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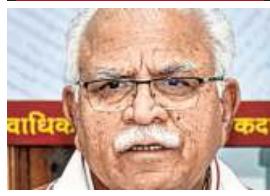
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IN BRIEF



CPI(M): nix move against namaz in public places

NEW DELHI
Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal is denying basic constitutional rights to one section of Indian citizens, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) said, calling his remarks against namaz in public spaces "extremely objectionable".
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North MCD workers to protest from tomorrow

NEW DELHI
Workers under various civic body unions have called for protests from Monday against the North Delhi Municipal Corporation over the issue of non-payment of salaries, dearness allowance and other pending dues.
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India sends medical relief to Afghanistan

New Delhi joins humanitarian effort amid health crisis

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
NEW DELHI

In a significant gesture, India on Saturday supplied the first consignment of materials as part of humanitarian assistance to help the Taliban-ruled Afghanistan deal with the deteriorating health situation in the country.

India has not recognised the Taliban administration in Afghanistan and has urged the international community to proceed cautiously in dealing with the Taliban because of uncertain security guarantees and the outfit's rigid position on human rights-related issues.

"In view of the challenging humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, the Government of India has dispatched humanitarian assistance consisting of medical supplies on the return flight today. These medicines will be handed over to the representatives of the World Health Organization (WHO) in Kabul and will be administered at the Indira Gandhi Children Hospital, Kabul," a press release from the Ministry of External Affairs announced.

The consignment consisting of medicines and injections were sent by a special



'Gift from Indians': Medical relief material being loaded on a Kabul-bound aircraft in New Delhi. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Kam Air flight that had flown in with 10 Indians and 94 Afghan minority community members on Friday, the Ministry of External Affairs said.

Marked as a gift
The boxes carrying the items were marked with stickers bearing the words – "Gift from the People of India to the People of Afghanistan". With Saturday's move, India joined countries such as Iran, Qatar, the UAE, Turkmenistan and Pakistan that have sent humanitarian support to Taliban-ruled Afghanistan.

In a speech on September 13, External Affairs Minister

S. Jaishankar had sought "unimpeded, unrestricted and direct access to Afghanistan" for ensuring supply of humanitarian aid to the general Afghan population who are dealing with a harsh winter and a breakdown in medical supplies. Help is also required for the large number of internally displaced persons living in temporary and unsafe shelters.

Since August, the Taliban regime has been seeking international help to operate the Kabul airport and to supply essential medicines to hospitals in the country.

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Delhi records second case of Omicron

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

A 35-year-old man with travel history to Zimbabwe and South Africa has tested positive for Omicron, becoming the second patient to contract the new variant of COVID-19 in Delhi, sources said on Saturday.

He has been admitted to LNJP Hospital and is now only experiencing weakness, the sources added.

The patient returned to India from Zimbabwe and had even travelled to South Africa. Sources said he was fully vaccinated. The man belongs to Andhra Pradesh and was admitted to the hospital on December 5.

LNJP Hospital has been designated for treatment of patients infected with the Omicron variant. The hospital currently has 35 patients. Till Friday night, there were 31 patients admitted to the hospital, while four patients were brought in on Saturday, according to sources.

Last week, a 37-year-old fully vaccinated man who arrived in Delhi from Tanzania became the first patient of Omicron in the national Capital.

The patient, a resident of Ranchi, had travelled from Tanzania to Doha and from there to Delhi on a Qatar Airways flight on December 2. He stayed in Johannesburg, South Africa, for a week. The patient had mild symptoms.

52 new COVID-19 cases
Meanwhile, Delhi recorded zero deaths due to COVID-19 and 52 fresh cases in a day, with a positivity rate of 0.09%, according to data shared by the city health department on Saturday.

The total number of cases reported in Delhi so far stands at 14,41,662. Over 14.16 lakh patients have recovered from the infection.

Interrogation on
"We are interrogating the man and hope to recover the other stolen items," Mr. Roushan said.

WEEKEND CURBS IMPOSED IN MUMBAI ▶ PAGE 8

City lights



Standing tall: Work in progress on the new secretariat complex in Hyderabad with the Buddha statue illuminated in pink on the Hussainsagar lake in the foreground on Saturday. ■ NAGARA GOPAL

Hand of god: Diego Maradona's stolen Hublot watch recovered

Assam man had brought it from Dubai

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

The Assam police have recovered a limited edition Hublot watch that belonged to football legend Diego Armando Maradona.

The police in eastern Assam's Sivasagar district retrieved it from the house of one Wazid Hussain during an operation at 4 a.m. on Saturday.

Hussain was not at home in Sivasagar town. The police caught him from his in-laws' house in the adjoining Charaideo district later.



Diego Maradona's limited edition Hublot watch.

■ TWITTER/@HIMANTABISWA

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, taking to Twitter, said the recovery of the "heritage" watch was an outcome of international cooperation between the Dubai and the Assam police through a

Central law enforcement agency.

"According to the information received from the Dubai police, Hussain once worked at the place Maradona used to stay in Dubai and had stolen a box containing many of his belongings," Sivasagar's Superintendent of Police Rakesh Roushan told *The Hindu*.

"The watch was among the footballer's belongings Hussain had taken away before returning to India in August 2020," he said.

Interrogation on
"We are interrogating the man and hope to recover the other stolen items," Mr. Roushan said.

WEEKEND CURBS IMPOSED IN MUMBAI ▶ PAGE 8

U.S. ban on para unit stuns Dhaka

Rapid Action Battalion accused of rights violations

SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

Bangladesh reacted sharply to the U.S. Treasury's decision to sanction a special military and police task force for alleged human rights violations. Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen has summoned U.S. Ambassador to Dhaka Earl Miller to protest against the actions.

The decision by the U.S. to ban the Rapid Action Battal-

American prescription

U.S. imposed sanctions against Bangladesh's Rapid Action Battalion on Friday, International Human Rights Day, for alleged human rights abuses

- U.S. Treasury Department designated RAB for 'serious rights abuses'
- U.S. also designated six current and former officials and placed visa ban on former DG Benazir Ahmad

■ Bangladesh on Saturday summoned U.S. envoy to protest sanctions against its top security officers

lion, came as a shock to the Sheikh Hasina Government, just days before its planned celebrations for the 50th anniversary of its Liberation Day, where President Ram Nath Kovind will represent India.

"The Foreign Secretary [Mr. Momen] regretted that the U.S. decided to undermine an agency of Government that had been on the forefront of combating terrorism, drug trafficking and other heinous transnational crimes that were considered to be shared priorities with successive U.S. administrations," a Government statement said. It added that the sanctions were imposed "unilaterally" and without any "prior intimation".

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SANCTIONS ON OTHERS ▶ PAGE 9

Farmers bid adieu to Singhu protest site

Protesters clean up before heading home

HEMANI BHANDARI
NEW DELHI

On the 380th day of their protest, farmers camping on Delhi's borders left for their homes with much fanfare – just the way they had reached here on November 26 last year.

The stage at Singhu border, which had become a platform for farmer leaders and speakers to make their voices heard, was dismantled on Saturday morning.

The Kundli-Manesar-Palwal Expressway was abuzz with activity since early Saturday with trucks, trolleys and cars lined up for the journey, most of them decorated with flowers and balloons.

A fully decorated yellow bus left for Mohali with protesters who had come to Singhu in the first week of December last year.

The farmers sang and danced to drums and ensured that everyone crossing the street danced with them.

"We have won and now



Mission accomplished: Farmers prepare to leave Singhu border on Saturday morning after their year-long protest against the farm laws was called off. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

we are going. This happiness must be shared," said 22-year-old Balwinder Saini.

Iron rods removed

A few metres away from the protest site from KMP Expressway, Sardar Budh Singh, 68, from Ludhiana was busy pulling out iron rods which the farmers had installed on the road to erect their tents. "If bikers hit these iron rods, they would

get hurt very badly. At night, they might not even see them. We are removing them so that no inconvenience is caused to the people," Mr. Budh said.

He added that after digging up the rods, they will quickly fill up the craters. "Jaise aaye they, vaise hi jayenge (We will leave the place the way we were welcomed)."

Many of the protesters

cleaned up the sites before leaving. "There was a lot of waste here, especially disposables, which had to be removed. We cleaned up the place because we didn't want the blame that we left a mess behind," said Malkit Singh from Fatehgarh Sahib.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 6

SEE ALSO ▶ PAGE 3

MSP IS KEY TO DIVERSIFY CROPS: FARMERS ▶ PAGE 8

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IN BRIEF
DJB suspends 10 workers over 'erroneous' readings

NEW DELHI
The Delhi Jal Board on Saturday said that 10 employees were suspended and services of 20 outsourced workers were terminated in connection with erroneous water meter readings. An FIR has also been ordered on all the persons involved, the DJB said. The action was taken after receiving complaints of faulty water meter readings.

Elderly woman murdered inside house

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

A 79-year-old woman was found dead inside her house on Saturday in central Delhi's Old Rajinder Nagar area, police said.

The deceased has been identified as Kusum Singhal, they said, adding that she was living alone. Singhal had two daughters—one lives in south Delhi and the other in Switzerland.

"It seems to be a friendly entry. She was hit on the head with a brick. The household items were found dispersed. It's not clear if the accused robbed anything," the police said.

Salary non-payment: North MCD workers to protest from tomorrow

Talks between employees' union and civic body over dues remain inconclusive

**STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI**

Workers under various civic body unions have called for protests, from Monday, against the North Delhi Municipal Corporation over the issue of non-payment of salaries, dearness allowance (DA) and other pending dues.

The Confederation of Municipal Corporation of Delhi Employees Union (CMCDEU) said protests will be held outside the North MCD headquarters from Monday after negotiations between the Union and the BJP-led civic body, over the payment of salaries and dues, drew no conclusion on Friday.

Indefinite strike warning
"No written assurance was given by the North MCD officials regarding the payment of salaries. We will hold protests starting Monday and we will observe the situation on a daily basis. If the civic body still remains adamant, we will go on an indefinite strike."

A.P. Khan, convener of CMCDEU, added that the Union served as an umbrella body for employees under the civic bodies. Kuldeep Singh Khatri, president of Shikshak Nay Manch, an association of teachers under the North MCD, said that "close to 3,000" teachers will protest outside the BJP's national office if their salaries are not paid by Monday.

"Previously, 2,500 teachers had protested outside the BJP's Delhi office over the non-payment of salaries. No leader came to speak with us, which shows that they have no concern for us. This, despite 7,000 teachers stepping away from the online teaching duties for 13 days and counting. Our salaries have been pending for close to

four months now and our DA has not been paid since July," said Mr. Khatri.

Simultaneously, category C and D workers at hospitals under the North civic body have also called for a 24-hour strike starting from Monday. "Lab technicians, sweepers and other workers from hospitals under the North MCD, including Hindu Rao and Kasturbha Hospital, will be part of the 24-hour strike. Nurses from Girdhari Lal Hospital will also join us," said Vinod Kumar Parcha, the president of the Hospital Employees' Union, adding that salaries were last paid for the month of October.

No funds'

"We tried convincing the CMCDEU representatives and mentioned that the money for the salaries will come soon but they refused. A total of ₹84 crore is yet to be paid to us by the Delhi Government for September. How can we commit to paying the salaries?" asked North MCD's Standing Committee Chairman Jogi Ram Jain.

North MCD's Leader of House Chhail Bihari Goswami said the civic body officials had "approached the Ministry of Finance" to discuss a possible solution to the fund crunch. "We were assured by the Ministry that some decision will be taken to help us with the ongoing situation. Currently, we have been using all our incoming revenues to pay salaries and we have assured the workers that there will be no disruption in payments from January."

Former North MCD Mayor Jai Prakash said the Delhi Government's "delay in sanctioning the funds" was the key reason behind the delay. "Even during my tenure last year, there was a backlog of ₹600 crore, which was not assigned to us because the Delhi Government cited COVID-19 as the reason... This year, there's a backlog of ₹900 crore, which the Delhi Government is yet to sanction to the North MCD. This is because the civic body elections are nearing and they (AAP) want to cause a ruckus by withholding the funds."

Civic body selling school plot much below market price, alleges Atishi

No sale, only joint lease agreement with private party: BJP

**STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI**

The Aam Aadmi Party on Saturday said the BJP-governed North Delhi Municipal Corporation is planning to sell a primary school in Shalimar Bagh and the BJP is hell bent on ruining their lives".

AP leader Atishi said that after looting the money of the poor, the BJP was now robbing their children's right to education by selling corporation-run schools.

She said the school was being auctioned at a rate way below the market price. She added that the "Delhi Government is working day and night to educate children and the BJP is hell bent on ruining their lives".

"The 2,800-sq.m plot belonging to the MCD primary school in Shalimar Bagh is being sold off at ₹126 crore. If we estimate its worth in terms of commercial parking rates, it's ₹500 crore. That is how much it should be sold for," Ms. Atishi said.

Dismissing Ms. Atishi's allegations as "baseless and concocted", Delhi BJP spokesperson Shanker Kapoor said: "The North MCD is not selling the plot but has gone for a joint lease agreement with a private party for construction of 354 vehicles parking. Under the agreement, North MCD will get ₹126 crore and half share in constructed car parking."

'Govt. should accept pollution mostly due to internal reasons'

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI**

The BJP on Saturday said the time has come for the Delhi Government to accept that the reasons behind most of the pollution in the Capital were internal.

Leader of the Opposition in the Delhi Assembly Rambir Singh Bidhuri referred to Centre for Science and Environment director general Sunita Narain to the effect

that a Singapore-like transport system should be implemented in Delhi which would in effect make it difficult for people to keep personal vehicles. "Till the time public transport is not accessible to the public, the people of Delhi will continue to be forced to travel in personal vehicles. In such conditions, it is impossible to control pollution," Mr. Bidhuri said.

EDMC builds kitchen gardens in 30 schools

**STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI**

East Delhi Municipal Corporation Commissioner Vikas Anand on Saturday said the civic body has built kitchen gardens in 30 schools under its jurisdiction.

He said that the produce from these gardens will be used for the mid-day meals provided to the students at the civic body's schools.

KEA
KARNATAKA EXAMINATIONS AUTHORITY
Samipre Road, 18th Cross, Malleshwaram, Bangalore-560 012 Phone: 080-23 460 460 (5 Lines)
Fax: 080-23461576 e-mail: keauthority@nic.in Website: http://kea.kar.nic.in

No.: ED/KEA/ADMN/CR- 26 /2021 Date: 10-12-2021

NOTIFICATION

Inviting applications online for Admission to MBBS and BDS courses for the year 2021-22 in the State of Karnataka and for admission to AYUSH courses to Karnataka Candidates

1. Government vide letter No. MED 173 RGU 2021 dated 09-12-2021 has directed KEA to commence the process of inviting applications online and conduct document verification for admission to UG Medical and Dental courses for the year 2021-22 in the State of Karnataka.

2. Accordingly, as per the directions of the Government, KEA will be inviting applications online for admissions to Medical and Dental courses for the year 2021-22. The candidates who have scored more than or equal to the prescribed minimum score in UGNEET-2021 only are eligible to register and apply online for UG Medical and Dental courses for the year 2021-22.

3. Karnataka candidates can also apply for Government share of AYUSH seats. Non-Karnataka candidates are not eligible for AYUSH admissions through KEA.

4. Non-Karnataka candidates will not be eligible for reservation. Hence, in the UGNEET-2021 examination, if they have scored the required minimum 50th percentile or above, fixed for 'GENERAL (UR)' category as per the qualifying criteria, then only they are eligible to register for admissions through KEA or for any other seats in the State of Karnataka. Please note that SC/ST/OBC eligibility criteria are applicable to Karnataka SC/ST/OBC candidates only.

5. Before registering through online for admission to Medical and Dental courses in the state of Karnataka, applicants are hereby informed to read the Information Bulletin UGNEET-2021 and understand the eligibility conditions, classification of seats (different types of category of seats) and eligibility to claim such seats which are hosted on the KEA Website <http://kea.kar.nic.in> for the information of the candidates.

6. The interested eligible candidates can register through online & enter the details online from 2.00 pm on 13-12-2021 to 17-12-2021 upto 11.59 pm by selecting the appropriate link in the KEA Website. Last date to pay the registration fees is 18-12-2021 before 5.30 pm.

7. Registration fee, schedule for verification of documents, original documents to be produced for verification and other details will be hosted on the KEA Website. Interested eligible candidates can register and apply online and appear for document verification as per the schedule.

ENTRY OF UGNEET-2021 ROLL NUMBER BY KARNATAKA CANDIDATES WHO HAVE ALREADY VERIFIED THEIR DOCUMENTS

The candidates who have already registered for CET-2021 and completed the document verification, have to enter their correct UGNEET-2021 Roll Number from 2.00 pm on 13-12-2021 to 17-12-2021 upto 11.59 pm through the online link enabled in KEA Web-portal to become eligible for admission to Medical, Dental and AYUSH courses. However, such candidates need not pay the registration fee once again. Further, they should check the NEET Roll number printed on the Application Form after entering the UGNEET – 2021 Roll Number.

• Candidates, who have assigned ranks in CET-2021 and completed their document verification as per CET-2006 Admission Rules, and those who are not claiming any additional reservation need not appear for verification of documents once again for Medical / Dental / AYUSH courses. But they have to download the UGNEET-2021 Verification slip from KEA portal on the specified dates to become eligible for admission to Medical / Dental / AYUSH courses.

• However, if any such candidate is eligible to claim reservation as per Government of Karnataka norms or under Linguistic Minority / Religious Minority / NRI WARD or candidates eligible to claim seats under Category-2 to Category-8 in St. John Medical College, Bangalore, they have to claim such reservations in the online application form and they have to appear for document verification with all the relevant original certificates / documents.

INSTRUCTIONS TO NON-KARNATAKA CANDIDATES

Non-Karnataka candidates who have qualified in UGNEET 2021, they have to first register through online in KEA Web-portal, enter all the details, and pay the registration fee. Further they have to enter the 12th standard marks details and upload in PDF format in the same web portal. They need not appear for verification of documents. However, OCI / PIO / NRI / Foreign Nationals and if any non-Karnataka candidates eligible to claim NRI Ward, Religious Minority or eligible to claim under category-2 to category-8 in St. John Medical College, Bangalore, then they have to appear for verification of documents at KEA, Bangalore on the specified dates.

