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# Statesman of December 2024 The Sulla Colon States Man india's national newspaper since 1818



KOLKATA | NEW DELHI | SILIGURI | BHUBANESWAR

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# Abhishek slams Centre over Aparajita Bill delay

Abhishek replaced this year's annual MP Cup tournament with the Sebaashray healthcare programme due to the gravity of recent events

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE** 

**KOLKATA, 30 NOVEMBER** bhishek Banerjee, the MP from Diamond Harbour and all India general secretary of the Trinamul Congress, strongly criticised the central government for delaying the approval of the Aparajita Bill, which seeks exemplary punishment for heinous crimes like the rape and murder of female doctor at RGKar Hos-G Kar incident should not be

He pointed out that the bill has been pending for the President's approval for two months. However, the central

government, if willing, could pass it in just a day by issuing an ordinance. He also stated that the Aparajita Bill provides measures to ensure punishment within just 50 days, adding, "A rape occurs every 10 minutes in India, yet the central government remains indifferent because most rapes happen in BJP-ruled states. This is why the Center lacks enthusiasm. If necessary, I will fight for this bill alone in Parliament. The culprits of R

Additionally, Abhishek Banerjee launched the Sebaashray initiative to provide

free modern healthcare services in his Diamond Harbour constituency.

This programme, spanning 70 days, includes 280 camps offering advanced medical care. Nearly 2,000 booths in Diamond Harbour will benefit from this initiative. More than 1,200 doctors, including Rajya Sabha MP Dr Santanu Sen and his wife Kakoli Sen, have joined the programme. Baneriee also announced a Doctors Summit 2025, planning to involve 5,000 doctors from across Kolkata and other districts. On Saturday, the programme was inaugurated at the Samannay auditorium in



Amtala. In light of the R G Kar Hospital incident, a minute's silence was observed for the female PGT doctor. Abhishek personally interacted with over 1,200 doctors from various fields, including mod-

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE** 

The public health engineering

(PHE) department along with

Asansol Durgapur Police

Commissionerate (ADPC)

has started disconnecting

illegal pipeline connections

in Asansol region, after direc-

tions from chief minister

ASANSOL, 30 NOVEMBER

Drive against illegal water

connections in West Burdwan

ern medicine and AYUSH, as part of the initiative. Camps will be held sequentially in all seven Assembly constituencies within the Diamond Harbour Lok Sabha constituency, with each camp running for 10 days.

Abhishek replaced this year's annual MP Cup tournament with this large-scale healthcare programme due to the gravity of recent events. The programme includes a helpline for doctors to address complaints and facilitate communication. Several camps will be set up in each Assembly constituency, with a plan for at least 280 camps overall.

The MP pointed out that "the way the CM spoke to junior docs on multiple occasions and took administrative actions is also something you won't find anywhere. But will changing police commissioner

or director of health stop rapes?"

On the Bangladesh issue, he said, "I have cleared my stand that you have to follow the Constitution of the country and the state has no role in it. The onus is on the Union government to take it up with the Bangladesh government in the strongest manner or in the language they understand.

Slamming the BJP, Abhishek said, "What is happening in Bangladesh is not a political issue. For BJP everything is politics - be it RG Kar or Bangladesh. It's your government in power - why don't

BJP leaders go and protest in Delhi?"

On the national Working committee meeting and its outcome, he said, "If the party has taken a decision and whoever they felt is capable have been assigned with necessary responsibility. It is up to them now in coming days to prove themselves. Whenever I have been assigned with any responsibility, I have tried to live up to the expectations."

On organisational reshuffle, he said, "I have done my work. It's up to the party to make the necessary changes, if at all. I submitted my report in September.

## Police list 'Jal Swapna' project beneficiaries

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE** 

**BURDWAN, 30 NOVEMBER** 

East Burdwan district police kicked off a door-to-door survey on Friday to check whether the beneficiaries were getting piped water or if the middlemen were hijacking the project benefits.

Nabanna has given 48 hours to submit the report.

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

Siliguri's Pragati College of

Education hosted a daylong

orientation programme for

field investigators on its premises

on Friday. The event was con-

ducted as part of the Parakh

Rashtriya Sarvekshan 2024, a

large-scale national survey aimed at assessing student

performance across India's

school education system. The

initiative was organised in col-

laboration with the prestigious

Shree Ramakrishna Govern-

ment-Sponsored Primary

Teacher's Training Institute.

The programme marked a sig-

nificant step toward fostering

competency-based education,

laying the groundwork for

future educational reforms to

ensure that every student's

SILIGURI, 30 NOVEMBER

In July, 2020, chief minister Mamata Banerjee had announced her ambitious Rs 58,000 cr Jal Swapna project to provide piped water supply to 2 crore rural households in five years. In the first phase, the project focused on the dry districts like Jhargram, West Midnapore, Bankura, Purulia, Birbhum, West and

East Burdwan. Each benefi-

Orientation programme

aspirations are met during

trained to carry out the survey,

which is scheduled for 4 Decem-

ber. The training covered the

use of various tools and inno-

vative OMR-based technology

in a paper-based approach to

Field investigators were

their learning journey

for field investigators

ciary is allocated to get 55 litres of potable water a day as per the scheme.

