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Shardul scalps seven as India fights back in second Test  
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## IN BRIEF



Northeast should be growth driver: PM

IMPHAL/AGARTALA  
Kicking off the BJP's campaign in poll-bound Manipur, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday made a pitch for oil palm plantations while envisaging the Northeast as the driver of India's growth story.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 9

Two militants killed in Kulgam encounter

SRINAGAR  
Security forces on Tuesday killed two militants in Kulgam of south Kashmir in an encounter, taking the number of ultras killed in a span of 24 hours to four. "Both terrorists were locals and linked to the Resistance Front, affiliated to the LeT," IGP Vijay Kumar said.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 8

Odisha child panel objects to raising marriage age

Bhubaneswar  
The Odisha State Commission for Protection of Child Rights has opposed the move to raise the legal age for marriage of girls to 21 saying it would not be effective in preventing child marriages and also lead to unwed mothers as another Act permits consensual sex after 18.

STATES ▶ PAGE 4

OPPORTUNITIES ▶ PAGE 14

## Supreme Court to hear EWS quota case today

Centre cites urgency, says NEET-PG counselling in limbo

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

A three-judge Special Bench of the Supreme Court, led by Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, is scheduled to hear on Wednesday a case raising questions on the ₹8 lakh annual income limit criterion fixed to identify the economically weaker sections (EWS) of society for extending reservation benefits.

The development came hours after Chief Justice of India (CJI) N.V. Ramana on Tuesday agreed to adjust the various combinations of the court's Benches, fixed for the week, to accommodate the case.

The other two judges on the Special Bench are Justices Surya Kant and A.S. Bobanna.

### Gentle listing

The Union government, represented by Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, has been making back-to-back oral mentions before the court, on January 3 and 4, to hear the case quickly. January 3 – the very day the court reopened after Christmas holidays – saw Mr. Mehta plead with Justice Chandrachud, who has been hearing the EWS case, for an urgent listing.

On Tuesday, again, Mr.

### Pressing issue

A timeline of the EWS reservation case

**July 29, 2021:** Government issues notification announcing 27% quota for Other Backward Classes and 10% for Economically Weaker Sections in the All-India Quota (AIQ) category in NEET-PG admissions

**Aug. 28:** A batch of petitions, filed through advocate Charu Mathur, challenges the notification in the Supreme Court

**Sept. 6:** Court issues notice to the government

**Dec. 31:** The review committee submits reports, finds ₹8 lakh criterion "feasible"

Mehta came up before the CJI's Bench to press for a hearing on January 5 itself.

Mr. Mehta underscored that the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test for post-graduate courses (NEET-PG) counselling was suspended since late November because of the questions raised about the criterion in the EWS quota. Medical admissions were getting delayed, and the issue had to be resolved quickly.

Resident doctors in Delhi had recently organised a massive protest over the de-

lay in the counselling schedule, leading to violence.

**Future prospects'** Mr. Mehta submitted to the court that the doctors were rightly agitated about their future prospects. He urged the CJI to list the case on January 5.

During the interaction, Chief Justice Ramana said the court's Benches had already been fixed for the entire opening week of miscellaneous hearings.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

## Key accused in app case arrested

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

The Mumbai Police have arrested a woman, alleged to be one of the main culprits behind the obscene app that targeted Muslim women, from Uttarakhand, officials said on Tuesday.

The police also formally arrested 21-year-old student, Vishal Kumar, who was detained from Bengaluru on Monday evening, after hours of questioning.

A court in Mumbai remanded the student in police custody till January 10. He was one of the four followers of the *Bulli Bai* app, the police said.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

SEE ALSO ▶ PAGE 2

+ Valley of snow



Cold snap: Srinagar, the summer capital of J&K, receiving the first snowfall of the season on Tuesday. The snowfall disrupted air traffic in the Kashmir Valley. ■ NISSAR AHMAD (REPORT ON PAGE 3)

## Woman, daughter reunited after 22 years

Separated as a child, Anjali met Chaitra again thanks to efforts by her husband

SATHISH G.T.  
HASSAN

It was a scene straight from a tear-jerker as a young woman ran to hug an elderly woman walking unsteadily towards her amid the lush green background of a coffee estate.

But it was not a staged drama for 31-year-old Anjali and her mother, Chaitra, who were tearfully reunited after 22 years in Mudigere taluk of Chikmagalur district of Karnataka on Tuesday.

The story goes 22 years back when Anjali, the fifth child of Chaitra and Kalimuttu, got separated from her parents. The couple had moved from Tamil Nadu to Mudigere to work at a coffee estate.

Recalling the traumatic events at the turn of the century, Ms. Chaitra said during that time, timber merchants from Kerala used



Tearful reunion: Anjali with her mother, Chaitra, in Mudigere taluk of Karnataka on Tuesday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

to visit Mudigere. Some of them had brought elephants and mahouts with them to transport wooden logs.

"A mahout's family had camped close to the estate where we were working and children of both the families were playing together. One day, Anjali went missing. I searched for her everywhere but I could not find her. Someone said she had gone with the mahout's

family. But there was no way we could trace her," Ms. Chaitra recalled. Riven by poverty, she did not file a police complaint.

Travelled to Kerala  
Anjali, who was just nine years old then, travelled to Kerala with the mahout's family where she worked as a domestic help for some years before marrying Nellamani Saji. After her

marriage, she shared the story of her roots with Mr. Saji, who tried to contact people in Mudigere. With the help of friends in Kozhikode, he got in touch with Monu, a social worker in Mudigere.

Mr. Monu, in turn contacted friends among estate owners in Mudigere and tracked down Ms.

Chaitra a couple of days ago.

"The information I had gathered from Anjali did match with what Chaitra told me. I took her picture and a video statement and sent them to Anjali on Monday. She immediately responded saying she was her mother," Mr. Monu said.

Anjali, now herself a mother of three children, and Mr. Saji travelled to Mudigere on Tuesday and met Ms. Chaitra in the presence of Mr. Monu and other friends, who helped make the reunion possible.

## States told to share intel on common grid

Shah asks DGPs to provide adequate information through counter-terror network

VIIJITA SINGH  
NEW DELHI

The Union government has asked the States to share more intelligence inputs through the Multi Agency Centre (MAC), a common counter-terrorism grid under the Intelligence Bureau that was made operational in 2001 following the Kargil War.

At a high-level meet on Monday, Union Home Minister Amit Shah asked the Directors-General of Police to share adequate information and actionable inputs through the MAC.

As many as 28 organisations, including the Research and Analysis Wing



Taking stock: Home Minister Amit Shah reviewing the security situation in the country with officials on Monday. ■ PTI

(R&AW), armed forces and State police, are part of the MAC. Various security agencies share real-time intelligence inputs on the MAC.

Plans are afoot for more than a decade to link the sys

tem up to the district level.

A senior government official said that though the system existed to share information among various agencies, it was not being implemented effectively.

### 'States reluctant'

"States are often reluctant to share information on the platform. There are several gaps in sharing critical information at the right time, the meeting by the Home Minister will give a push to the efforts," the official stated.

There are around 400 secured sites connected with the MAC headquarters.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

## Weekend curfew in Delhi; curbs on buses, trains lifted

Kejriwal, Tiwari test positive for virus

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government has decided to impose a curfew on Saturdays and Sundays till further orders following the surge in COVID-19 cases in the city. The curfew will be in force from 10 p.m. on Friday till 5 a.m. on Monday.

"Essential and emergency services will be exempted from the curfew," Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said following a DDMA meeting on Tuesday.

meeting on Tuesday.

The Minister also said that to avoid commuters' rush, buses and metros will run at full capacity.

Delhi on Tuesday reported 5,481 new cases over 24 hours, the highest in more than seven months.

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and BJP leader Manoj Tiwari also tested positive for the virus.

UPTICK IN OCCUPANCY ▶ PAGE 3

## Health officials worried as self-test kits fly off shelves

Difficult to track those testing positive

K.V. ADITYA BHARADWAJ  
BENGALURU

The rampant sale of self-test kits amid rising COVID-19 cases is causing alarm among health officials as they are unable to track, isolate and treat those testing positive.

Officials in Karnataka said people who have mild flu-like symptoms or those who travel frequently are relying on this method, essentially rapid antigen test kits.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

www.licindia.in

Attention, LIC policyholders:

It's best in life to be prepared.

Government of India has amended Life Insurance Corporation Act, 1956, permitting the Corporation to reserve shares in its proposed public issue on a competitive basis, in favour of policyholders.\*

To be able to participate, policyholders must take two steps:

1

Update your personal records with LIC



Visit [www.licindia.in](http://www.licindia.in) and click on the icon to register your Permanent Account Number (PAN) online.

Enter your date of birth, gender, email ID, PAN, full name, mobile number and LIC policy number.

Follow the instructions to update your PAN records for all your LIC policies.

Contact your LIC Agent for any assistance.

2

Open a DEMAT account (if you do not have one)

To open a DEMAT account, visit either of these websites for registered Depository Participants (DP):

NSDL:

<https://sebi.gov.in/sebiweb/other/OtherAction.do?doRecognisedFpi=yes&intmld=19>

CDSL:

<https://sebi.gov.in/sebiweb/other/OtherAction.do?doRecognisedFpi=yes&intmld=18>

You must provide the following to the DP to open your DEMAT account:

- Recent photograph
- PAN Card
- Address proof
- Cancelled cheque

The DP may also seek further information.

Contact your banker or broker for any assistance.

### PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING

This notice or any information being shared with policyholders is not an offering of equity shares of the Corporation. | Policyholders would have to approach the Depository Participant and be solely responsible for the DEMAT account and its functioning. All related costs would have to be borne by the policyholder. | There is no assurance that policyholders will be allotted any or all of the equity shares they may apply for even in the event of a reservation of shares for policyholders in any proposed issuance. | The Corporation does not guarantee the performance of its equity shares and investors need to be aware of the risks associated with any investments in a public offering. For important information regarding proposed reservation of shares for policyholders, visit <https://licindia.in/ipo>

\*Details of proposed IPO will be intimated once finalised.

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Har Pal Aapke Saath

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## IN BRIEF

## Man arrested for duping people in Ponzi scheme

The Economic Offences Wing of Delhi Police on Tuesday said it has arrested a 36-year-old man for allegedly duping nearly 60 people of around ₹1.5 crore. The accused promised the victims good returns from a Ponzi scheme but he and his accomplice fled with their money, officers said.

## Western disturbances to bring rain in Capital

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Under the influence of two consecutive western disturbances, the Capital is in for a wet spell that is likely to last till January 9.

The Indian Meteorological Department forecast says the minimum temperatures are likely to rise by 2-3 degrees Celsius, while the maximum temperature is likely to fall by a few notches due to overcast conditions and there is no possibility of cold wave conditions.

On Tuesday, the maximum temperature was 23.2 degrees Celsius, four degrees above normal, while the minimum was 8 degrees Celsius, which was one notch above normal.

Under the influence of the first western disturbance, scattered to fairly widespread light/moderate rain is likely over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, north Rajasthan and West Uttar Pradesh till January 6.

A second intense western disturbance is very likely to affect northwest India from the night of January 6, the IMD said. Under the influence of these two weather systems, the Capital is likely to stay cloudy with chances of rain.

The maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to be 19 and 11 degrees respectively on January 4.

## SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED



Indu

General Public is hereby informed that one girl Namely: Indu, D/o Ekadshi Singh, R/o: Village Turtipur, P.S. Ubhav, Distt. Balia, U.P. has been missing/kidnapped since 25.09.2014. from Kilkari Rainbow Home, Kashmiri Gate, Delhi from the area of P.S. Kashmere Gate, Delhi in this regard a case vide FIR No. 367/14, U/s 363 IPC, dated 26.09.2014 has been

registered at P.S. Kashmere Gate, Delhi. The description of the missing/kidnapped girl is as under: Age: 15 years, Height: 5'4", Face: Oval, Complexion: Shallow, Built: Normal, Wearing: Blue colour suit-salwar and black colour plastic slipper in his feet. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the girl but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this girl kindly inform to the following.

**Website:** <http://cbi.nic.in>  
**E-mail Id:** [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)  
**Ph:** 011-24368638, 24368641  
**Fax No.** 011-24368639  
**SHO**  
**P.S. Kashmere Gate, Delhi**  
**D/P/1680/N/2021** **Ph.: 011-23967889, 8750870123**

## OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER, KASHMIR PHE JAL SHAKTI DEPARTMENT SRINAGAR

## NOTICE INVITING TENDER

E-NIT No. 120 of 2021-22 Dated:- 30.12.2021

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of UT of J&K, Chief Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Department, Kashmir/Jammu invites tenders from eligible contractors for execution of works for supply of materials and/or labour for execution of works for Emppanelment of Eligible Contractors at Provincial Level and fixing of item rates for PLAIN AREAS (LIFT) falling in District Barwara for Execution of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) works costing Above 3 crores up to 10 crores and above (GROUP V), details of which are given below. The bidding process shall be completed online in two covers viz, Cover 1 consisting of Pre-Qualification Bidding, tender fee, earnest money, General Terms and Conditions and Technical Specifications, Cover '2nd' shall consist of Financial Bid in the prescribed BOQ.

S. No	Particulars of the work	Estimated Cost (Lacs)	Cost of document/tender fee (In Rs)	Earnest money (Lacs)	Bid Validity	Time of Completion of work (days)
1	2	5	6	7	8	9
1	Empanelment of eligible contractors at Provincial level and fixing of item rates for each district/geographical area/zone for execution of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) works. These areas are broadly consisting of:		1000/-		180 Days	
a.	Construction of water supply schemes by way of filtration plants, pump houses, service reservoir, Overhead tanks, laying of distribution mains,					
B.	Retrofitting of electro-mechanical equipments at various Water Supply Schemes					
Group V	Above 3 crores up to 10 Crores and above			1.00		180

**Position of funds:** Approved Under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)

The tender documents are issued by Chief Engineer, Kashmir Jal Shakti (PHE) Department. The awarding authority is District Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM).

Note:- In view of the fact, that this NIT for item rate contract has been framed for the first time in the Department, a helpdesk shall be established at the Direction office level as well as district level for encouraging and facilitating the intending bidders for participation in the instant NIT to ensure wide participation across all the Districts.

Key/critical Dates:

I Publish Date	31-12-2021
ii Document Download/sale start Date	31-12-2021
iii Clarification start date	31-12-2021
iv Bid submission start date	04.01.2022
v Clarification end date	20.01.2022
vi Pre-bid Meeting date	04.01.2022
vii Document Download/sale end Date	28.01.2022
viii Bid submission end date	28.01.2022
ix Date and time of Bid opening	31.01.2022

1. Bid documents can be assessed at and downloaded from the websites <http://jkttenders.gov.in>

2. The pre-bid meeting will be held in the office chamber of the Chief Engineer, Kashmir, PHE Department, through virtual/online mode.

3. The bids shall be deposited on the website <http://jkttenders.gov.in>

4. The financial bids of the bidders shall be open in the office of the Chief Engineer, Kashmir, Jal Shakti (PHE) Department.

6. Bids must be accompanied by bid security and cost of Tender Document as specified in column 6 & 7 of the table and shall be payable at Srinagar.

a. Bid Security to be pledged in favour of FA/CAO, Kashmir, Jal Shakti PHE Department. Bid Security will have to be in form of CDR/FDR/BG of any scheduled Bank and shall have to be valid for at least one year after last date of submission of Bid. The Bid of bidders having bid security less than as specified above will be rejected.

b. The cost of download tender documents should be in form of DD/T/R/E challan in favour of FA/CAO, Kashmir, Jal Shakti PHE Department.

7. The original copy of tender document in shape of DD/TR/E-challan, Earnest money in shape of CDR/FDR/BG and other relevant documents shall be obtained from the bidder who is declared as L1 and others after opening of financial cover.

8. The bid shall remain open for acceptance for a period of 180 days from the date of opening of price bids. If any bidder/tenderer withdraws his bid/bidder before the said period or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid, the said earnest money shall stand forfeited and the bid shall be declared non-responsive.

9. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents from the website <http://jkttenders.gov.in>.

10. Queries by email if any should be made at [kmpred@gmail.com](mailto:kmpred@gmail.com) or [pheccjm@gmail.com](mailto:pheccjm@gmail.com)

**Sd/-**  
**Chief Engineer,  
 Kashmir, Jal Shakti, PHE Department**

**DIPK-16018/21**

**MSME TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CENTRE CHENNAI**  
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**Top Importing Countries Foreign Trade Policy & Schemes**  
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## ENTERPRISE CONNECT

## LIC Chairman inaugurates "LIC Digi Zone"

The Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India inaugurated "LIC Digi Zone" to enhance the Digital Operations of LIC i.e. sales and services for its customers. It was inaugurated at the hands of LIC Chairperson Shri. M.R. Kumar, in the presence of Managing Directors – Shri Raj Kumar, Shri Siddhartha Mohanty, Shri B.C. Patnaik and Shri C. Vikas Rao, Zonal Manager, Western Zone and other senior officials of the Corporation, on 29th December 2021.

With an intention to become a tech driven life insurer, LIC will offer information regarding LIC products and services through kiosks installed in the premises. Customers can use LIC's Digi Zone to buy policies online, pay premium and avail other services as well. Soon after the inauguration, the operation went live by walk-in customers who made digital transactions in the new "LIC Digi Zone". On this occasion, Shri M.R. Kumar said, "The launch of LIC Digi Zone is a big day for our Corporation. LIC plans to undertake the next wave of digital transformation to unlock several benefits of accelerating growth, driving customer satisfaction and improving intermediary productivity and loyalty".

## Atul Kumar Goel takes charge as OSD in Punjab National Bank

Shri Atul Kumar Goel joins the Bank today and will serve as Officer on Special Duty (OSD) in PNB until the end of this month/January 2022. He is slated to take over as the new MD and CEO of Punjab National Bank (PNB) with effect from 01.02.2022. As approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), Shri Goel, who was till now the MD and CEO of UCO Bank, will serve as PNB chief up to the date of his attaining the age of superannuation (i.e., 31.12.2024), or until further orders, whichever is earlier. Shri Goel will replace Shri CH. S. Mallikarjuna Rao, incumbent MD & CEO of PNB, who is due to demit office at the end of January 2022. Shri Goel has around three decades of professional banking experience in three banks viz. Allahabad Bank (now Indian Bank), Union Bank of India and UCO Bank. He is a qualified Chartered Accountant and has vast experience, exposure and expertise in all major areas of banking, including Large Corporate, Treasury Management, Risk Management, Financial Planning & Investor Relations, apart from Support Service, Business Process Transformation, Compliance, etc. He is also at the helm as Chairman of the Indian Bank's Association (IBA) for 2021-22. Additionally, he is a Director on the Board of The New India Assurance Co. Ltd. He is also a member of Governing Council & Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Indian Institute of Banking & Finance (IIBF). As an MD and CEO of UCO Bank, Shri Goel was instrumental in the complete turnaround of the Bank and bringing it back to profitability in FY 2020-21 after five years of consecutive losses. Before UCO Bank, Shri Goel worked as Executive Director at Union Bank of India (UBI). His rich knowledge and experience contributed towards Large Corporate Credit and Balance Sheet Management at UBI, which is immeasurable. He served as Director on the Boards of Star Union Dai-ichi Life Insurance Co. Ltd. and Union Trustee Company Private Limited. Shri Goel began his banking career with Allahabad Bank (now Indian Bank) on 27.03.1992 as a Chartered Accountant in Specialist Officer in Scale II and got elevated up to the level of General Manager. He handled key areas covering a vast spectrum of banking operations, most notably as Chief Financial Officer (CFO). During his tenure at Allahabad Bank, he headed the Mumbai Zone and served as Director of All Bank Finance Limited. Earlier, he was

the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Accounting Standards & Taxation and the Standing Committee on Retail Banking of IBA as well.

## PGI Satellite Center foundation stone to be laid at Ferozepur on Jan 5

Preparations are in full swing ahead of Hon'ble Prime Minister visit to the border town of Ferozepur on January 5 for laying the foundation stone for PGIMER's Satellite Center at Ferozepur. Shri Banwari Lal Purohit, Hon'ble Governor of Punjab, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Hon'ble Minister of Health & Family Welfare and S. Charanjit Singh Channi, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Punjab will also have their August presence at the foundation stone laying ceremony of the PGIMER's Satellite Center by the Hon'ble Prime Minister scheduled to take place at 1.00 pm on Wednesday, 5th January, 2021. A team of senior officials from the PGI, Chandigarh, along with district officials is already present in Ferozepur to oversee preparations for the big ticket event. With a budget of 490.5 crores the new satellite center at Ferozepur is planned to house 100 indoor beds. This includes 30 intensive care and high dependency beds. It is planned to house 10 clinical specialty departments and five other supporting departments. It will also house minor and major operation theatres. The building will be constructed using the latest techniques and is proposed to be a platinum-rated green hospital. With PGIMER's prominence as a center of excellence in the region, the patient load at the institute has been constantly rising in the past decades to present levels. The emergency and routine services are finding it difficult to cope with the patient load. Secondly, families have to travel long distances to avail services at PGIMER. Thus, it became imperative that newer outreach models of service to the public be explored. With this in mind three satellite centers of PGIMER were sanctioned by the central government in Una (H.P.), Sangrur (P.B.) and Ferozepur (P.B.). In total, these three satellite centers will add 700 outreach beds for patient care apart from offering OPD services to the public. A budget of 449 crores and 301 beds have been sanctioned for the center at Sangrur. The construction of the hospital at Sangrur is nearing completion and its OPD services have started. Construction at both centers at Ferozepur and Una is anticipated to finish by 2024.