8. Government in their letter No. HFW 124 RGU Bangalore, dated 28-06-2017, have directed KEA to conduct Common Counselling for admission to UG Medical and Dental courses for all Government, Private (Including Minority), NRI and Others seats in the State of Karnataka.

9. Centralised and Combined Counseling for the seats to be notified by the Karnataka State Government, in Government, COMED-K, KRLMPCA, AMPCK institutions, the admissions will be as per the Karnataka Selection of Candidates for Admission to Government Seats in Professional Educational Institutions Rules, 2006 (in short Rules) as amended from time to time and as per the guidelines of MCI / DCI / Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, GOI / Government of India / Medical Education, Karnataka / Director Medical Education, Karnataka / Entrance Test Committee.

10. Mere qualifying in UGNEET-2021 does not confer any right on the candidate unless the candidate fulfills eligibility conditions / submission of certificates. Further, only the candidates who complete the registration process including document verification are eligible for Medical / Dental seats in Government / Private Colleges in Karnataka. Registered but not verified / Unregistered candidates will not be allowed for any admission either through KEA or by the College, as after the mop-up round, the list of registered and verified but un-allotted candidates will be sent by KEA to colleges to fill-up vacant seats, if any. (As per GOI instructions)

11. For more details regarding academic eligibility / updates please visit KEA Website <http://kea.kar.nic.in>

NOTE: All the candidates who have qualified in UGNEET-2021 are hereby advised to register and complete the document verification process to become eligible for admission to Medical / Dental Courses in the State of Karnataka.

DIPR/DDU/JA/2325/2021-22

STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19, NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE.

Sd/- (S. RAMYA IAS), Executive Director.

FOOD SPOT

RAHUL VERMA

I was mesmerised by the sight - on television - of a Chinese chef putting together a bowl of soup. A cauldron of chicken broth was bubbling on the stove. Noodles bobbed in boiling water elsewhere. He put some broth in the bowl, topped it with noodles and thinly sliced pork, and then garnished it with chopped green scallions.

He handed the steaming bowl of soup to the salivating diner, and I reached for the phone. I looked for Chinese eateries in east Delhi, and found a promising one. Called Hudson Chopsticks, it had (apart from mains and appetisers) various kinds of soups on the menu and included the one that I was yearning for: noodle-filled thukpa.

It was not just the food show, the weather too had set the mood for some bone-warming soup. We asked for three kinds - chicken thukpa momo soup (₹189), chicken hot and sour (₹179) and clear chicken soup (₹179). With that, we asked for steamed chicken momos (₹239) and chicken drums of heaven

(₹329). The food arrived in well-packed containers and I had quite a fulfilling dinner.

Keep it spicy

I started with the momos. Large in size and six to a plate, the momos were soft and had been stuffed well with minced chicken. The chicken was just mildly spiced, which was good, for the drums of heaven had been coated with a hot chilli sauce and were deliciously spicy. I then moved to what I had been dreaming of - the thukpa.

This is a Tibetan soup dish that I grew immensely fond of back in those days when we used to visit a food hub called Tib Dhabs in north Delhi. Thukpa or thupka - a huge bowl of soup with noodles, shredded chicken and all kinds of greens

- used to fill us up and cost just a few rupees those days.

Hudson's thukpa was rather good. It had two juicy momos in it, some greens and a lot of noodles. It was hot and satisfying. I then tried out the clear soup and found it exceptionally good. The soup, light and fragrant, had thick slices of chicken in it, and various kinds of crunchy veggies - from broccoli and Chinese cabbage to carrots, baby corn and mushrooms. I had a spoonful of the hot and sour soup, just to taste it, and found it deliciously spicy.

As the temperature dips, I see myself ordering (and perhaps even preparing) soups to warm the body and soul. After all, if winter be here, can the soups be far behind?



Soup for the soul

Comfort food: Chicken momo thukpa, hot and sour (left) and clear chicken soup (right) from Hudson Chopsticks.

Executive Engineer Drinking Water & Sanitation Division Jamtara

प्रधान मंत्री - १

e-Procurement Notice

Tender no:- DWSD/EE/JAMTARA - 15/DWSD/JMT/2021-22

Dated-10/12/2021

S. No	Particulars of the work	Estimated Cost (Lacs)	Cost of document/tender fee (In Rs)	Earliest money (Lacs)	Bid Validity	Time of Completion of work (days)
1	Name of the Work	5	6	7	8	9
2	Estimated Cost	Rs 168040000.00 (Rs Sixteen Crore Eighty Lakh Forty thousand) only	1000/-		180 Days	

JAL SHAKTI, PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING, DEPARTMENT.

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

e- Nit No. 105 OF 2021-22, Dated:08-12-2021

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of UJK, Chief Engineer Jai Shakti (PHE) Department, Kashimir invites e-tenders from reputed and resourceful Contractors/ Firms/Companies/Join Venture of all classes registered in JKPWD/CPWD/Railways or any other state Government for "Empanelment of eligible contractors at Provincial level and fixing of item rates for District Anantnag (Qazigund) Plain Lift Zone Group-4 for execution of Jai Jeewan Mission (JJM) works", details of which are given below. The bidding process shall be completed online in two covers viz. Cover 1st 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.

I	Particulars of the work	Estimated Cost (Lacs)	Cost of document/tender fee (In Rs)	Earliest money (Lacs)	Bid Validity	Time of Completion of work (days)
1	Empanelment of eligible contractors at Provincial level and fixing of item rates for Anantnag District (Qazigund Division) geographically different zone for execution of Jai Jeewan Mission (JJM) works. These works are broadly consisting of:- a. Construction of water supply schemes by way of filtration plants, pump houses, service reservoir, overhead tanks, laying of distribution mains/Electro/Mechanical works. b. Construction of Plain Lift Zone Group-4 works of District Anantnag (Qazigund) Plain Lift Zone Group-4 works.	Above 100 Lacs upto 300 Lacs	0.75	120		
2	Pre-qualification	7	8	9		

Position of funds: Approved under Jai Jeewan Mission (JJM)
The tender inviting authority is Chief Engineer, Kashimir Jai Shakti (PHE) Department. The awarding authority is District Jeewan 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 pre-qualification 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.

Timings	
DELHI	
SUNDAY, DEC. 12	
RISE 07:05	SET 17:26
RISE 13:28	SET 00:50
MONDAY, DEC. 13	
RISE 07:05	SET 17:26
RISE 13:57	SET 01:46
TUESDAY, DEC. 14	
RISE 07:06	SET 17:27
RISE 14:26	SET 02:39

Delhi Weather max min
Delhi City 24 08
Safdarjung 24 08
Palam 22 11

Delhi Palam Today
23°C A dry weather to continue. Day will be pleasant with cool breeze. Night will be slight cold and hazy. Shallow fog during morning.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
23°C The weather will be dry. A slight cold morning turns pleasant day with cool breeze. Night will be slight cold and hazy.

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THE HINDU
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Celebrations break out as farmers from Punjab, Haryana reach home

Rousing welcome for them with sweets, garlands at several points along highways

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CHANDIGARH



Jubilant mood: Farmers returning home after their year-long agitation against the farm laws, in Patiala on Saturday. •PTI

Families of farmers along with fellow villagers at many places on the Delhi-Karnal-Ambala and Delhi-Hisar national highways along with other State highways en route were welcoming and honouring the peasants coming in tractor trolleys with garlands, ladoos, barfi and other sweets.

Villagers and others who supported the farmers' agitation carrying flags of farmers' organisations showered petals as they assembled along the highways to welcome them.

Farmer leader Balbir Singh Rajewal was given a warm welcome at the Shambhu border upon his return and he congratulated the farmers for their "victory." I congratulate all the Punjabis and the countrymen. A big battle has been won... Also thanks to those who supported it (agitation)," said Mr. Rajewal while talking to reporters.

"We have won the morcha... the Central government was forced to bow down," he said. A family came all the way from Chandigarh to welcome farmers near Singhu on the Delhi-Haryana border.

Result of penance'
"We are elated and our happiness cannot be described in words. It (the victory) was the result of *tapasya* (penance) of farmers who faced all sorts of hardships, including harsh

weather conditions," said a Chandigarh resident, who actively supported the farmers' stir.

Slow traffic

Because of the large convoy of tractor trolleys and other vehicles, vehicular traffic slowed down at many places on Delhi-Ambala and Delhi-Rohtak national highways. Some elated farmers, especially youth and women, performed 'bhanga' to the beats of 'dhol' as they were on their way back to their homes in Punjab and Haryana.

At Kharana near Punjab, villagers assembled in large numbers to welcome the agitators and also burst fire-crackers amid a celebratory mood.

Preparations to welcome farmers were made at different toll plazas too and other places along the national highways.

Kerala CM should make stance on adoption row clear: Medha

'What happened to Anupama was unjust, unjustifiable'

STAFF REPORTER
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM



Social activist Medha Patkar with Anupama and B. Ajit Kumar in Thiruvananthapuram on Saturday. •

'Saddening incident'

The incident, she said, was very saddening. Government agencies should function within the framework of constitutional and legal rights - those of the parents and the rights of the child. It was necessary that agencies do their job of protecting both mother and child. That

had not happened. "But she has won the battle... Adoption could not be formalised," Ms. Patkar said.

Move ahead in life'
"Whatever Anupama has faced is criminal in a way. One does not expect this of any parent," she said. Ms. Patkar who met Anupama at YMCA urged her not to feel troubled, raise her son well, and move ahead with her life.

Asked about the Kerala Women's Commission, Ms. Anupama told Ms. Patkar that apart from taking her statement, the commission had not intervened in the matter.

YMCAs urged her not to feel troubled, raise her son well, and move ahead with her life.

Asked about the Kerala Women's Commission, Ms. Anupama told Ms. Patkar that apart from taking her statement, the commission had not intervened in the matter.

The method he developed is unique and it was later selected for the Rural Innovators Meet (RIM) 2021, an annual programme conducted by the Kerala State Council for Science, Technology and Environment (KSCSTE).

Since pepper plants have long life, nursery pots and polythene bags were ruled out and a customised method similar to drip irrigation was installed. Big plastic drums were cut into two and filled with a mixture of tri-

dung, neem cake, coir pith compost, bone meal and soil treated with limestone powder.

Steel wire mesh was cut into cylinders and covered with green net to make poles for the runner shoots and they too were filled with the same mixture.

"Usually pepper vines cling to trees or trellises with adventitious roots. But when we use PVC pipes or concrete poles, the grip will be very weak. Since our poles are filled with the soil-ma-

HC stays notices to ED officers by Bengal police

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has stayed the two notices issued to the Enforcement Directorate's (ED) officers by the West Bengal Police pursuant to an FIR lodged by Tinamool MP Abhishek Banerjee.

The court said there was no merit in the preliminary objection raised by the police on the maintainability of the petition filed by the ED and its three officers.

"It is necessary to consider the question of interim relief. It is a settled position of law that the three conditions are required to be established for grant of any interim relief: a strong *prima facie* case, balance of convenience and irreparable injury to the petitioner. In view of the discussions hereinabove, I find that the present case is a fit case for grant of ad-interim relief."

'Stan Swamy was fully committed to human rights'

Case against him a violation of his rights: kin

SONAM SAIGAL
MUMBAI

Father Stan Swamy, arrested for his alleged role in the Elgar Parishad rally in Pune, and who was in jail for a long time before his death in July this year, was fully committed to human rights. It is therefore unfortunate and ironical that the entire case against him is a violation of his human rights and those of others, said Father Frazer Mascarenhas, former principal of St Xavier's College, Mumbai, and next of kin of Father Stan Swamy.

In an interaction with *The Hindu* on International Human Rights Day, Father Frazer said, "Father Stan, 84,

had faced a difficult time due to ill-treatment [in jail], so he knew what others were going through. He was really worried about those [co-accused] in Taloja jail and the ladies in Byculla jail. He would have been very happy to know that Sudha [Bharadwaj] is out on bail."

Father Frazer said, "At a meeting in the COVID ICU, I told him he has COVID and he said, 'I had expected that, because I was in Taloja jail hospital, which is a misnomer because all they gave there was paracetamol'.

And then he laughed. He said 'the hospital only has Ayurvedic doctors, no allopathic doctor'."

Stormy winter session ahead for Karnataka Assembly in Belagavi

Poll results of Legislative Council will be announced

B.S. SATISH KUMAR
BELAGAVI

The winter session of the State legislature, being held after three years in the border city of Belagavi from Monday, is expected to generate heat as allegations of a bitcoin scam, a complaint made to the Prime Minister's Office by a contractors' association that people's representatives and bureaucracy demand 40% commission to award contracts and clear bills, and delay in payment of compensation to flood victims have given adequate ammunition to the Opposition.

There is also anger building up among farmers' organisations over several issues. The Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha has declared that it

will lay siege to Suvarna Vidhana Soudha, the venue of the session, demanding statutory status to the Minimum Support Price for farm produce.

But what can be more stormy is the reported effort by the Government to set the stage for tabling an anti-conversion Bill. Though there are indications of the Government not tabling the Bill immediately, it appears that it will test the waters when a private member's Bill in this regard would be tabled in the Upper House.

Results of the just-concluded elections to the 25 seats of the Legislative Council will also be announced on December 14, a day after the start of the session.

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Yogendra Yadav equates protest sites with Char Dham

These places will forever be etched in the hearts of people'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Swaraj India president Yogendra Yadav on Saturday equated the four venues at Delhi's borders, where farmers were protesting for over a year against the Centre's farm laws, with Char Dham, four pilgrimage sites for Hindus.

Addressing a gathering at the Ghazipur border, Mr. Yadav said this is not a day for speeches, adding that whatever the farmers had said, they have done it.

"Now, we will not speak but books and history will speak. The entire nation will speak. Today is just a day to remember that for the last one year, the meaning of Char Dham has changed in our country. People from Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu used to come and say that they wanted to do a yatra of four places - the Singhu border, the Tikri border,

der, the Ghazipur border and the Shahjahanpur border.... These [protest sites] had become Char Dham for the country," he said.

Although the protesting farmers will vacate these sites in two-three days, the names of these places will forever be etched in the hearts of people, Mr. Yadav said.

"When people ask me what have you gained from this and what are you taking back home, I respond saying the farmers of the country have got their lost self-respect back," Mr. Yadav said.

der, the Ghazipur border and the Shahjahanpur border.... These [protest sites] had become Char Dham for the country," he said.

brutal killings of Lakhimpur Kheri," said Mr. Yadav.

He credited Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) leader Rakshesh Tikait for ensuring that the protest does not die down.

"When people ask me what have you gained from this and what are you taking back home, I respond saying the farmers of the country have got their lost self-respect back," Mr. Yadav said.

nure mix, the roots will grow stronger. I planted the saplings in May 2020 and now they are ready for harvest."



Pastor P.D. Yohannan at his terrace garden in Kottarakara.

Yield all through year
Pastor Yohannan adds that pepper vines growing on trees take more time to develop berries.

"In this method we will get yield throughout the year and after three years I am expecting 3 to 4 kg of pepper from each plant," he says. At present his garden has 48 plants and three varieties that include the popular Karimunda, Panniyur 2 and 7.

Pastor Yohannan says he plans to continue farming along with his duty and the schedule will be arranged accordingly.

"Recently, teams from Kerala Agricultural University, Thrissur, and the Pepper Research Station, Panniyur, visited my garden. I was given Panniyur 1, 3, 4, 8 and 9 by the research station and I will plant them soon," he says.

A liberal sprinkling of pepper on his terrace

Pastor adopts a unique method to grow 48 pepper plants on his 1,500-sq-ft terrace

NAVAMY SUDHISH
KOLLAM

When pastor P.D. Yohannan took a flight to Kerala in March 2020, he had his return ticket ready. But COVID-19 disrupted all his plans, confining him to his homestead in Kottarakara. Since lockdown meant zero routine business, he started cultivating pepper plants on the terrace and today his little garden is attracting visitors, including scientists, researchers, and students, from all parts of the State.

At innovators' meet

"I had been living outside Kerala for the last four decades and suddenly there was no church or prayer meetings to conduct. I started looking for productive options and started researching about crops that require minimal maintenance. Since we have vegetables and tubers in the compound, I decided to cultivate pepper in our 1,500-sq-ft terrace," he says.

The method he developed is unique and it was later selected for the Rural Innovators Meet (RIM) 2021, an annual programme conducted by the Kerala State Council for Science, Technology and Environment (KSCSTE).

Asked about the Kerala Women's Commission, Ms. Anupama told Ms. Patkar that apart from taking her statement, the commission had not intervened in the matter.

"Usually pepper vines cling to trees or trellises with adventitious roots. But when we use PVC pipes or concrete poles, the grip will be very weak. Since our poles are filled with the soil-ma-

REGIONAL APPOINTMENT

The West Bengal Power Development Corporation Limited
(A Government of West Bengal Enterprise)

NOTIFICATION

Ref.: Employment Notification No.: WBPCL/Recruitment/ 2021/05

Candidates who had reported at the Corporate Office of WBPCL on 10/12/2021 (Friday) for Walk-in Interview for selection to the post of 'Staff Nurse' but could not be interviewed due to appearance of huge number of candidates are requested to go through the website of WBPCL (www.wbpcdl.co.in) for information regarding revised schedule for Walk-in Interview.

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BRIDEGROOMS WANTED

INDEX OF MATRIMONIAL

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BRIDES & GROOMS WANTED

Classification common for Brides, Bridgrooms, Brides & Grooms

Assamese

Awadhi

Bengali

Bhojpuri

Bihari

Chhattisgarhi

English

Gujarati

Haryanvi

Hindi

Kannada

Kashmiri

Konkani

Malayalam

Manipuri

Marathi

Marwari

Nepali

Oriya

Parsi

Punjabi

Saurashtra

Sindhi

Tamil

Telugu

Tulu

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Business

Defence

Doctor

Engineer

Finance/ Banking

Government/ Quasi-Govt.

IAS / Allied Services

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MBA/ CA/ ICWA

NRI

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Divorcee

Physically Challenged

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WEDDING ARRANGEMENTS

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Specialist Doctor, 35, 5'6" (168 cm)

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KAMMA NAIDU Girl, 26, 165.9 cm,

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MBBS, Gold Medalist MS, OG, 2nd

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991426536

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PG Doctor from

Bangalore aged 33 employed in UK is

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Caste no bar. Ct: 8754479218

THE HINDU MATRIMONIAL

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1987/4" Maurya (BOC), BE, Civil, ME, MCA, Marketing, Working at Infosys Chennai 9811344815.