East Burdwan will have 11 lakh *Jal Swapna* beneficiaries by the end of December, the officials said. "The remaining families will be covered by the mid of 2025," said Biswanath Roy, public health karmadhyaksha of East Burdwan zilla parishad on Friday.

> Mamata Banerjee. Sandip Kundu, assistant engineer of PHE of Asansol said that recently chief minister Mamata Banerjee directed the department to disconnect all the illegal water connections throughout the state. Along with other districts, West Burdwan has also started taking steps.

> "Since yesterday, we have started taking actions and disconnected illegal pipelines in the Salanpur block of West Burdwan district. Illegal water connections of factories, hotels, restaurants, shops, petrol pumps etc have been disconnected in Salanpur block yesterday. Today too, PHE officials are conducting search operations and disconnecting lines," said Sandip Kundu.He said that not only the illegal pipelines will be disconnected but all the errant users will be served notices directing them to submit fines to the PHE department. Heavy earth moving machineries are also used to destroy large pipelines

and water connections in factories and hotels. These errant users have taken connections from the rising water pipelines, which have 24hourwater supply. The PHE officials have alerted the illegal users a day ago and directed them to cut off the illegal connections themselves, otherwise face strict actions within twenty four hours. Locals in Salanpur have alleged that due to rampantillegal connections from the bulk supply main line,

four days on an average. Local MLA, Bidhan Upadhyay has said that presently there is huge water shortage at River Damodar and at such a time illegal hooking of piped water connections cannot be tolerated and punitive actions will be taken against all errant users.

the residents have been get-

ting drinking water once in

Besides Salanpur, raids and disconnection activities are also going on today at Jamuria and Raniganj block of West Burdwan district. In the Sripur area of Jamuria, 10 connections have been disconnected by the PHE today. In Jamuria block, the special drive was taken by the PHE department, led by chief engineer Trina Bhaduri. Even steps were taken against a few nursery owners, who use illegal connections to water the plants.

# BJP MLA highlights neglect of Gorkha aspirations

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE** SILIGURI, 30 NOVEMBER

A section of the hill population has expressed its reactions to the central government's decision to convene a meeting of the Joint Working Group/Committee on the tripartite agreement among the Centre, the Tripura government and The Indigenous Progressive Regional Alliance (TIPRA).

The meeting is scheduled to take place in Delhi on 3 December, according to a notification issued by the ministry of home affairs. The agenda includes discussions on the charter of demands submitted by TIPRA and a presentation on the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC).

Neeraj Zimba, secretary general of the Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF) and BJP MLA from Darjeeling, raised a critical question: "Why are the Indian Gorkhas

still waiting for justice?" Speaking on the issue, Mr Zimba highlighted the contrasting progress made in addressing the aspirations of other communities. Referring to the TIPRASA Accord, he said, "The recent strides by the Union home ministry in addressing the aspirations of the Tiprasa community are commendable steps towards inclusive governance and regional fulfilment. However, this progress starkly contrasts with the persistent neglect of the Indian Gorkhas, a community with one of the oldest and most deserving political legacies in modern

Indian history." Mr Zimba emphasised

the BJP's commitment to the Gorkha cause as outlined in its Sankalp Patras (manifestos) of 2009, 2014, and 2019. He stated, "The BJP has consistently advocated for a permanent political solution (PPS) to the Gorkha issue. From national platforms to electoral rallies, top BJP leaders—including the Prime Minister, the home minister, and the BJP president—have repeatedly assured the Gorkhas of a political resolution that addresses their aspirations. Yet, these emphatic promises remain unfulfilled."

He further argued that the Gorkhas' demand for a permanent political solution is not a mere appeal but a legitimate assertion of their constitutional rights. He said, "Their unwavering loyalty to India's sovereignty, defence, and democratic ethos is unparalleled. Despite this, their demand for a separate state under Article 3 of the Constitution has been met with indifference. The creation of the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA) was a stopgap measure—a temporary distraction from the core issue, which remains unresolved."

Mr Zimba expressed frustration over the BJP's inability



to act on its promises. "For over a decade, the BJP has anchored its electoral promises in the vision of a just resolution for the Gorkha community. However, these repeated assurances have yet to translate into action. Is this a case of policy paralysis, or is the Centre deliberately exploiting the nationalist and patriotic Gorkhas as a dependable vote bank?" he ques-

The Darjeeling MLA urged the central government to move beyond rhetoric and symbolic assurances. "The time for promises has passed. A Permanent Political Solution for the Gorkha issue is not just a constitutional obligation but also a matter of national integration and unity. Addressing this demand is essential for strengthening India's federal and democratic

Mr Zimba warned that failure to resolve the issue could lead to political and social unrest. "Ignoring this issue risks creating a vacuum that may escalate into unrest, similar to what we have witnessed in Manipur. The government must act decisively before the Gorkhas' faith in constitutional processes erodes completely," he concluded.

framework," he said.