## SJVN 382 MW Sunni Dam Hydro Electric Project Launched in Himachal Pradesh

At an impressive ceremony in Mandi, Himachal Pradesh, Prime Minister virtually laid the Foundation Stones of 210 MW Luhri Stage-1 Hydro Electric Project located in Shimla & Kullu districts of Himachal Pradesh and 66 MW Dhaula Sidhi Hydro Electric Project situated in Hamirpur & Kangra districts of Himachal Pradesh. This historic occasion was graced by Governor of Himachal Pradesh Shri. Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh Shri Jai Ram Thakur, Union Minister of I&B and Youth Affairs & Sports Sh. Anurag Thakur. These projects are being implemented by SJVN on Build-Own-Operate-Maintain (BOOM) basis. Luhri-1 Hydro Electric Project and Sunni Dam Hydro Electric Project are on River Satluj and Dhaula Sidhi Hydro Electric Project is on River Beas. Shri Nand Lal Sharma, Chairman & Managing Director, SJVN stated that in November 2020, Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by the Prime Minister, 210 MW Luhri-1 Hydro Electric Project was approved at a Project Cost of

Rs 1810 crore. The Project is scheduled to be commissioned by January 2026. On completion it would generate 758.20 million units of electricity annually. The project has also been accorded a budgetary support of Rs 66 crore. Shri Sharma informed that the salient features of Luhri-1 Project, involve construction of 80-meter-high concrete Gravity Storage Dam. Two main Penstocks and two Auxiliary Penstocks from the Dam would operate two Turbines of 80 MW each and two of 25 MW each respectively. The Surface Powerhouse would be at Toe of the Dam. Contributing to the preservation of environment, this project would lead to reduction in emission of 6.1 lakh tons of carbon dioxide annually from the environment. He added that Luhri-1 Project shall generate 20 Lakh mandays job opportunities while the State of Himachal Pradesh would immensely benefit with free power worth around Rs. 1140 crore during the Project Life Cycle of 40 years. Shri Sharma disclosed that the Government of India approved the Project cost of Rs 687.97 Crore for 66 MW Dhaula Sidhi Hydro Electric Project and has also accorded a budgetary support of Rs 21.6 crore for this project. The Project is targeted for completion on November 2025. On completion this Project will add 304 Million Units of energy annually. Shri Sharma stated that the Salient Features of Dhaula Sidhi Project entailed construction of a 70-meter-high Concrete Gravity Storage Dam which would feed Two Turbines of 33 MW each respectively. Project would have a Toe Dam Surface Power House and on completion would lead to reduction of 2.4 lakh tons of carbon dioxide from the environment, annually. He added that this Project would result in creation of 8 Lakh man days employment opportunities while Himachal Pradesh would benefit with free power worth Rs. 461 crores from the Project. Shri N.L. Sharma further briefed that Project Cost for 382 MW Sunni Dam Hydro Electric Project has been estimated at Rs 2614.51 crore which on completion is expected to generate 1382 million units of electricity annually. This Project would help in reduction of 11 lakh tons of carbon dioxide from the environment annually and Himachal Pradesh would benefit with around Rs. 2587 crore worth of Free Power.

## BHEL Day 2022 celebrated with fervour

BHEL Day 2022 was celebrated at the company's Corporate office in New Delhi where Dr. Nalin Shinghal, CMD, BHEL; Functional Directors on the Board of BHEL, and senior officials of NCR-based divisions participated with great enthusiasm. The CMD also addressed a cross-section of employees through video conferencing on the occasion.

**CMD NBCC HONOURED AT 36th INDIAN ENGINEERING CONGRESS 2021**

In the 36th Indian Engineering Congress organized by The Institution of Engineers (India), IEI at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi on 26th December, 2021, Sh. PK Gupta, CMD, NBCC (India) Ltd. Delivered the prestigious 34th Dr. Ajudhia Nath Khosla Memorial Lecture on the topic- "Infrastructure Sector Consultancy-Challenges and Solutions." The IEI Engineering Congress is organized annually to recognize industry leaders for their innovation, excellence in engineering operations and thereby, to lead the industry in a competitive manner.

## Delhi could see 50K daily cases'

Current wave of COVID-19 may peak by Jan. 20, IIT Kanpur tells government

NIKHIL M BABU  
NEW DELHI

The current wave of COVID-19 could peak around January 20 in Delhi with 50,000 daily new cases if no restrictions are imposed, an IIT Kanpur team has informed the government, an official source said.



Timings	
<b>DELHI</b>	
WEDNESDAY, JAN. 05	
RISE 07:15	SET 17:39
RISE 09:38	SET 20:33
THURSDAY, JAN. 06	
RISE 07:15	SET 17:40
RISE 10:19	SET 21:39
FRIDAY, JAN. 07	
RISE 07:15	SET 17:41
RISE 10:56	SET 22:39

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	23	08
Safdarjung	23	08
Palam	22	10

**Delhi Palam Today**  
18°C Rise in night temperature. Day will be cool with smoke haze. Spell of rain and thunderstorm with gusty winds to occur.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
19°C The weather will be cool with cloudy sky. Night will be cold. Spell of rain and thunderstorm with gusty winds will occur.

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**THE HINDU**  
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# Hospital bed occupancy highest in 14 days

Capital's case fatality rate stands at 1.73%; use of ventilated beds doubled between Dec. 11 and Jan. 3

JATIN ANAND  
NEW DELHI

With the number of daily COVID-19 cases and positivity rate continuing to surge across the Capital, the occupancy of hospital beds under various categories has been at its highest in the past fortnight, according to government data.

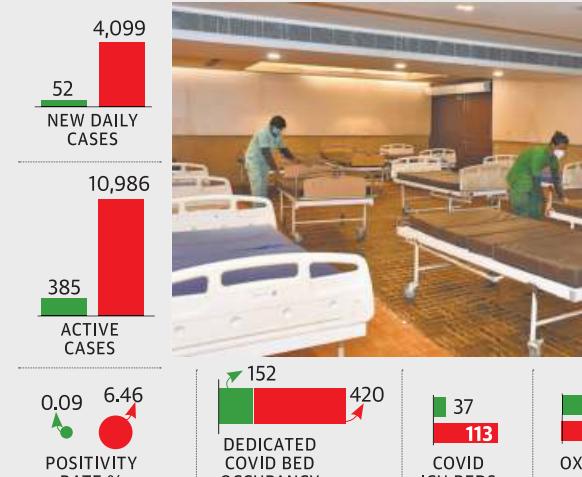
While the number of new COVID-19 cases went from 52 to 4,099, active cases rose from 385 to 10,986 and the positivity rate surged from 0.09% to 6.46% between December 11 and January 3.

The occupancy of COVID and oxygen-supported beds increased by 2.5 times, ICU beds by over three times and ventilators by two times during this period. However, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said 94.1% of the total 9,042 beds for COVID-19 were vacant as of Tuesday.

## Dedicated beds

According to Health Department records, 420 dedicated COVID beds were occupied on January 3 opposed to 152 on December 11 and the oc-

## A STEADY RISE



cupancy of ICU beds has gone up to 113 from 37.

Ventilator bed occupancy was recorded at 48, up from 20 and that of oxygenated beds at 398 compared to 148 during the 14-day period.

According to government sources however, when it came to ventilators, only 14 of them were in use.

Health Department data

show that COVID bed occupancy had breached the 300 mark on January 2 with 307 such beds being occupied, followed by a sudden surge in the next 24 hours bringing the bed occupancy to 420 by the next day.

COVID ICU bed occupancy fluctuated in two digits throughout the 14-day period before reaching 65 on

January 2 and breaching the 100 mark within 24 hours and settling at 113 on January 3.

Oxygen-supported beds progressively inched closer to the 300 mark during the period before breaching it within 24 hours between January 2 and 3 and rising to 398, up from 293.

As of January 2, when

tests in Delhi per million were significantly higher than nationally at 17,29,958 tests per million compared to the national figure of 5,03,661 per million.

## 'Symptoms mild'

Seeking to reassure Delhiites, Mr. Sisodia said experts believe that the symptoms of Omicron are very mild and the infected people are recovering very quickly. He appealed to people to opt for hospitalisation only in case of a dip in oxygen levels.

"At present, Delhi has reported over 11,000 COVID cases of which only 350 people are hospitalised and only 124 patients are on oxygen beds. There are seven persons who are on ventilators as of now," he said.

# Teachers' varsity will make India Vishwaguru'

BJP says government keeps announcing universities 'only for publicity'

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Delhi Assembly on Tuesday passed the Delhi Teachers' University Bill with Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia saying teachers graduating from the university will lead India to become a "Vishwaguru".

Participating in the discussion, Mr. Sisodia, who also holds the education portfolio, said the BJP is not serious about education. The Central government, he said, has increased the fees of IITs from ₹90,000 to ₹3 lakh while the IIM fees have gone up to ₹23 lakh. This will make it difficult for the children from poor families to get admission in these institutions, he said.

Mr. Sisodia said he is ready to answer every question in the Assembly but the BJP does not have the "courage to hear the truth".

BJP MLA Ajay Mahawar

demanded that the Babarpur Assembly constituency be renamed after former president and scientist A.P.J. Abdul Kalam while another BJP MLA Abhay Verma requested Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to change the name of Laxmi Nagar metro station to Laxmi Nagar-Shakarpur metro station.

Leader of the Opposition Ramvini Singh Bidhuri said the government "could not respond" either to his allegations or the questions raised by him.

During the debate on Delhi Teachers' University Bill, Mr. Bidhuri said the government keeps announcing universities "only for publicity".

The LOP also placed in the Assembly grievances of the teachers and staff members of 12 government-funded colleges of Delhi University.

"The staff members have not got their salaries for six

months. Thousands of posts of principals, vice-principals and teachers are lying vacant in Delhi schools. Not a single guest teacher was confirmed, but thousands of them were fired," Mr. Bidhuri said.

"The government has increased the fees at Delhi Technological University by lakhs of rupees. The promise of education to poor children has also proved to be false," the BJP leader said.

Mr. Bidhuri said he also questioned the new excise policy during the question-and-answer period and asked how many liquor shops were open in non-conforming areas and how much commission was given to wholesalers and retailers.

But, Mr. Sisodia "did not have this information", he said. "Mr. Sisodia admitted that in the Master Plan-2021, liquor shops have been allowed in non-conforming areas, but when asked where these shops were open, he could not answer," Mr. Bidhuri said.

**New liquor policy**  
Mr. Sisodia said due to the new liquor policy in Delhi, "the commission of BJP leaders has been stopped" which is why they are "furious and upset". "The policy has stopped the theft of ₹3,500 crore. Earlier, this money used to go to BJP leaders as commission, now it is coming to Delhi's treasury," he said.

Mr. Sisodia made the statement during the discussion on the new liquor policy in the House.

He said before the new policy, there was no liquor shop in about 80 wards of Delhi. In these places, illegal outlets were being run under the patronage of BJP leaders as commission, now it is coming to Delhi's treasury," he said.

Mr. Sisodia made the statement during the discussion on the new liquor policy in the House.

presentation of tribals in gram panchayats, the Zilla Adiavasi Kalyan Sangh (ZAKS) on Monday staged a demonstration in front of the office of the Balangir Collector.

"Since the beginning, posts of sarpanch and block chairpersons have been reserved for tribal candidates. However, the draft notification says no block or gram panchayat has been earmarked for tribals in Balangir," said Niranjan Bisi, general secretary of the ZAKS, Balangir. Mr. Bisi said, "We will not let panchayat election take place. Tribals will not even file nomination for any posts. In Khaprakhol and Turekela, more than 35% of population are tribals."

"The Orissa HC has directed to reserve posts as per the proportion of State's population. The reservation exercise has been carried out as per Section 10 (5) of Odisha Gram Panchayat Act. As against 22.5% tribal population in Odisha, the government has earmarked 31% of posts of sarpanch and block chairperson for tribals, So there is no question of depriving tribals," said Gyana Ranjan Dash, Director of Pancharatna Raj.

As per the draft publication for reservation of offices of all panchayat samitis, no reservation has been provided for tribal candidates in non-scheduled areas.

Protesting against non-re-

## Strict measures needed



No precautions: Shoppers at the weekly market in Jahangirpuri on Tuesday even as the number of COVID-19 cases is rising rapidly in the Capital. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

# Snow blankets Kashmir Valley; 42 flights cancelled

Tourists stranded; IMD issues orange alert in J&K

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT SRINAGAR

A fresh spell of snowfall disrupted air traffic and left tourists stranded in the Kashmir Valley on Tuesday as the weather department issued an "orange alert" and predicted "intensification of wet weather" over the next 24 hours in Jammu & Kashmir.

Snowfall started on Monday night and continued till late on Tuesday afternoon. An official spokesperson said the continuous snowfall and poor visibility resulted in the cancellation of 42 flights across all airlines on Tuesday. "Flights were oper-

ating as visibility improved," the official said.

The cancellations left scores of tourists stranded in the Valley.

Former Chief Minister and National Conference vice-president Omar Abdullah criticised the airport authorities for the flight cancellations. "Our international airport" has no landing aids that enable the runway to remain open when visibility dips. We make such a big deal about tourism and investment promotion, now imagine the plight of those tourists who've sat all day outside the terminal and

avalanches and landslides in vulnerable areas, disruption of power supply in hilly areas and water logging in low lying areas, besides further dip in day temperatures," the IMD said. The IMD urged people not to venture out.

"There are chances of avalanches and landslides in vulnerable areas, disruption of power supply in hilly areas and water logging in low lying areas, besides further dip in day temperatures," the IMD said. The IMD urged people not to venture out.

As per the AAP leader, the role of a Maharashtra-headquartered firm, which has been given the contract by GETCO to conduct the recruitment test, is also under the radar.

The government has de-

# Tribals up in arms over quota in panchayat elections

They threaten to boycott poll after not a single post was reserved for them in 23 out of 30 Odisha districts

## SATYASUNDAR BARIK BHUBANESWAR

A massive controversy has erupted across non-scheduled areas of Odisha with tribals threatening to boycott and disrupt forthcoming panchayat elections.

Organisations comprising tribal population are aggrieved that not a single post of sarpanch and block chairperson has been reserved for tribals in 23 out of 30 districts (non-scheduled areas).

22.5% tribal population Scheduled areas are those which have predominant population from tribal communities. Three districts Mayurbhanj, Sundargarh and Koraput have been iden-

tified as fully scheduled areas whereas parts of Rayagada, Keonjhar, Sambalpur, Boudh, Kandhamal, Ganjam, Kalahandi and Balasore are scheduled areas.

As tribals constitute 22.5% of State's total population, re-

servation of posts of sarpanch, block chairman and zilla parishad chairman has been made based on their population percentage. Accordingly, posts have been reserved for tribals only in scheduled areas.

Protesting against non-re-

presentations of tribals in

gram panchayats, the Zilla Adiavasi Kalyan Sangh (ZAKS) on Monday staged a demonstration in front of the office of the Balangir Collector.

"This agency's name had surfaced in a similar scam in the past. The middlemen usually charge ₹20 lakh from each candidate and take ₹1 lakh to ₹2 lakh as advance. With the help of this agency and officials, right answers are clicked on behalf of the candidates," he alleged, explaining how the exam was being gamed.

He also named around a dozen persons who are actively involved in the malpractice.

The Orissa HC has directed to reserve posts as per the proportion of State's population.

The reservation exercise has been carried out as per Section 10 (5) of Odisha Gram Panchayat Act. As against 22.5% tribal population in Odisha, the government has earmarked 31% of posts of sarpanch and block chairperson for tribals, So there is no question of depriving tribals," said Gyana Ranjan Dash, Director of Pancharatna Raj.

As per the draft publication for reservation of offices of all panchayat samitis, no reservation has been provided for tribal candidates in non-scheduled areas.

Protesting against non-re-

# Another scam in government recruitment surfaces in Gujarat

State government orders inquiry into power engineers' exam after allegations by AAP of malpractice

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT AHMEDABAD

Another scam in government recruitment has surfaced in Gujarat when the State government on Tuesday ordered an inquiry into the allegations of irregularities in an online exam being held for the recruitment of engineers for the Gujarat Energy Transmission Corporation.

The exam began on Tuesday and will continue for the next three days at many centres.

The administration was forced to order the probe af-

ters in Gandhinagar that Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel has ordered an enquiry.

"Our government believes in transparency. Nearly 35,000 aspirants are appearing in this exam. Strict action would follow if anyone is found guilty," he said.

As per the AAP leader, the

online test, which began at 12 noon, is being conducted for the recruitment of 300 electrical and 53 civil engineers. "The scam is being run by people based in Bayad town of Arvalli district. The candidates who have paid an advance only pretend to appear in the exam but will not answer any question....people sitting in

a control room will click answers for them," Mr. Jadeja claimed.

"This agency's name had surfaced in a similar scam in the past. The middlemen usually charge ₹20 lakh from

## Odisha child panel opposes raising legal age of marriage

The move could create unwed mothers, says OSCPCR

### STAFF REPORTER

BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (OSCP) has opposed the move to raise the legal age for marriage of girls to 21 saying it would not be effective in preventing child marriages and at the same time it could create unwed mothers as another Act permits consensual sex after 18.



**C** The National Crime Records Bureau data says only 785 cases have been registered under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act in 2020

SANDHYABATI PRADHAN  
OSCP Chairperson

strengthen families by providing appropriate livelihood opportunity.

#### Cases registered

"The National Crime Records Bureau data says only 785 cases have been registered under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act in 2020 which was 523 in 2019 and 501 in 2018. On the other hand, 23.3% girls were marrying before the legal age as captured by NFHS - 5," she said.

She said: "The Juvenile Justice Care and Protection Act and the Integrated Child Protection Scheme have the scope to extend support to such vulnerable children only up to the age of 18. In

such circumstances there will be no space to provide support to a child bride or groom in between the age of 19 to 21 if rescued from child marriage.

"The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 has restricted consensual sex up to the age of 18. This implies that someone may have sexual act after 18 but won't be able to marry till 21 which will create new sets of issues like increasing unwed mothers and foeticide thereafter," Ms. Pradhan added.

The OSCPCR said instead of raising the legal age of marriage of girls to 21, the minimum legal age for both boys and girls must be 18. The OSCPCR said instead of raising the legal age of marriage of girls to 21, the minimum legal age for both boys and girls must be 18. In

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
KOLKATA

Amidst rising COVID-19 cases, the West Bengal government has decided to go ahead with the 27th Kolkata International Film Festival where 200 films will be screened across ten venues in the city starting January 7.

The inaugural film will be Satyajit Ray's 1970 classic *Ara-nyer Din Ratri*. The festival will offer centenary tribute to Satyajit Ray, Chidananda Dasgupta and Hungarian filmmaker Miklós Jancsó. It will also pay special tribute to Buddhadeb Dasgupta, Dilip Kumar and Jean Paul Belmondo among others.

Finland is going to be theme country for the festival this year. Six films from Finland will be screened. Fifty-nine films will be screened in the competitive section. Along with the venues at Nandan cultural complex in the city, films will be screened at Nazrul Mancha and a few other venues.

The Kolkata International Film Festival used to be a mega event where actors from Bollywood would participate in the opening and closing cer-



Minister Indranil Sen and actress Sayantika Banerjee unveil the KIFF trophy in Kolkata on Tuesday. ■ PTI

emony. However, this time the festival is likely to be a muted event. The festival will conclude on January 14.

#### Ganga Sagar Mela

While the State government has decided to go ahead with the film festival, questions are being raised about the Ganga Sagar Mela which will be held in the second week of January.

A doctor has filed a petition before Calcutta HC challenging the State's decision to hold the annual pilgrimage. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had said that she could not stop or impose curbs on the mela as it was not a State government event.

## Concern over NITI Aayog's low ranking for Rajasthan

State at 16<sup>th</sup> position among 19 in health index ranking

### MOHAMMED IQBAL

JAIPUR

Health rights groups in Rajasthan on Tuesday expressed concern over the NITI Aayog giving low ranking in the health index round IV report with the findings that health status had stagnated and health services were deteriorating in most parts of the State. The ranking was given recently on the basis of 24 indicators related to health outcomes and on key inputs and processes.

The report 'Healthy States, Progressive India', prepared by the NITI Aayog, the World Bank and the Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, has placed Rajasthan at the 16th position among 19 big States. Moreover, the State has shown a decline between the base year 2018-19 and the reference year 2019-20.

#### 'Worst performer'

Rajasthan has been depicted as the 'worst performer' in health outcomes measured in the form of neonatal, under five and maternal mortality rates, tuberculosis treat-



NITI Aayog's health index round IV report says that health status had stagnated in most parts of Rajasthan. ■ FILE PHOTO

ment success rate, etc. It falters even in institutional deliveries and immunisation in comparison with other States.

Activists attached to the Jan Swasthya Abhiyan (JSA) here demanded that the State government get its act together and take decisive steps to improve the health status of people. The JSA highlighted the enactment of the Right to Health Care Act, strengthening of primary healthcare and making free and rational medication accessible to all as the urgent steps.

Chhaya Pachauli, director of voluntary group Prayas, said the State government

must ensure that all citizens get free basic preventive and curative services within half-an-hour of walking distance as part of the right to healthcare. The State must also invest generously in primary healthcare and maternal and child health services which should be delivered through an outreach in villages or through the institutions such as the anganwadi centres.

"The functioning of the primary healthcare services largely influences indicators such as immunisation, antenatal care, institutional deliveries and infant and maternal mortality rates," Ms. Pachauli said.

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Public Notice : MERGER / RELOCATION OF OFFICES

This is for the information of general public that as part of our Company's business consolidation plans, we will be closing the following offices that are located in the National Capital Territory of Delhi (NCT) and will now be serviced by our other offices w.e.f. 16/03/2022. They will continue to enjoy uninterrupted services from the nearest or new location as given against the office below, as well as online at www.uicil.co.in

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1. Divisional Office 5 (Office Code: 40500); Divisional Office 7 (Office Code: 40700); Jamuna House, 10203, 3rd Floor, Padam Singh Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi-110005.

2. Divisional Office 24 (Office Code: 42400); Jeevan Vikas Bldg, 30-31, A, Floor No-4 Asaf Ali Road, New Delhi-110015.

3. Branch Office (Office Code: 41202), 4C-2, 3rd Floor, Mookhand Commercial Complex, Lajpat Nagar, New Delhi-110024

4. Micro Office Mahipalpur (Office Code: 41384); L-382, 1st Floor, Mahipalpur Extension, New Delhi-110037.

5. Branch Office (Office Code: 41703); Bharatram Road, Daryaganj, New Delhi-110002.

6. Micro Office Khajuri (Office Code: 41782); C-2, 2nd Floor, Main Road Wazirabad, Bhanupur, New Delhi-110053

7. Micro Office Subash Nagar (Office Code: 42581); Deepwan House, Ajay Enclave, G-22, Subash Nagar, New Delhi-110018

8. Micro Office Palam (Office Code: 42582); Vardhaman Shakti Mall, 2nd Floor, Vardhaman Extension, Dwarka, New Delhi-110075.

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Place : New Delhi Date : 05/01/2022

Ajay Rastogi Dy. General Manager

## OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

### DEATH

#### OBITUARY



We Regret to inform the peaceful passing of our beloved mother

**RANI SAHIBA RADHA GAJAPATHI RAJU**

of Vizianagaram on 04<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at her Residence at Chennai.

Vidya Gajapathi Raju Singh  
Urmila Prakash and Grand children

**Brahmasri Ramakrishnan Mama, Dharmadhikari,**  
Sri Stringeri Jagadguru Sankara Math, Krupasankari Street,  
and Managing Trustee of Sri Sharada Bharathi Trust,  
West Mambalam, Chennai.