ENGLISH

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GOVT / QUASI GOVT

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9164647183.

HINDI

SEEKING MATCH within 40, Bengal

34/160 M.Sc, B.Ed, wkg in BIlore, Cb: 767563013/ mp044175@gmail.com

IAS / ALLIED SERVICES

HINDU TAMIL 30/168, IAS/Bhar cd) seeks Groom IAS, IPS, IRS, Civil service, Cent Govt Doctor, Dr, IIT, IIM, Bank, Defence Officer Language/Caste no bar 9940578045

KANNADA

HINDU VOKKALIGA 27 BE seeks Groom from same community. Ct: 979168175.

MALAYALAM

DHEEVARA GAZETTED Officer Central Group A seeks alliance for his daughter/BE/25/168/Vishakan/soft-wa engineer in Chennai transferable from well employed boys preferably working at Chennai/ Bengaluru/Tiruvandrum/Cochin. Caste no bar. 9444678747.

THIYADIVORCE ISSUELESS GIRL

28/165 MBA working Chennai. Looking for well-educated Girl from same caste. Ct: 9840037580/701052453

HINDU – SC Girl:

36/157, Agri -Scientist - (CG-Pune) from south Kerala, seeks alliance from well educated professionals. Contact: 9792420241, 9447296008

EZHAVA GIRL

27, 156 cm, Karikha, M.Tech, SW, Engineer, parents related Govt, servants. Trivandrum seeks alliance from well-employed professionals. Contact: 7305836940.

SC AD/PR

32/38, Asst Manager, Indian Bank, seeks govt or bank group, Mob: 8778463566

NAIR GIRL

27/160 Cm, Bharani, Final year PG Gen Medicine seeks proposals, PG Doctors preferred. Mob: 8089584220, 9294905255

DIVORCEE NAIR

girl 38 SWE fair, non-vegetarian 158cm athletic, on deputation to Toronto (both back middle of 2022). Proposals from boys of Comparable Profile. Mobile: 9446022706 Email: nairjk54@gmail.com

Alliance sought by parents for Mukkulathor Girl Pg Doctor, 30 years, Slim, Good Looking from decent well settled family. Divorced due to Cultural Incompatibility in short Span from Divorcee / Widower from Doctors, Professionally qualified, Businessman of equally placed, cultured, broadminded family from same Community or Any other forward or Backward communities. Contact: 7305836940.

SC AD/PR, 32 yrs, Asst Manager, Indian Bank, seeks govt or bank group, Mob: 8778463566

UDAYARI (CBN)

29/170, MBBS, MS, Doctor, Pvt.Hospital, Chennai, Elite Family, Seeks Groom - Doctor / Business / IAS/ IPS - Ct: 9799583548

MUDALIAR

22/160, V.Fair, Post Graduate, Having Own Institution, Commercial Complex, Estates, Rich Family, Seeks Groom - Business / Abroad / India - Ct: 9399012419

HINDU DEVENDRAKULA VELLALAR

SCAR, 31/167cm MBA Banker, Seeks Groom - Business / Abroad / India - Ct: 984170765 / 9445275067

HINDU UDAYAR

38yrs first Marriage. Degree holder, well to do family, Seeks Bridegroom (FC, BC, B.Com) working within India. Ct: 9080359664.

ELITE ROYAL

Mudaliyar 26/M.Edn Customs Clearing Agency/Dr, Engg, Petrol Oil, etc.rich family seeks Groom 30/9416160

SC AD/BE MNC

31/165 M.Sc, (PM) Daughter / IAS Officer Secretary to Minister/Rickeet Sreemati Groom 90436482435

HINDU REDDY

27 Yrs / 5' 4 feet M.D. Dermatologist, Divorced. Looking for a Smart Professionally Qualified Groom With Financially Well Off. Background Wanted Chennai Based Hindu- Caste No Bar.Ct: 9944760000

ALLIANCE FOR

Tamil Yadava Girl, Age 27, 165, V.Fair, MBBS, MS (OG) Final year, Chennai, Business Professional, Working in IT, Chennai Native/Pembalur. Any Post Graduates Preferred. Ct: 944341777.

CSI CHRISTIAN

29 well settled Software Engr. doing PG in London seeks well Settled Groom Dr/ Engineer in India, settled in Europe, U.K or abroad. Engineers/ Any Post Graduates Preferred. Ct: 944341777.

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9940283379

HINDU INTERCASTE

37/168, MBA, IT, seeks well settled, teetotaler B.E./ B.Com.

37-40 yrs, Caste no bar. Send BHP 09663036289.

SUITABLE MATCH for May 93 born Tamil girl vadama B've based CA Inter passed girl Koushali Gotham from well qualified affluent family boy. Horoscope matching must 984058602.

CHETTIAR

32/165, Good Looking, B.C., Affluent Business Family in Madurai, seeks Good Looking Business Groom

SUITABLE MATCH for May 93 born Tamil girl vadama B've based CA Inter passed girl Koushali Gotham from well qualified affluent family boy. Horoscope matching must 984058602.

HINDU AGAMUDIYAR

26, B.Tech, Tech, Kadangam, Aylvyan working at MNC Bangalore. Legally Divorcee seeks suitable Bridegroom B.E/ good job / same caste. Ct: 9944024176.

HINDU INTERCASTE

37/168, MBA, IT, seeks well settled, teetotaler B.E./ B.Com.

37-40 yrs, Caste no bar. Send BHP 09663036289.

SUITABLE MATCH for May 93 born Tamil girl vadama B've based CA Inter passed girl Koushali Gotham from well qualified affluent family boy. Horoscope matching must 984058602.

HINDU VANNIAR

IAF thanks Stalin, T.N. police, local residents

STAFF REPORTER
COIMBATORE

The Indian Air Force (IAF) on Saturday thanked Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, the State police and residents of Kattery near Coonoor for the assistance offered following the December 8 helicopter crash that killed 13 people, including the Chief of Defence Staff, General Bipin Rawat.



for rescue efforts and retrieving the bodies.

Mr. Stalin visited Coonoor the very evening of the crash, and also paid homage to those killed in the chopper crash.

Several theories were floated on social media and speculation was rife over the State's handling of the crash episode. The IAF's tweet puts a stop to those making such speculation, leaving no one in any doubt about their appreciation for the assistance rendered by the National Highway paid floral tributes to the soldier.

Thousands of people, in-

Kerala bids adieu to Pradeep

Andhra Pradesh Minister promises to support Lance Naik Sai Teja's family

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THRISSUR

Junior Warrant Officer (JWO) A. Pradeep, who was killed in the helicopter crash at Coonoor, was cremated with full State and military honours in the compound of his house at Ponnukkara here in Kerala on Saturday.

Pradeep's eight-year-old son, Dakshan De, lit the funeral pyre. Air Force personnel chanted the slogan "Warrant officer Pradeep amar raha". His uniform and the national flag covering the coffin with his mortal remains were handed over to his wife Seela Lakshmi.

Union Minister V. Muraleedharan and Thrissur MP T.N. Prathapan accompanied the ambulance carrying the mortal remains from Coimbatore to Thrissur. People waiting on both sides of the National Highway paid floral tributes to the soldier.

Thousands of people, in-



Last journey: The remains of junior warrant officer A. Pradeep at his house in Thrissur on Saturday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

cluding Ministers, elected representatives, military and paramilitary forces, police officers, cultural leaders, teachers, friends and local people paid homage to Pradeep when his body was kept from 2.45 p.m. to 3.45 p.m. at Government Vocational Higher Secondary School, Puthur, where he had studied.

Pradeep joined the Air Force in 2004. He was later selected as air crew. He participated in many missions, including against Maoists in Chhattisgarh.

₹50 lakh for Sai Teja kin

Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj Minister Peddreddi Ramachandra Reddy on Saturday called on the family members of chopper crash victim Lance Naik Sai Teja, at their village, Regadapalle, of Kurabakota mandal in the

district, and handed over a cheque for ₹50 lakh as *ex gratia*.

Addressing the media after paying tributes to the portrait of Sai Teja, the Minister said, "This is a very small gesture to Sai Teja's family compared to his high achievements in service of the country. At a very young age, he had risen to the rank of the personal security officer to the highest defence personnel in the country."

Later, he consoled the family members, who included Sai Teja's parents and younger brother Mahesh, who works in the Army in Sikkim.

Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister K. Narayanaswamy, Collector M. Hari Narayanan, and senior officials were present. Sai Teja's last rites will be performed on Sunday morning.

(With inputs from Chittoor)

IN BRIEF



Vaikunta Darshan for 10 days: TTD Chairman

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams Trust Board will provide Vaikunta Dwaras Darshan for 10 days from January 13. Free darshan will be provided to SC, ST, BC and fisherman communities.

Search for tiger intensifies in Wayanad

Forest officials of the North Wayanad Forest Division have intensified operations to capture the tiger, which has allegedly killed 10 domestic animals in a fortnight under the Begur forest range.

Kerala Governor's letter triggers an uproar

Parties plan protests over postings

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan's caustic putdown of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan for "political cronyism" in University appointments has triggered a political uproar against the Left Democratic Front (LDF) Government.

The Congress and the BJP's student organisations are poised to launch street protests. Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee president K. Sudhakaran said Mr. Vijayan had created a record of a sort for Chief Ministers by "systematically undermining the constitutional of

fice of the Governor".

Leader of the Opposition V. D. Satheesan said Mr. Vijayan owed the public an explanation. The Governor's letter to the CM was a "damning indictment of the politicisation of the higher education sector", he said.

Seven arrested in two cases of 'moral policing' in Karnataka

Four are from Dakshina Kannada, three from Udupi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MANGALURU

Seven persons have been arrested in two "moral policing" cases reported in Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts of Karnataka on Friday and Saturday.

Four crew members of a bus were arrested on charges of harassing a boy and a girl. D.Pharma students and from different faiths, at the private bus stand in Mangaluru on Friday.

The arrests took place af-

ter a video clip of the crew

harassing the students after

they boarded the bus bound

for Kollur, went viral on so-
cial media on Friday.

In a *suo motu* complaint, Mangalore South police sub-inspector Sheetal Algur said that in the video, a group is seen entering the bus and demanding identity cards of the two students who were seated. The group abused the two and forced them to alight. The group abused the girl for travelling with a boy from a different faith. The boy was humiliated and as-
saulted for allegedly behav-
ing in an inappropriate man-
ner with the girl. The group
allegedly warned the boy

not to move around with the
girl in future.

The Manipal police arrest-
ed three persons also on
charges of harassing a man
and a woman from different
faiths, who were known to
each other, on Saturday.

The names of the accused
were given as Praneesh, Vi-
nooth Poojary, and Sanjay
Kumar. The police said the
accused confronted Altaf,
27, when he was seen with a
woman, his family friend,
near Mannapalla Lake. The
accused abused the two for
being together and also
threatened Altaf.

kili mandapam, abused him
citing his religion, and made
derogatory remarks against
him for visiting the temple.

Mr. Hussain said he was
insulted and threatened for
visiting the temple, which he
revered and held in high es-
teem. Several devotees and
staff at the temple were wit-
ness to the incident, he said.

Causing mental agony

"I felt humiliated and insulted by Rangarajan Narasimhan. He has no right to prevent me or any individual from visiting the temple. It has caused severe mental agony to me," Mr. Hussain said.

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selvakumar.n@thehindu.co.inTHE HINDU
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No. AIIMS-BLS(B)(2)/04/21-
Date: 11-12-2021
VACANCY NOTICE
The All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Bilaspur H.P. intends to fill 39 posts of Senior Residents (Non-Academic) and 39 posts of Junior Residents (Non-Academic). The details of vacancies is given below. The interested candidates are advised to fill the application form (Appendix-I) and submit the same through registered post/by hand latest by 15-01-2022 up to 5:00 P.M. duly addressed to Deputy Director (Administration), AIIMS Bilaspur At Kothipura, District- Bilaspur H.P.-174001.
DETAIL OF VACANCIES

Senior Residents (Non-Academic)							
S.No.	Department	Category					Total
		UR	EWS	SC	ST	OBC	
1.	Anaesthesia	1	1	-	-		2
2.	Dermatology	-	-	1	-		1
3.	ENT	1	-	-	-		1
4.	General Medicine and allied	3	1	-	3	2	9
5.	General Surgery and allied	3	-	3	-	2	8
6.	Hospital Administration	1	-	-	-		1
7.	Obstetrics and Gynaecology	2	-	-	-		2
8.	Ophthalmology	-	-	-	1	1	
9.	Orthopaedics	2	-	-	-		2
10.	Paediatrics and neonatology	2	-	-	-		1
11.	Pathology	1	1	-	-		2
12.	Pharmacology	-	-	-	-		1
13.	Psychiatry	1	-	-	-		1
14.	Radiology	-	-	1	-		1
15.	Radiotherapy	1	-	-	-		1
16.	Transfusion Medicine & Blood Bank	-	-	-	1		1
17.	Community & Family Medicine	1	-	-	-		1
	Total	19	3	5	3	9	39

Two (02) posts are reserved for Persons with Benchmark Disabilities category (PwBD) (non-surgical jobs) Junior Residents (Non-Academic)

Senior Residents (Non-Academic)							
S.No.	Name of Post	Category					Total
		UR	EWS	SC	ST	OBC	
1.	Junior resident	19	3	5	2	10	39

Two (02) posts are reserved for Persons with Benchmark Disabilities category (PwBD) PAY SCALES SENIOR RESIDENTS (Non-Academic) → Level-10 in pay matrix with a minimum of Rs. 56,100/- + NPA JUNIOR RESIDENTS (Non-Academic) → Level-10 in pay matrix with a minimum of Rs. 56,100/- + NPA AGE LIMIT- Up-to 45 years in case of Senior Residents - Up-to 30 Years in case of Junior Residents Detailed advertisement containing terms and conditions along with application proforma may be downloaded from Institute website https://www.aiimsbilaspur.edu.in or by sending request on e-mail ID rcsrajai@aiimsbilaspur@gmail.com Executive Director, AIIMS-Bilaspur H.P.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

DIRECTORATE OF FLORICULTURE SRINAGAR KASHMIR

Tel-0194-2474234 Fax -2482032 - email: kashflori@rediffmail.com

Subject: - Extension No.05.

In view of no response, the last date for submission of bids invited vide this office e-Tender Notice No.21 of 2021 dated 10.09.2021 for Outsourcing of entry ticketing system of Ashmuqam Park is hereby extended as per the details given below:-

1. Period of downloading of bidding document 09/12/2021 from 04:00 PM to 27/12/2021 up to 02:00 PM
2. Bid submission Start Date 09/12/2021 from 04:30 PM
3. Bid submission End Date 27/12/2021 up to 2:00 PM
4. Date & time of Opening of Tenders 30/12/2021 at 2:00 PM

Other terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in the aforesaid Tender Notice.

By Order

DIPK-14661/21

Sd/-
Accounts Officer
(Member Secretary)

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From THE HINDU GROUP

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY
MECHANICAL BRANCH
Open Tender Single Packet System
Tender Notice No: JBP/M/Tender/30/2021 Dated 08.12.2021
E-Tender on behalf of President of India acting through Sr.Divisional mechanical Engineer (F/)
Divisional Railway Manager (Mechanical), West Central Railway, Jabalpur for the following work.
NIT NO. JBP/M/Tender/ 30/2021 Dated 08.12.2021
Name of work with location - Supply, Installing & commissioning of Two Nos' Hot Box Detector (HBD) at El-JBP (Down Main Line) & KTE-JBP (UP main Line) section of Jabalpur Division including 24 months warranty. Approx cost of the work - 1,07,68,600/-, Earnest Money to be deposited-Rs.-00, Tender form cost-Rs.-00, Completion period (in month) - 90 Days, Pre Bid Conference date & time- 15.12.2021 & 11.00 Hrs., Last date & time for submission of tender (Up to 15.00 hrs) - 30/12/2021 Upto 15.00 Hrs. Date & Time for opening of tender :30.12.2021 at 15.30 Hrs. The complete information of the above 'e-tender' is available in website on "<https://www.ireps.gov.in/>" and also placed on the notice board of the Divisional Railway manager (Mech) office of West Central Railway Jabalpur. Tenders other than in the form of e-bid shall not be accepted against above tenders.

For DRM (Mech.)
West Central Railway, Jabalpur
email:[DRM.\(Mech.\)@westcentralrailways.gov.in](mailto:DRM.(Mech.)@westcentralrailways.gov.in)

THE HINDU GROUP

TMC promises ₹5,000 per month for Goa women

A support to counter inflation: Mahua

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PANAJI

The Trinamool Congress (TMC) on Saturday promised to roll out a direct cash transfer scheme for women in Goa if voted to power in the State after the Assembly polls due in February next year.

Under the scheme titled Griha Laxmi, ₹5,000 would be transferred to a woman of every household per month as guaranteed income support to counter inflation once the party comes to power.

The Mamata Banjee-led party has announced that it

would be contesting all 40 seats in State.

The women from 3.5 lakh households in the State would be covered under the Griha Laxmi scheme as it will also do away with the maximum income ceiling, which is mandated in the current Griha Aadhar scheme of the BJP government in the State," Ms. Moitra, who is TMC's Goa in-charge, said.

She said that the current scheme of the BJP government in Goa provides only ₹1,500 per month to women and it covers only 1.5 lakh households due to the income ceiling.

"The actual implementation of Griha Aadhar scheme requires ₹270 crore annually, but the Goa government has earmarked only ₹40 crore annually because of which many people are not able to get the benefit," the TMC parliamentarian said.

Dancer alleges abuse at Srirangam temple

Threatened by activist: Zakir Hussain

C. JAISANKAR
TIRUCHI

Bharatanatyam dancer Zakir Hussain has alleged that he was abused and forced to exit the Sri Ranganathaswamy temple in Srirangam by an activist on Friday.

The incident took

FROM PAGE ONE

India sends medical relief to Afghanistan

Afghanistan's leading hospitals, including the Indira Gandhi Children Hospital in Kabul, had exhausted supplies of anaesthetics necessary for surgical procedures which prompted Taliban's acting Deputy Prime Minister Mullah Baradar to reach out to the UNDP in Doha.

