was also pointed to the Departments and a report will be taken after 20 days.

The Chief Secretary directed to form an Informal Island Development & Monitoring Committee with senior local officers of the Island and they would coordinate and meet once in 15 days every

month. If this is successful, then it would be put on every area or every group of areas, where all officers would give inputs to the SDM about the progress of inter-departmental coordination and of land encroachments, etc.

The Chief Secretary also directed APWD to complete its ongoing works. He further asked SDM / AC to visit Shaheed Dweep, Swaraj Dweep and other Islands regularly.

Improvement and development of rural road network, encroachment by bigger resorts, encroachments on Govt. property, repair of rural roads to be focused. The Chief Secretary also asked the people of the Islands to keep the Island neat and clean.



Tokyo Paralympics bronze is a gold medal for me, says Manoj Sarkar



BHUBANESHWAR: Indian shuttler Manoj Sarkar might have won bronze in the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics but the medal is no less than gold for the athlete.

Manoj had won a bronze medal after defeating Japan's Daisuke Fujihara in the men's singles SL3 event at the Paralympics Games in Tokyo.

"To be honest Tokyo Bronze medal is a Gold for me because winning a medal for India at such a level is no mean feat. But this is also true that my dream hasn't been fulfilled and I'll try to do that in Paris 2024," Manoj Sarkar told ANI after winning his first game in the ongoing Para-Badminton National championship here in Bhubaneswar.

The Indian shuttler feels people's view towards the para-athletes and the specially-abled person has changed due to a remarkable show by the Indian contingent in the Tokyo Games.

"After my bronze medal, the vision of the countrymen has changed towards the specially-abled person. People used to call us 'persons with disability' but now everyone calls us 'person with super ability' and this is a big change," said Manoj Sarkar.

"Now more and more

parents are recognizing talents in their children despite them being specially-abled and this is a big achievement for us as a country," he added.

Manoj Sarkar recently won the gold medal at Uganda Para-Badminton International in Kampala after defeating compatriot Pramod Bhagat.

"I and Pramod (bhaiya) often meet in finals of the tournament and whoever has his day wins the game. Most of the time Pramod has defeated me but in Uganda, I feel it was my day and my body was also responding well hence I came out with flying colours," Manoj said.

"In Uganda, the competition was tougher than the Paralympics as there were some new players also. In the SL3 category, most of the players in the top 10 categories are from India only," he added.

Despite the first match in men's singles, the SL3 category being a cakewalk for Manoj, the Indian shuttler is wary of the threat he might face in the upcoming games.

"There are athletes who will give a tough fight in the quarters and semis and I strongly feel there will thrilling encounters later in the day and tomorrow," Manoj signed off.

'Atrangi Re': Dhanush, AR Rahman shine in a rather insipid love triangle



Towards the intermission point in Atrangi Re, there is a big reveal, the response to which determines the audience's acceptance of the latest Aanand L Rai film. We see Akshay Kumar's Sajjad priming his horns to play the antagonist of sorts in the star-crossed love story of Vishu (Dhanush) and Rinku (Sara Ali Khan). Akshay is visibly revelling in the idea of playing this OTT character, and beside him, we see a beaming Sara feeling the same, and we cut away to a bathroom stall where Dhanush invokes the Raanjhanaa title song and performs a quick dance. Basically, despite the ludicrousness of the central premise, all three actors have their versions of fun on screen. But there is only so much that spirited performances and a brilliant score can do when the writing is messy and all over the place.

Atrangi Re begins with a forced marriage between Rinku and Vishu. While Rinku is forced into marriage because she is forever trying to elope with the love of her life Sajjad, Vishu finds himself at the wrong place at the wrong time as he becomes victim to the now-infamous groom kidnapping in certain Indian states. There is an unnecessary sense of urgency in the first few minutes of the film, and before things can even come to a much-needed pause, we are asked to take a leap of faith about Vishu harbouring feelings for Rinku.

Come on! Even Dhanush's exceptional histrionics in that "love proposal" scene can't really fill in for the shallowness of the proceedings. Unlike the writing in Ranjhanaa, which gave us a sense of why Kundan was head-over-heels in love with Zoya, here we don't really know what makes Vishu like Rinku. Like, of course, she has a lot of spunk and a serious non-understanding of time, space, and privacy, which makes her the stuff of dreams for many of our heroes. However, Vishu's transition from being plain irritated at her to becoming all doe-eyed around her is painfully coercive.

This weirdly magical journey is elevated by one of AR Rahman's recent best works. Although a bulk of the songs are used to hasten the narrative of the first half, it is only with the power of this music that we embark on this middling journey. But one can not just shake off that feeling of incompleteness that stems from Atrangi Re's writing choices. Of course, there is that "twist" that, well, isn't as convoluted as the makers deem it to be. And when their ONE trump card isn't groundbreaking enough, Atrangi Re ran the risk of becoming saddled with fatigue and it does so in an emphatic fashion.

For all its chest-thumping on inventiveness and refreshing outlook at the time-tested narrative of the vagaries of love, Atrangi Re doesn't

quite deliver on what was promised. It actually feeds into stereotypes rather than break them, or at least skirt around them. While it is smart how Dhanush is cast as a doctor in this film, the use of his, and his friends' medical expertise is milked for easy but unsmart laughs. Another unsmart thing is definitely how Rinku's character arc develops. Although Sara is earnest as Rinku, the role turns out to be too gimmicky for a film of this potential. However, the more underwritten part is that of Akshay Kumar, and despite a cherubic and upbeat performance, Sajjad doesn't quite create the intentioned flutter.

Just like every Himanshu Sharma-Aanand L Rai collaboration, Atrangi Re too deals with an all-encompassing love that crosses physical and mental boundaries. Just like all their films, the concept too is a fascinating one even if it borders on the old-fashioned. However, despite a solid cast, brilliant music, and spectacular visuals, this time around the successful collaboration misses the target by quite a distance. Just proclaiming the film is "funnily weird" isn't enough if it takes itself too seriously, and being neither funny nor weird, Atrangi Re settles down in a space that is just well... plain. And that's the worst thing that can happen to a world created by one of our most maverick writer-filmmaker duos.