Attained the Lotus Feet of the  
Divine Mother Sharadamba on 04<sup>th</sup> Jan 2022



Pranams, devotees and staff of the Math and trustees, staff and patashala students of  
Stringeri Sharada Bharathi Trust

## Social worker Sindhuai Sapkal passes away

Known as 'orphan children's mother', she died of heart attack at a private hospital

### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA PUNE

Renowned social worker Sindhuai Sapkal, fondly known as 'orphan children's mother', died following a heart attack at a private hospital here, doctors said.

Sapkal, who had received the Padma Shri last year, had completed 74 years in November.

She had been admitted to the Galaxy Care Hospital here. "She had undergone a

hernia surgery one-and-a-half months ago and recovery was very slow. Today [Tuesday] she died of a heart attack around 8 p.m.," said Shailesh Puntambekar, Medical Director of the hospital.

Sapkal, who grew up in extreme poverty, went on to set up institutes for orphan children. Born on November 14, 1948, in Wardha district of Maharashtra, Sapkal was forced to drop out of school after she had passed Class IV.

At the tender age of 12, she was married to a 32-year-old man. After she gave birth to three children, her husband abandoned her even when she was pregnant.

Her mother and the village where she had grown up refused to help, forcing her to beg to raise her daughters at one point.

She overcame these circumstances with sheer will-power and started working for orphans. Having raised over 1,050 orphan children, she could boast of having 207 sons-in-law and 36 daughters-in-law.

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hernia surgery one-and-a-half months ago and recovery was very slow. Today [Tuesday] she died of a heart

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### CHENNAI METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

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Sl. No	Tender No.	Description	Bid Security	e-Bid Submission closing Date	e-Bid Opening Date
1.	MAT/OT/035/2022	Supply and delivery of 18 Nos of desilting machines (4 Wheeler), 3 Nos of Jet riddling (2000 Ltr), 6 Nos of Jet riddling (6000 Ltr), 3 Nos of Jet riddling (9000 Ltr), 3 Nos of Jet riddling cum suction (9000Ltr) and 6 Nos of super sucker (8000 Ltr) as per relevant IS specification. (Under two cover system)	Rs. 9,20,000/-	07.02.2022 up to 3.00 P.M.	08.02.2022 at 3.30 P.M.
2	MAT/OT/036/2022 dt.04.01.2022	Supply and delivery of various sizes of Class K-7 & K-8 Ductile Iron pipes conforming to IS 2029/2000 to its latest revision including rubber gasket (EPDM) conforming to IS 5382/1985 to its latest revision for O&M works on ARC basis for the year 2021-2022 (Under single cover system)	Rs. 2,96,500/-	07.02.2022 up to 3.00 P.M.	08.02.2022 at 3.30 P.M.
4.	Details of EMD	: Bid Security shall be in the form of NEFT/RTGS. Scanned copy of the e-receipt duly reflecting the UTR number shall be uploaded.			
5.	Specification at website	: The tender specification will be placed at <a href="http://www.tntenders.gov.in/">www.tntenders.gov.in/</a> & <a href="https://chennaimetrowater.tn.gov.in/">https://chennaimetrowater.tn.gov.in/</a> The prospective bidders may download the same for reference.			
6.	For all other details refer bid document in the website from 06.01.2022				

PURCHASE MANAGER

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## IN BRIEF



20,268 ducks culled in Alappuzha district

ALAPPUZHA

Rapid response teams of the Animal Husbandry Department culled 20,268 ducks within a one-km radius of two bird flu hotspots in Pallipad and Ambalapuzha North grama panchayats in Kerala's Alappuzha district on Tuesday.

## Two killed as crane wire snaps in Telangana

HYDERABAD

Two people were crushed to death and two others injured after wire of a crane snapped and iron rods fell on them. The incident took place at Nandigama village in Telangana's Sangareddy district on Monday evening. The accident occurred when the cable of a crane snapped while it was lifting heavy iron rods at a private industry in Nandigama, the police said.

# Hold Assembly session, remove me as Chancellor, says Governor

Arif Mohammed Khan says Kerala Chief Minister may take over the responsibility

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

**The solution is very easy. They (government) can call a special session of the Assembly. They can appoint the Chief Minister as Chancellor. Or else, let the government bring in an Ordinance for the purpose. I will immediately sign it**

ARIF MOHAMMED KHAN  
Kerala Governor

Speaking to reporters in Kochi, Mr. Khan denied that his recalcitrance to discharge duties as Chancellor had precipitated an administrative crisis in universities. "The solution is very easy. They (government) can call a special session of the Assembly. They can appoint the Chief Minister as Chancellor. Or else, let the government bring in an Ordinance for the purpose. I will immediately sign it," he said.

The Governor seemed to

indict the government for impinging on the autonomy of varsities. Mr. Khan said the Assembly had made him Chancellor through an act of law. "And I see every day that the very people who passed the law are breaking it. There is interference at every step. I am given a responsibility, but then impeded from discharging my duty."

Mr. Khan said "something definitely has happened"

which made him decide not to continue as Chancellor. "But I won't discuss the issue because it involves national institutions," he said.

In what seemed to be a reference to his contentious decision, purportedly at the behest of the government, to endorse the extension of the Kannur University Vice Chancellor beyond the retirement age, Mr. Khan said: "You do something in the

day. Then you go home and your conscience pricks you. You decide I am not going to continue my job. Something serious has happened. Constitutional propriety must be respected. And that is the reason why I do not want to discuss those very, very serious issues publicly."

## No power tussle'

Mr. Khan pointed out that conflicts often happen when there is a power tussle. "Here, I am not asking for power. I am saying that it has become difficult for me to work as Chancellor. Please make some alternative arrangement," he said.

Mr. Khan said "something not ordinary serious, but very serious" had influenced his decision to stay away from the Chancellor's duties.

KCR has lost his mental balance, charges Nadda

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD

BJP national president J.P. Nadda on Tuesday alleged that Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao had lost his 'mental balance' after the bypoll losses at Dubbik and Huzurabad.



Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath during the foundation stone laying event of ATS training centre in Deoband. ■ PTI

# We eliminate terror, says Yogi

CM on inauguration spree before polls

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GAZIABAD

Sharpening his attack on the Samajwadi Party (SP), Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said on Tuesday, in a reference to SP chief Akhilesh Yadav's recent comments, that those who were getting Lord Krishna in their dreams were forgetting that they had nurtured the demon Kansa in the past.

"Those who fired at Ram bhakts are now promising to build the Ram temple in record time. They are putting chameleons to shame in changing colours," he said.

Earlier in the day, Mr. Nadda was informed by the police when he landed at the airport that the proposed 'silent candlelight save democracy rally' from Gandhi Statue to Paradise Circle in Secunderabad will not be allowed due to COVID restrictions.



## Inadequate response

The ₹8 lakh income criteria to identify EWS are not reasonably explained by the Government

The submission by a Government-appointed committee to the Supreme Court that the annual family income of ₹8 lakh is "reasonable" threshold to determine if someone belongs to economically weaker sections to avail 10% reservations in admissions and jobs does not seem to hold water. The submission rejected the notion that the Government had "mechanically" adopted ₹8 lakh as the cut-off because it was used to identify the OBC creamy layer, by asserting that the income criterion was "more stringent" than the one for the OBC creamy layer. This justification, based on a few more criteria that exclude some income and occupational parameters from the OBC creamy layer, however, is not convincing as the Court's key question remained unanswered satisfactorily. The Court had said that the OBC category is socially and educationally backward, and had therefore additional impediments to overcome, and had asked whether it "would... be arbitrary to provide the same income limit both for the OBC and EWS categories". The submission does not adequately respond to this question. On whether at all differences in purchasing power across urban/rural regions and per capita income/GDP across States were considered to arrive at this number, the submission suggests that this exercise would be infeasible and complex. But while asserting that an annual family income criterion of ₹8 lakh is the right approach, the committee does not present any data on the estimated number of EWS persons in the population based on this.

If available consumer expenditure surveys such as the 2011-12 NSSO report, Key Indicators of Household Consumer Expenditure are any indication, a bulk of the population will be eligible for reservations under the "below ₹8 lakh" cut-off under the EWS category, rendering the limit irrational. The committee's assertion that ₹8 lakh corresponds to the "effective income tax exemption limit" even as the only income slab exempt from paying taxes was for those earning below ₹2.5 lakh, also renders the criteria on "being economically weak" as less stringent. The submission lays emphasis on the fact that outcomes in the recent entrance and recruitment examinations (NEET, UPSC, JEE) showed an even bunching of eligible candidates in different income brackets (₹0-2.5 lakh, ₹2.5-5 lakh, ₹5-8 lakh), but it does not explain why marks cut-offs were even lower in recruitment exams than that of the socially and educationally backward OBCs. The validity of the 103rd Constitution Amendment, through which the EWS quota was introduced in 2019, is in any case still before a Constitution Bench. But the apex court must seek more clarity on the criteria adopted by the Government committee to set the income limit for identifying the EWS sections eligible for reservations.

## Transition in peril

The military should end the crackdown in Sudan and pave the way for democracy

The resignation of Sudan's civilian Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok has pushed the country, already battered by political instability, anti-military protests and violence, into further chaos. Mr. Hamdok, who was ousted in a military coup in October and then reinstated as part of an agreement, failed to convince the protesters that he could form an independent technocratic government that would complete Sudan's democratic transition. As violent clashes continued, Mr. Hamdok, who was called a "traitor" by the protesters, was left with no other option but to go. The crisis is of the military's own making. Sudan was on a slow but steady transition towards democracy under the Sovereignty Council, which was formed as part of a power-sharing agreement between the Generals and the civilian leaders. But General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan disbanded the Council and ousted Mr. Hamdok. Ever since mass protests in late 2018, the Generals have tried everything to protect the military's privileges. They first removed long-time dictator Omar al-Bashir and took power in their hands. They agreed on power sharing only after direct military rule became unsustainable. And when the civilian leaders were consolidating power, the military struck again through the coup. But where they erred was in miscalculating the will of the protesters.

The military now has power, but is in a difficult situation. When Gen. Burhan reinstated Mr. Hamdok sans the Sovereignty Council after the coup, he may have calculated that the military could exercise greater control over the civilian government and the transition process, which includes elections. But with Mr. Hamdok's resignation, this plan seems to have collapsed. A direct takeover of the government by the military would be extremely unpopular. Finding a legitimate Prime Minister would not be easy either. According to the constitutional declaration of 2019, the Prime Minister should be selected by a legislative council and then endorsed by the Sovereignty Council. The legislative council was never formed and the Sovereignty Council was disbanded. The military could appoint another technocrat. But if the protesters did not accept Mr. Hamdok, they are certainly not going to accept anyone the military appoints next. Weeks-long protests have also paralysed an already enfeebled economy. Inflation has soared to over 400%. The UN says at least a third of the country's nearly 43 million people will need humanitarian assistance in 2022. Sudan needs a stable, responsive government that can address the critical challenges. The military has the moral and political responsibility to resolve the crisis. It should immediately end the crackdown, respect the power-sharing agreement it signed with the civilian leaders in 2019, restore the Sovereignty Council and allow the country's full transition into democracy.

# The hint of a 'one nation one NGO' regime

The current purge against civil society organisations seems to be indiscriminate and alarming



M.S. SRIRAM

**O**n December 31, 2021, the Ministry of Home Affairs issued another public notice extending the validity of registration certificates that were expiring from September 29, 2020 to March 31, 2022 till the latter date, provided that the request for renewal had not been rejected. What should have been a routine activity of the Ministry has turned out to be a fairly detailed exercise of scrutiny, resulting in a paralysis in granting permissions. The levels of due diligence and the information sought on the one hand and the annual declarations to be given by the board members of civil society organisations on the other have increased significantly. The mandatory opening of bank accounts for foreign contributions has been centralised in one branch of the State Bank of India. The linking of Permanent Account Number (PAN), Aadhaar number and mapping it with the bank account/s of the individual board members are happening with gusto. All this has resulted in a chill settling over the people who are and have been associated with civil society organisations serving a social or cultural cause. The registrations under Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) have been long necessitated in order to undertake due diligence of the causes for which the organisation is working for and also to have a handle on the traceability of funds.

### Data on cancellations

Recently, the Missionaries of Charity established by Nobel Laureate Mother Teresa, was in the news for

the cancellation of its permission under the FCRA. A perusal of the statistics available on the website of the Ministry of Home Affairs (<https://bit.ly/32Kij6E>) reveals an interesting pattern. Of the 20,675 permissions under the FCRA that were cancelled from 2011 onwards, only 89 have been cancelled on request; the rest have been cancelled on violation. Of these 20,675 cancellations, 80% of the cancellations are after 2014, with a massive purge of around 10,003 permissions in the year 2015. The dashboard (<https://bit.ly/3sXfOsU>) shows a little under 17,000 active organisations – which have either got permission or will know their fate by March 2022, while around 33,000 organisations have either lost their permission or it has expired. These cancellation numbers do not include the rejection of around 600 applications that have been in the news in the recent past, as the website shows only three cancellations in the year 2021 and none in 2020.

There has been a pattern to the organised attack on civil society organisations and this looks like the final shot. In the past, the amendments in the FCRA that restricted the ability to sub-grant, killed many of the niche organisations working in very remote areas which had no direct access to international funding but were doing it through larger non-governmental organisations. The other amendment restricting the proportion of expenses on administration almost choked organisations that worked for the rights of the disposed. The increasing level of surveillance type of data sought has resulted in many organisations losing people on their governance structure and resulting in problems in funding.

The level of the purge is alarming on two fronts. If this purge is because of violations that seem to



threaten sovereignty because of evidence of money laundering, subversive activities and violation of the laws, then it is worrying that these organisations survived for all these years. This says a bit about the system of scrutiny that we have had in the past.

Alternately, if these are organisations that have been purged on xenophobic considerations – because they are activists usually questioning the Government and speaking for the marginalised – organisations working on issues such as human rights, and organisations serving the people whom the state is unable to reach, then it is even more alarming. That is because it is suppressing the concept of *anyodaya* – reaching the last person with rights, services and entitlements.

### Organisations that are needed

Why we need civil society organisations is a moot question. We need them because they usually work on what can be called an unreasonable agenda. This unreasonableness falls in three large verticals. The first is that they ask for greater efficiency, delivery and accountability from the state. Whether it is about rehabilitation and compensation in the case of land acquisition or setting up a great accountability framework as was done through the movement led by the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti

Sangathan for the Right to Information. The second vertical is in correcting the extractive nature of markets. The groups asking for environmental accountability are looking at inter-generational justice on a matter that is not very precisely measurable but is palpable. The third is basically picking up causes that are so niche that it is beyond the capability of the state to come up with such initiatives such as a school of drama set up by NINASAM (Nilakanteshwara Natyaseva Samgha) in a village called Heggodu, Karnataka, or an idea of distributing clothing for work as done by Goonj. These initiatives cannot be put into specific business plans, spreadsheets or government schemes. They, therefore, need a grant-based, cause-based revenue stream model.

### Issue of funding

Why foreign funding? As we know, "causes" have no boundaries and funding for such socially desirable belief systems could come from beyond borders. Some causes carried out by organisations such as Doctors Without Borders, or Reporters Without Borders are by definition international in nature. Similar is the case with the Jaipur foot provided by the Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti. The humanitarian work by the Missionaries of Charity is beyond the capability of a state. Such causes do not have a rational basis to be explained in terms of a financial model; how do you put a price tag to press freedom? The niche funding will happen from agencies that may be beyond the borders. They need to be encouraged.

In general, past regimes have been tolerant of all developmental and cultural causes; somewhat wary and tolerant of rights-based causes; and largely suspicious of civil society organisations working for human rights and environmental causes. Both human rights and

environmental causes put these civil society organisations directly in confrontation with the job of policing/internal security and "development" or economic growth. That is a fight that the civil society organisations were used to.

### Deeper study needed

However, the current purge seems to be indiscriminate. The depth and the variety of the work of a civil society organisation cannot be captured in the annual returns filed on the FCRA portal, where there is no scope for explaining something beyond the binary. There needs to be a study on how many civil society organisations lost their permissions on "expiry" only because the pre-populated dropdowns given by the FCRA portal were unable to capture the work of the organisations.

The duality of welcoming foreign investments (which takes away capital gains and dividends) while actively discouraging foreign aid to charities is staring us in the face. The definition of what is foreign in the case of electoral bonds and donations to political parties is dodgy at best. This duality is the signature of the current dispensation. Its appetite to collect data is matched only by its reluctance to share data. If the hope, therefore, for civil society organisations is corporate social responsibility funding and funding from Indian philanthropists, watch this space. As cartoonist P. Mahamud indicated in a cartoon, we are moving towards a 'One Nation One NGO' regime.

(The writer is on the boards of non-governmental organisations, or NGOs that have applied for FCRA permission. None of those NGOs is mentioned in the article.)

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# The bottom line in Blinken's foray into Southeast Asia

The aim was to drive home the message that America's Indo-Pacific policy is not just aimed at deterring China's rise



HARSH V. PANT & PREMESA SAHA

**T**he visit by United States Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken to Southeast Asia in December 2021 – his first since becoming Secretary – underscores the importance that is being accorded to this region by the Joe Biden administration. While Mr. Blinken visited Indonesia and Malaysia, he could not go to Thailand after a COVID-19 case was detected in the press corps accompanying him (He landed there, spoke to the Thailand Deputy Prime Minister expressing regret, and then left for the U.S.). In his speech at Universitas Indonesia on December 14, Mr. Blinken laid out the five core principles shaping the American strategy of a free and open Indo-Pacific. Alongside, he also underlined the mechanisms that the U.S. is adopting to implement these core principles.

**On being a reliable partner**  
From Washington's perspective, the aim of laying out the initiatives pertaining to the region was to drive home the message that America's Indo-Pacific policy is not just aimed at deterring Chinese aggressiveness and rise. The idea was to present the U.S. as a reliable partner in meeting the challenges that the Indo-Pacific region

is facing. For instance, completely aware that the Southeast Asian nations are averse to choosing or taking sides in this U.S.-China competition, Mr. Blinken made it a point to mention that "individual countries will be able to choose their own path and their own partners. He said: "It's not about a contest between a U.S.-centric region or a China-centric region as the Indo-Pacific is its own region."

### China's shadow

But the impending Chinese threat was always lurking in the background, reflected in the suggestion that "there is so much concern, from northeast Asia to southeast Asia, and from the Mekong River to the Pacific Islands, ... about Beijing's aggressive actions, claiming open seas as their own, distorting open markets through subsidies to its state-run companies, denying the exports or revoking deals for countries whose policies it does not agree with, engaging in illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing activities".

The competition between the U.S. and China in the Indo-Pacific is in full swing, and this competition is here to stay. Given how both China and the U.S. are trying to lure the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries to their side – China with its grand economic infrastructure investment deals and the U.S. through recent high-profile official visits as well as the promise of investing more in this region under the Build Back Better World initiative and the Blue Dot Network. The U.S. is trying to push-

evidence that Southeast Asia is the major theatre where this competition will play out.

In Southeast Asia, the U.S.-China competition is most visible in two areas; one is the South China Sea and the second is the investment in fulfilling the infrastructure development needs of Southeast Asian countries. The U.S. has continued its Freedom of Navigation operations in the disputed waters of the South China Sea; these operations are meant to challenge "unlawful and sweeping maritime claims in the South China Sea [that] pose a serious threat to the freedom of the seas, including the freedoms of navigation and overflight".

In his remarks in Indonesia, Mr. Blinken stressed America's determination "to ensure freedom of navigation in the South China Sea, where Beijing's aggressive actions there threaten the movement of more than \$3 trillion worth of commerce every year". He also brought up the 2016 international tribunal ruling which had rejected the Chinese nine-dash-line claims as well as asserted that the U.S. and the other South China Sea claimant countries will "continue to push-

economic framework in the Indo-Pacific focusing on "trade and the digital economy, technology, resilient supply chains, decarbonisation and clean energy, infrastructure, worker standards, and other areas of shared interest".

### Beijing is invested here

When it comes to investments in infrastructure development, Southeast Asia has been one of the top recipients of Chinese investments under its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). How these investments have driven countries such as Cambodia and Laos to do China's bidding in the ASEAN even at the cost of compromising ASEAN's unity is a known fact. Besides this, China has been heavily investing in port and railway connectivity in countries such as Indonesia and Vietnam.

Mr. Blinken reiterated that the U.S. remains committed to help close the gap on infrastructure. Recognising that "ports, roads, power grids, broadband – all are building blocks for global trade, for commerce, for connectivity, for opportunity, for prosperity. And they're essential to the Indo-Pacific's inclusive growth," he pointed out that the members of the Quad (Australia, India, Japan and the U.S.) have provided more than \$48 billion in government-backed financing for infrastructure for the region. The infrastructure coordination group launched by the Quad members is seeking to catalyse even more investment and is looking to partner with Southeast Asia on infrastructure and many other shared priorities.

Washington is promising to do more under the Build Back Better World initiative and the Blue Dot Network. The U.S. is trying to showcase a comprehensive eco-

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

### Vaccination drive

The good response on day one, when over 40 lakh adolescents received their first jab of Covaxin, is encouraging (Page 1, January 4). Vaccination of children must be expanded to all above 12. The decision on homologous and heterologous boosters must be taken at the earliest. The complacency which led to the disastrous second wave and pushed the world to the precipice should not be repeated.

D. BIJU C. MATHEW,  
Thiruvananthapuram

### China's moves

Ever since the stand-off between India and China in Ladakh, there has been a

steady military and infrastructural build-up by the Chinese military at the border. The report, "China constructing bridge on Pangong lake in Ladakh" (Page 1, December 4), is cause for even more concern. These activities may also be to build psychological pressure on India, which should be ready for any eventuality.

D. SETHURAMAN,  
Chennai

**Standing up for science**  
One does not have to be a practising scientist to grasp the issues facing the pursuit of science, and indeed national life today. C.P. Rajendran's comprehensive analysis, "The deafening

silence of scientists" (OpEd page, January 4) breaks through the "grey zone of cynical detachment" where a perverse nostalgia and revanchism, pseudoscience and quackery are seizing hold of the imagination, in a "pernicious political landscape". Under this, the spirit of enquiry basic to science, philosophy and indeed any viable ethical system, is under threat.

VASANTHA SURYA,  
Bengaluru

■ It is unfortunate that our National Science Congress has become a gathering for making extraordinary claims instead of presenting and discussing serious subjects of

science and its potential to enhance and change the lives of many Indians. Jawaharlal Nehru truly believed that science was the only key if India was to progress. He invested heavily in a string of national-level scientific institutions. We now have leaders denying established and proven scientific theories. We appear to be mixing up anecdotal remedies, fables and myths and passing it off as science. China spends billions on research and development. No wonder it is ready to challenge the world.

H.N. RAMAKRISHNA,  
Bengaluru

■ The writer deserves praise for saying, loud and clear,

that pseudoscience finds support in India, even from those in authority. The respect for science in this great country is unfortunately eroding.