This is the first time that India has sent humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan after the Taliban took over Kabul by dislodging the government of President Ashraf Ghani in August. This is an important development as it is likely to be followed by the large scale humanitarian assistance from India to Afghanistan which will be supplied through a

transit facility from Pakistan.

It was reported earlier that India is unlikely to recognise the Taliban administration though there is a possibility that there could be medical, educational and other kinds of exchanges between both sides.

As part of the Operation Devi Shakti, which was launched in August to evacuate Indians and Afghan minority community members from the strife torn country, the Government has evacuated a total of 669 people from Afghanistan. This includes 448 Indians who were working on various projects and businesses and 206 Afghan nationals.

United States' ban on para unit stuns Dhaka

On Friday, the U.S. Treasury announced the designation and sanctions against the RAB force for "serious human rights abuse", as a part of a batch of sanctions announced on International Human Rights Day against China, Russia, Myanmar and North Korea as well.

against Bangladesh could set off alarm bells in India and across the region, for the possible use of sanctions against security forces similarly accused of human rights violations here.

Magnitsky Act
"NGOs have alleged that RAB and other Bangladeshi law enforcement are responsible for more than 600 disappearances since 2009, nearly 600 extrajudicial killings since 2018, and torture. Some reports suggest these incidents target opposition party members, journalists, and human rights activists," the U.S. Treasury said, invoking its "Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act". The Magnitsky Act as it is known, was named after a Russian lawyer who was arrested after he exposed corruption in the Putin administration, and died in prison in 2009. It authorised its President to "impose economic sanctions and deny entry into the United States to any foreign person identified as engaging in human rights abuse or corruption".

The MEA declined to comment on the U.S. action, which followed a day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in President Joseph Biden's Democracy Summit, to which Bangladesh was not invited. Despite India's good ties with both countries, officials said the matter was a bilateral issue, which India would not seek to interfere in. However, the sanctions

Farmers bid adieu to Singhu protest site



Farmers in decked-up tractors returning from Singhu border on Saturday. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

At the Singhu border, several items were stacked for donation — cots, mattresses, string beds, tarpaulins, raw food and wood, among others. "We helped the needy throughout the year. Why not now when we are leaving," said Mandeep Singh, 21, from Patiala. He gave away bedsheets, rations, containers and mattresses.

Lakhvir Singh, 30, from Ludhiana — who took 10 days to customise his trolley with an air conditioner, LED TV, bed and other equipment — got emotional while dismantling the attachment. He said they would reinstall the truck in their village as a remembrance of their struggle. "We spent a year here struggling and fighting for our rights. This truck will remain as it is," he said.

The Jangi Kitab Ghar, a library which was set up by Jasveer Singh and Zia-Ur-Rahman, will leave the site at the end, the duo said.

"I had given my word that I'll be here in solidarity with them till the end," said Mr.

Rahman, a resident of Hyderabad, adding that there are plans to set up the library in Punjab.

Nachhatar Singh, 87, one of the two famous senior protesters at Singhu border, stayed put at the site on Saturday as he had decided to leave in the end.

He said he has decided to walk back "even if it takes 10 days".

Mr. Singh, who is a part of 'Miti Aid', an NGO engaged in helping protesters with joints and leg pain, said they will continue to help people on their way back home.

While the majority was getting ready to leave the protest site at Singhu, 20 odd protesters sat there, wearing chains and continuing their agitation.

"We'll stay here as long as we can because we are demanding an assurance on Minimum Support Price, which the Government hasn't given. Those who have left are traitors. We will not be fooled by the Government," said Subhash Sandhu, a resident of Hissar.

"I had given my word that I'll be here in solidarity with them till the end," said Mr.

NC undecided on attending delimitation panel meeting

Preliminary reports not shared, say party MPs from Jammu and Kashmir

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR / NEW DELHI

The National Conference (NC) has continued its flip-flop over participating in the delimitation exercise for Jammu and Kashmir, with the party undecided on attending the meeting of the Delimitation Commission scheduled for December 20 in New Delhi.

The meeting is the first such since Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a multi-party meeting in June.

Official sources said the commission had completed its report and was likely to share it with all the five associate members — three NC and two BJP MPs.

"An invitation has been sent to us [NC]. The leadership is yet to take a decision on whether to attend the meeting," NC MP Hasnain Masoodi told *The Hindu*.

The NC has been upset with the commission's failure to formally include the MPs during a four-day tour of the Union Territory in July, when it held meetings with local political parties, public representatives and officials.



BJP leaders arriving to meet the Delimitation Commission in Srinagar on July 6, 2021. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

"We were not associated with the commission's visit to J&K and thereafter. No report or any material has been shared with us," Mr. Masoodi said.

Unconstitutional steps

In February, the NC MPs boycotted the three-member commission, headed by Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai (retd.), though they were extended an invite to join the proceedings.

The party had argued that the J&K Reorganisation Act, 2019 and measures thereafter, including the formation of the commission, were "unconstitutional and the

case was before the Supreme Court".

However, the party changed its stand after the multi-party meeting chaired by the Prime Minister and assurances of a follow-up and announcement of J&K-centric measures.

NC president Farooq Abdullah, Srinagar MP, then showed willingness to be part of the delimitation process and his party presented a memorandum to the commission members during their J&K visit.

But more recently, Dr. Abdullah had expressed his anger on December 8 over the pace of the commission on

finalising its report. "Being members of the commission, we were neither invited nor shown any preliminary report. The Centre was deviating from its promise and assurance that there will be no extension to the commission beyond March 6, 2022 for submitting its report to enable elections to the J&K Legislative Assembly," Dr. Abdullah said.

Addition of seats

The commission is mandated to carve out seven additional seats for the 83-member Assembly of the Union Territory.

It is also likely to announce reservation for the Schedule Tribes (ST) and Schedule Castes (SC) in its report.

A senior Election Commission official in New Delhi said the draft delimitation plan was "almost ready".

Asked whether separate representation for Kashmiri Pandits had been made, the official said no such recommendation had been finalised yet.

(With inputs from Damini Nath in New Delhi)

Displaced Pandits betrayed, says Farooq

'Ethnic cleansing won't happen in J&K'

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

National Conference (NC) president Farooq Abdullah on Saturday said displaced Kashmiri Pandits were betrayed by those who claimed to be their messiahs, and promised to pass the Kashmiri Hindu Shrines Management Bill once in power to protect them.



"The NC had tabled the Kashmiri Hindu Shrines Management Bill in 2009. I was threatened not to get this legislation through. Today, they are pretending to be the well-wishers of Kashmiri Pandits, who they are using to strengthen their vote bank," Dr. Abdullah said at a day-long convention organised in Jammu.

He said when the Centre with a majority in Parliament could get the Bills on farm laws through, why could not Bills regarding Kashmiri Pandits? "The Kashmiri Hindu Shrines Management Bill will definitely be passed when the NC will be mandated to form the Government. They [Centre] will never pass such a Bill," he said.

He said J&K would never go into the hands of those who believed in "engineer-

ing ethnic cleansing". "You [Kashmiri Pandits] have suffered a lot and what happened then had never been even comprehended."

He accused former J&K Governor Jagmohan of "facilitating the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits with the promise to get them back in two months. Jagmohan got Padma Vibhushan but never brought KPs back".

Downplaying the bickering between his party and the Gupkar alliance partner Peoples Democratic Party, NC vice-president Omar Abdullah said the alliance was working towards a cause.

"The existence of the Peoples Alliance for the Gupkar Declaration is for a certain cause and every member is doing the job at their level," he said.

Pak. militant behind Bandipora attack: IGP

Two local people have provided help

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

The J&K police on Saturday said a Pakistani militant and his local associates from the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) were behind the killing of two policemen in Bandipora on Friday.

"A Pakistani terrorist opened fire upon the policemen. They couldn't snatch the weapons [from them] due to the retaliation by the police. Two over-ground workers have facilitated the attacker," IGP Vijay Kumar said.

The IGP held a meeting with the offices of the Army, CRPF and police in Bandipora. He asked the security forces to "jointly track the attackers by working out specific inputs and strengthening anti-militancy operations in the district".

Police and Army officers visited Gulshan Chowk and inspected the scene. Senior constable Mohammad Sultan and constable Fayaz Ahmad died in the attack. DGP J&K Dilbag Singh on Saturday visited the families of the deceased policemen. While interacting with the family of Sultan in Sopore, DGP Singh said, "Every support would be provided to the family."

He said the police had got some clues and were working to identify the terrorists. "There have been recent incursions by Pakistan in some places in which some Pakistani terrorists have in-

filtred to this side. The terrorists are on our radar. I hope that Pakistani terrorists who have recently infiltrated will be neutralised soon as the operations are on against them."

Main motive

He said the main motive of the Pakistani-sponsored terrorists was to kill someone and harm the lives of people and their property. "The police along with other security agencies work for the security and safety of people so the police become the target. We have been fighting this war for the last 30 years and it is our responsibility to protect the lives and property of people."

Hundreds of locals attended the last rites of the two policemen in their villages.

Paying his tributes, Peoples Conference president Sajad Ganji Lone said in a tweet, "20 years ago, a policeman from Bandipora was killed alongside my father. My father was killed too. Saw photos of orphaned daughter and son. Remember just because today's orphan doesn't belong to you doesn't mean tomorrow's orphan won't belong to you."

The biggest threat that we as people face is that death has become a statistic. A good statistic and a bad statistic depending which side of the ideological divide you are on," he said.

He said the police had got some clues and were working to identify the terrorists.

"There have been recent incursions by Pakistan in some places in which some

Remains of all crash victims identified

They were handed over to families for the last rites, say defence officials

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The mortal remains of all the military personnel killed in the Mi-17V5 chopper crash have been "positively identified", defence officials said late on Saturday.

While six of the mortal remains were handed over to the families in the day, the remaining four which were confirmed later in the day would be handed over to the family members on Sunday morning, they said.

"The positive identification of the mortal remains of Lance Naik B. Sai Teja and Lance Naik Vivek Kumar has been done and they have been released to close family members," an Army official said.

Wreaths will be laid on Sunday at the Base Hospital, Delhi Cantonment, for the mortal remains of Lt. Col.

Harjinder Singh, Havildar Satpal Rai, Naik Gurwase Singh, and Naik Jitendra Kumar prior to departure.

The last rites of Lt. Col. Harjinder Singh are likely to take place at Brar Square on



With heavy heart: IAF soldiers load the JWO Rana Pratap Das's coffin in a vehicle at Bhubaneswar airport. ■ BISWARANJAN ROUT

Sunday, a defence official said. The positive identification of the last four mortal remains was done through DNA testing, the official said.

For the six mortal remains identified earlier in the day, which includes Lance Naik Teja and Lance Naik Vivek Kumar and the four IAF chopper crew, wreath laying was done and the remains were sent to their respective destinations in an IAF transport aircraft.

The last rites will be performed with appropriate military honours, the official said.

The condition of the lone survivor Group Captain Varun Singh remains critical but stable.

Trinamool unveils manifesto

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

The Trinamool Congress on Saturday launched its manifesto for the upcoming Kolkata municipal polls with focus on drainage, water supply and road infrastructure.

Senior Trinamool leaders released the manifesto titled "Kolkatar 10 Diganta (Ten Milestones for Kolkata)", which promises a 'SHE toilet complex' in every ward, equipped with a bathing area, sanitary napkins and baby care rooms.

area of jurisdiction, calling it a breach of the federal form of governance under the Constitution.

The Supreme Court has asked the advocate on record for the Centre to appear when the case is called out.

Punjab said the notification issued under Section 139 of the Border Security Force Act, 1968 encroaches on a State subject in List II of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution. The State said

it was neither consulted nor kept in the know before the issuance of the notification in October. The notification was unilateral. It pointed out that earlier notifications from 1969 to 2014 had limited the BSF jurisdiction to 15 km from the International Border in Punjab. The State said many districts, towns and villages of Punjab fell within the 50-km radius and came within the jurisdiction of the State Government.

No drop in stubble burning in Punjab, Haryana this year

After satellite monitoring, IARI says there were 78,291 instances of setting ablaze fields from September 15 to November 30



Polluting smoke: A farmer burning straw stubble on a field at Butana in Haryana. ■ AFP

meant to accelerate the process of turning rice stubble into compost. Untreated rice straw takes four to eight weeks to disintegrate which is too long for the average farmer to wait to be able to sow the winter wheat crop.

Expensive option
The other option is to employ farm labourers who will cut the stalk and pile it into bundles, but that is expensive and unaffordable for more than 95% of the farmers. The chemical formula for the decomposer, which is essentially a bio-enzyme, was developed by the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), in Pusa, Delhi.

The bio-enzyme developed was initially formulated as a capsule and needs to

be mixed with an organic liquid mixture to be usable.

However, it emerged that a capsule was not the best way to put the product into fields. Hence the company made it into a powder that can be mixed with water, which is loaded into a tank with the boom sprayer whe-

reas manually it took half a day.

The IARI, which monitors stubble burning via data from multiple satellites based on a protocol from the Indian Space Research Organisation, has reported that there were 78,291 instances of stubble burning from September 15 to November 30 in Punjab and Haryana which comprise over 85% of instances of the kharif crop. Last year there were 84,771 instances recorded in these States in the same interval.

The Delhi-based environment think-tank, the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), has a different set of figures based on data from the NASA VIIRS satellite that says there were more fires this year than the

MSP is key to diversify crops: farmers

Guaranteed prices will help in the shift from water-intensive paddy and wheat, they say

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ
NEW DELHI

Guaranteed minimum support prices (MSP) for all crops may be the best route to crop diversification in Punjab and Haryana, farmers think.

Farmers in these two States already get the benefit of MSP rates for paddy and wheat because of the high levels of procurement. However, they say they will join the upcoming fight for an MSP guarantee for all crops, as it will enable them to shift away from input-expensive, environmentally harmful and climatically unsuitable paddy to grow oilseeds and lentils instead.

"Why would I want to pay to pay ₹3 lakh for a borewell that is going to drain even more groundwater from my lands if I can be assured of MSP rates for growing other crops," asked Jagmohan Singh, a leader of the Dhaikunda faction of the Bharatiya Kisan Union, who is a member of the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM). He suggested that paddy cultivation and procurement be shifted instead to a State like Telangana, which is fast emerging as the moniker of the new rice bowl of India due to major



Sustainable options: Farmers are likely to move to cultivation of mustard, safflower and lentils if minimum prices are guaranteed for these crops. ■ PTI

improvements in irrigation.

Mr. Singh said input costs are also cheaper in places where water availability is higher and the need for fertilizers and pesticides is lower than in Punjab.

Paddy farmers in Punjab need thrice the amount of irrigation water used by those in Bihar to produce one kg of rice, according to a study by the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations, and Punjab faces rapidly increasing groundwater depletion at a rate of up to 120 cm a year.

Nationwide, paddy and sugarcane use up half the country's water resources, largely because procurement policies skew profitability and distort cropping patterns.

For instance, maize uses only a fifth of the irrigation water of rice, but farmers are wary of shifting to a crop where remunerative prices are not guaranteed.

"Crop diversity is impossible without a guaranteed MSP. If all crops were procured, not just rice and wheat, then the average Punjab farmer would stop grow-

ing paddy and instead grow safflower, moong or chana dal," said Mr. Singh.

Punjab, Haryana in focus

More than half of government procurement of wheat and paddy over the last five years has taken place in Punjab and Haryana, according to the Agriculture Ministry data. Over 85% of wheat and paddy grown in Punjab, and 75% in Haryana, is bought by the Government at MSP. No other crops receive such support.

The support could also

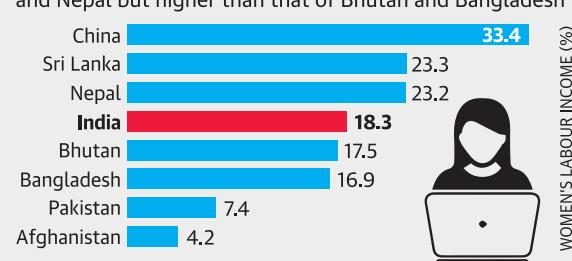
help solve the bugbear of stubble burning that has darkened the skies of northern India.

"Punjab farmers are well aware of the pollution caused by stubble burning as it affects them even more than the citizens of Delhi. But the solution is not to criminalise the burning of paddy stubble, but rather to provide financial incentives so that farmers can shift to other crops," said Kavitha Kuruganti, convenor of the Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture, who is also one of the few women leaders in the SKM.

"The environmental degradation of Punjab because of the demands of the Green Revolution hurts all farmers. The drop in the level of groundwater is alarming," said Darshan Pal, a senior SKM leader who heads the Krantikari Kisan Union in Punjab. "We will join the struggle for MSP not just on behalf of our brothers in other States who do not get remunerative prices for their crops, but in our own self-interest, so that we have sustainable choices beyond paddy," he said, suggesting maize and oilseeds as the best alternatives.

Income inequity

Among neighbours, women's share of total labour income in India was lower compared to that of China, Sri Lanka and Nepal but higher than that of Bhutan and Bangladesh



Moldova has the highest female labour income in the world at 45%.

Overall, the share of women in total incomes from work neared 30% in 1990 and stands at 34% today.

"Unpaid care work is likely to prevent women from participating in the labour market, and, when they do work, to prevent them from attaining high-paying positions. When paid and unpaid work are combined, women's contribution to work increases substantially and thus makes the female labour income share appear even more unfair," states the report.

Men in India take 82% of labour income, says report

Study explores gender inequality in global earnings

JAGRITI CHANDRA
NEW DELHI

Men in India capture 82% of labour income, while women earn just 18%, according to the first-ever estimates of the gender inequality in global earnings presented in the World Inequality Report 2022 released earlier this week.

The female share of the total labour income is the national aggregate labour income earned by women relative to the total aggregate of labour income within a country. In a country with perfect equality between women and men, the female labour income share would be 50%.

But the report finds that it is below 50% around the world, with significant variations across countries, ranging from below 10% to 45%. The report covered 180 countries between 1991 to 2019.

Female labour income in India of 18.3% is lower than the average for Asia, which was at 27% in 2019.

Eleven countries in the region have values above 30%. Among the neighbours that

performed worse than India were Bhutan (17.5%), Bangladesh (16.9%), Pakistan (7.4%), and Afghanistan (4.2%).

Moldova has the highest female labour income in the world at 45%.

Overall, the share of women in total incomes from work neared 30% in 1990 and stands at 34% today.