## ensure a comprehensive and national education system.

accurate evaluation process

successfully, with all planned

activities, including awareness

sessions and detailed training,

executed effectively. The ini-

tiative is expected to play a

crucial role in driving meaningful

insights for improving the

The programme concluded

## Ref No.: WBPWD/EE 524PED/eNIT99/24-25, (Tender ID

WBPWD/EE/S24PED/eNIT100/24-25 (Tender ID: 2024 WBPWD 775459 ) WBPWD/EE/S24PED/eNIT102/24-25 (Tender ID: 2024 WBPWD 775467 Online Tender is hereby invited by the Executive Engineer, PWD, South 24 Parganas Electrical Division, 57/2 Diamond Harbour Road, Kolkata-700023 from the eligible contractors for the following works: Name of Work: 1 Temporary arrangement for Illumination, PA System for Parking Zone Ganga Sagar Mela-2025 [for 09 days]. 2 Temporary arrangement for lumination, PA System & DG Set for Bus Buffer Zone at Kanpur Buffer Zone Diamond Harbour in connection with 'Gangasagar Mela-2024" [for 12 days] 3. Temporary arrangement fo Illumination, PA System for Parking Zone from Singherhat to Daskhin Rajarampur in connection with Ganga Sagar Mela-2025 [for 9 days]. Bid submission start:04.12.24 at 09:00AM, Bid Submission end: 09.12.24 at 01:00 PM Bid Opening Date:11.12.24 at 01:30 PM Details of eNIT, BOQ & tender document may be downloaded from https://wbtenders.gov.in Sd/- Executive Engineer, PWD South 24 Parganas Electrical Division ICA- T21736(2)/2024

## NIeT No. PHE/EE/NIeT-17/2024-2025 is invited by the Executive Engineer New Town Kolkata W/S Divn-I, PHE Dte. Details information about the tender

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

EE, JCD. PWD. Jalpaiguri, invites e

Tender for the work of -Repairing of

potholes and damaged road surface (in

stretches) from Hostel-1 of Jalpaiguri

Govt. Engineering College to Power

http://wbtenders.gov.in Sd/- EE, JCD,

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

TENDER NOTICE

eNIT84/24-25, (Tender ID:

ICA-T21745(2)/2024

PWD, Jalpaiguri, Govt. of W.B.

will be available in the website www.wbtender.gov.in as well as in the office notice board. Sd/- EE, NTK W/S Divn-I, PHE Dte. ICA-T21718(2)/2024

ide Ref. No. WB/PHED/AE/BSD/NIeT available in the website www.wbtenders.gov.in The last date for ission of tender is 12/12/2024

and financially sound agencies with valid redential against eNIT 02 of 2024-25 of the dersigned vide Tender ID: 2024 HSD 776313 1. Details may be had from the Notice Soard O/o the undersigned on all working days within 18.12.2024 up to 3.00 P.M. (website: http:// whtenders.gov.in). 5d/- Executive Engineer upto 14:00 Hours. 5d/- for Assistant ICA-T21719(2)/2024

Engineer Uluberia Sub-Division, P.H.E Dte. vide Ref: No. WBPHED/AE/USD/ 1170/AE/USD, Dt: 25/11/2024. Details will be available in the website www.wbtenders.gov.in and wbphed.gov.in Last date of application is 11/12/2024. 5d/- for Assistant Engineer Uluberia Sub-Division, P.H.E. Dte. ICA-T21724(2)/2024

Engineer, Uluberia Sub-Division, P.H.E. NIeT\_16/2024-2025, Memo No 1176/AE/USD, Dt: 26/11/2024. Details will be available in the website www.wbtenders.gov.in and wbphed.gov.in Last date of application is 12/12/2024. For Assistant Engineer, ICA- T21723(2)/2024

PWD TENDER NOTICE tender for the work "Up-gradation 8 Repairing of (G+2) old Lift (EVS make) at No .: - WBPWD/EE/KNHED/NIQ -115/2024-25. Tender Id 2024\_W8PWD\_775841\_1. Bid Submission Start Date (online) :06/12/2024,1.05 PM Bid Submission Closing Date (online) :12/12/2024 upto 1.00 PM Corrigendum if any will be Published in website only. Details of NIT and Tender Documents may be download http://wbtenders.gov.in Sd/-S. Chakraborty/EE/KNHED/PW Dte ICA- T21743(2)/2024

e-TENDER NOTICE (1st Call) Tender is invited by the Superintending Engineer, G. T. A-Circle P.H.E. Dte. on behalf of Governor of West Bengal vide e-NIT No eT/14/SE/GTA CIRCLE/PHE DTE. OF 2024-2025 (St. NO. 01 to 50) and ID: 2024 PHED 774116 1 to 50 for Annual Operation and Maintenance for different JJM Works under Darjeeling Division-II, GTA. Details will be available

in the website: whtenders gov.in The

Last date for submission of tender is

20.12.2024 upto 02:00 P.M. 5d/- for

Superintending Engineer, G. T. A-Circle,

ICA-T21717(4)/2024

TENDER NOTICE

invited open Tender against eNIT No. 04 of 2024-25 for Renovation and Repairing works to A/3, A/4, N/2, R/7, F/3, P/1, T/3, R/4, L/2, M/3, J/4 III/3, Q/1, L/1, K/5, S/5, II/5, C/5, K/6, P/4, P/5, N/5 N/6, L/4, R/3, T/4, B/6) due to change of occupation at RHE Sadhanpur, Burdwan in the district of Purba Bardhaman during the year 2023-24, 2024 HSD 776183 1, Blid submissio closing date (online) on 13.12.2024 up to 4.00 pm For details please visit website: http://wbtende. turther corrigendum if any may be required will be published in the website only. 5d/-Executive Engineer, Burdwan Division, Housing Dte ICA-T21714(2)/2024