A. ARAVINDAN,  
Chennai

■ The article is both poignant and a much-needed voice against wrong science. While the accompanying picture suggests that evolution is a

### CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:

The first edit, "Widening the safety net" (January 4, 2022), had referred to 0.4 million children receiving the first dose of COVID-19 vaccine on the first day. It should have been 4 million.

While the scoreboard had mentioned correctly that R. Ashwin got 46 runs out of 50 balls, his feat was erroneously described as a 46-ball 50 in the text of the Sports page story titled "South Africa pacemen call the shots on day one" (January 4, 2022).

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# Disproving the charge of conspiracy

After Gandhi's assassination, the RSS and Hindu Mahasabha looked for ways to save themselves from ruin



DHIRENDRA K. JHA

In his new book, *Gandhi's Assassin: The Making of Nathuram Godse and his Idea of India*, Dhirendra K. Jha throws light on a pretrial statement Godse made, which refutes the self-portrait he offered in the courtroom "and the myths which pro-RSS writers created to suppress the real life that the assassin had lived and influences that had worked on him and led him to murder Gandhi." An excerpt:

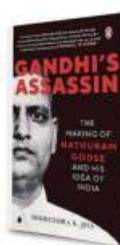
What the events would mean ultimately for the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and the Hindu Mahasabha was difficult to predict, but within twenty-four hours of Gandhi's assassination they were looking for ways that might save them from ruin and salvage some of their standing. The grief of the multitude was unmistakable, and people seemed to have lost their minds. At the heart of the violent reaction lay the sense of grievance nurtured by many people belonging to the depressed castes towards Maharashtrian Brahmins. It was through the RSS and the Hindu Mahasabha that a section of Maharashtrian Brahmins had dreamt of achieving the goal of a Hindu Rashtra. The antipathies that emerged after the assassination intensified the popular distrust of the RSS and the Mahasabha. The retaliation on January 31 was intense, beyond what anyone had imagined.

## About turn

The next morning, Madhav Sadashiv Golwalkar issued a written statement from Nagpur: 'In the presence of this appalling tragedy I hope people will learn the lesson and practise the doctrine of love and service. Believing in this doctrine, I direct all my brother swayamsevaks to maintain a loving attitude towards all, even if there be any sort of provocation born out of misunderstanding and to remember that even this misplaced frenzy is an expression of unbounded love and reverence, in which the whole country held the great Mahatma, the man who made the name of our mother-



THE HINDU ARCHIVES



**Gandhi's Assassin: The Making of Nathuram Godse and his Idea of India**  
Dhirendra K. Jha  
Vintage/Penguin Random House  
₹699

land great in the world. Our salute to the revered departed one.'

This was not the usual language the RSS used for Gandhi when he was alive. All through, it had spewed venom against him and had even wished his death when he sat on fast a fortnight ago. Rattled by the people's fury, the RSS now did a one-eighty and Golwalkar quickly claimed that his organisation believed in the 'doctrine' of Gandhi. Even the reaction to the attacks on RSS workers and offices was infused with utmost caution. The statement also placed the responsibility for the assassination in a generalised context and made no reference to Godse – perhaps the assassin's parent organisation lacked the courage to own up to the fact that he was its member.

In fact, another statement, also issued on February 1, by the 'Sangha Chalak of Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh, Bombay' totally abandoned Godse. It said 'the alleged assassin of Mahatma Gandhi was never connected in any way' with the RSS. 'We have already condemned the dastardly and cowardly attack on Mahatma Gandhi's life and we mourn this national calamity. We are observing national mourning by closing our centres for 13 days,' the statement said. V.D. Savarkar's attitude was no different. Like Golwalkar, he too grew frantic as soon as the fallout of the assassination became visible. Known for being protective of his reputation, the Mahasabha leader, now in his mid-sixties, was equally prompt in deserting Godse the moment mobs attacked his residence in the morning of January 31. By evening, Savarkar issued a brief statement expressing strong denunciation and condemnation of the murder. Stating

that 'the news of the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi was too shocking and sudden', he appealed to the 'people to stand by the Central Government of Free India and maintain order in the country'. Like Golwalkar, he too made no specific reference to his protégé and ardent follower.

## The gravest blow

For Godse, the shift in the attitude of the RSS and Savarkar might have been the gravest blow. Since the time he met Savarkar and joined the RSS, he had been nothing but loyal. The shift showed, if at all it was needed, how deceptive and distorted was the image of his mentors that Godse had kept in his heart. Abandonment by those he had prided himself on being associated with was to worsen his miseries in the days to come.

N.P. Thakur, deputy superintendent of police on special duty in Nagpur, focused specifically on checking the antecedents of Godse and exploring the many rumours that reached Delhi and Bombay after Gandhi's assassination. For Thakur, a scrutiny of the papers seized from the RSS headquarters at Nagpur removed much of the confusion, which was apparently sought to be created by the Sangh leadership when it declared that Godse had never been associated with it. Thakur came out with specific information, through the scrutiny of these papers as well as his own in-

dependent investigations, to nail the lie being spread by the RSS in this regard and unearth the truth about Godse's past.

The chargesheet revealed that the prosecution had relied heavily on the notebook entries and this became even more apparent as the trial progressed. Godse's accomplices knew that the only way they could save themselves was by disproving the charge of conspiracy, for the murder would then be seen as the act of a single man. 'There was one entry to the effect that some money was given to some "Bandopant". Now Digambar Ramchandra Badge [who had turned approver] had already made it clear in [his] deposition that "Bandopant" meant "Badge". There were other entries to the effect that some money was given to Nana Apte (Vinayak Rao), some to Gopal (Godse), and some was kept with him,' noted Gopal. 'It was obvious that the prosecution attached great importance to these entries as they seemed to help their attempt at providing the existence of a conspiracy immensely.'

In private parleys outside the courtroom, Godse became the target of attack for the serious 'mistake' he had committed. In the given situation, there was only one way that Godse could have rectified his 'mistake': by vehemently refuting the existence of a conspiracy. In actual terms, this would involve Godse telling the court that the idea to kill Gandhi was solely his own and he never shared it with any of the co-accused. Such a line of argument would help protect not just Apte and Savarkar, but also Gopal.

Excerpted with permission from Penguin Random House

# The eligible denied benefits

Thousands of farmers are denied benefits under the Rythu Bharosa scheme due to payment rejections by banks



VENKATA KRISHNA KAGGA &amp; CHAKRADHAR BUDDHA

Vantala Singanna, from a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group of G Madugula block of Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh, set out recently to understand why he doesn't receive Rythu Bharosa benefits like his fellow farmers. Rythu Bharosa is a scheme of the A.P. Government that provides ₹13,500 per agricultural year over three instalments as financial assistance to farmers during a crop season. This is crucial for tribal farmers as they struggle to secure credit through financial institutions and are often looted by private money lenders. Singanna met functionaries ranging from village volunteers (appointed by the Government to improve last-mile public service delivery) to block agriculture and revenue officers, tribal welfare officers, and bank staff. He found that the Government had removed his name from the list of eligible beneficiaries.

## Bank rejections

We at LibTech set out to investigate this phenomenon as the A.P. Government transferred the second instalment of benefits for this agricultural year in October 2021. (It will make the final transfer in January 2022.) We filed multiple Right to Information requests and interviewed implementing agencies. We met 80 farmers and visited banks to document their struggle through the process.

In May 2021, nearly 1.09 lakh farmers were identified as beneficiaries from the II tribal blocks of the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA), Paderu, and payments were approved by the Government. However, 5,660 farmers' payments were rejected by the banks due to various technical reasons (bank rejections) across these blocks in the May 2021 transfers. We found that the majority of these bank rejections was due to software mapping failures by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). Of the 5,660 cases, 5,029 remain unresolved. These farmers were also denied benefits in the October 2021 transfers. Collectively these farmers were denied ₹4.61 crore in two instalments. And the forest land-cultivating farmers will lose an additional ₹40 lakh in the upcoming third instalment.

Such experiences are critical for us to understand the structural architecture that creates such sagas. The Union Government's PM KISAN scheme has also faced similar is-

sues. However, the instalments are paid as soon as the farmers resolve the issue, unlike in Rythu Bharosa. Farmers with bank rejections formerly had one agricultural year to fix the issues and have their benefits transferred. But they only had four to six months to do it for the October 2021 instalment. And failure to do so resulted in the removal of their names from the beneficiary list.

## No clarity of settlement

Given the limited access to banking infrastructure, mobile and road connectivity, tribal farmers find it difficult to resolve bank rejections on their own. There is also a lack of understanding of the settlement procedure among field functionaries and bank employees. Neither the Union Government nor the State Government has published written rules for block- and panchayat-level authorities on how to settle bank rejections. The decision to remove the names of farmers from the beneficiary list appears to have been taken at the State level without considering field realities. It is a violation of a provision of the Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act that states that "every Gram Sabha shall be responsible for the identification or selection of persons as beneficiaries under the poverty alleviation and other programmes".

The A.P. Government has done well to pay old-age pensions at the doorsteps of rights-holders in cash through the well-established village volunteer system. Given the robustness of the pension transfer mechanism and the maze of problems created by the opaque Aadhaar Payment Bridge System, it would be prudent for the A.P. Government to follow its own success model for the farmers facing bank rejections in Rythu Bharosa. Or it should allow all the farmers the choice of how they wish to get their entitlements.

There is no accountability assumed by any agency involved in rectifying bank rejections. The Departments of Agriculture and Tribal Welfare, the Grama Secretariats and Ward Secretariats, and UIDAI and NPCI that handle these transfers should all be willing to accept responsibility in ensuring that these entitlements reach farmers on time. Given the number of institutions and functionaries available, the state should immediately resolve bank rejections. The Government is now preparing to retry payments for all affected farmers. However, farmers like Singanna will be excluded unless the process gaps and complexities involved in the resolution of bank rejections are acknowledged.

Venkata Krishna Kagga and Chakradhar Buddha, and Ajay Palle Swaro, who contributed to the article, are researchers with LibTech India

## STATE OF PLAY

# An industrial image makeover

The Kerala Government is striving hard to improve the investment atmosphere

K. A. MARTIN

Kerala, where the Left parties have a big say in the way the State is run even when they are out of power, used to be widely perceived as a hotbed of industrial militancy, which scared away investors. But the Left Front Government under Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, which is about a year old in its second consecutive term in office, is striving hard to improve the investment atmosphere.

Industries Minister P. Rajeeve, who is leading the charge to attract fresh investments and change the industrial culture, declared 2022 as the 'Year of Entrepreneurs'. The Government's target is to help establish a lakh new MSMEs by the end of the year. The powerful Kerala State Small Industries Association, with a membership of around 6,000 enterprises, has backed the Department strongly while also making demands from the Government.

The other measures being implemented include branding of products from all industrial estates and areas in the State under the 'Kerala Brand' provided the products meet the prescribed standards. The programme has already come into effect for the handloom weaving industry.

President of the Kerala State Small Industries Association M. Khalid and general secretary K. A. Joseph said they welcomed the new initiatives as the sector had suffered during the pandemic. It is estimated that there were around 1.25 lakh MSMEs in operation in the State, employing an average of seven to eight people.

In the midst of these efforts to improve the investment atmosphere, industry sources have complained of the slow pace of decision-making and bureaucratic hurdles to substantially improve the situation in a time-bound manner. They point to long-term pendency of complaints before various stakeholder agencies.

But Mr. Rajeeve is confident of industry providing great support to the reforms and of positive results soon. He to Kerala's high ranking in the Good Governance Index, which also took into consideration the rise in business in a State. Though Kerala is ranked 28th in the Ease of Doing Business index, the State had improved its score from 44.82 to 85.10, he added.

operations for three years, six months after which the unit has to get all the clearances. However, the new enterprises will not get any exemption from Union Government rules governing establishment of fresh units.

A dashboard will be inaugurated on January 5 to monitor real-time Industries Department activities that include real-time information on status of applications for clearances, status of complaints received by the Department and government schemes. The dashboard will be accessible to all stakeholders, including investors.

The other measures being implemented include branding of products from all industrial estates and areas in the State under the 'Kerala Brand' provided the products meet the prescribed standards. The programme has already come into effect for the handloom weaving industry.

President of the Kerala State Small Industries Association M. Khalid and general secretary K. A. Joseph said they welcomed the new initiatives as the sector had suffered during the pandemic. It is estimated that there were around 1.25 lakh MSMEs in operation in the State, employing an average of seven to eight people.

In the midst of these efforts to improve the investment atmosphere, industry sources have complained of the slow pace of decision-making and bureaucratic hurdles to substantially improve the situation in a time-bound manner. They point to long-term pendency of complaints before various stakeholder agencies.

But Mr. Rajeeve is confident of industry providing great support to the reforms and of positive results soon. He to Kerala's high ranking in the Good Governance Index, which also took into consideration the rise in business in a State. Though Kerala is ranked 28th in the Ease of Doing Business index, the State had improved its score from 44.82 to 85.10, he added.

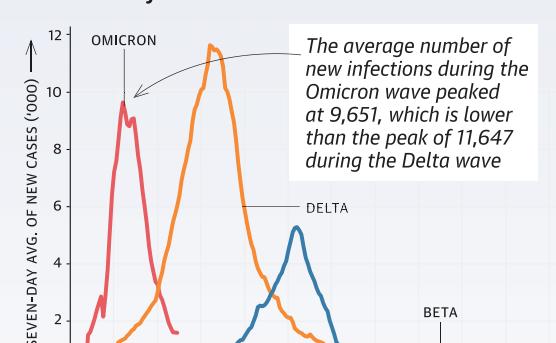
martin.ka@thehindu.co.in

## DATA POINT

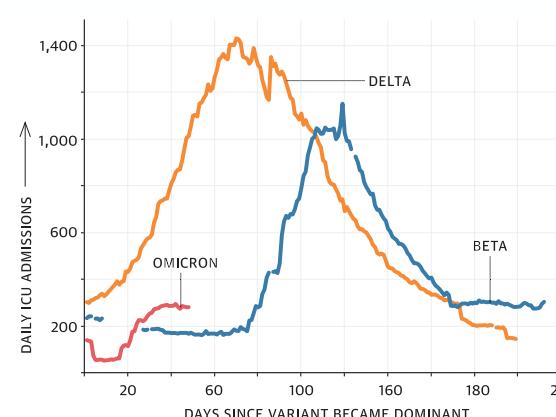
### Good news from Gauteng

Even as COVID-19 cases due to the Omicron variant are rising globally, data from South Africa's Gauteng province, considered the epicentre of the new strain, show that daily infections rapidly declined 50 days after the variant became dominant. While the initial spike was faster than the Delta and Beta waves, daily cases seem to have peaked at a lower count and in fewer days than the Delta wave. Fewer hospitalisations and ICU admissions indicate that the Omicron variant leads to milder disease than Delta. In the current wave, daily recorded deaths are also lower than the previous two waves. **By Vignesh Radhakrishnan and Sumanth Sen**

**1. CASE TALLY |** The chart shows the average number of daily COVID-19 cases recorded during the **Omicron wave (November 16, 2021 to January 3, 2022 - 49 days)**, Delta wave (May 1, 2021 to November 15, 2021 - 199 days), and the Beta wave (October 1, 2020 to April 30, 2021 - 212 days). **The first day a variant became dominant is considered day 1 of that version**

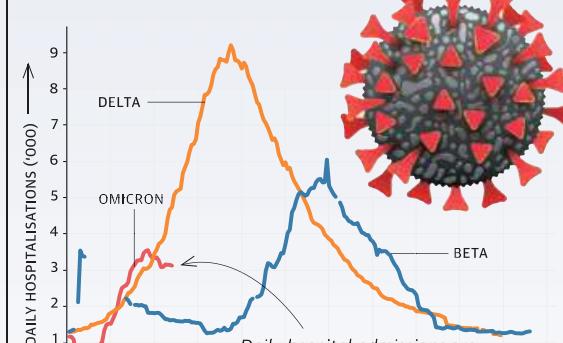


**3. ICU ADMISSIONS |** The chart shows the daily COVID-19-related ICU admissions recorded during the three waves. Data for the Omicron wave are until January 2, 2022. Forty-eight days since the Omicron variant became dominant, ICU admissions are significantly lower than those registered during the Delta wave and similar to the number registered during the Beta wave



Grounded halt: Travellers at the O.R. Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg, capital of Gauteng province, in November 2021. ■ AFP

**2. HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS |** The chart shows the number of daily COVID-19-related hospitalisations recorded during the three waves. The number of daily hospitalisations at the **peak of the Omicron wave was 3,564**, which is significantly lower than the peak reached during the Delta wave at 9,208



**4. DAILY DEATH**

FROM PAGE ONE

## Supreme Court to hear EWS quota case today

The EWS case was heard by a Bench of three judges led by Justice Chandrachud, while the Benches were sitting in a combination of two judges for the week.

But Mr. Mehta persisted that even a two-judge Bench led by Justice Chandrachud would be enough to hear the case as long as it was scheduled on Wednesday.

The CJI agreed in court to see whether the schedule could be juggled to form a three-judge Special Bench.

NEET counselling was suspended after the Union government, on November 25, informed the court about its "considered decision" to revisit the "criteria" determining EWS. The government had asked for four weeks to form a review committee, examine the issue and file a report.

The court's query was significant as the One Hundred and Third Constitutional Amendment of 2019, which introduced the 10% EWS quota, is itself under challenge before a larger Bench.

The Amendment is under question for making economic criterion as the sole ground for grant of reservation benefits.

## States told to share intel on common grid

The reluctance on the part of the States was also stated in a parliamentary standing committee report in 2020.

The committee had observed that the contribution made over the years by State agencies is lower in the overall inputs that had been received at the MAC.

The IB had informed the committee that all organisations that are in any way involved in the counter-terrorism effort are members of this centre. All the States have a Subsidiary Multi-Agency Centre (SMAC) located in the capitals.

The IB informed the panel that the Union Home Ministry, along with the IB, was contemplating to ex-

change the government's submission followed rounds of grilling from the court in past hearings to reveal the logic and study before zeroing in on the "exact figure" of ₹8 lakh as the annual income limit to identify EWS of society.

The Centre's review committee submitted a report on December 31, supporting the ₹8 lakh income threshold as a "reasonable" basis to determine EWS.

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## MLA granted protection from arrest

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
MUMBAI

tend the connectivity of SMAC to the districts.

"So, the IB is picking up districts in a phased manner because there is an issue of connecting them with the lease line, encrytors, etc.

Further, at the MAC level, the meeting of all these agencies is convened almost every day where intelligence of the last 24 hours is brought on to the table, discussed and follow-up action is devised or agreed upon," the report said.

The IB Director had told the committee that there had been a few instances where some State agencies hesitated to share their intelligence inputs with the MAC.

His plea says he has been falsely implicated.

## Officials worried as test kits fly off the shelves

"We now sell anywhere between 15 and 30 kits every day in each of our shops," said the regional manager of a pharmacy chain in Bengaluru.

Ravindra Kumar M. J., secretary, Bengaluru Chemists and Druggists Association, said the at-home COVID-19 tests fall in the price range of ₹250-₹350 and are easy to use like pregnancy test kits.

"Many people who are travelling frequently or are worried that they have COVID-19 have begun using them," he said.

But what happens if those who test positive but have only mild symptoms do not isolate themselves for the entire duration or self-medicate?

"During the peak of earlier waves of the pandemic, the government had mandated us to take down details of those buying cold, cough and fever medicines. Such a mechanism may be one of the options to track these cases, but presently there are no such instructions," Mr. Kumar said.

The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, in its recent letter to all the States and the Union territories, recommended the use of self-tests/home tests for symptomatic individuals. But the lack of any mechanism to capture positive cases through home tests, unless individuals report it themselves, is a cause for concern.

A senior civic health official said home tests had good accuracy in case of a positive result, but could be misleading in case of a negative result.

"If a person has COVID-like symptoms, she or he should get an RT-PCR test even if the home test came negative," he said.

Chandan Hiremath, a software engineer who is scheduled to travel to Germany next week, used such

a rapid antigen test kit to ease his fears and ensure that his travel plans are not derailed. He tested negative.

Unless citizens voluntarily report the results and agree to take an RT-PCR test from a certified facility, the government has no way to capture the data. "Had I tested positive, even if I wanted to report it, I wouldn't know how to contact the civic body," Mr. Hiremath said.

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## EC takes stock of election preparedness

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission of India on Tuesday held a meeting to discuss the Assembly elections due in five States amid rising COVID-19 cases across the country.

According to officials, it was a routine meeting of the three-member commission, which, last week, completed visits to four of the five States that will go to polls. It was yet to announce any further restrictions on campaigning.

Chief Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra said in Lucknow on December 30 that all political parties were in favour of holding polls on time. He stated that the commission had told the poll-bound States to speed up vaccination so that 100% of those eligible had received the first dose at least.

# Northeast should be growth driver: PM

Inaugurating projects in poll-bound Manipur and Tripura, he says previous regimes ignored region

IBOAIMA LAITHANGBAM  
SYED SAJJAD ALI  
IMPHAL/AGARTALA

Kicking off the BJP's campaign in poll-bound Manipur, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday made a pitch for oil palm plantations while envisaging the northeast as the driver of India's growth story.

Mr. Modi said previous governments had neglected the region and alienated its people until New Delhi was brought to the doorsteps of Manipur and the rest of the northeast after he became the Prime Minister in 2014.

"After Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose hoisted his Army's flag for the first time and called it the gateway to India's Independence, the northeast is now becoming the gateway to fulfilling the dreams of New India," Mr. Modi said at a rally at Imphal after inaugurating 13 projects worth ₹1,850 crore and laying



ing the foundation stone of nine others that would cost ₹2,950 crore.

He banked on farmers in the northeast to cash in on the Centre's ₹11,000-crore oil palm mission.

### Reducing imports

"India spends thousands of crores of rupees in importing palm oil. Much of our mission to let the farmers benefit hugely from oil palm cultivation will happen in the

north east, including Manipur," he said against the backdrop of protests in the region against the initiative.

Mr. Modi accused the previous Congress government in Manipur of creating a divide between the people of Imphal Valley and the hills around it. While the valley is dominated by the largely Hindu Meitei community, the hills are inhabited by several tribal communities, many of whom are Christians.

He said the State's BJP-led coalition had bridged the hill-valley divide, and said the "double-engine government" had transformed Manipur from a "blockade State" into one ready with routes for international trade.

Mr. Modi said there was a time when Manipur was left to its fate but he brought the Government of India to the people's doorsteps in the State and its northeastern neighbours.

### End to insurgency

"I asked the leaders, officers and Ministers to regularly visit the northeast, spend time and formulate need-based schemes. Five from the northeast are in the Union Ministry," he said.