"Unpaid care work is likely to prevent women from participating in the labour market, and, when they do work, to prevent them from attaining high-paying positions. When paid and unpaid work are combined, women's contribution to work increases substantially and thus makes the female labour income share appear even more unfair," states the report.

Protecting wildlife: 2,054 cases registered in three years

WCCB has conducted various species-specific operations

SHIV SAHAY SINGH
KOLKATA

Between 2018 and 2020, about 2,054 cases were registered for killing or illegal trafficking of wild animals in India, Central Government statistics say.

In the three years, about 3,836 accused were arrested for the crime.

The number of cases registered in the year 2018 was 648 and 1,099 persons were arrested; followed by 805 cases and 1,506 arrests in 2019; and 601 cases and 1,231 arrests in 2020.

The data was made available on the basis of cases registered by the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau and State Forest and Police Authorities in the past three years.

The details were made public by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in response to a question in the Lok Sabha by BJP MP G.M. Siddeshwar.

The reply on November 29 also pointed out that Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has been created for control of wildlife crime at the Central Government level, to work in close coordination with State forest department and other law enforcement agencies.

In response to another



Step by step: Anti-trafficking efforts have helped bring down trade in tortoises and turtles. ■ FILE PHOTO

question on December 6 by DMK MP K. Shanmuga Sundaram, the Ministry said the WCCB has conducted a number of species-specific enforcement operations in coordination with State enforcement agencies.

Illegal trade

The WCCB had launched operation "Save Kurma" from December 2016 to January 2017 to focus on the poaching, transportation and illegal trade of live turtles and tortoises. The operation resulted in seizure of more than 15,912 live turtles and the arrest of 55 suspects.

Another operation "Operation Turfshield-I" from December 2019 to January 2020 and Operation Turfshield-II" (December 2020 to February 2021) was taken up to tackle the illegal trade of live turtles, resulting in the seizure of 4,601 live/dead turtles and arrest of 45 accused in the first operation.

In the second operation, 59 accused were arrested and the efforts led to the recovery of 11,771 live turtles/tortoises and 45 kilograms of turtle calippe.

"Operation Softgold" was undertaken from October, 2018 to March, 2019 to tackle illegal trade in Shahtoosh shawls (made from Chiru wool). During the operation, 350 shawls were found.

Omicron scare brings in fresh Mumbai curbs

STAFF REPORTER
MUMBAI

With new patients infected by the Omicron variant of the SARS-CoV2, the Mumbai Police have imposed Section 144 of the CrPC in the city for the weekend to prevent large gatherings and rallies.

The total number of patients affected by the Omicron variant has gone up to five in Mumbai.

The order will remain in place for Saturday and Sunday. Any person violating it shall be punishable under Section 188 of the IPC.

On Friday, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation had said that three more individuals were infected with the Omicron variant.

The order, issued by Chaitanya S., Deputy Commissioner of Police (Operations), said, "As I am satisfied that Greater Mumbai continues to be threatened by the COVID-19 pandemic and it is imperative to continue emergency measures to prevent and contain the spread of COVID-19 virus, with a view to prevent danger to human life, health or safety, and to prevent any threat to the law and order situation, do hereby prohibit any rally or morna or procession etc of either persons or vehicles."

Back to the roots



Fresh food: A boatman collecting lotus stems from the waters of Nigeen Lake in Srinagar on Saturday. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

Shah credits PM with reviving holy sites

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
AHMEDABAD

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi with "saving the Hindu community from humiliation and reviving important but forgotten centres of the Hindu religion".

The Union Home Minister was speaking at the founda-

tion stone laying ceremony of a temple in Ahmedabad.

"Under Modiji's leadership since 2014, work on our forgotten centres of our faith have been without fear and with full respect," Mr. Shah said, referring to the Prime Minister's constituency of Varanasi, Kedarnath and other pilgrimage sites.

Mr. Shah said that the

Kashi Vishwanath temple has been restored to full glory by the Prime Minister. Mr. Modiji will inaugurate it on December 13.

"For decades, our faith centres and temples remained neglected or forgotten but now things have changed," Mr. Shah said, while thanking the Patidar community for planning the

temple of their deity in Ahmedabad.

"Earlier, people visiting temples used to feel a sense of shame but now under Modiji, a new era has begun when he performed the *maha aarti* at Varanasi," he added.

Mr. Shah also inaugurated development projects in his constituency Gandhinagar.

Tiger in Buxa cheers wildlife enthusiasts

SHIV SAHAY SINGH
KOLKATA

In a major success for tiger conservation, a photograph of a tiger was captured in a camera trap in West Bengal's Buxa Tiger Reserve on Saturday. The last time there has been an undisputed claim of the presence of tiger in the reserve located in north Bengal was in 1998.

"A male tiger was captured in a camera trap today in the Buxa Tiger Reserve," V.K. Yadav, Principal Chief Conservator of Forest and Chief Wildlife Warden West Bengal, told *The Hindu*. The photograph was captured at 12.02 a.m. on Saturday.

The development has brought cheer to wildlife experts and nature enthusiasts as questions were raised on the presence of big cats in the reserve. There are about 98 tigers in the Sundarbans in south Bengal.

Pinaka extended range rocket system tested: DRDO

Industry partner is now ready for series production

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Successful tests of the Pinaka Extended Range (ER) multi-barrel rocket launcher system, Area Denial Munitions (ADM) and indigenous developed fuses have been carried out at various test ranges, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) said on Saturday.

"The DRDO, along with the Army, conducted a series of performance evaluation trials of these industry-produced rockets at field firing ranges during the last three days," it said in a statement.

"In these trials, enhanced-range Pinaka rockets were test-fired at different ranges with various warhead capabilities. All the trial objectives were met satisfactorily."

The DRDO said 24 rockets were fired for different rang-

es and warhead capabilities to meet the objectives of accuracy and consistency.

With this, the initial phase of technology absorption of Pinaka-ER by the industry partner has successfully been completed making the industry partner ready for series production of the rocket system, it said.

The technology of the Pinaka ER rockets was transferred from the DRDO to the industry partner, which manufactured the enhanced Pinaka Mk-1 rockets with DRDO's handholding during the production and quality assurance.

rocket system, it said.

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He said he had raised his voice against separatism and terrorism, as a social activist. Mr. Maridhas said the Madurai police had registered the FIR against him under multiple sections of the IPC. He said there were no materials to invoke the

YouTuber moves HC seeking quashing of FIR

'No materials to invoke IPC provisions'

B. TILAK CHANDAR
MADRASI

YouTuber Maridhas has moved the Madras High Court, seeking the quashing of an FIR registered against him by the Madurai police.

In his petition, M. Maridhas said on December 9, he had posted a message regarding the death of Chief of the Defence Staff Bipin Rawat.

He said he asked the government to take action against "the persons who smile on the death of the Chief of the Defence Staff". Instead, the government had taken action against him, Mr. Maridhas said.

He said he had raised his voice against separatism and terrorism, as a social activist. Mr. Maridhas said the Madurai police had registered the FIR against him under multiple sections of the IPC. He said there were no materials to invoke the

provisions against him. The petition has been listed before Justice G.R. Swami-nathan, and will be taken up for hearing on December 13.

The Madurai police had picked up Mr. Maridhas for an inquiry over his social media post, which questioned whether Tamil Nadu was turning into another Kashmir.

Formally arrested
The Central Crime Branch of the Chennai police on Saturday formally arrested Mr. Maridhas, in connection with a pending case of forgery. The Madurai police had arrested Mr. Maridhas and lodged him in Theni prison.

The CCB arrested him at the prison in connection with the case, registered last year on a complaint from Vinay Sarawagi, associate executive editor, News18 group.

SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

2	9	3	1	4	6	7	5	8

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G7 puts up united front against Russia

At Foreign Ministers' meet hosted by Britain, delegates vow a strong stance with respect to Ukraine

REUTERS
LIVERPOOL

The world's wealthiest democracies on Saturday sought to present a united front against Russian aggression toward Ukraine as Britain hosted a meeting of Foreign Ministers in the northern English city of Liverpool.

The G7 meeting, attended in person by U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and his counterparts from France, Italy, Germany, Japan and Canada, comes amid international concern that Russia could invade Ukraine. Russia denies planning any attack.

Ahead of the formal discussions, British Foreign Minister Liz Truss met Mr. Blinken on Friday night where they expressed deep concern about the build-up of Russian troops on Ukraine's border, Britain's foreign office said in a statement.

Any incursion by Russia "would be a strategic mistake for which there would be serious consequences," the foreign office added.



Show of strength: U.K. Foreign Secretary Liz Truss, centre, along with G7 Foreign Ministers at the Museum of Liverpool on Saturday. ■ AP

"We need to come together strongly to stand up to aggressors who are seeking to destabilise behaviour, and has said it needs security guarantees for its own protection."

Ministers arrived at the Museum of Liverpool to a brass band playing Christmas carols, before convening the first formal meeting session which will look at geopolitical issues including nuclear talks with Iran and the military buildup in Iran.

"What the G7 meeting this weekend .. is about unity and the United States of destabilising behaviour, and has said it needs security guarantees for its own protection."

Ministers told reporters ahead of the talks.

Age of introspection

Britain, as current chair of the G7, is calling for its members to be more strident in their defence of what it calls "the free world".

Earlier this week, Ms. Truss

between like-minded major economies, that we are going to absolutely be strong in our stance against aggression, with respect to Ukraine," Ms. Truss told reporters ahead of the talks.

Democracy

Britain, as current chair of the G7, is calling for its members to be more strident in their defence of what it calls "the free world".

Earlier this week, Ms. Truss

Truss said the "age of introspection" for the West was over and it needed to wake up to the dangers of rival ideologies. She has highlighted the economic risks of Europe's dependence on Russian gas and the wider security threat posed by Chinese technology as examples.

The G7 meeting is also expected to result in a joint call for Iran to moderate its nuclear programme and grasp the opportunity of ongoing talks in Vienna to revive a multilateral agreement on its nuclear development.

Both Ms. Truss and Mr. Blinken stressed the need for Iran to engage in the talks.

Germany, which takes over the rotating G7 leadership from Britain next year, is expected to set out its programme for 2022 at the meeting.

Ministers from the European Union, Australia, South Korea and India will take part in some sessions as guests of the G7, along with representatives from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

China brands U.S. democracy 'weapon of mass destruction'

Beijing's response follows the Democracy Summit snub

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BEIJING



Retaliatory response: China has ramped up a propaganda blitz criticising U.S. democracy as corrupt and a failure. ■ AP

cite division and confrontation." Instead, Beijing vowed to "resolutely resist and oppose all kinds of pseudo-democracies".

People's democracy

Ahead of the summit, China ramped up a propaganda blitz criticising U.S. democracy as corrupt and a failure.

Instead, it touted its own version of "whole-process people's democracy" in a white paper released last week that aimed to shore up legitimacy for the ruling Communist Party, which has

become increasingly authoritarian under President Xi Jinping.

While the U.S. has repeatedly denied there will be another Cold War with China, tensions between the world's two largest economies have spiralled in recent years over issues including trade and technological competition, human rights, Xinjiang and Taiwan.

Taiwan, a democratic self-ruling island that is claimed by China, was invited to the U.S. summit in a clear snub to its larger neighbour.

Blinken takes up Iran deal with leaders

REUTERS
LONDON

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Friday held a "productive" meeting with counterparts from Britain, Germany and France, including a discussion of the Iran nuclear deal, a State Department spokesperson said on Saturday.

Talks between Iran and world powers over reviving a 2015 nuclear deal resumed in Vienna on Thursday.

Productive meeting
"Secretary Blinken had a productive meeting with his E3 counterparts from Germany, France, and the U.K. in Liverpool yesterday. They discussed the JCPOA (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action) talks and our way forward," the State Department spokesperson said.

The meeting took place in the northern English city of Liverpool on the eve of a G7 Foreign Ministers' meeting which is expected to result in a joint call for Iran to moderate its nuclear programme and grasp the opportunity of talks in Vienna.

Previous fallout
Under the original nuclear deal that then-President Donald Trump abandoned in 2018, Iran limited its nuclear programme in return for relief from U.S., European Union and UN sanctions. The West fears the programme would be used to develop weapons, something Tehran denies.

Canadian pleads guilty to narrating IS videos

His voice had a role in 2 scribes' deaths

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

2019 by Kurdish-dominated Syrian forces allied with the United States. He was turned over to U.S. authorities and charged.

Khalifa left Canada in 2013 to join the Islamic State group in Syria, and by the next year had become a key member of its propaganda department because of his fluent English and Arabic.

The cell was behind videos showing the beheadings of foreigners including the U.S. journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff.

The films he narrated included two of the most violent propaganda films IS produced: "Flames of War," distributed in 2014, and "Flames of War II," three years later.

At least 70 dead in Kentucky after storms

Tornadoes rip through at least five U.S. States, 110 people trapped in Amazon warehouse

ASSOCIATED PRESS
MAYFIELD

Kentucky's Governor said at least 70 people may have died in the state and the toll was climbing after tornadoes and severe weather ripped through at least five states, leaving widespread devastation.

Gov. Andy Beshear said the twister touched down for more than 200 miles in Kentucky and the death toll could exceed 100 across 10 or more counties.

"This has been the most devastating tornado event in our state's history," Mr. Beshear said at a news conference Saturday.

The storms hit a candle facto-



Thrown off track: A train that was derailed after a devastating outbreak of tornadoes in Kentucky, U.S. on December 11. ■ REUTERS

ry in Kentucky, an Amazon facility in Illinois and a nursing home in Arkansas. Beshear said about 110 people were in the Mayfield

factory when the tornado hit.

By late morning, officials had confirmed 18 deaths. But Mr. Beshear said the toll was certain

to rise, with at least 10 persons feared dead in his state's Muhlenberg County and an undetermined number in and around the city of Bowling Green.

Rescue efforts were complicated because Mayfield's main fire station and emergency services hub were also hit by the tornado, said Jeremy Creason, the city's fire chief and EMS director.

At least one person died at an Amazon facility in Edwardsville, Illinois, Police Chief Mike Fillback told reporters on Saturday morning. The roof of the building was ripped off and a wall collapsed.

A feminist retelling of 'Nineteen Eighty-Four'

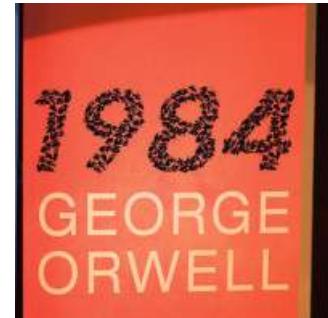
American writer penning a new version of Orwell's masterpiece through the eyes of Julia

SUDIPTA DATTA

When Donald Trump became U.S. President, sales of George Orwell's dystopian novel against totalitarianism, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, and other cautionary tales soared. The more Mr. Trump uttered improbable and alternative facts, comparisons were drawn to Orwell's depiction of the totalitarian state of Oceania ruled by Big Brother and its Thought Police, which banned all personal ideas with people living on the assumption that every sound you made was overheard, and, except in darkness, every movement scrutinised". Now, as reported by *The Guardian*, the Orwell Estate has approved the publication of a feminist retelling of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, told through the perspective of Julia, protagonist Winston Smith's lover.

American writer Sandra Newman's *Julia, 1984: A Novel*

will be published by *Granta* in 2023. In the original, Smith works at The Ministry of Truth, rewriting the past as instructed by Big Brother, and he begins an affair with Julia of the Fiction Department. The first time they meet, Julia surprises him by telling him his name. When he wonders how she found out, she quips, "I expect I'm better at finding things out than you are, dear." As Bill Hamilton, literary executor of the Orwell Estate, is quoted as saying, "Newman gets under the skin of Big Brother's world in a completely convincing way which is both true to the original but also gives a dramatically different narrative to stand alongside the original. The millions of readers who have been brought up with



Sandra Newman's version will be published in 2023.

Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* will find this a provocative and satisfying companion."

In the original, Julia is delighted when Winston tells her he thought she was part of the Thought Police. She is good at disguises, she tells him, "I always look cheerful and I

never shirk anything. Always yell with the crowd, that's what I say. It's the only way to be safe." While the original begins with a sentence of foreboding: "It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen," Ms. Newman starts her book thus. "It was the man from Records who began it, him all unknowing in his prim, grim way, his above-it-all oldthink way. Comrade Smith was his right name, though 'Comrade' never suited him somehow. Of course, if you felt foolish calling someone 'Comrade', far better not to speak to them at all."

'Ideal citizen'
"She has known no other world and, until she meets Winston, never imagined one. She's opportunistic, believing in nothing and caring not at all about politics. She routinely

breaks the rules but also collaborates with the regime whenever necessary. She's an ideal citizen of Oceania. But when one day, finding herself walking toward Winston Smith in a long corridor, she impulsively hands him a note - a potentially suicidal gesture - she comes to realise that she's losing her grip and can no longer safely navigate her world," *Granta* told *The Guardian*. Ms. Newman has written four novels and had been shortlisted for The Guardian First Book Award for *The Only Good Thing One Has Ever Done*.

Orwell's famous novel has been adapted many times both in print and film; as a recent fictional review of Shakespeare's works, including Margaret Atwood's *Hag-Seed*, a retelling of *The Tempest*, and J.K. Rowling's *Macbeth*.

China brands U.S. democracy 'weapon of mass destruction'

Beijing's response follows the Democracy Summit snub

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BEIJING

China branded U.S. democracy a "weapon of mass destruction" on Saturday, following the U.S.-organised Summit for Democracy which aimed to shore up like-minded allies in the face of autocratic regimes.

China was left out of the two-day virtual summit and responded by angrily accusing U.S. President Joe Biden of stoking Cold War-era ideological divides.

China was left out of the two-day virtual summit and responded by angrily accusing U.S. President Joe Biden of stoking Cold War-era ideological divides.

"Democracy" has long become a "weapon of mass destruction" used by the U.S. to interfere in other countries,

Germany, which takes over the rotating G7 leadership from Britain next year, is expected to set out its programme for 2022 at the meeting.

Ministers from the European Union, Australia, South Korea and India will take part in some sessions as guests of the G7, along with representatives from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Blast rocks Palestinian camp in south Lebanon

Hamas, authorities blame each other

REUTERS
BEIRUT

A large explosion rocked a Palestinian camp in the southern Lebanese port city of Tyre on Friday night, causing a number of injuries and leading to reports of a number of deaths.