## Bankura student only Indian selected for prestigious US space & rocket workshop

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE ASANSOL, 29 NOVEMBER

A Class XII student of MDB DAV School in Bankura, Ayan Deogharia has successfully participated in the prestigious five-day workshop on International Air and Space Programme (IASP) – 2025 from 10-14 November at Alabama

He is the only Indian student to be selected by the US Space and Rocket Centre for this IASP-2025. His research work, along with a few Mexican students, has been already shortlisted for next level experiment.

A resident of nondescript Mantumra village in Chatna block of Bankura, Ayan Deogharia, a brilliant student since his childhood days comes from a humble background. While his father Kalyanashish Deogharia works in a private company, his mother Shipra is a house-

He stays in a rented house, continuing his studies in the private English medium school. Since his childhood he loves space studies and subjects like Bengali, history or geography doesn't attract

him too much. Talking to The Statesman today he said that this is not the first project, but in 2022 he started his research work on space waste disposal. "If we don't start thinking of clearing the space waste then

a time will come when we



will be unable to send satellites to space," he added.

He had earlier participated in the University of Petroleum and Energy Studies in Dehradun in 2023 in a workshop. There he has showcased and presented his research work on space studies. After which he got a call and participated in another workshop at the National Space Convention.

"I have learnt a lot from this workshops and the latest five-day training in the USA will further help me to start fresh research work on space. We have developed a special material, which will be able to stay in space even during the harsh weather conditions. Let us all hope that it passes the test," he added.

Ayan further added that though he went to the USA to study further in space science, but in future he wants

to stay in the country and conduct research work for the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

"We were all very much

anxious initially about how we would send our son to the USA for that five-day workshop. It was very expensive. But thanks to the corporate sponsorship from Jindal Steel and Power, Ayan's dream was fulfilled and he ultimately was able to visit Alabama and participated in that workshop by NASA. After returning, he is now full of confidence and we all hope that one day he will excel in space science research work and make the country proud," added his mother Shipra Deogharia. Bankura MP Arup Chakraborty has congratulated Deogharia for his achievement and has offered support

### SOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL TENDER NOTICE Tender Ref No.: WBPWD/EE/ 524PED/ eNIT87/24-25, (Tender ID 2024\_WBPWD\_775425\_1) WBPWD/ EE/S24PED/eNIT88/24-25, (Tender ID:

2024\_WBPWD\_775429\_1) WBPWD/ EE/S24PED/eNIT89/24-25, (Tender ID: 2024\_WBPWD\_775430\_1) Online Tender is hereby invited by the Executive Engineer, PWD, South 24 Parganas Electrical Division, 57/2, Diamond Harbour Road, Kolkata-700023 from the eligible contractors for the following works: Name of Work: 1. Temporary arrangement for Illumination, PA System for Parking Zone from Bhagabanpur to Jamtala, Nischintapur in connection with Ganga Sagar Mela-2025 [for 9 days]. Temporary arrangement for Illumination, PA System & DG Set for Bus Buffer Zone at Damodarpur Buffer Zone, Kulpi in connection with "Gangasagar Mela-2024" [for 12 days]. 3. Temporary arrangement for Illumination, PA System for Parking Zone from Belpukur to Bhagabanpur in connection with Ganga Sagar Mela-2025 [for 09 days]. Bid submission start:04.12.24 at 09:00 AM Bid Submission end: 09.12.24 at 01:00 PM Bid Opening Date:11.12.24 at 01:30 PM Details of eNIT, BOQ & tender document may be downloaded from https://wbtenders.gov.in 5d/- Executive Engineer, PWD South 24 Parganas Electrical Division ICA-T21732(2)/2024

2024\_WBPWD\_775407\_1) WBPWD/ EE/S24PED/eNIT85/24-25, (Tender ID:2024 WBPWD 775416 1)

WBPWD/EE/S24PED/eNIT86/24-25, (Tender ID: 2024\_WBPWD\_775421\_1) Online Tender is hereby invited by the Executive Engineer, PWD, South 24 Parganas Electrical Division, 57/2, Diamond Harbour Road, Kolkata-700023 from the eligible contractors for the following works: Name of Work: 1. Temporary arrangement for Illumination, PA System & DG Set for accomodation of Police at 6 (six) nos. locations at Kulpi in connection with "Gangasagar Mela 2025" [for 9 days]. 2. Temporary arrangement for Illumination, PA System & DG Set for Bus Buffer Zone at SH-1 at 3 (three) nos. locations from Chakmonohari to Dayarampur in connection with "Gangasagar Mela-2025" [for 9 days]. 3. Temporary arrangement for Illumination, PA System & DG Set for Bus Buffer Zone at SH 1 at 2 (two) nos. locations from Polerhat to Mirzapur in connection with "Gangasagar Mela-2025" [for 15 days]. Bid submission start:04.12.24 at 09:00 AM Bid Submission end: 09.12.24 at 01:00 PM Bid Opening Date: 11.12.24 at 01:30 PM Details of eNIT, BOQ & tender document may be downloaded from https://wbtenders.gov.in