He credited the Centre-State coordination for extinguishing the "fire of insurgency and security" in the northeast. "There is the light

of peace and development. Hundreds of youth in the region have joined the mainstream of development by shunning guns," he said.

### Protest against visit

A "lockdown" called by Com-COM, a conglomeration of six extremist groups, had greeted Mr. Modi and his entourage after he landed in Imphal amid tight security.

In Tripura's capital Agartala, his second stop in the region, the Prime Minister highlighted the connectivity with adjoining Bangladesh to project the State as a gateway to usher in all-around development in the northeast.

The Prime Minister also inaugurated a ₹450-crore terminal building at Agartala's Maharaja Bir Bikram Airport and remotely launched the State-level Project Mission 100 of Vidya Jyoti Schools and the Mukhyamantri Tripura Gram Samridhi Yojana.



**Veteran fighter:** Okrom Ibobi Singh is considered Congress party's strength as well as weakness. • FILE PHOTO

## In Manipur, Ibobi is best bet for Congress

Three-time CM yet to be in poll mode

SOBHANA K. NAIR  
NEW DELHI

2017, thanks to multiple waves of exodus. This includes rebel K. Joykishan, who has been in the department lounge for a long time. The final nail was driven in August last year, when six-time Congress MLA and party's State president Govindadas Konthoujam quit to join the BJP. Congress insiders claim that the party has regrouped since then with N. Loken Singh, a four-time MLA, as the State president.

"Despite the 15-year rule, the Congress has no organisation or committed cadres. When the MLAs left the party, they left with their supporters hollowing out the party," another Congress leader added.

### NEWS ANALYSIS

Limping into the poll ring, the Congress has Mr. Ibobi as the best bet. Party's vice-president Devabrata Khumanthem Singh told *The Hindu*, "It is but natural that the leader of the Congress Legislative Party will lead the battle into the Assembly election. If we do get a favourable mandate, the decision on the Chief Ministerial candidate will once again fall on the legislature party."

And it is still banking on nostalgia for Mr. Ibobi's three terms as Chief Minister to pave its way for a return. +

## Cong. tries to find Punjab unit's pulse

Top leader meets senior Ministers in State after Sidhu questions Channi govt.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

K.C. Venugopal, Congress general secretary in charge of organisation, on Tuesday met senior Ministers of Punjab, including Deputy Chief Minister Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa.

Though there is no official word on the purpose of the meeting, the timing is significant as it comes just days after Mr. Randhawa publicly aired his differences with Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee chief Navjot Singh Sidhu.

At a recent public rally, Mr. Sidhu questioned his own government for not arresting Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) leader and former Minister Bikram Singh Majithia, against whom the government had registered an FIR



**At loggerheads:** Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa faced the heat for not arresting a SAD leader in a drug case. • FILE PHOTO

(first information report) in a drug case.

"FIR has already been registered and raids are being conducted to arrest Bikram Majithia, who is behaving like a fox," Mr. Randhawa, who holds the Home portfolio, countered.

At a press conference on

Monday, he said the Punjab Congress chief was "unhappy" at his (Mr. Randhawa) elevation as Home Minister. He was willing to give it up if that makes Mr. Sidhu happy, he had said.

Many believe Mr. Sidhu's consistent attack on the Charni Singh Channi govern-

ment over issues such as the sacrifice case or the drug mafia could be a way of putting pressure on the party's top leadership to name him as the party's chief ministerial face in the coming Assembly polls.

**'Not eyeing positions'**  
Mr. Sidhu, though, has officially always denied that he has been aspiring for any position in the government.

Among those who attended the meeting at Mr. Venugopal's place included Ministers Bharat Bhushan Ashu, Pargat Singh and Raja Warring.

While Mr. Warring and Mr. Pargat Singh are known to be Mr. Sidhu's close aides, Mr. Ashu and Mr. Randhawa have spoken out against the State Congress chief.

## Modi mum on China bridge, says Rahul

Government busy with polls: Kharge

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday questioned the silence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi over media reports that China is constructing a bridge on the Pangong Tso (lake) in Ladakh near the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

On Monday, some of the leading media outlets, including *The Hindu*, reported that China is constructing a bridge in eastern Ladakh, connecting the north and south banks of the Pangong lake, that will considerably bring down the time to move troops between the two sectors.

"PM's silence is deafening. Our land, our people,



our borders deserve better," Mr. Gandhi said on Twitter.

Leader of the Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge targeted the Narendra Modi government by alleging that it was busy with elections when the 'enemy' was at India's gate. "Enemy is at our gates. PM Modi is taking a siesta," tweeted Mr. Kharge.

## Denial of FCRA to MoC challenged

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

A U.S.-incorporated organisation, Global Peace Initiative, and its founder, evangelist K.A. Paul, have approached the Supreme Court challenging the refusal of the government to renew the registration of Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA).

The registration was not renewed purportedly on the basis of some "adverse inputs", the writ petition said. "The cancellation of the license of a renowned charitable organisation like the Missionaries of Charity on vague grounds such as 'adverse inputs' will have a chilling effect on all other Non-Governmental Organisations," it said.

The plea has also urged the court to quash the government's direction to not renew the registration of "close to 6,000 NGOs".

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY / e-Tender Notice									
Tender No: First Re tender No 1RE16/SE/PHCK/2021-2022, 1RE17/SE/PHCK/2021-2022 JJM - 2021 - 22 Phase 2 - SLSSC 3 - Providing FHTC and laying pipes in Panachikkadu Panchayat, Kottayam District and JJM - 2020 - 21 Phase 2 - Manarcadu Panchayat, Kottayam District - Laying pipelines and Providing FHTC.									
● EMD: Rs. 50,000/- each ● Tender fee : Rs. 15,000/- plus 18% GST (GST will be paid by the contractor on reverse charge basis while filing his returns) ● Last Date for submitting Tender: 27-01-2022, 03:00 pm ● Ph: 0481 2562745									
● Web: www.kwa.kerala.gov.in, www.etenders.kerala.gov.in KWA-JB-GL-6-835-2021-22 Superintending Engineer, PH Circle, Kottayam									

Government of Tamil Nadu FISHERIES AND FISHERMEN WELFARE DEPARTMENT											
TENDER NOTICE											
T.N. No.17/2021-2022/HDO, dated: 30.12.2021											
For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamil Nadu tenders are invited from Engineers, Fisheries and Fishermen Welfare Department, Integrated Fish Conservation, Agriculture, Human Resources & Fisheries and Fishermen Welfare Department, Nandanam,Chennai - 35 for the following works from the registered Civil contractors of Govt. Departments.											
Details of works, approximate value of works, EMD, availability of tender documents and all other details are available from 07.01.2022 onwards in the Government website https://tntenders.gov.in. If any Changes/Corrections in the tender, it will be published in the above Government website only.											

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU TIRUNELVELI HIGHWAYS, (Construction & Maintenance) CIRCLE									
TENDER NOTICE									
T.N. No.17/2021-2022/HDO, dated: 30.12.2021									

For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamil Nadu, Percentage tender through online only will be received upto 08.02.2022 at 14.00 hours by the Superintendent Engineer (H), C&M, Tirunelveli Circle for CRIDP 2021-22 Works pertaining to Virudhunagar (1 Work), Tenkasi (2 Works) and Thoothukudi (1 Work) (H) C&M Division.

Details of works, approximate value of works, EMD, availability of tender documents and all other details are available from 07.01.2022 onwards in the Government website https://tntenders.gov.in. If any changes/ corrections in the tender, it will be published in the above Government website only.

Superintendent Engineer (H), C&M, Tirunelveli Circle.

DIPR/02/Tender/2022

"தென்னாலூர் மாவட்டத்தில் குற்ற நீரை வழங்கும் பாதுகாப்பு நிலையம்"

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Ref. No. 011/M (P) / BL - SANIT / TNMS / 2021

Sealed Tenders are invited by the Tender Inviting Authority,

# Many States announce more curbs amid surge

India reported 37,379 new cases in 24 hours, the highest on a single day in the past three months. Health Ministry data show

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

India's COVID-19 tally continued its rise with the country reporting 37,379 new cases in the 24 hours to 8 a.m. on Tuesday – the highest on a day in three months, according to figures from the Health Ministry.

The cumulative Omicron tally rose to 1,892 cases as reported from 23 States and Union Territories so far. Of these, 766 cases have recovered or migrated, according to the update.

The total number of active cases rose to 1,71,830 and the cumulative toll to 4,82,017, with 124 more fatalities reported in the 24 hours.

The active cases comprise 0.49% of the infections reported in the country. The daily test positivity rate was recorded at 3.24%. The case fatality rate remains at 1.38%.

As the cases continue to rise, more States are bringing

in restrictions on movement and public gatherings.

Maharashtra reported a whopping 18,466 cases to take the active case tally to 66,308. In a new single-day high, 10,606 of them were reported from Mumbai taking the city's active case tally to 47,476.

## COVID-19



**Child friendly:** A COVID Care Centre for children being set up at the Yamuna Sports Complex in New Delhi. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

quarantine for seven days. Positive symptomatic patients will be admitted to Seven Hills Hospital, Bombay Hospital or Breach Candy Hospital.

With Mumbai recording the highest number cases in the State and the country, Mayor Kishori Pednekar hinted at the possibility of a lockdown if the daily COVID-19 cases crossed the 20,000-

mark. Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar said there would be no physical sessions for students of classes 1 to 8 for the rest of January.

The Punjab government on Tuesday ordered a series of restrictions, including curfew in all towns and cities from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. till January 15. All schools, colleges, universities and coaching

institutions will remain closed till January 15.

Odisha on Tuesday registered a 60% jump in the daily cases (680) compared to Monday's 424.

Andhra Pradesh recorded a spike, reporting 334 cases in the past 24 hours. This is the highest daily case figure to have been reported in the past 55 days.

### Karnataka norms

Karnataka reported 2,479 cases and four COVID-related deaths in the past 24 hours.

The State now has 13,532 active patients. Revenue Minister R. Ashok announced that night curfew would be extended while weekend curfew would be imposed from Friday 10 p.m. to Monday 5 a.m. across the State till January 19. Essential services will be allowed during the curfew. The government has decided to stop physical classes from classes 1 to 9 in Bengaluru.

ru schools from Thursday. Colleges barring medical and paramedical institutes in Bengaluru will remain closed as well.

In Gujarat too, cases seemed to show a spike with the State reporting 2,265 new infections, taking the active cases to 7881.

The Kerala government on Tuesday issued orders limiting the number of persons attending indoor events to 75 and that of outdoor events to 150.

The Uttar Pradesh government on Tuesday increased the timing under the night curfew: from the earlier 11 p.m. - 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. - 6 a.m.

In Assam, 475 new COVID-19 cases were reported on Tuesday. The State also reported vaccinating a total of 1,86,118 children between 15-18 years since Monday.

(With inputs from State bureaus)

# Centre tells States to set up field hospitals

NTAGI chief says it may be third wave

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Health Ministry has asked States to take preparatory measures with top priority and regular monitoring in light of the rising number of COVID-19 cases.

In a letter on Tuesday, the Ministry said the States were expected to have begun work on re-establishing field and makeshift hospitals and repurpose beds in public and private hospitals to fight another potential surge in cases.

The States are also expected to develop COVID-19 care centres in hotel rooms and other similar accommodations to be linked with dedicated hospitals for the care of mild or asymptomatic cases. The States have also been asked to ensure availability of testing kits and ample supply of drugs.

Noting that the Omicron

variant of the coronavirus accounts for more than 50% of cases in major Indian cities, N.K. Arora, Chairperson of the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (NTAGI), said the massive surge in numbers indicated a third wave, but there was no need to panic.

The head of the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (NTAGI) also analysed the COVID graph in South Africa, where Omicron originated, and spoke of the "epidemiological similarities" between the two countries.

"If we look at the behaviour of the Omicron wave in South Africa, where it rapidly increased, in two weeks, the number of cases started coming down and most of the cases were either asymptomatic or had a mild illness," he said.

(With PTI inputs)

## Molnupiravir priced at ₹35 a capsule

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD

Pharma major Dr. Reddy's Laboratories on Tuesday said it would launch 200 mg capsules of molnupiravir, the anti-viral drug that India recently granted emergency use authorisation for COVID-19 treatment, at ₹35 each under the brand name Molflu.

Each strip would have 10 capsules. With the recommended dose of 800 mg twice a day for five days, the total course of 40 capsules would cost ₹1,400, making it among the most affordable treatment options available to patients, Dr. Reddy's said.

Molflu is expected to be available from early next week in pharmacies throughout the country with particular focus on States with a high caseload of COVID-19. The drug would be manufactured in a facility approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Dr. Reddy's is among a clutch of companies that received emergency use authorisation last week from the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) to manufacture and market molnupiravir capsules for the treatment of adult patients with COVID-19 who have a high risk of progression of the disease. Last year, the drug maker, like many others, entered into a non-exclusive voluntary licensing agreement with Merck Sharpe Dohme (MSD) to manufacture and supply molnupiravir in India and to over 100 low and middle-income countries.

## ICMR approves indigenous kit to detect Omicron

WHO calls for increased genome sequencing as 'timely information is needed to tailor public health response'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has approved a testing kit for detecting the Omicron variant of SARS-CoV-2. The kit is manufactured by Tata Medical and Diagnostics and is named OmiSure. The kit will be used to confirm Omicron in patients with its S-Gene Target Failure (SGTF) strategy.

The ICMR's letter of approval dated December 30 said: "The tests have been performed as per the manufacturer's instructions. Responsibility for batch-to-batch consistency lies with the manufacturer."

"Diagnostic services are critical for public health. During an outbreak, timely information is needed to guide and tailor public health response to stop/curtail disease spread. Hence, since the onset of the CO-



**Tracking the virus:** A batch of swab samples being taken for RT-PCR testing for COVID-19. ■ FILE PHOTO

VID-19 outbreak, one of the key areas of the WHO's support has been to strengthen laboratory capacities, with

the focus on addressing inequalities in access to COVID-19 diagnostics tools," said Poonam Khetrapal

Singh, Regional Director, WHO South-East Asia Region.

### Genomics consortium

The WHO is proposing to set up a SARS-CoV-2 genomics consortium in Southeast Asia this year. The consortium will help enhance genomic sequencing and surveillance.

This will also help improve the timely use of genomic data for public health decision-making and to strengthen preparedness and response to future outbreaks/ pandemics, added a release issued by the group.

Stating that challenges remain, Dr. Singh said that li-

mited trained workforce and other resources are key barriers identified by countries for sustained long-term testing and sequencing capacities. In a bid to address this, the WHO is building a community of practice – sharing of experiences through webinars and sharing of information through platforms such as the regional laboratory network.

"With COVID-19 cases once again beginning to increase, we need to remain vigilant. Which means enhancing our capacities to quickly test and provide timely results, and conduct genome sequencing for new variants," Dr. Singh said.

## Monuments Authority gets new member

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Pramod P. Joglekar, a former Professor and Head of the Department of ancient Indian history, culture and archaeology at Deccan College, Pune, was on Tuesday appointed a member of the National Monuments Authority by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet.

Professor Joglekar would be a whole-time member of the NMA for a period of three years from the date of assuming office, the note said. It added that the Culture Ministry had been informed about the appointment.

## Cruise ship with cluster back in Mumbai

Infected persons had refused to be isolated in Goa

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE  
PUNE



**Trouble on board:** The cruise ship Cordelia Empress entering the harbour in Mumbai on Tuesday. ■ AFP

In south Mumbai, a team of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) and the police reached the spot. The BMC arranged five ambulances, each of them a 17-seater, to ferry the patients to a COVID-19 care centre, the officials said. The patients al-

so have the option of quarantining themselves at hotels at their own expense.

"The ship with all its passengers had to be sent back after a few of those who had tested positive refused to get admitted to a COVID-19 facility in Goa. Only six crew

members who had tested positive were disembarked," said an official from a shipping services company.

The official said that in view of a steep rise in cases, the South Goa District Administration ordered that the entire ship be sent back to Mumbai with COVID-19 positive passengers isolated from the others.

There were chaos and protests on the cruise ship after the passengers who had tested negative were also refused permission to disembark by the South Goa district authorities.

The company that operates the Cordelia cruise has issued a statement that sailing tours would be suspended on January 5 in view of the rising COVID-19 cases.

(With inputs from PTI)

## Soldiers celebrate New Year with tricolour at Galwan valley

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Photographs of Indian Army troops holding a large tri-colour at the Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh as part of the New Year celebration were released on January 4 by sources in the security establishment.

The photographs were also shared by Union Law Minister Kiren Rijiju on Twitter with the caption, "Brave Indian Army soldiers in Galwan Valley on the occasion of #NewYear2022". The images were released three days after China's state media played up a purported video of PLA soldiers sending New Year greetings to Chinese people from a location



**High on the hills:** Indian Army troops gathered at Galwan valley on January 1. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

near the Galwan valley.

In one of the photos of the Indian troops, around 30 Indian soldiers were seen with the national flag. Another photo showed the group with four of them holding

the national flag and another tri-colour flying high on a flagpole adjacent to a temporary observation post.

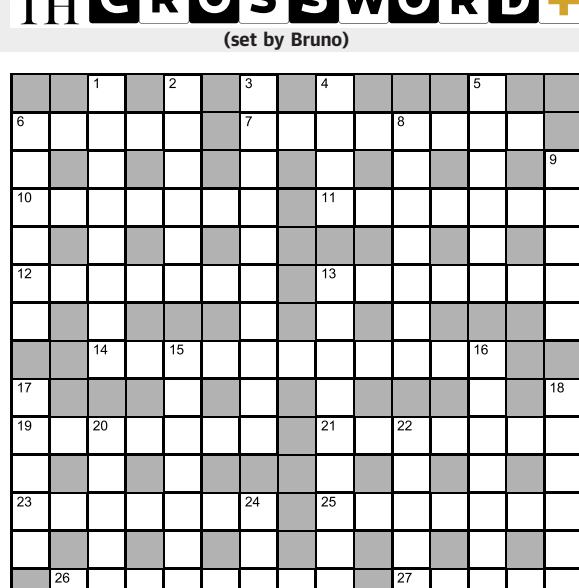
The sources said the photographs were taken on January 1 in the Galwan Valley.

## TH CROSSWORD (set by Bruno)

13446

Display keystrokes of genius.  
Type your answers in our online grids!

@ <https://rgo.page.link/jjpTn>



**Across**  
6 Pal often worn around part of body with another gem (5)  
7 Slow movement of earth – perhaps gravity's extremely likely to be controlling (8)  
10 Middle East City bombed in WWII was later mostly rebuilt by '54 (3-4)  
11 Animal waste observed to move westward between harbours (7)  
12 Hide as wife visits short function with family (7)

**Down**  
1 Break in rush at terminal (7)  
14 Superfast Buick with loud rear engine repaired to transport Queen (6-5)  
19 Pieces of music about soft love – they are usually of poor quality (3-4)  
21 Delete old joke generalizing ethnicities, basically (7)  
23 Boil at a nonsense tax (7)  
25 Pharmacist, removes covers, takes out two articles, mixes with sulphur to make ointments (7)  
26 Jack-of-all-trades husband burns USB with many networks (8)  
27 Four odd unknowns – young and hairy (5)  
**13** Ordering Southern-style wings and dousing in water to remove heat at the top (10)  
**15** Prideful corner-back refused to dribble to the other end of pitch (7)  
**16** Large family company in America infiltrated by unknown terrorist outfit from the South (4-4)  
**17** Boy has to study to make money (5)  
**18** A type of lower shirt (6)  
**20** Service run by government peons, it fails regularly (6)  
**22** City in Odisha – extremely filthy or clean? (6)  
**24** Well... time wasted in puzzle (4)

## SUDOKU

4	5	8	2
5	8	6	
3	4		
8	7	4	5
2			
	3	6	7
	4		6
		3	9
1	3	2	8

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to puzzle 13446

E	S	T	A	G	E	N	T
F	P	L	O	A			
O	N	A	G	R	E	V	O
L	A	P	U	E	B	A	T
S	A	E	M	N	U	I	N
G	I	S	T	C	O	P	R
D	T	L	N	E	P	I	C

# Xi signs combat training order for PLA

'The armed forces must redouble their efforts to better combine training with combat operations'

ANANTH KRISHNAN

HONG KONG

China's President Xi Jinping on Tuesday signed an annual mobilisation order to mark the start of this year's training for the Chinese military, with an emphasis on "combining training with combat operations".

The training mobilisation orders are issued by Mr. Xi, who also heads the Central Military Commission (CMC), usually in January and the mobilisation orders have in the past impacted how the People's Liberation Army (PLA) carries out its exercises that often begin in the subsequent weeks following the order.

The official Xinhua news agency said Mr. Xi signed this year's order on Tuesday and "declared the start of military training for the year."

"The entire rank and file of the armed forces are required to resolutely implement the plans and instructions of the Party leadership



**Routine drill:** A file photo of PLA soldiers taking part in combat training in Jiuquan. ■REUTERS

and the CMC, according to the order, adding that the changing landscape of national security and combat circumstances must be accurately understood," the report said.

#### Evolution of technology

"The armed forces must closely follow the evolution of technology, warfare and rivals, redouble their efforts

to better combine training with combat operations, and strengthen systematic training and the use of technologies to develop an elite force that is capable of fighting and winning wars," the order said, adding that "all officers and soldiers should uphold the spirit of fearing neither death nor hardship, and conduct training in a vigorous, well-designed and safe manner

to boost their commanding and fighting capability and foster excellent conduct."

The order in 2021 had similarly emphasised "enhancing training in real combat conditions". Mr. Xi had also issued an order on training in combat conditions in January 2020. Four months later, the PLA deployed two divisions right up to the Line

of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh after the completion of routine exercises, sparking the worst crisis along the India-China border in decades.

Twenty months on, disengagement is yet to happen at several locations along the LAC after multiple rounds of diplomatic and military talks, while tens of thousands of troops remain deployed in forward areas. The PLA has also continued to build infrastructure in forward areas to sustain its deployments through the winter, while India has matched the PLA's build-up with its own deployments.

The training mobilisation order in January 2020 had called for strengthening military training in combat conditions and it was seen by observers as altering the pattern of annual exercises and forward deployments not only closer to the LAC but also in other theatres, leading to tensions in the South China Sea as well.

# Tear gas fired as thousands in Sudan protest against military

They call for disbandment of Gen. Burhan-led ruling council

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

KHARTOUM

Sudanese security forces fired tear gas on Tuesday at anti-coup protesters in Khartoum chanting slogans against the military following the resignation of the country's civilian premier on Sunday, witnesses said.

Protesters shouted "No, no to military rule" and called for the disbandment of Sudan's ruling council headed by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, who led an October 25 coup that derailed a transition to civilian rule.