It said China's artificial intelligence company SenseTime, and two ethnic Uighur political leaders in Xinjiang, Shohrat Zakir and Erkin Tuniyaz, took part in the sweeping oppression of Uighurs.

The Treasury accused Pyongyang's government-run animation firm, SEK Studio, and companies and individuals related to it, of exploiting North Korean workers to earn much-needed foreign currency and avoid sanctions on the country.

The NNA reported that the blast emanated from a Hamas weapons depot in the Burj al-Shemali camp and a judge had ordered security forces to launch an investigation.

Shehab News Agency, seen as close to Hamas, quoted a Palestinian source as saying the explosion was caused by the ignition of oxygen canisters stored for use in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hamas has not officially commented. It maintains a presence in a number of Palestinian camps in Lebanon.

The area surrounding the blast had been evacuated and rescue crews had deployed, the Palestinian source said.

IN THE HIGH COURT OF HIMACHAL PRADESH SHIMLA In the matter of M/s. Indian Technomac Company Limited (In Liquidation)

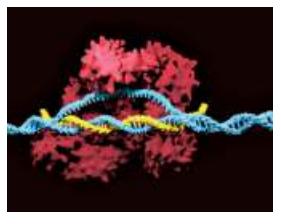
Company Petition No. 13 of 2014 SALE NOTICE

In pursuance of the orders of the Hon'ble High Court, Himachal Pradesh, dated 02.08.2019 & 08.08.2019 and subsequent orders passed on this behalf dated 15/09/2020 24-12-2020 25-10-2021 and.....29-11-2021 in Company Petition No.13/2014, sealed tenders cum auction are invited from the intending bidders by the undersigned for the purchase of movable, immovable and current assets of M/s. Indian Technomac Company Limited (In Liquidation) described hereunder on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" scheduled to be auctioned on dated 28 December, 2021. The particulars of the properties are given hereunder in the table:

Table-1

Lot No.	Name and Description of Lot Property	Location of the property	Reserve Price [in Crores]	EMD @ 10% of Reserve Price [in Crores]	Specific Condition Bidding
1.	Land (189-01-16) Bighas	M/s Indian Technomac Company Ltd. Address: Village Jagatpur, PO Misserawala, Paonta Sahib, Himachal Pradesh herein after shall be called as "Factory Premises" for the purpose of brevity in this notice and brochure enclosed and all proceedings connected therewith.	148.79	14.88	
2.	Other Land 76-13-00 Bighas	(i) HB No. 156, Rampur Majri [46-13-00] Bighas (ii) HB No. 157, Bharapur [30-00-00] Bighas, Paonta Sahib	18.66	1.87	Open to all bidders
3.	Fixed Building and Shed	Factory Premises	41.43	4.14	
	[A] Immoveable Property Assets Land & Plant Value (1+2+3)		220.88	22.01	
3.	Vehicles	* Factory Premises*	1.21	0.12	
4.	All Moveable Assets (Plant & machinery) (Except Electrical Equipments)	* Factory Premises*	54.11	5.41	
5.	All Moveable Assets (Plant & machinery) (Electrical Equipment's)	* Factory Premises*	32.60	3.26*	
	B] Moveable Assets, Plant & Machinery Value (3+4+5) Value		87.92	8.79</td	

SNAPSHOTS



Single sex litters

Using CRISPR-Cas9 tool, scientists have created female-only and male-only mice litters with 100% efficiency. The proof-of-principle study, published in *Nature Communications*, uses a two-part genetic system to inactivate embryos shortly after fertilization so that only the desired sex would grow further.



Singing birds

Research published in *Global Ecology and Conservation* counts the number of countries in which wild birds are used in singing contests - a place where male birds are required to exhibit their song, plumage and movements. The researchers find at least 36 bird species are used thus in about 22 countries. They point out a correlation between this practice and decline of numbers within species.



The deadly spring

A study published in *Scientific Reports* conclusively pins down impact of the Chicxulub meteorite in springtime. This, 66 million years ago, ended the 165-million-year dominion of dinosaurs, wiping out 75% of life on Earth, allowing a new order to emerge. This has been a major question until now; the answer enhances the ability to trace the first stages of damage to life on Earth.



Emerging stars

A study published in *The Astrophysical Journal* documents the identification of three very young stars near the centre of our galaxy. The discovery was made using European Southern Observatory's Very Large Telescope based in Chile. These stars began to form a million years ago. Compared to our Sun which is about five billion years old, this is very young.

How the idea of vaccine protection changed in one year

From being centred around the idea of 'herd immunity', over a period of a year, the narrative has now shifted to that of booster doses

R. PRASAD

One year ago, on December 11, 2020, Pfizer's vaccine for COVID-19 was granted an emergency use authorisation, and exactly a week later Moderna vaccine was granted an EUA. On December 30, 2020, AstraZeneca was given an EUA by the U.K. drug regulatory body. In India, the drug regulator granted a restricted use authorisation to both Covishield and Covaxin on January 3, this year.

The discussion for months before and after the vaccines got an EUA was centred around achieving herd immunity - where a large percentage of the population is infected or vaccinated so that virus spread in the population is significantly slowed or stopped. Achieving herd immunity was seen as an end goal of the pandemic.

It was made to appear that we could vaccinate our way out of the pandemic and get back to normal times. The over 90% efficacy against symptomatic disease by both the mRNA vaccines made that goal of ending the pandemic look simple and straightforward.

Except for AstraZeneca and Covaxin vaccines, which also tested trial participants for asymptomatic COVID-19, the efficacy of the two mRNA vaccines were based on their ability to prevent symptomatic COVID-19. This was despite the fact that about 80% of infections were asymptomatic. That asymptotically infected people could still spread the virus to

others was overlooked.

Besides major issues of vaccine availability in most countries, vaccine hesitancy and approvals being limited to adults in the beginning meant that reaching this desired percentage needed for achieving herd immunity even in countries which had easy access to vaccines would take several months.

Herd immunity

As new variants of the SARS-CoV-2 virus emerge, the thinking on strategies to overcome COVID-19 change

- Initially, the talk centred around achieving herd immunity
- Even for countries with vaccines, it appeared that achieving herd immunity would take several months
- The emergence of the Delta variant and spread of virus by vaccinated people changed the calculus
- The discussion around herd immunity died slowly
- In the case of the Omicron variant, early data from South Africa suggest that available vaccines are "holding up" against severe disease and death
- Even as the U.S. has approved booster shots for all adults, the WHO first called for a moratorium on booster doses till year-end
- The WHO now said immunocompromised people and those who received an inactivated vaccine may receive a third dose



GETTY IMAGES

cause breakthrough infections even in fully vaccinated people, and such people shedding the virus and infecting others completely changed the calculus.

Off the charts

It not only forced CDC to revise its masking guidelines in end-July, but both herd immunity and the idea of vaccinating our way out of the pandemic were off the charts. The discussion around herd immunity died slowly. Scientists soon realised that it is necessary to vaccinate almost everyone. "Expecting the benefit to pass on to the unvaccinated does not seem to be possible with this virus," epidemiologist Dr. Giridhara Babu of PHFI had earlier told *The Hindu*.

"The narrative of herd immunity and vaccinating one's way out of the pandemic was flawed from the beginning. Herd immunity does

not apply to coronavirus. These viruses cause recurrent infection. Herd immunity applies to viruses such as measles, where immunity is of the sterilising type, and vaccination of a large segment of the population results in suppression of the epidemic," Dr. Jayadevan, Vice Chairman, Research Cell, Kerala State IMA says in an email.

And Pfizer began aggressively making a case for providing booster doses.

Waning immunity

Pfizer began raising concerns about waning immunity despite full vaccination based on vaccine effectiveness studies. But the sharply declining protection that Pfizer was referring to was based on neutralising antibodies which shield the vaccinated people from breakthrough infections. While the Delta variant caused more breakthrough infec-

tions even in fully vaccinated people, the vaccines still remained highly effective against severe disease, hospitalisation and death.

According to a December 9 paper published in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, the effectiveness of Pfizer vaccine against "symptomatic infection was higher than effectiveness against asymptomatic infection but waned similarly. Variant-specific effectiveness waned in the same pattern".

Most importantly, the effectiveness against severe disease and death reached over 96% two months after the second dose and persisted at nearly the same level for six months.

"The only randomised trial on boosters so far that measured disease outcomes was conducted by Pfizer. There was no difference in severe disease between the two- and three-dose groups," says Dr. Jayadevan. "In fact,

iant would be able to evade vaccine protection altogether, says Dr. Michael Ryan of the WHO.

A December 8 press release from Pfizer said that two doses showed over 25-fold reduction in neutralisation titres against the Omicron variant in people who had received two doses. But importantly, it said it believes that people vaccinated with two doses "may still be protected against severe forms of the disease".

Protection offered by vaccination in previously infected people has been found to be far superior to protection conferred by full vaccination in infection-naïve individuals. A study posted in the preprint server *medRxiv*, which is yet to be peer-reviewed, found that compared with full vaccination using Pfizer vaccine, immunity gained from infection offered longer lasting and stronger protection against symptomatic disease and hospitalisation caused by the Delta variant.

"There is no evidence on the ground so far that severe disease, hospitalisation or death has been increasing among fully vaccinated people in India," Dr. Jayadevan says. "However, breakthrough infections have been occurring, the vast majority of which are asymptomatic or mild."

Vaccines holding up

According to WHO, even in the case of the Omicron variant, early data from South Africa suggest that currently available vaccines are "holding up in protection" against severe disease and death.

Though the existing vaccines might prove less effective against Omicron, it is "highly unlikely" the Omicron var-

Galaxy with no dark matter

STAFF REPORTER

Astronomers led by researchers from the Netherlands have found no trace of dark matter in the galaxy AGC 114905. An ultra-diffuse dwarf galaxy, AGC 114905, is about 250 million light-years away. The word dwarf here refers to its luminosity (MNRAS).

The researchers collected data on the rotation of gas in AGC 114905 for 40 hours with the Very Large Array telescope. Subsequently, they plotted the distance of the gas from the centre of the galaxy on the x-axis and the rotation speed of the gas on the y-axis. The graph shows that the motions of the gas in AGC 114905 can be completely explained by normal matter.

**Question Corner****Mystery in meteorites**

What information do beads of glass in meteorites hold?

Most meteorites contain tiny beads of glass that date back to the earliest days of the solar system, before planets formed.

Now, scientists with Chicago University have published an analysis of how these beads came to be, and what they can tell us about the early solar system.

The beads of glass inside these meteorites are called chondrules. But what exactly caused the formation of these chondrules remains unclear.

Scientists can find clues about the early days of the solar system by looking at the types of a given element in a rock. Elements can come in several different forms, called isotopes, and the proportion in

each rock varies according to what happened when that rock was born, how hot it was, whether it cooled slowly or was flash-frozen. From there, scientists can piece together a history of likely events.

Scientists at the University of Chicago measured the concentrations and isotopes of two elements that are depleted in meteorites, potassium and rubidium.

The team pieced together what must have been happening as the chondrules formed. The elements would have been part of a clump of dust that got hot enough to melt, and then to vapourize. Then, as the material cooled at a rate of around 500 degrees C per hour, some of that vapour coalesced back into chondrules.

They theorise that massive shockwaves passing through the early nebula could have been sudden and violent enough to cause this extreme heating and cooling, says a University of Chicago release.

Readers may send their questions / answers to questioncorner@thehindu.co.in

Heat shock and cold sensitivity

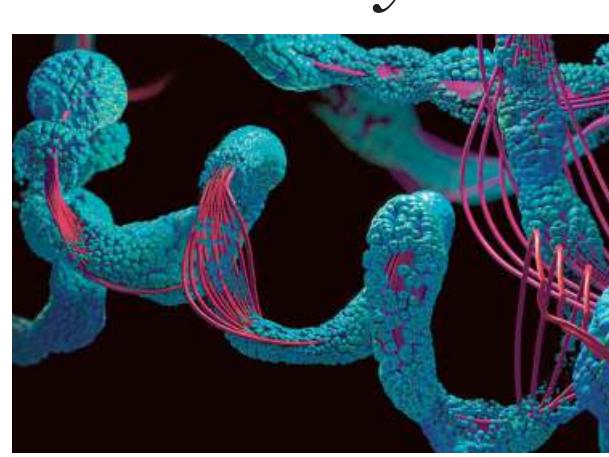
How chaperone proteins work to maintain normal cellular function

**SPEAKING OF SCIENCE**

D. BALASUBRAMANIAN

DNA is a linear chain of nucleotides, portions of which are faithfully transcribed into linear messenger RNA. The message in this RNA is translated into strings of amino acids - proteins. Proteins need to take a precise three-dimensional shape to become functional entities. This protein folding does not happen all by itself, at least most of the time. A special bunch of proteins called molecular chaperones assist in correctly folding the protein.

Chaperones in biology
The idea of chaperones may sound quaint and Victorian, but in biological systems they play crucial roles. After the new protein chain has been shaped correctly, chaperones move on. Or else the new chain is eliminated. Without chaperones, newly synthesised proteins would soon become a tangled mess of insoluble aggregates, hind-



Busy molecules: Parts of the DNA are faithfully transcribed into linear messenger RNA. This message is then translated into proteins. ■ GETTY IMAGES

dering cellular processes. Many molecular chaperones belong to the class of "heat shock" proteins (or stress-response proteins). This is because whenever an organism is subjected to elevated temperatures - a heat shock - proteins in the system begin to lose their native shapes, and chaperones are produced in large quantities to restore order. Chaperones are needed under physiological conditions too, for normal cellular function.

Misfolding of proteins can cause a number of diseases. Alpha-synuclein protein, present in neurons, is wrongly folded in Parkinson's disease. Brains of Alzheimer's patients have plaques formed from aggregates of amyloid beta-peptide. This accumulation of amyloid fibrils is toxic, leading to widespread destruction of neurons - a "neurodegenerative"

CIn normal cells 1%-2% of all proteins present are heat shock proteins.

rare disorder make diagnosis difficult - it often takes ten years from first clinical presentation to a confirmed diagnosis.

The first family with confirmed FCAS in India was reported only in August this year. Sagar Bhattacharjee and colleagues, at the Aster CMI Hospital in Bengaluru, traced the genetic underpinnings of FCAS in a four-year-old boy who frequently suffered from winter rashes. It turns out that several family members, including his paternal great-grandfather, had similar symptoms. This was published in *Indian Journal of Pediatrics*, August 2021, 88(8):834.

Triggering inflammation
Addressing the role of HSC70 in sensing low temperatures, the group of Ghanshyam Swarup at the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology has worked out a framework for the triggering of autoinflammatory conditions. This was published in *The FEBS Journal*, 2021; doi:10.1111/febs.16203. Disorders related to cold sensitivity are caused by mutations in proteins that

regulate inflammation. At normal body temperatures, HSC70 is able to coax these mutated proteins to fold correctly and thus function normally. In cold conditions, however, the HSC70 molecule is itself slightly altered in its shape and is not able to universally interact with the mutated regulators of inflammation. This leads to a pathological state with symptoms such as chills, joint pains and red skin rashes setting in within two hours.

Cancer cells divide at break-neck pace, and heat shock proteins are very important in maintaining the stressful cancerous state. An overabundance of heat shock proteins in cancer cells is an indicator of a poor prognosis. Cancerous cells accumulate mutations in proteins that would normally suppress tumours. HSC70 and HSP90 play the roles of villains, as they continue to fold the mutated proteins, thus allowing tumour progression. In the laboratory, inhibitors of HSP90 have shown much promise as anti-cancer agents. However, no inhibitor has yet been approved for human use, as the levels required for these to be effective are too toxic for your body.





Locked in: Airlines stopped flying from South Africa, amidst the spread of the new Omicron variant. ■ REUTERS

Two Omicron variants

In what way does the sub-lineage, BA.2, differ from the original? Will this make it harder to track?

R. PRASAD

The story so far: The World Health Organization designated Omicron (B.1.1.529) as a variant of concern on November 26, three days after the genome sequence was deposited in a public database by South Africa and Botswana. Based on genome sequence data, scientists have identified a sub-lineage – BA.2 – of Omicron. As a result, the Omicron variant has been split into two sub-lineages, namely BA.1, "for the original globally-distributed lineage", and BA.2, "for the new outlier lineage".

Why is BA.2 called a sub-lineage?

■ The BA.2 has a "cluster of sequences that share many of the same mutations as the 'original' Omicron (BA.1) but is missing some mutations and has some other new ones," Dr Emma Hodcroft, co-developer of Next Strain, tweeted. The BA is an alias for B.1.1.529, now redefined to encompass both BA.1 and BA.2.

While BA.2 is genetically quite different from the sub-lineage BA.1, BA.1 and BA.2 are two divergent clusters with a common ancestor, says a senior scientist. Both BA.1 and BA.2 are equal sub-lineages of B.1.1.529.

Since both have a common ancestor, how many mutations in the spike protein are common and how many are unique to each?

■ The B.1.1.529 cluster, which includes both BA.1 and BA.2, has 86 mutations, of which 40 mutations are in the spike protein alone. While 12 mutations have been found exclusively in the spike protein of BA.1, the BA.2

sub-lineage has seven exclusive mutations in the spike protein. Twenty-one mutations in the spike protein are common to both BA.1 and BA.2.

As on December 9, the genome sequence data from seven samples across the world have been posted on the public database. Of the seven, five sequences have been deposited from Canada, and one each from South Africa and Australia.

Compared to the small number of BA.2 genome sequences deposited so far, there are over 1,000 sequences of BA.1 that have been deposited in the database from across the world.

Can the sub-lineage BA.2 be identified by RT-PCR tests?

■ The new sub-lineage named recently, BA.2, cannot be identified by the primers used in the RT-PCR (reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction) test. While the BA.1 sub-lineage carries the characteristic S-gene dropout mutation, the BA.2 does not have this mutation.

The currently used primers in RT-PCR tests carry sequences that target three genes, one of which is the S-gene. Since the BA.1 sub-lineage carries the S-gene dropout mutation, only two of the three targets in the primer will turn positive when the BA.1 sample is tested by RT-PCR. The S-gene in the primer does not test positive due to the presence of the S-gene dropout mutation. The test being positive for two genes but not for the S-gene is a convenient way of knowing that the sample tested is a sub-lineage BA.1 of the Omicron variant. In short, the S-gene dropout is a proxy to identify the BA.1 sub-lineage.