Sd/- Executive Engineer, PWD South 24 Parganas Electrical Division. ICA- T21733(2)/2024

House, via Canteen to ALUMNI Building Hiru canteen to Workshop building and east side gate of Jalpaiguri Govt. Engg College under Jalpaiguri Construction Division during the year 2024-25 Estimated Amount put to Tender Rs. Tender Id: 2024\_PWD\_775786\_1. Bid submission start date (online) 04.12.24, from 03.00 P.M., Bid submission closing date (online) 11.12.24. up to 03.00 P.M. Corrigendum if any will be published in website only. Details of NIT & tender documents may be downloaded from

construction of Protection wall at Hill damaged due to landslide) at chainage 20.07 KM and 20.10 KM of Peshoke Road under PWD, Darieeling Division during the year 2024-2025. Estimated Amount Rs. 6,71,576=00 Tender ID No. 2024\_WBPWD\_775779\_2 e-NIT No. 10 submission start date (online) 29/11/2024 from 11.00A.M. Bid submission closing date (online) 09/12/2024 upto 5.30 P.M Corrigendum if any will be published in website only. Details of NIT and Tender Documents may be downloaded from website. https://wbtenders.gov.in. 5d/-EE, PWD., Darjeeling Division. ICA-T21765(3)/2024

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

TENDER NOTICE

Tender Ref No.: WBPWD/EE/ S24PED/

eNIT90/24-25, (Tender ID:

2024\_WBPWD\_775432\_1)

WBPWD/EE/S24PED/eNIT91/24-25,

(Tender ID: 2024\_WBPWD\_775433\_1)

WBPWD/EE/S24PED/eNIT92/24-25,

(Tender ID: 2024\_WBPWD\_775435\_1)

Online Tender is hereby invited by the

Executive Engineer, PWD, South 24

Parganas Electrical Division, 57/2,

Diamond Harbour Road, Kolkata-

700023 from the eligible contractors for

the following works: Name of Work: 1.

Temporary arrangement for

Illumination, PA System & DG Set for Bus

Buffer Zone at Halder Chak, Kakdwip in

connection with "Gangasagar Mela-

2025" [for 12 days]. 2. Temporary

arrangement for Illumination, PA

System for Parking Zone from

Nischintapur Market to Dhaler khal in

connection with Ganga Sagar Mela-2025

[for 9 days]. 3. Temporary arrangement

for Illumination, PA System & DG Set for

Bus Buffer Zone at Dhopa Bari, Kakdwip

in connection with "Gangasagar Mela-

2025" [for 12 days]. Bid submission

start:04.12.24 at 09:00AM. Bid

Submission end: 09.12.24 at 01:00 PM

Bid Opening Date: 11.12.24 at 01:30 PM

Details of eNIT, BOQ & tender document

may be downloaded from

https://wbtenders.gov.in

Sd/- Executive Engineer, PWD South 24

Parganas Electrical Division

online e-tender for the work of : 1. Emergent construction of Protection wall at Valley side including other allied works (damaged due to landslide) at chainage 4.92 KM of Peshoke Road under PWD, Darjeeling Division during 2024 WBPWD 775779 1 2. Emergent

Tender ID No. including other allied works

Tender ID: 2024 WBPWD 775481 1 Online Tender is hereby invited by the Executive Engineer, PWD, South 24 Parganas Electrical Division, 57/2, Diamond Harbour Road, Kolkata the following works: Name of Work: 1 lemporary arrangement for llumination, PA System & DG Set for Bus Buffer Zone at Raghunathpur Buffer Zone, Kulpi in connection with 'Gangasagar Mela-2024" [for 12 days]. 2. Temporary arrangement for Illumination, PA System & DG Set for Bus

Buffer Zone at Ramjannagar Buffer Zone Mela-2024" [for 12 days]. submission start:04.12.24 at 09:00 AM Bid Submission end: 16.12.24 at 01:00 PM Bid Opening Date:18.12.24 at 01:30 PM Details of eNIT, BOQ & tender document may be downloaded from https://wbtenders.gov.in 5d/- Executive Engineer, PWD South 24 Parganas Electrical Division