Streets leading to the presidential palace and army headquarters were sealed off by hefty deployments of troops, riot police and paramilitary units, witnesses said.

Security forces fired tear gas near the palace, and later at another rally north of the capital and in the east-



**Keeping up pressure:** People protesting against the military in Omdurman on Tuesday. ■AFP

ern city of Port Sudan.

The protesters also gathered in Khartoum's twin city Omdurman and the South Darfur capital Nyala, taking the total on the streets across the country into the thousands.

Pro-democracy activists have stepped up calls for demonstrations since the October coup which saw then-Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok and Cabinet Minis-

ters detained.

The coup has triggered mass demonstrations and a bloody crackdown that has left at least 57 people dead, according to the independent Doctors' Committee.

Mr. Hamdok resigned late Sunday – six weeks after he was reappointed by Gen. Burhan – saying the country was now at a "dangerous crossroads threatening its very survival".

# Theranos founder convicted for fraud

She 'defrauded' investors in her startup

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

SAN FRANCISCO

Fallen U.S. biotech star Elizabeth Holmes was convicted on Monday of defrauding investors in her blood-testing startup Theranos, in a high-profile case seen as an indictment of Silicon Valley culture.

Holmes is a rare example of a tech exec being brought to book over a company flaming out, in a sector littered with the carcasses of money-losing companies that once promised untold riches.

Her case shone a spotlight on the blurred line between the hustle that characterises the industry and outright criminal dishonesty.

"The guilty verdicts in this case reflect Ms. Holmes' culpability in this large-scale investor fraud and she must now face sentencing for her crimes," U.S. Attorney Stephanie Hinds said in a prepared statement read outside the courthouse by a representative.

The 37-year-old now faces the possibility of 20 years behind bars for each conviction. She remains at liberty ahead of another hearing on



Elizabeth Holmes

the terms of her bail next week. No date was set for sentencing.

Ms. Holmes had vowed to revolutionise health diagnostics with self-service machines that could run an array of tests on just a few drops of blood, a vision that drew high-profile backers and made her a billionaire by the age of 30.

Prosecutors spent 11 weeks presenting over two dozen witnesses, as they painstakingly laid out their argument that Holmes knew her technology fell short, and deliberately misled investors and patients.

She personally put the logos of pharma giants Pfizer and Schering-Plough onto Theranos reports hailing the company's blood-testing technology, which were then shared with investors.

# China to 'modernise' nuclear arsenal

Beijing defends its atomic weapons policy, urges U.S., Russia to reduce stockpiles

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

BEIJING

China said on Tuesday it will continue to "modernise" its nuclear arsenal and called upon the U.S. and Russia to reduce their own stockpiles a day after global powers pledged to prevent such weapons from spreading.

In a rare joint statement setting aside rising West-East tensions, the U.S., China, Russia, Britain and France reaffirmed their goal of creating a world free of atomic weapons and avoiding a nuclear conflict.

The five nuclear powers

also committed to full future disarmament from atomic weapons, which have only been used in conflict in the U.S. bombings of Japan at the end of the Second World War.

But squaring that rhetoric with reality will not be easy at a time of spiralling tensions between those same global powers not seen since the Cold War.

There are growing global concerns about China's rapid military modernisation, especially after its armed forces last year announced they had developed a hyper-

sonic missile that can fly at five times the speed of sound.

The U.S. has also said China is expanding its nuclear arsenal with as many as 700 warheads by 2027 and possibly 1,000 by 2030.

On Tuesday, China defended its nuclear weapons policy and said Russia and the U.S. – by far the world's largest nuclear powers – should make the first move on disarmament.

"The U.S. and Russia still possess 90% of the nuclear warheads on Earth," Fu Cong, Director General of

the department of arms control at the Chinese Foreign Ministry, said. "They must reduce their nuclear arsenal in an irreversible and legally binding manner."

Mr. Fu dismissed U.S. claims that China was vastly increasing its nuclear capabilities. "China has always adopted the no first use policy and we maintain our nuclear capabilities at the minimal level required for our national security," he said.

But he said Beijing would "continue to modernise its nuclear arsenal for reliability and safety issues".

# Diplomat Keshap to helm U.S.-India industry body

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN



The former Chargé d'Affaires at the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, Atul Keshap, has been appointed president of the U.S.-India Business Council (USIBC), an industry body, according to a statement from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. He will replace Nisha Biswal, who has been appointed the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Senior Vice President of International Strategy and Global Initiatives and South Asia.

"With the two countries on the cusp of entering an even more robust era in our strategic partnership, I feel privileged and honored to lead USIBC," Mr. Keshap said about his appointment.

Mr. Keshap was also previously the U.S. Ambassador to Sri Lanka and the Maldives.

# U.S. sets global record with 1 million cases

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

WASHINGTON

The United States reported more than one million new COVID-19 cases on Monday after the long New Year's weekend, according to data from Johns Hopkins University, as the Omicron variant spread at a blistering pace.

There were 1,080,211 new cases in the country, a global record, although the number of cases reported on a Monday is usually higher than other days because of delays in weekend tallying, especially after such a three-day holiday weekend. Still, the figure is double the number of daily cases compared to the previous Monday.

The rolling average over seven days – which experts see as more reliable – was 4,86,000 cases per day as of Monday evening, the university said.

The new figure comes a day after top U.S. pandemic advisor Anthony Fauci said the country was experiencing "almost a vertical increase" in COVID-19 cases, adding the peak may be only weeks away.

Omicron strain accounted for around 59% of U.S. cases in the week ending December 25, according to government modelling.

STOP CORONA: Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene*					
S. N.	Name of Work	Amount Put to tender (Rs.)	EMD	Tender Fee's	Dt. of release of tender procurement solution/I.D. No.
1	Replacement of 400mm dia. old/damaged sewer line by pipe bursting method in C-3 Block main road behind EWS Flat Sultanpur in AC - 10	47,92,320/-	95,900/-	500/-	03/01/2022/2022_DJB_214024_1
2	Replacement of 400mm dia. old damaged sewer line by pipe bursting method at F-2, F-4 Block Sabzi Mandi road Sultanpur.	49,27,461/-	98,600/-	500/-	03/01/2022/2022_DJB_214028_1

Further details in this regard can be seen at <https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>

ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER)

Advt. No. J.S.V. 948 (2021-22)

(Himanshu Agarwal)  
Ex. Engineer(M)10

NIT No.	Name of Work	Estimate Cost	Ernest Money (Rs.)	Date of release of Tender in e-procurement solution	Last date/ Time receipt of Tender through e-procurement solution
12	Operation and Maintenance of Bottling Plant GK, Job Work For Processing and Packaging Water in 20 Liter "JAL" JARS.	Rs. 457500/- (Rupees Four Lakh Fifty Seven Thousand Five Hundred only)	Ernest Money Exempted vide Office memorandum no: F/94/2020-PD and DJB endorsement No:DJB/2020-21/Misc-II(PT)/971 Dated 23.12.2020	Tender Id: 2021_DJB_213929_1 Publish Date 31-Dec-2021 04:35 PM onward	21-01-2022 upto 03:00 PM

NIT along with all Terms & conditions is available on DJB website <https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>

ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER)

Advt. No. J.S.V. 946 (2021-22)

CHIEF WATER ANALYST (W&S)-I

STOP CORONA: Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene*					
NIT No.	Name of Work	Tender Rate	Ernest Money (Rs.)	Date of release of Tender in e-procurement solution	Last date/Time receipt of Tender through e-procurement solution
32.1	Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 70 Nos. Tube wells along with Automation, O and M for 2 Yrs. at Coronation and Wazirabad WTP for augmentation water supply.	Percentage Rate	Rs. 20,43,500/-	Tender Id: 2022_DJB_214035_1 Publish Date 04-Jan-2022 10:00 AM onward	24-Jan-2022 up to 03:15 PM
32.2	Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 50 Nos. Tube wells along with Automation, O and M for 2 Yrs. at Bhagirathi WTP for augmentation water supply.	Percentage Rate	Rs. 13,00,000/-	Tender Id: 2022_DJB_214035_2 Publish Date 04-Jan-2022 10:00 AM onward	24-Jan-2022 up to 03:15 PM

NIT along with all Terms and Conditions is available on DJB website <https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>

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Advt. No. J.S.V. 943 (2021-22)

Executive Engineer (E&M)-II

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- 6

## MARKET WATCH

	04-01-2022	% CHANGE
Sensex	59,856	-1.14
US Dollar	74.58	-0.40
Gold	46,814	-0.51
Brent oil	80.17	-0.26

## NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	739.25	2.65
Asian Paints	3459.30	36.90
Axist Bank	709.15	12.80
Bajaj Auto	3289.15	12.05
Bajaj Finserv	17135.45	154.15
Bajaj Finance	7242.00	123.40
Bharti Airtel	697.45	6.15
BPCL	385.95	-0.15
Britannia Ind	3638.45	20.90
Cipla	924.25	-6.25
Coal India	153.00	-2.30
Divis Lab	4621.70	-29.55
Drd Reddys Lab	4835.45	-17.70
Eicher Motors	2705.00	-13.80
Grasim Ind	1692.00	30.40
HCL Tech	1333.45	7.30
HDPC	2675.30	38.90
HDPC Life	1528.55	8.90
Hero MotoCorp	653.15	2.65
Hindustan	2484.90	8.30
Hindustan Unilever	476.10	-1.95
ICICI Bank	2401.25	39.95
IndusInd Bank	904.40	-7.90
Infosys	1899.15	0.70
Indian Oil Corp	114.05	1.10
ITC	220.25	1.15
JSW Steel	670.40	3.35
Kotak Bank	1852.60	28.15
L&T	1937.55	14.70
M&M	831.85	2.05
Maruti Suzuki	7630.10	106.20
Nestle India Ltd.	19889.05	211.10
NTPC	132.90	6.90
ONGC	147.80	4.75
PowerGrid Corp	210.60	5.60
Reliance Ind	2458.10	54.25
SBI Life	1220.60	11.20
State Bank	483.50	12.70
Shree Cement	26954.10	-293.30
Sun Pharma	837.70	-11.25
Tata Consumer Products Ltd.	738.85	-9.15
Tata Motors	489.60	-8.00
Tata Steel	1148.80	6.35
TCS	3884.75	67.00
Tech Mahindra	1789.80	5.00
Titan	2583.50	59.15
UltraTech Cement	7650.35	-73.55
UPL	761.75	-2.45
Wipro	721.50	2.80

## EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	74.35	74.67
Euro	84.03	84.42
British Pound	100.45	100.92
Japanese Yen (100)	64.16	64.44
Chinese Yuan	11.66	11.72
Swiss Franc	81.02	81.41
Singapore Dollar	54.84	55.09
Canadian Dollar	58.35	58.60
Malaysian Ringgit	17.75	17.85
Australian Dollar	53.63	53.87

Source: Indian Bank

## IN BRIEF



## RBI promotes Kumar, Choudhary as EDs

The Reserve Bank of India has elevated Deepak Kumar and Ajay Kumar Choudhary as Executive Directors (EDs) with effect from January 03. Previously, Dr. Kumar was heading the Department of Information Technology of RBI while Mr. Choudhary was the Chief General Manager-in-Charge, Department of Supervision.

## Airtel Payments Bank is now a scheduled bank

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Tuesday said Airtel Payments Bank Ltd. has been included in the Second Schedule to the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934. With this, the bank can now pitch for government-issued Requests for Proposals (RFP) and primary auctions and undertake both Central and State Government business.

## SPORT

## Jasprit Bumrah and the transfer of joy that engages the viewer



## BETWEEN WICKETS

SURESH MENON

There is little doubt that India currently field the best fast-bowling combination in their history. They have never had a pack as effective as Bumrah-Shami-Ishant-Siraj-Yadav-Thakur. Earlier generations had only the heroic tales of Mohammed Nissar and Amar Singh who rattled the English batsmen in India's debut Test in 1932. Nearly half a century later we were still pining for them.

We lived off Nissar and Amar Singh for a long time. Nissar was faster than Bodyline's terror Harold Larwood according to some, while Amar Singh came off the track "like the crack of doom". When you consider that among our opening bowlers

since have been the wicketkeeper Budhi Kunderan, Tiger Pataudi, Ajit Wadekar and Sunil Gavaskar, you can understand the extent of the problem.

In the years I was growing up, Nissar and Amar Singh seemed both like a fantasy and a contemporary pair, invoked regularly. This was rather like harking back to a glorious past for lack of anything to boast about in the living present. Now Nissar and Amar Singh can be returned to history.

The two questions most urgently asked those years were: Why can't India produce fast bowlers, and, when can we expect to have an opening pair to match the best? There was Gavaskar of course, the best in the world, but he lacked a partner who was consistent and gave fans the same certainty. And now here we are. A battery of opening batsmen: Rohit, Rahul, Agarwal, Shaw, Gill.

How did this come about? It is a fact not always acknowledged that bowlers decide the quality of a country's batting too. When you have some of the best fast bow-

lers in the world, you will have some of the best players of fast bowling too. In the years when spinners ruled the roost, and earned India the reputation for being the Land of Spin, they produced the finest batsmen against spin.

It is an interesting coincidence that when the Spin Foursome – Bedi, Prasanna, Chandrasekhar, Venkatraghavan – was in its prime, the attack was spearheaded by Chandra, he of the freakish action and effective bounce. Now that the Pace Foursome is in charge, it is spearheaded by Bumrah of the freakish action and effective bounce.

Coaches had the wisdom to let the bowlers be. In his delivery stride Chandra brushed his ear as the arm came down ensuring release at the highest point of the arc. Bumrah could deliver the ball with equal comfort at various points in the arc, particularly away from his body which tended to confuse the batsmen. Both bowlers are blessed with supple wrists to control the pace.

Control is the fast bowler's greatest ally;

there is nothing so wasteful as speed without control. In the first Test in South Africa, the manner in which Bumrah took the off bail of Rassie van der Dussen who didn't offer a stroke, and then the leg bail of Keshav Maharaj who couldn't, was subtle, almost musical.

After the Dussen effort, a smiling Bumrah ran towards his teammates, arms spread out, eyes saying, "Did you see that?" The bowler's joy communicates itself to the viewer; that is the essence of all performance, the transfer of joy. In his early years, Kapil Dev had this quality too, an almost child-like surprise at his own gifts.

Subtlety is a speciality of Shami's too. The ball swings just enough, forcing the batsman to play or beating him just enough for the edge. Sometimes it ignores the bat altogether on its way into the stumps. The seam held upright means the batsmen seldom have an early clue. Both Siraj and Thakur are capable of crossing 140 kmph, but it is at their normal slower speeds that they are dangerous.

Part of the reason for the rise of fast bowling in India is the decision by the Board of Control for Cricket in India sometime after the disastrous tours of England and Australia (played eight, lost eight) to instruct groundsmen to retain a minimum grass cover on pitches, between four and five millimetres, sometimes up to eight on hard surfaces. Gradually fast bowlers began to head the domestic averages on a regular basis.

Part of the reason is the success of bowlers like Kapil Dev, Srinath and Zaheer. Partly it is due to the decline of spin bowling where competition for places isn't what it was when the Bedi generation was at its peak. Partly it is due to the recent victories abroad orchestrated by the fast bowlers from Sreesanth to the current lot.

Indian fans now believe when their fast bowlers are operating that a wicket is likely any time, just as they feel a measure of confidence when they watch their openers going out to bat. There has been a psychological turnaround thanks to the fast men.

## Bangladesh eyes historic victory

REUTERS  
WELLINGTON

Bangladesh looked to be closing in on a shock victory over World Test champion New Zealand after Ebadot Hossain's three wickets in the final session of the fourth day reduced the host to 147 for five in its second innings, a lead of only 17, in the opening match in Mount Maunganui on Tuesday. Bangladesh was all out for 458.

The scores: New Zealand 328 & 147/5 in 63 overs (Will Young 69, Ebadot 4/39) vs. Bangladesh 458 in 176.2 overs (Mahmudul Hasan Joy 78, Najmul Hossain Shanto 64, Monimul Haque 88, Liton Das 86, Mehidy Hasan Miraz 47, Boult 4/85, Wagner 3/101).

## 'Omicron spread may hit Q4 GDP outlook by 20-30 bps'

Reserve Bank may delay raising reverse repo rate, say HDFC Bank economists

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

HDFC Bank economists said the spread of the Omicron coronavirus and resulting curbs could lead to GDP growth coming in lower by 20 to 30 basis points (bps) than their earlier estimate of 6.1% for the fourth quarter ending March 2022.

The strong relation between economic activity and the Google Mobility Index in India suggested that with a rise in COVID restrictions – and hence mobility – economic activity was likely to take a hit in Q4, said the economists led by Abheek Barua. Other risks to the original forecast are in the form of States imposing restric-



**Global pain:** A slowdown in recovery worldwide due to the spread of the virus may weigh on India's exports. ■ K.K. MUSTAFAH

tions, and restrictions extending beyond January.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had projected Q4 growth at 6% in its monetary policy meeting in December.

The HDFC Bank economists also warned that a

slowdown in global recovery could weigh on exports.

**'Uncertainty returns'**  
"The return of uncertainty around growth and inflation due to the spread of the [Omicron] variant might delay

10-year bond yields to trade between 6.4-6.5% over the coming month, 'pressured by higher inflation, elevated oil prices, and normalising liquidity conditions'.

the RBI's decision to hike the reverse repo rate in February 2022 as well," they said in the report titled 'The Omicron Wave: Higher highs, weaker lows, impact on growth, FX and yields.'

"We expect the USD/INR pair to remain range-bound between 74-76 over the coming quarter. While the rise in COVID cases is likely to put pressure on the rupee, the

RBI is likely to intervene and prevent sustainable moves beyond 76."

They also estimated 10-year bond yields to trade between 6.4-6.5% over the coming month, 'pressured by higher inflation, elevated oil prices, and normalising liquidity conditions'.

Prices have surged up to ₹70,000 a candy: industry bodies



"coronavirus outbreak," said Harshad Ajmera, a gold wholesaler in Kolkata.

Mr. Ajmera noted a price correction had made gold more affordable for retail consumers in India early last year. Local gold prices hit a record of ₹56,191 per 10 gm in August 2020, but fell back to ₹43,320 in March 2021, when monthly imports spiked to a record 177 tonnes.

Imports could moderate in January as rising coronavirus cases have prompted local authorities to impose curbs, said a Mumbai-based bullion dealer. "Jewellers are afraid of lockdown. They have scaled down purchases," the dealer said.

## Availability of cotton, rising prices worry textile industry

Prices have surged up to ₹70,000 a candy: industry bodies

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
COIMBATORE

High cotton prices this season has become a subject of concern to the domestic textile industry as the units are facing not only spike in raw material prices but also shortage in availability.

T. Rajkumar, chairman of Confederation of Indian Textile Industry, said in a press release that the average price of cotton was ₹37,000

a slab for 220 kg in September 2020 and it rose to ₹60,000 in October 2021, when the new cotton season started.

Further, only about 120 lakh

bales arrived in the market between October 1 and December 31 as against the usual arrival of 170 lakh to 200 lakh bales.

The Southern India Mills' Association chairman Ravi Sam said though the 2021-2022 cotton season started with a comfortable opening

stock of 75 lakh bales and estimated crop of 360 lakh bales, the cotton prices started increasing from the beginning. There was a pent-up demand for the cotton in the post-COVID period.

The U.S. sanctions on Xinjian cotton, that accounts 10% of the world cotton production, is another factor.

"MCX and NCDEX, dominated by the large traders are also fuelling the market."

At present, Indian cotton prices are higher than the international prices, affecting the competitiveness of the industry. The government should immediately remove the import duty on cotton.



# Shardul steps up, keeps India in the hunt at Wanderers

His seven for 61 restricts South Africa to a slender lead of 27; Petersen, Bavuma score vital half-centuries; Pujara finds his touch in second innings

## INDIA IN SA

**S. DINAKAR**  
JOHANNESBURG  
Not for nothing is Shardul Thakur a 'breakthrough' bowler. He's sharp, focused and full of boyish enthusiasm.

He stays in the shadow of his more illustrious compatriots, but, when given an opportunity, comes bounding in and asks questions with 'effort' balls.

On Tuesday, day two of the second Freedom Test here at the Wanderers, Shardul proved more than a breakthrough seamer. He scalped a career-best seven for 61, taking the centrestage, bowling with venom.

On view were rhythm, energy and skill, as the Mumbaikar moved the ball both ways, mixed his length, extracted bounce.

Shardul's rich haul notwithstanding, the Proteas, replying to India's 202, gained a 27-run first innings lead.

### Gripping action

And in a day of gripping action, incisive left-arm seamer Marco Jansen removed India skipper K.L. Rahul, caught low in the cordon by Aiden Markram, off a back of a length delivery close to off-stump.

And Mayank Agarwal (23), who was driving the ball crisply, fell to a Duanne Oli-

vier inswinger. The bowling was often hostile but Cheteshwar Pujara (35 batting) counter-attacked, square-driving and on-driving Jansen, pulling Olivier. And Ajinkya Rahane (11 batting) survived.

India was 85 for two at stumps, ahead by 58 runs. The Test is on a knife edge.

Cracks are opening up on the surface, the ball is rearing from a length and batters took blows on the body.

### Impressive Petersen

Earlier, Keegan Petersen (62) was impressive while notching up his first Test half-century.

The diminutive Petersen has an organised game. He is solid in defence and fluent when he drives or whips off his legs. Importantly, he has footwork and balance.

He flicked and on-drove Mohammed Siraj, who pulled up with a hamstring strain on day one but made a quick recovery to bowl on day two, for boundaries. Mohammed Shami was cover-driven.

Jasprit Bumrah and Shami were red hot in the morning but Dean Elgar and Petersen weathered the first hour with application, courage and some luck.

Elgar, rising on his toes to keep the short-pitched deliveries down with soft hands, was typically dogged.



'Lord Shardul': Thakur swung the Indians back into the contest with a superb spell. ■ REUTERS

Rahul, captaining with imagination, switched his pacemen. The plan worked.

Shardul, with a mean delivery of away movement [from the left-hander] and lift, ended Elgar's determined tenure.

Elgar (28) and Peterson added 74 runs for the second wicket.

Shifting his line adeptly to the right-hander, Shardul removed Petersen with a well-pitched up outswinger, lur-

ing the batter into a fatal drive.

And just before lunch, he brought one into Rassie van der Dussen to win a controversial caught-behind verdict.

On a day of fortune swings, Temba Bavuma and wicket-keeper batter Kyle Verreyne strung together a partnership. Verreyne, who got firmly behind the line, looked composed.

The 60-run fifth wicket as-

sociation was ended when Shardul brought one back in to Verreyne.

Bavuma launched into strokes, straight-driving Bumrah, on-driving Ashwin and going right back, shortening the length, and pulling the off-spinner for a six.