Since BA.2 does not carry the S-gene dropout mutation, all the three target sequences in the RT-PCR primer will test positive. Hence, it will not be possible to straightaway know if the sample tested is a sub-lineage of the Omicron variant. Only by genome sequencing can one identify if a sample belongs to the BA.2 sub-lineage.

Will BA.2 have higher transmissibility and/or immune escape?

■ According to a senior scientist, the additional seven mutations in the spike protein do not provide sufficient evidence in terms of increased immune escape and transmissibility. Even individually, these seven mutations have not been implicated with either significant immune escape or enhanced transmission. As of now, the combined effect of the seven mutations is not known either.

"The designation aims to aid scientific discussion and does not imply an assessment of the lineages' transmission properties," the Pango Network said in a tweet.

Do the two sub-lineages change the manner in which patients are treated?

■ No, the clinical management of patients with any degree of disease severity remains the same immaterial of whether they have been infected with one of the Omicron sub-lineages or the Delta variant.

Will U.S. directives on 5G use impact flights?

Can expansion of 5G networks and aviation co-exist in a safe manner? What has the FAA directed?

MURALI N. KRISHNASWAMY

The story so far: On December 7, 2021, the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) issued two airworthiness directives (with effect from December 9, 2021) that are to create a framework as well as gather more information about the potential effects of 5G on crucial aviation safety equipment. The FAA also said that it is working with the Federal Communications Commission and wireless companies to ensure that the expansion of 5G and aviation can co-exist in a safe manner.

Why is it significant?

■ On November 2, 2021, the FAA issued a Special Airworthiness Information Bulletin which had "initial information about possible interference from 5G C-band wireless transmissions". These steps are significant as American wireless communications companies get ready in early January 2022 to begin transmission in the "C-band" (in 46 places), which is a range that is close to the one used by certain aircraft equipment. This will be in addition to other frequencies already in use for 5G.

What is the essence of the FAA directives?

■ In short, the directives affect two categories of air transportation, the first being transport and commuter-category aircraft and the second, helicopters. It is estimated that over 6,800 aircraft equipped with radio altimeters will be affected; they include aircraft made by Airbus, Boeing, Embraer and Gulfstream to name a few.

The directives address the "threat of potential radar altimeter interference" from 5G cellular in the 3700 MHz-3800 MHz frequency, or the C-band – another report gives it as between 3700 MHz-4200 MHz – which is close to the 4200 MHz-4400 MHz range used by aircraft radio altimeters, says the FAA. The directives will also require highlights in flight/flight operation manuals that will limit flight operations when such interference is experienced. Operations by aircraft, including large jets, could be restricted. Some may be prohibited from using certain landing and navigation systems in places where there is scope for potential interference from new 5G cellular networks. The restrictions could be severe for smaller aircraft and helicopters. Overall, these could result in flight cancellations, delays or diversions in 46 places where these towers are, according to an aviation report.

A report says that telecom firms in the U.S. are expected to begin activating additional 5G frequencies as early as January 5, 2022. In November 2021, these firms had announced voluntarily restricting power output at cell towers (using these frequencies) near an estimated 46 airports and other strategic locations for about six months. The FAA has also sought specific data about the locations of 5G towers, their power supply and angles to study how they can interfere with aircraft approaches. This could lead to what experts call "more-tailored" warnings that are less disruptive".

What is the aircraft equipment that can be affected?

■ A senior Airbus commander and examiner told *The Hindu* that all medium and large commercial aircraft have two types of altimeters – pressure altimeter and radio altimeter. The pressure altimeter, which displays the altitude of the aircraft in relation to mean sea level, is used for all purposes of air traffic control reporting, and maintenance of separation and altitude as all aircraft can use a specified common datum such as MSL or airfield altitude. Most commercial aircraft have two radio altimeters.

The radio altimeter measures height (not altitude) of the aircraft above the surface immediately below. For this



Some aircraft, including large jets, could be restricted from using certain landing and navigation systems in places where there is scope for potential interference from new 5G cellular networks.

purpose, it transmits a radio signal directly below. In all modern commercial aircraft, the radio altimeter is a very important tool used for precision approaches and landing. There are various other systems that depend on inputs from the radio altimeter – for example, predictive windshear, ground proximity warning system, traffic collision avoidance system, and auto landing, he said. Any disturbance caused to internal radio altimeter readings caused by 5G or other equipment transmitting in frequency bands close to it can result in disastrous effects on crucial systems during approach/landing.

Another senior commander who flies Boeing aircraft said that the problem can get amplified because the radio altimeter is essential for any type of precision approach, which in this day and age is used at major airports almost 100%.

What are the takeaways from the directives?

■ According to Captain A. (Mohan) Ranganathan, a former airline instructor pilot and aviation safety adviser, there are four important points.

The first is: "Prohibited operations include instrument landing system approaches (ILS), required navigation performance (RNP) operations, automatic landing operations and some use of enhanced flight vision systems and other flight control systems." Captain Ranganathan says that if ILS, RNP operations and Autoland are prohibited, the entire operations come under what is called as a non-precision approach category which will require increased visibility and obstacle clearance limit requirements. For airports and passengers, this will result in additional flight times and also more fuel requirement for each flight as the separation between flights will increase that will have a domino effect of flight delays.

The second: the FAA's separate order for helicopters likewise prohibits automated flight that requires use of radio altimeter data in 5G-affected areas. Those operations include auto-hovering. This means that helicopters flying in all areas within the vicinity of a city or town will become impossible unless they revert to manual flights.

The third: there is a warning of potential interference from both transmissions from 5G base stations and from the handheld phones of passengers. This is the biggest danger, he says, as a majority of passengers do not switch off their cell phones. This could pose extreme danger

when flying in the vicinity of major airports. Even if 5G towers are prohibited within a certain radius, any passenger switching on and using the (5G) phone while the aircraft is at lower altitudes and hovering due to delays, can cause a problem.

The fourth: for large commercial aircraft, the risk is limited to "specific scenarios", but can cause "extreme" consequences in some circumstances, such as when aircraft are performing reduced-visibility instrument approaches, says the directive. Reduced visibility approaches, he says, pose a big danger as you are close to the ground and a false input to the autopilot system due to erroneous signals can result in a crash.

Stringent rules and punishment criteria are required to enforce safety, Captain Ranganathan told *The Hindu*.

Is there an issue with mobile phone use?

■ In 2000, Swiss aviation investigators believed that "electrical interference from a mobile phone" could have been a factor in the crash of a small aircraft, Crossair flight LX 498, shortly after take-off. Earlier this year, the French Civil Aviation Authority had warned that the latest generation of smartphones, 5G, can interfere with aircraft altitude instruments, and recommended that they should be turned off during flight.

What about the implications for India?

■ The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) did not respond to an email by *The Hindu* for its comments. But a senior Boeing commander said pilots in India were aware of the implications of 5G in the country, adding that there was no official communication on the subject so far. In India, 5G could be rolled out in the 3.2 GHz-3.6 GHz band, which may not have the potential to interfere with aircraft operations, says an expert.

What is the way ahead?

■ The senior Airbus commander said that there needs to be a lot more research to realise the full implications of 5G on the radio altimeter and other aircraft systems. There could be expensive protective counter measures or mitigating procedures, but till then, staying away from 5G seems to be the easiest and safest option.

An aviation expert said wireless carriers could also operate in certain frequencies within the C-band, leaving what is called a buffer between 5G signals and frequencies used in aviation. And, Captain Ranganathan said that in India, the DGCA should order a ban on 5G towers within 15 nautical mile radius of any airfield with precision approaches such as ILS. With densely built-up areas in many cities that are coming up or that are close to airports, interference to navigation signals can be catastrophic.

Which States in the N.E. are under AFSPA?

Why is the demand for repealing the law getting more vocal? What powers does it confer on the armed forces?

K. VENKATARAMAN

The story so far: The killing of 14 civilians in a botched military operation in Nagaland has led to fresh calls for repealing The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA), a stringent law that allows the armed forces to use maximum force in an area declared as "disturbed". Following the incident on December 4, the demand for repealing the law has become quite vociferous. Among those calling for its withdrawal are the Chief Ministers of Nagaland and Meghalaya.

What is the origin of AFSPA?

■ In the wake of the partition riots, four ordinances were promulgated in 1947. The first was the Bengal Disturbed Areas (Special Powers of Armed Forces) Ordinance; this was followed by ordinances for Assam, East Punjab and Delhi, and the United Provinces. These were replaced by a common legislation, the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1948. This was meant to be in force for one year, but was repealed only in 1957.

Thereafter, the President promulgated the Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Ordinance in May 1958. This was subsequently replaced by an act of Parliament. Initially known as the Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Act, 1958, it was subsequently adapted appropriately after the creation of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura.

Which parts of the country come under AFSPA?

■ The AFSPA has been in force for decades in most parts of the Northeast States. Under this law, an area can be declared a 'disturbed area', bringing into play the protection it offers to the armed forces for use of force in the notified area. The notification is extended periodically, mostly for six months at a time.

As of today, the whole of Assam and Nagaland are 'disturbed areas'. The last six-month extension was made on August 28 and June 30 respectively. The whole of Manipur, with the exception of the Imphal municipal area, has been notified by the State government for one year from December 2020.



Long road: Protests demanding the repeal of AFSPA have been ongoing for decades. ■ FILE PHOTO

In a 'disturbed area', any officer of the armed forces may fire upon or use force, even to the point of causing death, against any person for the maintenance of public order.

In Arunachal Pradesh, the 'disturbed area' notification is confined to the districts of Tirap, Changlang and Longding, and the areas falling under Namsai and Mahadevpur police stations, bordering Assam.

The AFSPA was revoked in Tripura in May 2015, after being in force since February 1997. It was revoked by a decision of the State Cabinet following substantial improvement in the ground situation.

Meghalaya was under AFSPA for 27 years, until it was revoked from April 1, 2018. The Act was implemented in a 20-km area along the border with Assam.

Jammu and Kashmir has a separate J&K Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1990.

What does the Act say?

■ The Act empowers the Governor of any State, or the Administrator of a Union Territory, or the Central

Government to notify parts of or the whole of a State or a Union Territory as a 'disturbed area', if they consider that the condition in such areas is so dangerous or disturbed that the use of the armed forces is necessary in aid of civil power.

In such a notified area, any officer of the armed forces may fire upon or use force, even to the point of causing death, against any person for the maintenance of public order. This must be done after giving due warning as considered necessary, and the target must be a person who is contravening any law, or order prohibiting the assembly of five or more persons, and carrying weapons, firearms or ammunition.

The Act allows arrest and search of any premises without a warrant in a notified area, and the recovery of any confined person, or any arms and ammunition stored unlawfully. The armed forces may also destroy any hideout, or arms dump or fortified area or shelter from which armed attacks are being launched, or any arms training is being carried out.

No person can be prosecuted or subjected to any legal proceedings for action taken under the Act, without the Central Government's previous sanction.

Why do many demand its repeal?

■ Detractors and human rights organisations, as well as many sections of civil society, argue that the Act encourages impunity and is the cause of many instances of excesses and atrocities committed by the armed forces under its protective cover.

From Champa Sharmila, an activist from Manipur, became an iconic figure symbolising the struggle against AFSPA after she sat on an indefinite fast in 2000, demanding its repeal. She ended it only in August 2016.

In 2005, a Government-appointed five-member committee headed by retired Supreme Court judge, B. P. Jeevan Reddy, recommended that AFSPA be repealed. It suggested that the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act could be suitably amended to deal with terrorism. It made this recommendation as it felt that the AFSPA created an impression that the people of the Northeast States were being targeted for hostile treatment.

However, the Army has been resolutely opposed to the repeal of AFSPA.

TPP

The Taliban that's fighting Pakistan

Emboldened by the return of the Afghan Taliban to power in Kabul, their ideological brethren in Pakistan look set to fight a long battle

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE

The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan's (TTP) recent decision to end a ceasefire with the Imran Khan Government has turned the tables on Pakistan, which was at a relatively advantageous position with the arrival of the Afghan Taliban in Kabul. The TTP has declared that it is a part of the Emirate of Afghanistan led by the Taliban of Kabul and that it is not a part of Pakistan. While the Afghan Taliban have rejected this claim, the ties between the two Taliban branches go back years. The TTP has also accused Pakistan of not keeping a part of the agreement which "guaranteed" the release of its fighters, mainly in the tribal northwest of the country. The TTP says the Government had promised the release of over 100 prisoners, which it did not keep. Pakistan says it would release the prisoners but would not allow them to cross the border to Afghanistan.

The disagreement appears futile as most of the fighters to be released are from the northwest and once freed, it is just a matter of time before they cross over to Afghanistan. The roots of the organisation go back to the 2001 U.S. invasion of Afghanistan. The air raids and ground invasion of Afghanistan forced thousands of foreign fighters, including Osama bin Laden-led al Qaeda, to leave Afghanistan and take refuge in the tribal territories of Pakistan such as Bajaur, Mohmand and Khyber. It was in the mud hills and mountain caves of these enclaves that the foreign fighters dug in and established underground networks to survive

The TTP has demanded the Pakistan government enforce a stricter version of Sharia in the country and vowed to continue fighting until it meets its goals

air attacks. It was in the mountains of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) that the fraternity between the Afghan Taliban and the Pakistani wing of the group took shape.

Platform of militants

The TTP was formed in 2007 as a platform of militants under the leadership of Mehsud. An ethnic Pashtun, Mehsud was associated with the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F), the Deobandi Islamic party of Maulana Fazlur Rahman. In the 1990s, after the Talib

ban took Kabul, Mehsud went to Afghanistan to fight the Northern Alliance, the united front of anti-Taliban militias that was backed by India, Russia and Iran. After the Taliban regime was toppled in 2001, Mehsud emerged as a major tribal leader in the Pakistani tribal belt, where he brought together different militia groups to form the TTP.

Mehsud was killed in a U.S. drone attack in 2009 but by that time, the TTP had established itself in Pakistan's FATA, fighting the Pakistani military as well as the U.S. drones. The TTP's goals in Pakistan are similar to that of the Taliban in Afghanistan. The TTP wants to overthrow the Pakistani state and implement its hardline interpretation of Sharia across the country. They had nurtured close ties with al-Qaeda, and had carried out some of the deadliest terrorist attacks inside Pakistan. Their worst attack came in 2014 when they killed 147 persons, mostly

students, in an Army Public School in Peshawar. The attack even received condemnation from the Afghan Taliban. The TTP claimed responsibility for the attack, stating it's a retaliation to the ongoing Zarb-e-Azab campaign of the Pakistan military, which began in 2014 to rid the tribal areas of foreign and native terrorists.

Over the years, the TTP has emerged as the most powerful terrorist organisation within Pakistan. Powered by native Pashtuns and Sunni extremist groups like Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, the TTP has often been chosen by the foreign fighters from Chechnya, Central Asia and Arab countries as a refuge. As of 2019, there were about 4,000 TTP militants in Afghanistan, according to a Pentagon report. The most recent addition to the arsenal of the TTP is the Islamic State of Khorasan or the IS-K, which has been facing pressure within Afghanistan from the Taliban rulers. Over the

last several weeks, the Taliban have been carrying out attacks against the IS-K in the eastern part of the country near the Pakistani border.

For the Afghan Taliban, the TTP is both a liability and a weapon. It's a liability because the Taliban are seeking international legitimacy and economic aid as well as continued support from Pakistan. Close ties with the TTP could be a hurdle in its bid for legitimacy. It's also a weapon because the Taliban can use the TTP against Pakistan if their relations with the Pakistani military-intelligence establishment is disturbed in any way.

Two factions

Most of the top Taliban leaders like Mullah Baradar, Hizbulah Akhundzada and the Haqqanis were either based in Pakistan or given shelter in the country by the military establishment. However, after taking power, two dominant factions have emerged in the Taliban – the

Kandahar faction and the Kabul faction. The Kandahar faction, led by Deputy Prime Minister Mullah Baradar and Mullah Yaqoub, son of the former Taliban leader Mullah Omar, appears to have asserted itself as an independent entity unwilling to be controlled by the ISI. The Kabul faction, dominated by the Haqqani Network, keeps deep ties with the Pakistani establishment.

The Afghan Taliban had played a role in the ceasefire between Pakistan and the TTP. With the ceasefire now broken and divisions running deep within the Afghan Taliban, an emboldened TTP could pose fresh security challenges to Pakistan. On Saturday, within hours of the collapse of the ceasefire, a TTP gunman opened fire at two policemen in northwest Pakistan, killing one of them. The TTP immediately claimed responsibility as if it's warning the government of what's to come in the days ahead.



In Focus

- The TTP was formed in 2007 as a platform of militants under the leadership of Baitullah Mehsud, an ethnic Pashtun who was associated with the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F)

- Over the years, the TTP has emerged as the most powerful terrorist organisation within Pakistan, which is powered by native Pashtuns and Sunni extremist groups like Lashkar Jhangvi

- After the Afghan Taliban captured Kabul in August, they brokered a ceasefire between the TTP and Pakistan, which has now come to an end

MI-17V5

The IAF's workhorse

The Russian-made Mi series is considered one of the most advanced choppers

DINAKAR PERI

On December 8, an Indian Air Force (IAF) Mi-17V5 helicopter with the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Gen. Bipin Rawat, his wife Madhulika Rawat and 12 defence personnel, including the crew, crashed in Coonoor ghat in the Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu. The cause of the chopper crash, in which there was only one survivor who is battling for his life, is being investigated.

Mi-17V5 of Russian Helicopters is considered one of the most advanced choppers of its class globally. It has incorporated the best engineering solutions of previous generations, according to Rostec State Corporation of Russia. Each Indian Mi-17V5 has a complex navigation and electronic display KNEI-8. The numerous indicators for various information in the earlier series of Mi helicopters have been replaced with four multi-function displays which unloads dashboards and greatly facilitates the work of the crew. The complex also significantly simplifies pre-flight check of the helicopter with information from all sensors of conjugate systems on a single monitor screen, according to the manufacturer.



mountainous and high altitude regions of India. Mi-17V5 is a twin engine helicopter designed with full glass cockpit, advanced avionics, weather radar and powerful aero engines for high altitude operations, according to the Defence Ministry.

Various operations

"The helicopter is being exploited for various civil and military operations such as transportation, paratrooper induction, search and rescue, medical evacuation and fire fighting in all weather conditions," the Defence Ministry had stated earlier.