eNIT101/24-25, (Tender ID

WBPWD/EE/SZ4PED/eNIT106/24-25

TENDER NOTICE Ref No.: WBPWD/EE/S24PED/ eNIT96/24-25, (Tender ID: 2024\_WBPWD\_775448\_1) WBPWD/

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

EE/ S24PED/eNIT97/24-25, (Tender ID: 2024\_WBPWD\_775451\_1) WBPWD/ EE/S24PED/eNIT98/24-25, (Tender ID: 2024\_WBPWD\_775453\_1) Online Tender is hereby invited by the Executive Engineer, PWD, South 24 Parganas Electrical Division, 57/2, Diamond Harbour Road, Kolkata-700023 from the eligible contractors for the following works: Name of Work: 1. Temporary arrangement for Illumination, PA System & DG Set for Bus Buffer Zone at Century Ply Workshop, Pailan in connection with "Gangasagar Mela-2024" [for 12 days]. 2. Temporary arrangement for Illumination, PA System & DG Set for Bus Buffer Zone at Ayodha Nagar, Diamond Harbour in connection with "Gangasagar Mela-2024" [for 12 days]. 3. Temporary arrangement for Illumination, PA System & DG Set for Bus Buffer Zone at Banganagar, Diamond Harbour in connection with 'Gangasagar Mela-2024" [for 12 days]. Bid submission start:04.12.24 at 09:00 AM Bid Submission end: 09.12.24 at 01:00 PM Bid Opening Date:11.12.24 at 01:30 PM Details of eNIT, BOQ & tender document may be downloaded from

Parganas Electrical Division.

https://wbtenders.gov.in 5d/- Executive Engineer, PWD South 24

ICA-T21735(2)/2024

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# The SULLOCULOUS States man India's NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1818 PAGES 20 |₹ 5.00 | LC S KOLKATA | NEW DELHI | SILIGURI | BHUBANESWAR

**WEATHER** 

Generally cloudy sky with possibility of light rain in some areas. Maximum and Minimum Temperature most likely to be around 25°C and 19°C respectively.

RAINFALL: 1.0 mm **RELATIVE HUMIDITY** 

Max. 89 % Min. 62 % **TEMPERATURE** Max: 22.0°C (-6.9) Min:  $21.2^{\circ}$ C (+ 3.7) **SUN RISES SUN SETS** 06:00 hrs 16:51 hrs **MOON RISES MOON SETS** 05:57 hrs 16:53 hrs

New Moon on 1 December

## **THUMBNAILS**



Army personnel block the road with barbed wires as they try to stop protesters marching towards the Leimakhong Army station demanding the release of a man who has been allegedly missing from the army camp, in Kangpokpi, Manipur, on Saturday. 

ANI

Every attack makes us stronger, says Gautam Adani on US allegations: Adani Group Chairman Gautam Adani said on Saturday that the allegations being levelled against the conglomerate in the US was another attack on the group from which it would emerge stronger and more resilient. Speaking at an event in Jaipur, he said his indictment by the US Department of Justice was one of 'three attacks' that had taken place against the Adani Group recently.

# **PCB likely to accept** hybrid mode for CT25

The Pakistan board has, however, put forward several riders, including that the Pakistan team will play at neutral venues in any ICC tourney hosted by India

**TRIDIB BAPARNASH NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER** 

nder fire from the all-powerful ICC board after Friday's virtual meeting failed to achieve consensus over the hosting of the upcoming Champions Trophy, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) is reported to have agreed to a hybrid hosting model for the tournament, scheduled to run between February and March next year.

According to multiple sources, PCB chairman Mohsin Naqvi, who is currently in the UAE, lobbying for Pakistan's cause, has put forward a list of conditions, in a bid for Pakistan to retain the hosting rights of the marquee tournament.

The current predicament around the tournament arose as India remained unwilling to travel to Pakistan for security reasons, and the PCB refused to budge on the BCCI's requests for a hybrid model.

To end the impasse that has already derailed the ICC's plans of announcing the schedule 100 days ahead of the tournament, the global



In the hybrid model, all matches involving India in the tournament, including the group matches, semi-finals, and the final (if they qualify), would be played in Dubai

body on Friday called an emergency meeting attended by 12 full ICC members, three associate members, and the ICC Chair but that also failed to break the ice.

Following the meeting, it has been learnt that the ICC communicated to the PCB on accepting the hybrid model as the only viable solution or to be prepared to be ousted from the event. Amidst all these, PCB

chairman Mohsin Nagyi met Emirates Cricket Board head Mubashir Usmani in Dubai, signalling his agreement to the hybrid model. According to a PCB statement regarding the meeting, Mr Naqvi told Mr Usmani that Pakistan was ready to host the Champions Trophy and all the preparations were on schedule.

Mr Usmani is also the chairman of the ICC's associate members' committee.

Mr Naqvi said that the situation in Pakistan was stable and all teams taking part in the event would be provided state level security. Hesaidworkatthestadiums which will host the tournament was also on schedule.

Meanwhile, it has been learnt that the PCB's acceding to the hybrid model

comes with a set of riders: All matches involving India, including group stages, semi-finals, and the final (if they qualify), will be played in Dubai due to India's refusal to send its team to Pakistan. If India fails to progress beyond the group stages, Pakistan has secured the right to host the semi-finals and final in Lahore. And finally, if India gets hosting rights of future ICC tournaments, Pakistan's matches will be

played at neutral venues.