The aggressive Bavuma (51 off 60) was rather unlucky to be brilliantly held down the leg-side by Rishabh Pant, off that man again, Shardul.

In low-scoring duels every

## SCOREBOARD

### INDIA – 1ST INNINGS

202 in 63.1 overs.

### SOUTH AFRICA – 1ST INNINGS

Dean Elgar c Pant b Shardul 28 (120b, 4x4), Aiden Markram lbw b Shami 7 (12b, 1x4), Keegan Petersen c Mayank b Shardul 62 (118b, 9x4), Rassie van der Dussen c Pant b Shardul 1 (7b), Temba Bavuma c Pant b Shardul 51 (60b, 6x4, 1x6), Kyle Verreyne lbw b Shardul 21 (72b, 2x4), Marco Jansen c Ashwin b Shardul 21 (34b, 3x4), Kagiso Rabada c Siraj b Shami 0 (6b), Keshav Maharaj b Bumrah 21 (29b, 3x4), Duanne Olivier (not out) 1 (72b), Lungi Ngidi c Pant b Shardul 0 (1b); Extras (b-2, lb-4, nb-3, w-5); Total (in 79.4 overs): 229.

### INDIA BOWLING

Bumrah 21-5-49-1, Shami 21-5-52-2, Siraj 9.5-2-24-0, Shardul 17.5-3-61-7, Ashwin 10-1-35-0

### INDIA – 2ND INNINGS

K.L. Rahul c Markram b Jansen 8 (21b, 1x4), Mayank Agarwal lbw b Olivier 23 (37b, 5x4), Cheteshwar Pujara (batting) 35 (42b, 7x4), Ajinkya Rahane (batting) 11 (22b, 1x4); Extras (b-2, lb-4, nb-3, w-5); Total (in 79.4 overs): 229.

### FALL OF WICKETS

1-14 (Markram, 3.5 overs), 2-88 (Elgar, 38.5), 3-101 (Petersen, 42.6), 4-102 (van der Dussen,

### BEST BOWLING FIGURES BY AN INDIAN IN SOUTH AFRICA

■ 7/61 – Shardul Thakur, Johannesburg, 2022

■ 7/120 – Harbhajan Singh, Cape Town, 2011

■ 6/53 – Anil Kumble, Johannesburg, 1992

■ 6/76 – Javagal Srinath, Port Elizabeth, 2001

■ 6/138 – Ravindra Jadeja, Durban, 2013

■ Shardul's figures is the best by an Indian against South Africa, eclipsing Ashwin's 7/66 at Nagpur in 2015

run counts and Jansen and Keshav Maharaj produced vital knocks as South Africa gained the lead.

In low-scoring duels every

off the tail, Pant pouched a flying off-side catch to dismiss Ngidi. The catch complemented the day when Shardul soared.

A dismissal that raised eyebrows

## S. DINAKAR

JOHANNESBURG

The incident happened just before lunch.

Shardul Thakur brought one back into Rassie van der Dussen. The ball found the inside edge and Rishabh Pant completed an acrobatic catch diving forward.

van der Dussen 'walked' and the players trooped off for lunch.

Then came the shocker. The replays from the front and straight angles showed Pant taking the ball off the grass.

Everyone in the press box and the former cricketers this correspondent spoke to were convinced it was a bump-ball catch.

The next question was, would van der Dussen be 'recalled' to the crease since the next delivery had not been bowled, the next batsman had not come in, and the Indians too had departed to the pavilion with the dismissed batter for lunch.

Apparently, the umpires and the third umpire had to come to an agreement about "conclusive" evidence about the legality of the catch before requesting the Indians to withdraw the appeal. It came to light that the umpires did not find that 'conclusive' evidence despite the replays indicating otherwise.

# It is my best figures, but my best is yet to come: Shardul

Petersen says South Africa would like to chase anything below 200 in fourth innings on bowler-friendly pitch

## S. DINAKAR

JOHANNESBURG

Shardul Thakur made history at the Wanderers on Tuesday. His seven for 61 is the best-ever figures by an Indian bowler against South Africa in Test cricket.

After the second day's play, a confident Shardul said, "It is my best figures. But my best is yet to come."

About his gameplan, Shardul said, "I wanted to keep coming hard at the batters. All I did was to hit the crack. There was an area from where the ball kicked up or kept low."

Shardul said it was a team effort. "Shami and Bumrah are the strike bowlers. They bowled well without luck, but created pressure. Today I got the wickets. This is how

we play as a pack.

"I love playing Test cricket. It is the purest form of the game. My mindset is different when I play Tests. I want to give my best," he added.

Shardul said he was not bothered about the limited opportunities he has been getting. "The selectors and the team management have confidence in me and that is why they are playing me as a genuine bowler. In a large country like India, there is bound to be competition."

Keegan Petersen said the South Africans would like to chase anything below 200.

"Over 200, with their bowling on this pitch, it could get difficult for us. The surface is not getting any better. Hopefully, we can get them all out quickly," he said.

Petersen, who came up with his first half-century in Tests on Tuesday, said, "The

presents different challenges."

Shardul said there was help for the seamers at both Centurion and Wanderers. "You have to bowl in good areas," he said.

About the Ranji Trophy getting postponed, he said, "I feel for them [the cricketers], but you also have to look at the COVID-19 scenario in the country."

Keegan Petersen said the South Africans would like to chase anything below 200.

"Over 200, with their bowling on this pitch, it could get difficult for us. The surface is not getting any better. Hopefully, we can get them all out quickly," he said.

Petersen, who came up with his first half-century in Tests on Tuesday, said, "The



Solid: Petersen battled through a tough first session to score his first half-century in Tests. ■ REUTERS

India pacemen came out guns blazing in the morning. We had to bat through that tough period."

Petersen added, "My dad Dirk was a club cricketer and he would take me along to matches. And he would bowl

naturally to me. I have been batting like this since I was a kid."

Petersen added, "My dad Dirk was a club cricketer and he would take me along to matches. And he would bowl

thousands of deliveries."

The South African was happy with the way the Proteas batted in the first innings. "A couple of us could have gone on to bigger scores, but overall it was a good performance. The quality of bowling was good."

Petersen revealed he had worked on a couple of shortcomings after the first Test. "We identified a couple of areas and addressed them."

He felt a blatantly attacking batting ploy might not succeed on this pitch. "You have to defend the good balls and then the scoring opportunities would come."

Petersen will remember the Wanderers all his life. After all, this is where he came up with his first innings of substance in Tests.

## Ranji put on hold

### AMOL KARHADKAR

MUMBAI

Ranji Trophy's return is set to be delayed as the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) hierarchy has made up its mind to postpone the tournament due to the third wave of COVID-19.

"BCCI does not want to compromise the safety of the players, support staff, match officials and other participants involved and has decided to put the three tournaments on hold till further notice. The BCCI will continue to assess the situation and take a call on the start of the tournaments accordingly," said BCCI secretary Jay Shah in a media release on Tuesday.

The BCCI hierarchy is hoping to start the Ranji by early next month should the Omicron wave subside by mid-month.

# Australia looks to sustain momentum

## ISL 2021-22

### SPORTS BUREAU

SC East Bengal shares honours with Bengaluru FC

formerly of BFC, gave East Bengal a deserved lead through a superb glancing header. Haokip met Wahengbam Luwang's fine delivery from a free-kick, with marker Cleiton Silva a touch late to react.

The Kolkata side almost doubled the lead on 40 minutes, but Daniel Chukwu couldn't connect with an inch-perfect cross from Lalrinniama Hnamte.

Marco Pezzaioli introduced Sunil Chhetri at the break and BFC made multiple forays into the box, only to find a match in the towering Adil Khan.

But the pressure soon told when Roshan Naorem's cross from the right was de-

flected goalward by East Bengal midfielder Sourav Das and goalkeeper Arindam Bhattacharya dived over the ball to let it through.

Chhetri could have put BFC ahead in the 72nd minute, but his clean strike off a cut-back from Roshan was kept out by defender Hira Mondal. Soon after at the other end, Haokip could have made it a night to remember but missed a gilt-edged chance, failing to get even a half-decent shot in when he had just the goalie to beat.

The result: Bengaluru FC 1 (Sourav 55-og) drew with SC East Bengal 1 (Haokip 28).

Wednesday's match: ATK MB vs Hyderabad FC, 7.30 p.m.

## IN BRIEF

### Djokovic heading to AO with medical exemption

MELBOURNE

World No. 1 Novak Djokovic is set to defend his Australian Open title after being granted a medical exemption to play. "I'm heading Down Under with an exemption permission. Let's go 2021!" the nine-time Australian Open winner, who beat Daniil Medvedev in last year's final, said on Instagram. AFP

### Steelers hold U Mumba; Thalaivas beat Yoddha

BENGALURU

U Mumba held Haryana Steelers to a 24-24 tie in a low-scoring match, while Tamil Thalaivas outwitted Yoddha 39-33 in a thriller at the Prokabaddi League here on Tuesday. While captain Fazel Atrachai had 4 points in defence for Mumbai, Haryana had itself to blame after allowing Abhishek Singh to make a valid final raid of the match with scores tied and no time remaining. Manjeet (7 points) and substitute Ajinkya Pawar (6) were impressive among the raiders for Thalaivas, while defenders Sagar (5) and Surjeet Singh (3) backed them up efficiently. Surender Gill scored 14 points for U.P. Yoddha who could not match the intensity of Tamil Thalaivas on the night. PTI

## TV PICKS

**South Africa vs India:** Second Test, day 3, Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 1.30 p.m.  
**Pro Kabaddi:** Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.  
**ISL:** Star Sports 3, 7.30 p.m.  
**The Ashes:** Fourth Test, day 2, Sony Six (SD & HD), 5 a.m. (Thursday)

Punjab boys,  
Kerala girls  
suffer defeats

## SPORTS BUREAU

INDORE  
Defending champions Punjab boys and Kerala girls lost their opening matches in the National junior basketball championships here on Tuesday.

Delhi boys stunned Punjab 78-56 in a Group A encounter.

**The results:**  
**Boys:** **Group A:** Delhi 78 (Himanshu 40, Sishanth Dhaddha 18) bt Punjab 56 (Rahul 20, Nawal Singh 17); Tamil Nadu 67 (A. Ajay 21, Hartharasudan 14, Vijayashankar 10) bt Maharashtra 60 (Yash Mane 15, Rajendra Singh 11).

**Group B:** Uttar Pradesh 80 (Kushal Singh 24, Rishabh Jaiswar 12) bt Karnataka 73 (R.M. Manoj 30, Joshua S. Sajith 18); **Group D:** Telangana 74 (Jasim 20) bt Goa 32.

**Girls:** **Group A:** Punjab 80 (Kavya Singla 25, Kanishka Dhir 20) bt Kerala 44 (Aleena Antony 18).

**Group B:** Tamil Nadu 86 (R. Sathy 21, Angel 12) bt Gujarat 12; **Group C:** Delhi 81 (Abhiya 15, Krithika 12, Sneha 11) bt Goa 6.

**Group D:** Telangana 64 (Yeshwini 18, Bhuvaneswari 13) bt Himachal Pradesh 57 (Poonam Thakur 21, Palak Kumari 10); Karnataka 94 (Mannali Jacob 18, Pavani Sangwan 12, Aiswarya 12) bt Bihar 18.

**Group E:** Jammu & Kashmir 74 (Chitresh Gupta 28, Shakhsir Sharma 21) bt Puducherry 22; West Bengal 65 (Ananya Mondal 16, Smriti Kana 15) bt Assam 47 (Iya 13).

**Group F:** Odisha 58 (Lizalin Jena 22, Swagatika Sahoo 12) bt Andhra Pradesh 42 (Aiswarya Devi 12, Venkatalakshmi 10).



Joaquim (Hero MotoSports Team Rally) negotiating the terrain. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

## Joaquim sizzles

## DAKAR RALLY

RAYAN ROZARIO  
COIMBATORE

Hero MotoSports Team Rally created history as its star rider Joaquim Rodrigues won Stage 3 of the RallyGP 3 class in ongoing Dakar Rally at Al Qaisumah, Saudi Arabia, on Tuesday. This is the first-ever stage win at Dakar, the toughest rally in the world, by an Indian team and an Indian manufacturer.

In his sixth straight appearance at Dakar, Joaquim, after a remarkable comeback in Stage 2, following a difficult Stage 1, put up fantastic performance from the start. The capable Hero Rally 450 also withstood the variety of extreme terrains.

The team's other rider Aaron Mare enjoyed yet

another mistake-free day as well and finished the stage in the 18th position. He continues to be in top-10 in overall rankings at 10th place.

The 255-km special section was lined with long stretches of alternating dune ridges and fast plateaus, and complicated intersections. Navigating through the terrain was indeed a tough task, but both riders aced all hurdles to mark a day in history for Hero MotoSport.

**Thrilled**  
"I'm extremely happy with how my day has turned out. Even though the stage was really fast, with a lot of difficulty around alternating dunes and tracks, I was able to push hard right from the very first kilometre," said Joaquim.

## Wolves upset United

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
MANCHESTER

Wolverhampton Wanderers ended Ralf Rangnick's unbeaten start as Manchester United interim manager on Monday as Joao Moutinho's strike earned a deserved 1-0 win at Old Trafford.

A first home defeat to Wolves in 42 years leaves United still seventh in the Premier League table, four points adrift of the top four. But it was another lacklustre performance that was just as concerning as the result

for Rangnick as the Red Devils were outplayed.

In the LaLiga, a second half goal from Lucas Ocampos was enough for Sevilla to claim a 1-0 win at Cadiz on Monday and move five points behind the leader Real Madrid.

**The results:** **Premier League:** Manchester United 0 lost to Wolves 1 (Moutinho 82).

**LaLiga:** Villarreal 5 (Dia 8, Torres 13, Moreno 37, 79, Trigueros 74) bt Levante 0; Osasuna 1 (Kike 10) lost to Athletic Bilbao 3 (Sanchez 16, 25, 68); Cadiz 0 lost to Sevilla 1 (Ocampos 58).

## DELHI LOCALS

## National shooting trials postponed

The National selection trials in pistol events, scheduled to be hosted at the Dr. Karni Singh Range, Tughlakabad, here from January 13 to 25, have been postponed by the National Rifle Association of India, owing to the weekend curfew announced by the Delhi government. The NRAI has also postponed the rifle and shotgun selection trials scheduled in Bhopal.

## Daksh Sahi scalps four

Daksh Sahi picked up four wickets and Mehl took three as Delhi Capitals Ballpark beat MS Cricket Academy by three wickets in the 2nd MS U-14 tournament.

**The scores:** MSCA 130 in 28 overs (Daksh Sahi 4/29, Mehl 3/5) lost to DCB 134/7 in 27 overs (Ayush Gautam 33, Darshit 3/22).

## Tushar, Pukhraj, Yash shine

Tushar took a five-for while Pukhraj Singh vaghela and Yash Gupta scored half centuries as Ganga International Cricket Academy beat CS Cricket Academy by 71 runs in the RD Group tournament.

**The scores:** GICA 165 in 37 overs (Pukhraj Singh Vaghela 60, Yash Gupta 50, Uttkarsh Panchal 5/18) bt CSCA 94 in 24 overs (Gaurav 53, Tushar

Verma 53).

## ASSOCIATED PRESS

SYDNEY Daniil Medvedev and Roman Safiullin won their singles matches before combining to win the doubles on Tuesday to give defending champion Russia a 3-0 sweep of Australia and first place in Group B at the ATP Cup.

**The results:** **Group B:** Russia bt Australia 3-0 (Roman Safiullin bt James Duckworth 7-6(6), 6-4; Daniil Medvedev bt Alex De Minaur 6-4, 6-2; Safiullin & Medvedev bt John Peers & Luke Saville 7-6(7), 3-6, [10-6]). **Italy bt France 3-0** (Jannik Sinner bt Ar-

## 5/21. Deadly spell by Nikhil Rajput

Nikhil Rajput picked up four wickets for just 10 runs as UB Lions won by 39 runs in the Turf Junior Cricket League against Turf Stallions.

**The scores:** UB Lions 141/3 in 20 overs (Anshul 43, Monu 39 n.o.) bt Turf Stallions 102/9 in 20 overs (Reyansh Kapoor 42, Nikhil Rajput 4/10).

## Sandeep scores unbeaten century

Man-of-the-Match Sandeep Parihar scored a 68-ball unbeaten 102 as Rawal Cricket Academy beat Yuvraj Singh Centre of Excellence by 127 runs in the 2nd Kanta Devi memorial tournament.

**The scores:** RCA 287/5 in 30 overs (Sandeep Parihar 102 n.o., Virat Tyagi 58) bt VSCE 160 in 26.2 overs (Raghav Chopra 62, Mohit Bhati 3/18).

## Kunal and Tanishq sizzle

Kunal Verma top-scored with 53 runs and Tanishq Arya picked up four wickets as Kanchan Cricket Academy won by five wickets against NSP-XI in the 1st DR Sharma memorial tournament.

**The scores:** NSP-XI 211 in 38.4 overs (Sidharth Jain 49, Tanishq Arya 4/49) lost to KCA 215/5 in 39 overs (Kunal Verma 53).

## Medvedev, Zverev impress

thru Rinderknech 6-3, 7-6(3); Matteo Berrettini bt Ugo Humbert 6-4, 7-6(6); Berrettini & Sinner bt Fabrice Martin & Edouard Roger-Vasselin 6-3, 6-7(7), [10-8])

**Group C: Germany bt USA 2-1** (Jan-Lennard Struff bt John Isner 7-6(7), 4-6, 7-5; Alexander Zverev bt Taylor Fritz 6-4, 6-4; Kevin Krawietz & Tim Puetz lost to Isner & Fritz 0-6, 3-6). **Canada bt Great Britain 2-1** (Denis Shapovalov lost to Dan Evans 4-6, 4-6; Felix Auger-Aliassime bt Cameron Norrie 7-6(4), 6-3; Auger-Aliassime & Shapovalov bt Jamie Murray & Joe Salisbury 6-4, 6-1).

"We requested the International Tennis Federation (ITF) and they agreed last

night to shift the event to Chandigarh. In any case, most of them are already playing the tournament in Chandigarh this week," said Col. Ranbir Chauhan of All India Tennis Association (AITA) on Tuesday.

The 'yellow' level of Covid restrictions in the Capital does allow training of sports persons for participation in national/ international tournaments as well as for organising such events, without spectators or visitors.

The country's leading juniors Chirag Duhan and Aman Dahiya, along with

## Anil Mukhi passes away

He was a racing columnist for *The Hindu*

CYRUS J. MADAN

Anil Mukhi's passing away will leave a void in Indian racing that will not be filled. He succumbed to an illness that he had fought with all the vitality and grit which was so symbolic of the way he lived his life.

He's gone far too soon and well before his time. Anil is survived by wife Sree devi and sons Rajiv, Karun and Akshay.

The family had migrated to Canada many years ago, where Anil set up and established the very successful Galaxy Bloodstock Services, with clientele across the globe.

## Passionate

He was a bloodstock agent, journalist (columnist for *The Hindu*), author, statistician for whom horse racing and breeding was a passion.

I was fortunate to have been associated with Anil in the early 1980s in Mumbai. It cemented a friendship that would last decades.

Few people will remember that it was Anil who arranged one of the largest consignments of mares and

stallions for breeding to come into India on a single jumbo jet in the early 1980s.

Anil's love for facts, figures and statistics, saw the emergence of a publication called the *Indian Turf Statistical Review* which was a veritable encyclopaedia on breeding and racing stats in India.

In fact, when the Turf Authorities Of India introduced the 'Classic Racing Awards' in 1998, to honour the champions of the Indian turf, it was Anil who was requisitioned to provide all the data in compiling the details that would determine the winners each year.

It was a service he would continue to provide until October 2020.

**ITF juniors shifted to Chandigarh**

## TENNIS

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The ITF grade-2 junior tennis tournament, scheduled to be held at the DLTA Complex here from January 9, has been shifted to Chandigarh. "The Covid-19 cases are on the rise in the Capital. We don't have enough accommodation at the stadium and it's not easy to have a bubble in hotels.

"We requested the International Tennis Federation (ITF) and they agreed last

night to shift the event to Chandigarh. In any case, most of them are already playing the tournament in Chandigarh this week," said Col. Ranbir Chauhan of All India Tennis Association (AITA) on Tuesday.

In the girls' section, 104th ranked Shruti Ahlawat is scheduled to join the event next week along with other prominent players like Meshkat Zahra Safi (112) of Iran and Daria Shadchnava (146) of Russia.

It may not be that big an unsettling decision for the players as Chandigarh is easily reachable from Delhi by road, rail and air.

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1. Applications are invited for recruitment to the following posts in the Reserve Bank of India.

S. No.	Posts	Vacancies
<b>Panel Year 2021</b>		
1	Legal officer in Grade 'B'	2
2	Manager (Technical - Civil)	6
3	Manager (Technical - Electrical)	3
4	Library Professionals (Assistant Librarian) in Grade 'A'	1
5	Architect in Grade 'A'	1
6	Curator on full-time contract	1

2. For all other details such as eligibility criteria, reservation of vacancies, scheme of selection, submission of on-line application and other instructions, please refer to the detailed advertisement to be published on the Bank's website ([www.rbi.org.in](http://www.rbi.org.in)) on January 15, 2022 and in the Employment News / Rozgar Samachar issue dated January 15, 2022 / subsequent issue. Candidates can apply for these posts only by online mode through the Bank's website.

**3. IMPORTANT DATES:**  
Website Link Open - for online Registration of Applications and Payment of Fees/ Intimation Charges (Up to 6:00 PM)  
January 15, 2022 to February 04, 2022

Online/Written Examination  
March 06, 2022

NOTE: Corrigendum, if any, issued on the above advertisement, will be published only on the Bank's website. (Hindi version of this advertisement will be available in Dainik Jagran, Dainik Bhaskar, Rajasthan Patrika and Navbharat Times)

## GENERAL

## Banks Board Bureau

An Autonomous Body of Government of India

**CORIGENDUM**

The advertisement issued by the Banks Board Bureau for the position of MD & CEO of Union Bank of India stands cancelled. The prescribed selection process for the position will be taken up in due course.