India is one of the largest operators of Russian helicopters and the Mi series have been in the IAF's inventory for decades. According to Rostec, over the decades, Russian Helicopters and its earlier companies have delivered 110 units of the Mi-4, 128 units of the Mi-8 and about 160 units of the Mi-17 to India. In fact, Mi-4 helicopters, supplied by the So-

be used for VVIP transport. In February 2016, Rostec handed over the final batch of three helicopters of the contract for 151 Mi-17V5 helicopters.

The Mi series in general and the Mi-17 in particular have a good safety record in the IAF fleet. There have been at least five accidents with the Mi-17Vs since induction, including the one shot by own air defence system in February 2019 during the aerial dual with Pakistan, a day after the Balakot air strike.

According to a recent report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence, the number of air accidents in the IAF has reduced from an average of 13 accidents per year in 11th plan (April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2012) to an average of 7.6 per year in 12th plan (April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2017).

In the last two decades, the IAF had flown approximately 2.5 lakh hours per year, with the available inventory of aircraft, according to the report. Comparing safety records from 1990 in a block of five years, as submitted by the IAF to the Standing Committee, the average number of accidents has gone down at each level. Between 1990-95, there were an average of 27 accidents a year, which is an accident rate of 1.07, and the average has come down for each five-year block and from 2015-18, there were an average of 7.33 accidents a year, an accident rate of 0.28.

DONBAS

At the centre of the Ukraine crisis

The region has two self-declared 'republics', run by pro-Russian rebels

STANLY JOHNY

Donbas, a small region in eastern Ukraine adjoining the Russian border, is no stranger to military conflicts. After the fall of the Russian empire, the region was incorporated into the newly created Ukrainian People's Republic in 1918. And then came the Bolsheviks, who were fighting a civil war against the remnants of the old regime. Donbas became part of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. During the Second World War, the Nazis took the region. Over 3,00,000 civilians were killed in Donbas alone during the Nazi occupation. In 1943, after defeating the Nazis in Stalingrad, the Red Army took Donbas back. In 1991, with the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the region, which comprises the Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts, became part of the newly born Ukrainian nation. Now, Donetsk and Luhansk are two self-declared republics run by rebels backed by Russia. With Russia mobilising thousands of troops on its border with Ukraine, which has sparked fears of war, Donbas is once again at the centre of a looming conflict.

The current crisis started with the 2013 Euromaidan protests in Ukraine. When pro-western protesters forced President Viktor Yanukovich to resign in 2014, counter-protests broke out in the Crimean Peninsula and Donbas, where a major



ity of people speak Russian. Immediately after Russia's annexation of Crimea, protests picked up in Donbas, eventually leading to an armed rebellion. In Donetsk and Luhansk, separatists declared self-ruled republics in May 2014. Ukraine and Western countries accused Russia of supplying weapons to the rebels and sending military personnel to the region to fight the Ukrainian army. Russia's official position is that it has nothing to do with the insurgency, but President Vladimir Putin said in 2016 that Russia "was forced to defend the Russian-speaking population in the Donbas...". In Donbas, ethnic Ukrainians make up a majority, while ethnic Russians are the largest minority. But over 70% of the population, across the ethnic divisions, speak Russian. Ukraine is also supposed to devolve more powers to the Donbas "republics", introduce constitutional reforms codifying the decentralisation of power and announce an amnesty to the rebel

fighters. Rebels, in turn, should allow the Ukrainian troops to restore control of the border with Russia. These terms were never implemented. A war of attrition continued on the border. Ukraine started getting enhanced military and financial aid and training from the U.S. and other western nations. Since 2014, the U.S. has committed over \$2.5 billion in military assistance to Ukraine.

As the Minsk process hit a dead end and Ukraine, under President Volodymyr Zelensky, moved closer to the West, Russia changed its approach. Earlier this year, Russia had gathered thousands of troops on the border, but pulled them back after Mr. Putin's Geneva summit with U.S. President Joe Biden in June. But as the Western aid to Ukraine continued to flow in with NATO members enhancing their activities in the Black Sea, the Russian troops were back. Mr. Putin sees Ukraine joining NATO or the latter moving advanced weaponry to Ukraine as a direct threat to Russia's "command positions".

He demands a commitment from the U.S. that Ukraine would not be taken into the NATO fold. The U.S. would not give any such assurance. As the stalemate continues, Donbas, a region of roughly 4 million people, has been caught in the middle of the most dangerous great power rivalry in Europe since the end of the Cold War.

Omicron may be less severe risk: FinMin

Ministry sees recovery strengthening in second half, says fuel tax cuts to help dampen inflation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

India's economic recovery is expected to gain further strength in the second half of this fiscal year, following the 8.4% GDP growth recorded in Q2, the Finance Ministry said on Saturday, citing preliminary evidence that the Omicron coronavirus variant may be a 'less severe' risk.

Stressing that India was one of the few countries to record four consecutive quarters of growth amid COVID-19, the ministry said the country would catch up with pre-pandemic levels of economic activity over the full year 2021-22.

A revival in services combined with a full recovery in manufacturing and sustained growth in the agriculture sector helped take GDP output in the second quarter



First cut: initial evidence suggests the Omicron variant is likely to be less severe given rising vaccination pace, says DEA. • PTI

to more than 100% of the pre-pandemic levels in 2019-20, the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) said in its monthly economic review for November.

"The recovery suggests kick-starting of the investment cycle, supported by surging vaccination coverage

and efficient economic management, activating the macro and micro drivers of growth," the DEA noted.

High-frequency data

"India's economic recovery is expected to gain further strength in the remaining quarters of the financial

year, as evident from 19 among 22 High-Frequency Indicators (HFIs) in September, October and November crossing their pre-pandemic levels in the corresponding months of 2019," it averred.

While the ministry expects India to be among only a few economies in the world to rebound strongly from the COVID-19 induced economic contraction of 2020-21, it added a conditional caveat about the Omicron variant posing a risk to the global recovery process.

"However, preliminary evidence suggests that the Omicron variant is expected to be less severe and more so with increasing pace of vaccination in India," it said.

While retail inflation stayed stable in October, the ministry expects price pressures to ease in the coming

months, thanks to the recent excise duty cuts on fuel.

Second-round effects

"Wholesale inflation climbed up to 12.5% in October driven by fuel and manufacturing segments attributable to rising input cost inflation and global energy prices. Going forward, reduction in fuel excise duty by Central Government, with State Governments following suit, is expected to ease the inflationary pressures through second-round effects in the coming months," it reckoned.

On Monday, the government is scheduled to release the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which measures retail inflation, for November. The Centre had announced duty cuts in petrol and diesel in the first week of last month.

Gold gained on Friday as its safe-haven appeal was boosted by elevated U.S. consumer prices, which also cooled some bets for aggressive interest rate hikes since the jump in inflation was not as big as expected.

Spot gold rose 0.5% to \$1,782.44 per ounce at 1838 GMT, having dropped for the previous two sessions. U.S. gold futures gained 0.5% at \$1,784.80.

The latest inflation report did not come in as hot as some were expecting and that should keep Federal Reserve rate hike expectations between two or three rate hikes in 2022," said Edward Moya, senior market analyst at brokerage OANDA. Spot silver rose 1% to \$22.15 an ounce.

Krish-e commenced operations in 2020 and had so far established more than 100 Krish-e centres across 16 States. Operating through Mahindra and Swaraj dealers, these centres provide services across a crop cycle.

'Cost of farming'
Mahindra said it is focused on bringing down the overall cost of farming, improving crop output and consequently, bolstering the farmer's income.



more than 35,000 precision farming acres managed.

Thus, ₹40 crore of extra income had been facilitated for rental entrepreneurs. And for Krish-e and M&M, ₹150 crore worth of farm equipment and crop inputs had been retailed through this initiative.

Ramdas Dhandage (37), a rental entrepreneur from Baramati, Maharashtra, with three Mahindra tractors, said he had seen rapid growth in his farm implements and tractor-rental business.

"My gross income has increased from ₹1.5 lakh to ₹4.5 lakh per month. After deducting EMI, maintenance and additional costs, my net income stands at ₹1 lakh per month," he said.

'Not mechanised'
"India is tractorised, but not mechanised," said Mr. Ramachandran.

"The total global agri-equipment market is roughly about \$160 billion, of which farm machinery makes up \$100 billion and tractors \$60 billion. But from an Indian context, the tractor market is roughly about \$7 billion, and farm machinery is at \$1 billion.

"Krish-e will help popularise this equipment by showing them tangible benefits," he added.

So far, 20 lakh rental hours had been managed on the rental platform, with

Samsung to make 1,000 campus offers

Eyes top institutes; Learning, growth opportunities key to retain talent: HR chief



Sameer Wadhawan

port our efforts to build innovative solutions for India-specific challenges," Mr Wadhawan said.

These engineers will be deployed at Samsung's R&D centres in Bengaluru, Noida and Delhi from June 2022 onwards. These centres together house about 10,000 engineers currently.

1,000 more next season

Samsung said it made 1,200 campus offers in 2019 and honoured all of them with candidates joining between May 2020 and the beginning of 2021. The company would continue to hire some 1,000 people in 2022 as well, Mr. Wadhawan said.

On the competition for talent, rising attrition and climbing salaries, he said it was true that some organisa-

tions were paying aggressively to retain talent. However, compensation was not the only thing that made employees stay back.

Instead, employees were looking at a holistic experience at workplaces that offered a combination of learning, freedom to innovate and the opportunity to work on cutting edge technologies, he pointed out.

"Therefore, enterprises have to find innovative solutions to augment talent demand. They have to create a holistic experience so that employees are learning, growing and having fun, and they also stay with you," added Mr. Wadhawan.

Samsung also has plans to hire experienced professionals to fill sales and manufacturing roles.

'Edible oil prices eased ₹8-10 a kg in 30 days'

Industry group sees further decline

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

Edible oil prices declined by ₹8-10 per kg in last one month mainly on the back of lower import duties and may fall by ₹3-4 per kg in coming months on higher domestic output of oilseeds and bearish trend in global markets, according to industry body SEA.

"The last few months have been harrowing for the Indian edible oil consumer largely on account of very high international prices of all oils viz, palm, soya and sunflower," Solvent Extractors' Association of India (SEA) president Atul Chaturvedi said.



SEA had advised its members before Diwali to reduce prices to the maximum extent possible, he said, adding that the Centre also reduced import duties on edible oils.

"We are happy to confirm all these actions have resulted in edible oil prices coming down by around ₹8-10 per kg in the last 30 days," Mr. Chaturvedi said.

About 260 of these new recruits would be from IIT campuses in Delhi, Kanpur, Mumbai, Chennai and other cities, while the rest would

work on cutting-edge domains including artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, IoT, deep learning, networks, image processing, cloud, data analysis, on-device AI as well as camera technologies.

These engineers would work on the quicker soft tyres for the start and the Briton going for the more durable mediums. "I didn't expect that, but amazing job, guys," said the Dutch 24-year-old over the team radio after being told he had secured pole.

Come from engineering colleges including BITS Pilani, IIITs and NITs, he said.

"We want to hire students from multiple streams including computer science, electronics and communications, electrical engineering, mathematics and computing, instrumentation and information technology to sup-

Ruthless Australia decimates England

400 Test wickets for Lyon; Hobart to host Perth's match

THE ASHES

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Brisbane

A ruthless Australia crushed England by nine wickets to win the first Ashes Test just after lunch on day four at the Gabba on Saturday.

Needling just 20 runs after bowling England out for 297 in its second innings – with Nathan Lyon taking his 400th Test scalp – Australia cruised to the target in 5.1 overs.

The only blemish was the wicket of makeshift opener Alex Carey. Regular opener David Warner was unable to bat due to a rib injury he suffered when he was twice hit by Wood in the first innings.

Australia will carry a 1-0 lead in the five-match series into the second Test, which starts in Adelaide on Thursday.

Lyon, who had looked ineffectual on Friday as he searched for his milestone 400th wicket, finally broke through when Dawid Malan got an inside edge. Lyon became just the 16th player to achieve thefeat.

Meanwhile, Cricket Australia chief Nick Hockley said Hobart would host its first-ever Ashes Test after winning the race to replace Perth as venue for the fifth and final clash of the series.

England, Head fined

Also, England was fined 100% of its match fee and penalised five World Test Championship points for a slow over-rate.

And, Head was fined 15% of his match fee and given one demerit point for breaching the Code of Conduct.



Milestone man: Lyon celebrates Pope's dismissal. • AP

SCOREBOARD

England – 1st innings: 147.

Australia – 1st innings: 425.

England – 2nd innings:

Haseeb Hameed c Carey b Starc 27, Rory Burns c Carey b Cummins 13, Dawid Malan c Labuschagne b Lyon 82, Joe Root c Carey b Green 89, Ben Stokes c Green b Cummins 14, Marcus Harris (not out) 9, Ollie Pope c Smith b Lyon 4, Jos Buttler c Carey b Hazlewood 23, Chris Woakes c Carey b Green 16, Ollie Robinson c Head b Lyon 8, Mark Wood b Lyon 6, Jack Leach (not out) 0; Extras (b-4, lb-5, w-6): 15; Total (in 103 overs): 297.

Fall of wickets: 1-16.

Australia bowling: Starc 20-3-77-1, Hazlewood 14-6-32-1, Cummins 20-6-51-2, Lyon 5-91-4, Green 12-3-23-2, Labuschagne 3-0-14-0.

Australia – 2nd innings:

Alex Carey c Buttler b Robinson 9, Marcus Harris (not out) 9, Marcus Labuschagne (not out) 0; Extras (nb-2): 2; Total (for one wkts, in 5.1 overs): 20.

Fall of wicket: 1-16.

England bowling: Robinson 3-0-13-1, Woakes 2-0-3-0, Wood 0.1-0-4-0.

Man-of-the-Match:

Travis Head.

Australia won by nine wickets and leads five-Test series 1-0.

Man City stays on top

EURO LEAGUES

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

MANCHESTER

Pep Guardiola saluted Raheem Sterling's "massive contribution" to Manchester City after the forward scored his 100th Premier League goal to give the leaders a 1-0 win against 10-man Wolves on Saturday.

Sterling netted from the spot in the second half at the Etihad Stadium to clinch City's sixth successive league victory.

Important results: Premier League: Manchester City 1 (Sterling 66'-pen) bt Wolves 0; Arsenal 3 (Lacazette 21, Odegaard 27, Gabriel 62) bt Southampton 2; Chelsea 3 (Mount 42, Jorginho 58'-pen, 90'-pen) bt Leeds 2 (Raphinha 28'-pen, Belhardt 83); Liverpool 1 (Salah 67'-pen) bt Aston Villa 0.

Bundesliga: Bayern Munich 2 (Coman 53, Musiala 74) bt Mainz 1 (Onisso 21); VfL Bochum 1 (Polter 40'-pen) drew with Borussia Dortmund 1 (Brandt 85).

Serie A:

Fiorentina 4 (Bonaventura 31, Vlahovic 51, 84, Mbuemo 90+5'-pen) bt Watford 1 (Dennis 24).

Serii B:

Parma 3 (Mancosu 23, Sottil 38) bt Genoa 2 (Papu Gómez 38, 48).



Sterling notched up a century of Premier League goals. • GETTY IMAGES

Malem 90) bt Salernitana 0.

On Friday:

Premier League: Brentford 2 (Jansson 84, Mbembo 90+5'-pen) bt Watford 1 (Dennis 24).

Europa League:

Atletico Madrid 3 (Griezmann 24, Morata 35, Alvaro Morata 70) bt PSV Eindhoven 2 (van der Horst 48, Tadic 60).

Champions League:

Atletico Madrid 3 (Griezmann 24, Morata 35, Alvaro Morata 70) bt Paris Saint-Germain 2 (Mbappé 43, Neymar 58).

Europa Conference League:

Paris Saint-Germain 2 (Mbappé 43, Neymar 58) bt Inter Milan 0 (Pjanic 20).

Europa League:

Paris Saint-Germain 2 (Mbappé 43, Neymar 58) bt Inter Milan 0 (Pjanic 20).

Gold rises after U.S. inflation data

REUTERS

Gold gained on Friday as its safe-haven appeal was boosted by elevated U.S. consumer prices, which also cooled some bets for aggressive interest rate hikes since the jump in inflation was not as big as expected.

Spot gold rose 0.5% to \$1,782.44 per ounce at 1838 GMT, having dropped for the previous two sessions. U.S. gold futures gained 0.5% at \$1,784.80.

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Hope has new faces: One-week-old lion cubs at the Sakkarbaug zoo in Junagadh, the only breeding centre in the world for Asiatic lions.



Roar on: An 'alpha' male at the zoo.

Back in the hunt

With three lionesses giving birth to 13 cubs, the Sakkarbaug zoo in Junagadh has infused fresh hope in conservationists

TEXT AND IMAGES BY VIJAY SONEJI

The stork has visited the Sakkarbaug zoo of Junagadh in Gujarat as three of its Asiatic lionesses have given birth to 13 cubs. On November 4, Deepavali, one of the lionesses gave birth to three cubs. On November 15, another five were born, and just eight days later, five more was brought into the world.

Riyaz Kadivar, veterinary doctor at the zoo, and his team have been taking care of the mothers and cubs.

The Sakkarbaug Zoological Garden is a 210-acre facility that provides pure-bred Asiatic lions for the Indian and international endangered species captive-breeding programme. Wild, free-ranging Asiatic lions have become

extinct in most parts of Asia, and are now found only in and around the Gir Forest.

Zoo Director Abhishek Kumar says, "My team and the veterinary doctors worked very hard and provided the best environment for the births, which is very cheerful news for wildlife enthusiasts, especially for people who have put in efforts to save an endangered species such as Asiatic lions."

Nirav Kumar, Assistant Director and Range Officer of the zoo, says, "We are the only breeding centre in the world for Asiatic lions, but we are also taking very good care of orphaned cubs. Right now, two cubs are under observation with the help of the veterinary doctor and his team. In the Gir Forest, the Asiatic lion population went to 674 in 2020."



Captive wonder: The main office of the Sakkarbaug zoo, established in 1863.



By the basket: A one-month-old cub being weighed at the zoo.



Under the shade: Five sub-adult lions at the zoo.



Emergency wheels: A lion ambulance at the ready.

Feeding time: A one-week-old cub being fed milk by zoo vet Riyaz Kadivar.



Raring to go:
Nine-month-old
orphaned male cubs
at the zoo.