Bilateral cricket between the two countries have been affected due to frosty political relations. The two arch-rivals last played a bilateral series in 2012-13 in India, comprising whiteball matches. After that, India and Pakistan have primarily faced each other in ICC tournaments and Asia Cups. Last year, when Pakistan were granted the hosting rights of the Asia Cup, India refused to travel to the country, and eventually played their matches in Sri Lanka, including the final, under a hybrid model. Pakistan, however, travelled to India during the 2023 ICC 50-over World Cup.

## Shinde down with 'Saturday night fever'as Maharashtra CM suspense continues

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE** MUMBAI, 30 NOVEMBER

Wild speculation and suspense continued because of the Maharashtra CM's name not being announced even on Saturday evening, a week after the thumping victory of the BJP-backed Mahayuti alliance.

However, BJP state President Chandrashekhar Bawankule on Saturday said that the oath-taking ceremony of the Mahayuti government will be held on 5 December.

The swearing-in ceremony will be held at around 5 p.m. on Thursday at Azad Maidan in Mumbai, he announced on social media, adding that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will attend.

On Saturday, a team of doctors visited Maharashtra caretaker chief minister Eknath Shinde at his Dare village residence in Satara district of Maharashtra, to put him on saline, after he complained of high fever. Mr Shinde's party's

sources said that he did not leave his residence since Friday because of fever and is reported to be resting based on the advice of his doctors.

However, this has mere-

Shinde's face was "fallen",

ly served to give a huge boost to political speculation with Mr Shinde's fever being attributed to some inexplicable and strange "political" reasons. These speculations are centred around Mr Shinde's meeting with a senior Sharad Pawar-led NCP leader. Jitendra Awhad, in Mumbai on Friday, just before he

left for Satara. The other source of political speculation is based on Eknath Shinde's supposedly "fallen face" in a photograph of his Delhi meeting with Union Minister Amit Shah on Thurs-

day, after it went viral. According to political gossip doing the rounds, in the purported photograph of the Delhi meeting with Amit Shah, Devendra Fadnavis and Ajit Pawar were seen "smiling", while indicating that he was upset with what transpired at the meeting.

**Nationalist Congress** Party (NCP) chief Ajit Pawar, meanwhile, said that it has been decided in Thursday's meeting with Amit Shah that the CM will be from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the remaining two parties will have Deputy Chief Ministers.

Speaking to the media, Mr Pawar said: "During the meeting (Delhi meeting of Mahayuti leader) it was decided that Mahayuti will form the government with CM from BJP and the remaining two parties will have DCMs." "This is not the first time there has been a delay... If you remember, in 1999, one month was taken for government formation," he added.

# Mantries to throw liquid on Arvind Kejriwal during Padyatra, detained

**AGENCIES NEW DELHI. 30 NOVEMBER** 

A man was apprehended by Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convenor Arvind Kejriwal's security staff on Saturday when he attempted to throw some liquid, likely water, at Mr Kejriwal during his padyatra ('foot journey').

The incident occurred while Mr Kejriwal was on his padyatra in Delhi's Greater Kailash area. The individual was reportedly beaten by Mr Kejriwal's security personnel.

Speaking on the incident, Delhi Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj alleged that there are continuous attacks on Mr Kejriwal. "BJP leaders carry our rallies in all states, they are never attacked... There are continuous attacks on Arvind Kejriwal... BJP attacked him in Nangloi. He was attacked in Chhatarpur...



have collapsed and the central government and the Home Minister are not doing anything," he said.

In October, the AAP had claimed that Mr Kejriwal, was attacked during a rally in the national capital, alleging that the Bharativa Janata Party orchestrated the attack.

Meanwhile, the AAP has



of the upcoming assembly elections, with the party's national convenor and senior leaders focusing on voter engagement and strengthening grassroots support. The party's broader strategy includes a combination of padyatras, committee formations, and an upcoming convention to

intensified its efforts ahead support and ensure a strong presence in the elections.

Earlier today, Mr Kejriwal and Mr Bharadwaj visited the family of a man who was stabbed to death in their home in the Panchsheel Park area. Speaking to the media, Mr Kejriwal said the victim's family is in deep shock as the motive behind the incident consolidate its ground-level remains unclear.

## Poll panel assures Congress it will address its concerns on polling data in Maharashtra polls and deletion of voters in **NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER**

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

A day after the Congress alleged serious and grave inconsistencies in the data relating to the polling and counting processes for the recently concluded Assembly elections in Maharashtra, the Election Commission of India (ECI) on Saturday assured the party that it would address all its "legitimate" concerns. The poll panel has also invited a Congress delegation at 5 p.m. on 3 December to raise

these issues in detail. In its response to the party memorandum submitted to it on Friday alleging arbitrary deletion of voters and subsequent additions, and inexplicable increase in voting percentages in Maharashtra Assembly polls, the EC said: "At the outset, the Commission is thankful to the Congress for bringing to its notice the



party's concerns about these

The poll panel said it has always accorded the highest attention, to the political parties, in particular, the national and state recognised parties, which it considers as the most vital stakeholders of the electoral democracy in India.The Commission assured the Congress that it will make all efforts to address all the party's legitimate con-

"As regards the first allegation regarding addition

Maharashtra, as the Congress is aware, electoral rolls are always prepared and finalised with close involvement of all political parties including yourselves. The copies of draft electoral roll published is given to political parties and the verification process involves political parties at every stage of the process," it said. The EC said it would get

the issues raised by Congress examined and keep them informed of the outcome, On voting percentage data, the poll panel said: "You are already aware, total votes polled at each polling booth was given by Presiding Officer, before leaving the polling station, to the authorized agents of candidates (Form 17 C Part1) at the end of polling on 20th November, the day of polling in Maharashtra and Jharkhand."