Secretary  
Banks Board Bureau

BBB.No.S3201/08

# Text & Context

## NEWS IN NUMBERS



### Housing sales

**71** In percent, the year-on-year growth in housing sales across top seven cities (Mumbai, Delhi-NCR, Pune, Chennai, Bengaluru, Kolkata and Hyderabad) in 2021 according to Anarock. Mumbai-based Anarock attributed the rise in housing sales to very low interest rates on home loans, pent-up demand, surge in aspiration for home ownership, cut in stamp duty by a few States including Maharashtra and discounts offered by builders. Housing sales stood at 1,38,350 units in 2020 and 2,61,358 units in the 2019 calendar year. PTI

### OTT industry

**13-15** In billion dollars, the size of the streaming industry in India over the next decade, which is expected to grow at a CAGR of 22-25%, according to a joint report on media and entertainment. The OTT industry is constantly growing and is one of the most competitive amongst emerging markets with over 40 players representing all types of content providers, said the report from CII and BCG. Besides, the OTT sector is also witnessing a rise in investments in content of Indian origin. PTI

### Gold import bill

**55.7** In billion dollars, the amount India spent on gold imports in 2021. India bought more than double the previous year's tonnage as a price drop favoured retail buyers and pent-up demand emerged for weddings that were delayed when the pandemic first hit. The 2021 gold import bill doubled the \$22 billion spent in 2020, and surpassed the previous high, set in 2011, of \$53.9 billion. Gold prices had hit a record high of ₹56,191 (\$754) per 10 grams in August 2020, but fell back to ₹43,320 in March 2021. REUTERS

### Dent on growth

**0.3** The percentage by which growth can be impacted in the March quarter according to a report by HDFC bank. Economists at the country's largest private lender said they were earlier estimating Q4 growth to come at 6.1%, which can get impacted by 0.2-0.3% because of the Omicron threat. However, with States imposing COVID-related restrictions (night curfew on movement of people, offices to operate at 50 per cent capacity in various States), economic activity is likely to get impacted in Q4FY22. PTI

### The Omicron share

**50** In percent, the share of Omicron variant in COVID-19 cases in major Indian cities according to Dr N. K. Arora, chairperson of the COVID working group NTAGI. A total of 1,892 Omicron cases have so far been detected across 23 States and Union Territories in the country and of the patients, 766 have either recovered or migrated, the Union Health Ministry said on Tuesday. Maharashtra has recorded the highest number of 568 Omicron cases, followed by Delhi (382), Kerala (185), Rajasthan (174), Gujarat (152) and Tamil Nadu (121).

COMPILATION BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

### EXPLAINER

## The continuing political crisis in Sudan

What led to the resignation of Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok? Where does the civil-military relationship stand?

STANLY JOHNY

**The story so far:** Sudan's civilian Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok resigned on Sunday, plunging the country into further turmoil. Mr. Hamdok, who was sacked by the military in October and reinstated a few weeks later as part of a deal, stepped down as anti-military protests continued to rock the country. The protesters rejected Mr. Hamdok's deal with the military and demanded the Generals hand over power to an independent civilian authority.

**Who is Abdalla Hamdok?** A trained economist, Mr. Hamdok had worked with the UN in the early 2000s. Born in 1956 in Sudan, he did his graduation in the University of Khartoum and earned a doctorate in economic studies from the University of Manchester. In 2018, the deposed dictator Omar Bashir nominated him as the Minister of Finance. But he refused the offer. Mr. Bashir had to resign in 2019 amid mass protests. The military formed a transition council and took the reins of the country in its hands. But the Generals' attempts to consolidate power were thwarted by protesters. Eventually, the military agreed to share power with the civilian leaders. The Forces of Freedom and Change, the civil society coalition that was spearheading the movement for democracy, proposed Mr. Hamdok as the Prime Minister after the power-sharing agreement was signed in August 2019. Subsequently, the Sovereignty Council, an 11-member body comprising military and civilian leaders that replaced the military-led transition council, appointed Mr. Hamdok as Prime Minister. During the Sovereignty Council's rule, Sudan entered into a peace deal with rebel groups, banned female genital mutilation, made peace with Israel and reached out to international powers for economic assistance. During this period, the U.S. took the country off the list of state sponsors of terrorism. Reforms at home and international recognition suggested that Sudan was on a slow but steady transition into full democracy. But then the military struck again.

**What triggered the current crisis?** Ever since mass protests broke out in late 2018, the military has tried everything it could to protect its privileges. It first removed Mr. Bashir and established the transition council. When the direct rule became unsustainable, the Generals agreed

to share power. But the civilian leaders' consolidation of social support and political power upset the Generals. According to the agreement, the acting Prime Minister (Mr. Hamdok) would run the day-to-day affairs while the military chief would remain the leader of the Sovereignty Council for two years. Lt. Gen. Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, the military chief, was scheduled to hand over the leadership of the transitional government to the civilian leadership last year. Instead, he disbanded the government, proclaimed himself the new leader, declared a state of emergency and imprisoned the civilian leaders, including Mr. Hamdok, in October 2021. The military was preparing the ground ahead of the coup. Pro-military mobs had carried out protests demanding the government's removal amid soaring prices of essentials. Port Sudan, the country's largest port, on the Red Sea, had been blockaded by a tribal group, with help from the military, which worsened the economic situation, including acute shortages of food, currency and fuel. But General Burhan failed to mobilise support after the coup. As protests continued, he reinstated Prime Minister Hamdok, but without the Sovereignty Council. This meant that the military could exercise greater control over the civilian government. The protesters didn't buy the apparent concession by the military. They called Mr. Hamdok a "traitor" for cutting a deal with the military and pressed ahead with the agitation. Eventually, unable to convince his old comrades that he could form an independent technocratic government, Mr. Hamdok stepped down.

**What explains the civilian-military rift?** After the Draft Constitution Declaration was signed on August 4, 2019, along with a power-sharing agreement between civilians and the military, promising elections in late 2022, tensions between the civilian leadership and the military leaders remained over at least one issue – bringing former dictator Mr. Bashir's regime to account for genocidal acts, human rights abuses and corruption. Analysts say the military was uncomfortable with this as it would expose their own acts and their financial interests that were entrenched during Mr. Bashir's rule. Gen. Burhan, after all, played a key role as inspector general of the armed forces during the final end of Mr. Bashir's tenure – overseeing Sudan's intervention in the Yemen Civil War. He had also been a regional army commander in



Darfur between 2003 and 2008, a period that coincided with the deaths of hundreds of thousands of civilians.

### What's next?

The military is now in a difficult position. Given that the civil-military relationship is already at a breaking point, the Generals establishing direct rule—the Myanmar model—would be extremely unpopular. That's why Gen. Burhan reinstated Mr. Hamdok in the first place. What the military wants is a civilian Prime Minister without real powers. Now that Mr. Hamdok is gone, the Generals would be under pressure to appoint another civilian government. According to the constitutional declaration of 2019, the Prime Minister should be selected by a legislative council and then endorsed by the Sovereignty Council. The legislative council was never formed and the

Sovereignty Council was disbanded. So the military is likely to directly appoint another technocrat. But that won't resolve the crisis. If the protesters did not accept Mr. Hamdok as their PM, they are unlikely to accept anybody else the military would appoint next. And this political crisis is being played out at a time when Sudan is going through a severe economic crisis. Weeks-long protests have paralysed an already weak economy. Inflation has soared to over 400% in recent months.

The UN estimates that at least a third of the country's 43 million people will need humanitarian assistance in 2022. What Sudan wants is a stable, responsive government that can urgently address the myriad problems the country faces. But the question is whether the military is committed to the democratic transition.

With inputs from Srinivasan Ramani

**Streets on fire:** Hundreds of Sudanese anti-coup protesters rally against the military as security forces were deployed in multiple cities, days after the resignation of the country's civilian premier. AFP

## THE GIST

**■ Post the resignation of civilian Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok, Sudan has plunged into a complete political turmoil. Mr. Hamdok was appointed as PM in 2019 post the formation of the Sovereignty Council, an 11-member body comprising military and civilian leaders that replaced the military-led transition council.**

**■ The military was unable to digest an equal sharing of powers and started processes to gain back political power of the country. In 2021, they disbanded the council, declared an emergency and arrested all civilian leaders including Mr. Hamdok, triggering massive protests.**

**■ Unable to deal with the rising protests, the military attempted to pacify the protesters by reinstating Mr. Hamdok but without the Sovereignty Council which leaves him powerless. The people did not accept this and have continued their demonstration against the military coup which led to Mr. Hamdok stepping down.**

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### EXPLAINER

## The failed deal between Antrix and Devas Multimedia

Why has a Canadian court ordered the seizure of more than \$30 million worth of AAI's assets? How can a foreign power issue such an order?

PRABHASH RANJAN

**The story so far:** In 2005, Devas Multimedia signed an agreement with Antrix – a commercial arm of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) – to provide multimedia services to mobile users using the leased S-band satellite spectrum to be provided by Antrix. In 2011, the UPA-2 government annulled this agreement on the ground that it needed the S-band satellite spectrum for national security and other social purposes. This abrupt annulment led to three legal disputes – a commercial arbitration between Antrix and Devas Multimedia at the International Chambers of Commerce (ICC), and two bilateral investment treaty (BIT) arbitrations brought by the Mauritus investors in Devas Multimedia under the India-Mauritius BIT (CC/Devas tribunal) and by Deutsche Telekom – a German company – under the India-Germany BIT (DT tribunal). India lost all three disputes.

The ICC tribunal ordered Antrix to pay \$562.5 million-plus interest as damages to Devas for wrongfully repudiating the contract. A U.S. court, in late 2020, dismissing all the contentions of Antrix, confirmed the 2015 commercial arbitral



award in favour of Devas. The CC/Devas and the DT tribunals ordered India to pay damages of \$160 million plus accrued interest to Devas' foreign shareholders and \$132 million to Deutsche Telekom respectively. In the meanwhile, the National Company Law Tribunal, last year, on a case filed by the Indian government, ordered the liquidation of Devas Multimedia on the ground that the affairs of the company were being carried on fraudulently.

Given India's non-compliance, the foreign shareholders of Devas initiated multiple attachment proceedings against

India in several jurisdictions to recover the money ordered by the CC/Devas tribunal. In this regard, they have succeeded in getting a favourable order from a Canadian court.

### How can a Canadian court order the attachment of Indian assets ignoring State immunity?

State immunity – a well-established principle of international law – shields a state and its property against legal proceedings in the courts of other countries. This covers immunity from both jurisdiction and execution.

However, there is no international legal instrument in force dealing with state immunity in the municipal legal systems of different countries, which has created an international void. Consequently, countries have filled this void through their national legislations and domestic judicial practices on state immunity.

Typically, prominent jurisdictions such as Canada follow the concept of restrictive immunity (a foreign State is immune only for sovereign functions) and not absolute immunity (total immunity from all legal proceedings in a foreign court). In the context of the execution of BIT awards, it implies that state property serving sovereign functions (diplomatic mission buildings, central bank assets, etc.) cannot be attached. However, properties serving commercial functions are available for seizure. Since the assets of AAI are used for a commercial, not sovereign, activity, under the Canadian State Immunity Act RSC 1985 (CSIA), they can be attached.

### How can assets of AAI be seized when the claim is against India?

In execution proceedings, assets of an entity can be seized if that entity is an *alter ego* of the State that fails to comply

with the arbitral award. In other words, if the foreign sovereign exercises such extensive control over the entity, then the presumption that the entity has a separate corporate character is set aside. Thus, the Canadian court must have concluded that the Indian government extensively controls AAI.

### What options does India have?

The first option is to comply with the two adverse BIT awards. However, it is highly unlikely that India would do so. The second option is to challenge this decision in an appellate court in Canada as per the Canadian law where India can try proving that the 'extensive control requirement' is not met in the case of AAI and thus, it is not India's *alter ego*. Nevertheless, it is important to bear in mind, as it was held in a case known as *MINE v GUINEA*, State immunity from execution is purely a procedural hurdle to the enforcement of the BIT award. It cannot justify India's breach of its international law obligations enshrined in the two BITs and the continued failure to comply with the arbitral awards.

Prabhash Ranjan is Professor and Vice Dean, Jindal Global Law School, O P Jindal Global University.

## THE GIST

**■ In 2005, Devas Multimedia signed an agreement with Antrix which was annulled in 2011. This abrupt annulment led to a arbitration between Antrix and Devas Multimedia at the ICC and two BIT arbitrations. India lost all three disputes.**

**■ Given India's non-compliance, the foreign shareholders of Devas initiated multiple proceedings against India and have succeeded in getting a favourable order from a Canadian court. The Canada court can do so through the concept of restrictive immunity.**

**■ The Canadian court can order seizure of AAI assets as India exercises extensive control over the entity making AAI seem like an extension of itself.**



For equality: Members of the National Domestic Workers Union staging a demonstration in front of the Madurai Collectorate on International Domestic Workers Day. ■ ASHOK R

## FROM THE ARCHIVES

# A nod to recognising the value of housework

This is an agenda all political parties, and not just the Makkal Needhi Maiam, could incorporate in their manifestos

KALPANA KARUNAKARAN

**With elections set to be held in Punjab, both the AAP and the Punjab Congress have promised various sums of money to homemakers if they are elected to power. In this article dated January 5, 2021, Kalpana Karunakaran elaborates on the need to politicise and recognise women's work as work in the legal and economic sense of the term and not just as a labour of love.** Edited excerpts:

In the context of the forthcoming State Assembly election in Tamil Nadu, the Makkal Needhi Maiam (MNM), led by veteran actor Kamal Haasan, has made an eye-catching election promise that is evidently targeted at a large constituency of voters – women who are full-time homemakers. The party has promised to recognise housework as a salaried profession by paying homemakers 'hitherto unrecognized and unmonetized' for their work at home.

A recent political entrant in the electoral fray, the MNM's promise to directly pay women a monthly amount may be viewed as a strategy to grab attention in an over-crowded, highly competitive electoral landscape. Nonetheless, the promise bears close examination as it flags off an important issue and one that has had an interesting, if chequered significance in the history of women's movements.

**Origins of the demand**

The demand for 'wages for housework' arose in the context of struggle and consciousness-raising associated with the Second Wave of the women's movement in North America and Europe. Alongside other demands for social and political equality, women's rights campaigners made visible and also politicised women's everyday experience of housework and child care in the 'private' realm of the household. In doing this, they challenged the assumption that a 'natural' affinity for housework was rooted in the essential nature of women who were performing a 'labour of love'. For leading women's rights activists of the 1960s and 1970s, it was important to bust the myth that women's work at home was a personal service with no links to capitalist production. In a concrete sense, this meant linking the exploitation of the worker in the factory to women's work at home.

As Mariarosa Dalla Costa and Selma James wrote in their seminal piece in 1972, the woman working at home produced 'the living human being – the labourer himself'. From the nine-month period of gestation in the womb, women's daily chores of cooking, cleaning, washing, ironing clothes, preparing lunch boxes and so on produced the labour power that was

daily consumed in the shop-floor or the assembly line and had to be reproduced afresh every day. By providing free services in the home, women made possible the survival of working-class households at subsistence-level wages, with obvious benefits for industry and capital.

Despite the links between the 'housewife' and the factory worker, the unwaged status of the former accounted for crucial differences between them. As feminist scholar and writer Silvia Federici wrote (in 1975), in "Wages against housework", it was possible for wage-earners to bargain around the terms of their paid work and the quantity of the wage. 'But exploited as you might be, you are not that work', she pointed out. Housework, on the other hand, had come to define the very nature of a woman. This disallowed women from seeing it as 'real work' or as a social contract. For the advocates of 'wages for housework', the wage that the state ought to pay women would make them autonomous of the men on whom they were dependent. More fundamentally, the very demand for a wage was a repudiation of housework as an expression of women's nature. It was a revolt against the assigned social role of women. Therein lay the radical nature of the demand for wages, not in the money itself.

**An unresolved issue**

There was disagreement among the women ideologues of the Second Wave on what payment of a wage would actually mean for women. The sociologist, Ann Oakley, who studied the history of housework in her path-breaking books published in the 1970s, was among those who believed that 'wages for housework' would only imprison women further within the household, increase their social isolation and dissuade men from sharing housework. Others too argued that the goal of the women's movement must be, to not ask for wages, but to free women from the daily drudgery of routine domestic chores and enable them to participate fully in all spheres of social life, including paid employment outside the household. The debate around monetary remuneration for housework remained unresolved within the women's movement, even as the tools to measure the value that women's unpaid work adds to national economies have grown more sophisticated.

However, the underlying issue, which is the disproportionate share of women's responsibility for the work that sustains human life and reproduces labour power, remains as pressing as ever. A report published by the International Labour Organization in 2018 shows that, globally, women perform 76.2% of total hours of unpaid

care work, more than three times as much as men. In Asia and the Pacific, this figure rises to 80%.

To return to the MNM's election promise, would the payment of a wage by the state to homemakers redress the situation? This raises the tricky question of how this constituency is to be defined. Is it to be only women who are full-time homemakers? Many women earning a wage outside the home also perform the bulk of household work. On what ground are they to be excluded? What about women workers who earn an income from home by stitching clothes, selling cooked meals or are engaged in petty trade? They often self-identify as 'housewives' given the meagre and variable wages they earn and periods of seasonal unemployment. These are issues that cannot be easily resolved. It would be better to strengthen the demand for a universal basic income for income-poor households and make sure that the cash transfer to the family reaches women directly, whether or not they combine household work with paid work.

**Struggle for legislation**

However, the demand that the state recognise housework is significant and its radical core must not be missed, as the historical experience of the women's movement shows us. In this context, it is worth mentioning that an important campaign on the question of household labour has been taking place in India. This is the ongoing struggle for national legislation for domestic workers. These are predominantly women who perform 'women's work' but in other people's homes.

They are, therefore, uniquely positioned to make this work visible and demand that its conditions be regulated, minimum wages guaranteed, and the workers' status and rights protected. The question of how to measure and account for the value of housework has been seriously addressed by women domestic workers and their trade unions in Tamil Nadu and elsewhere. Their demands include an hourly minimum wage, a weekly day-off, an annual bonus and the protection of their bodily autonomy in the workspace. This is an agenda that all parties, and not just the MNM, could incorporate in their election manifestos, should they take seriously the mandate of 'recognizing and monetizing' housework. If domestic workers emerge as a strong force that succeeds in asserting the dignity of housework and making it a visible and valued form of labour, this can only be a good thing for all women performing housework in the long run.

Kalpana Karunakaran teaches in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Madras. The views expressed are personal.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY Balancing acts

Reappraising the life of four former Prime Ministers of India through biographies

NISTULA HEBBAR

The recently concluded winter session of Parliament took place not just amid a fierce confrontation between the Government and the Opposition, but also in the shadow of the new under-construction Parliament building. The reimaging of the Central Vista and much of Lutyen's Delhi is being seen not as a manifestation of a particular architectural expression but as a sign of changed power structures in India's Durbar city, and much is being written, good and bad, about this proposed disruption. Political disruptions, however, are not just etched in stone, sometimes the etching in stone is an afterthought.

Biographies of former Prime Ministers, Indira Gandhi, V.P. Singh, H.D. Deve Gowda and Atal Bihari Vajpayee are demonstrative of this. It has been a while since Katherine Frank's well-regarded biography of late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, *Indira: The Life of Indira Nehru Gandhi*, came out, but the appeal of the book hasn't dimmed in the way that it illuminates both the strength of Mrs. Gandhi's politics but also her inner world, letters to friends, and what it revealed during crucial moments of her life. Especially illuminating are the chapters dealing with the Emergency and some attempts to explain one of the greatest mysteries of Indian politics – what prompted her to impose and then remove the draconian measure.

Debashish Mukerji's *The Disruptor: How Vishwanath Pratap Singh Shook India* is a book that tries, in the author's own words, to redress the neglect of history writers over the legacy of perhaps India's most disruptive of prime ministers. The forces unleashed by Mr. Singh, in his all too brief stint at the PMO, brought Mandal politics to the fore in India and defined the coming decades of Indian politics. The biography, detailed and well-researched, is sympathetic but not starry eyed and clearly sets out the power politics between V.P. Singh and his deputy Devi Lal as being one of the triggers for the timing of the announcement of the implementation of the Mandal Commission recommendations. The announcement changed the contours of Indian politics, so much so that in the whole of north India, where once upper caste chief ministers held sway, backward community leaders now occupy pole positions.

Nearly six years after V.P. Singh, India's first OBC Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda was sworn in to head a fragile coalition of like-minded parties called the United Front government. If V.P. Singh's legacy was overlooked because he suited neither the Congress nor the BJP, Mr. Gowda suffered from the tyranny of distance between the north and the south. An exhaustive biography of Mr. Gowda, *Furrows in a Field: The Unexplored Life of H.D. Deve Gowda*, by journalist Sugata Srinivasaraju goes into not just his early life and political rise but also his outsider status in Delhi despite being Prime Minister. Mr. Gowda's eye problems, which made him sensitive to bright light and often had him shut them while listening to others, was forever branded as a habit of nodding off to sleep at inappropriate times, whereas in his very short term as Prime Minister he tackled tough issues facing the country including restarting the political process in Jammu and Kashmir. The book quotes the April 11, 1997 speech by Saifuddin Soz participating in the debate on the motion of confidence on the Gowda government: "I want to tell you one thing, which only I can tell you. The Prime Minister created a situation of hope in Jammu and Kashmir State. He went to Jammu and Kashmir four times. For six years nobody went to Kashmir."

Preceding and succeeding Mr. Gowda was late Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. An examination of his prime ministerial tenure in *Vajpayee: The Years That Changed India* by former bureaucrat Shakti Sinha, who served under him, is an intimate look at the balancing act of the first coalition government that survived its full tenure and the challenges of the Kargil War, the hijacking of IC-814, economic sanctions by the United States following India testing a nuclear device at Pokhran all the while heading this multi-party government.

These books look beyond the fixed images of these Prime Ministers to examine their life, work and public impact minutely, which does much more than etchings in stone.

## THE DAILY QUIZ

Humans have a special relationship with cats. A quiz on the bigger members of the cat family.

1 The IUCN recognises two tiger subspecies, commonly called the continental tiger and the Sunda island tiger. In which Asian location are all the remaining wild island tigers currently found?

2 The accepted collective nouns for which of the big cats are 'leap' and 'coalition'?

3 The black panther is a melanistic colour variant of which two big cats?

4 Name the four big cats of the genus *Panthera* that has a true roar.

5 Which big cat holds the Guinness World Record for the 'mammal with the most names' with 40 in English alone?

6 Which Indian national park is the last refuge for the remaining wild Asiatic lions?

7 The world's largest wild cat is 'Panthera tigris altaica'. What is its common name?



◀ Name this cat native to Africa that has the longest legs of any cat relative to its body size. ■ WIKIPEDIA

Please send in your answers to the [dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in](mailto:dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in)

Answers to the previous day's daily quiz:  
1.1989, 2.Irrawaddy, 3.Bagan, 4.Rohingya Muslims, 5.Sprinkling water on each other, 6.National League for Democracy, 7.Usha Narayanan, 8.U Thant.

Early Birds: Pratibha Lohiyal| Hemant Khinchil Mohd. Kiron Karim| Pooja Khyali| Mahmood Lebbai