"The presiding officer near the completion of polling at polling station performs multiple statutory responsibilities like filling up of various statutory forms, record keeping of activities in PO's diary, sealing of the machines, etc. before winding up the polling at polling station. The data feeding from all polling stations into voter turnout out app, at this stage, thus takes time," the EC said.

Stating that this cannot be changed, it said this number aggregates to final voter turnout which all political parties and candidates can verify. The poll panel said it will convey its detailed reply to the issues raised by the Congress at the earliest pos-

A Congress delegation is welcome to the Commission at 5 p.m. on 3 December to raise these issues in detail, it added.

# Downpour lashes Chennai: Cyclone Fengal's landfall near Puducherry early Sunday

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE** CHENNAI, 30 NOVEMBER

Ahead of Cyclone Fengal (pronounced 'fenjal') making landfall early on Sunday near the Puducherry coast, Chennai and surrounding districts are pounded by heavy downpour accompanied by gutsy winds without any respite.

While the sea is rough with high tides lashing the shores, the Marina beach, the second longest in the world, is covered by a blanket of water. According to the Meteorological office, heavy rains would continue for the next 48 hours. The public has been asked to remain indoors by both the Tamil Nadu and Puducherry gov-

Many low-lying areas of Chennai, particularly Korattur and Royapuram in north Chennai, as well as in Ambattur

ernments.



and Avadi, are surrounded by flood waters. The Chennai Corporation is taking steps to pump out water from waterlogged areas.

The Chennai airport has been closed till 7 p.m. in the evening since the runway and the taxi are under water due to the heavy rains. Arrival

and departure of flights have been cancelled due to the inclement weather as a precautionary measure.

With the Regional Meteorological Office having issued a red alert for Chennai and seven other districts, the Tamil Nadu and Puducherry governments have taken adequate precautionary measures.

The cyclone, lying 120 km south-east of Chennai, is moving at a pace of 13 kmph, and is expected to hit the Coromandel coast on Sunday morning between Karaikal and the heritage town of Mamallapuram.

However, under its impact,

extreme heavy rains have been predicted for Chennai, Tiruvallur, Kancheepuram, Chengalpattu, Ranipet, Cuddalore, Villupram and Mayiladuthurai districts, besides Puducherry and Karaikal. A few more interior districts in Tamil Nadu would also receive isolated moderate to heavy rains, the Meteorological office said in a bulletin.

Fishermen have been advised not to venture out to sea till further notice. Fishing boats and mechanised vessels have been remaining idle for the last 10 days. Cyclone warning signals have been hoisted

at all ports on the east coast. Besides NDRF teams, SDRF teams have been deployed in all the districts which would be affected by the cyclone and rain. Besides relief camps/shelters, emergency medical teams are also on standby.

# MoD signs ₹1207.5 cr contract for refit of INS Vikramaditya

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER** 

The Ministry of Defence signed a Rs 1207.5 crore contract with Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) today for the Short Refit and Dry Docking (SRDD) of the Indian Navy's aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya.

Commissioned in November 2013, INS Vikramaditya is a vital component of India's naval strength. Once the refit is completed, the carrier will rejoin the active fleet with upgraded combat capabilities, further enhancing the Navy's operational readiness.

A statement from the ministry stated that the project represents a significant milestone in the development of Cochin Shipyard Limited as a Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) hub, supporting India's industrial ecosystem. It involves the participation of nearly 50



MSMEs and is expected to generate employment for over 3,500 personnel, contributing significantly to the local economy.

This initiative aligns with the Government of India's Atmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India vision, emphasising self-reliance in defense capabilities. The project

underscores India's com-

mitment to developing indigenous infrastructure and expertise for supporting its defense forces.

The completion of the SRDD will not only enhance the operational life of *INS* Vikramaditya but also reaffirm India's push towards greater self-sufficiency in defense manufacturing and mainte-

### **THUMBNAILS**

**Adoption Meet**: The state Social Welfare department arranged the district's first adoption meet in Burdwan town on Saturday, where couples with their adopted children joined. Out of 55 aspirants, 30 couples were allowed adoption of children from different government homes and agencies in the district, said district's child protection officer Sudeshna Mukherjee. She said, "November is regarded as the month for adoption. Couples shared the do's & don'ts while grooming the adopted children. We warned people to stay away

from illegal practices of buy-

ing parenthood by unholy

means.'

**Robotic surgery for heart** operations: Robotic technology surgery is set to be introduced in Kolkata for the most complex and critical heart operations work within a very short period of time. Dr Ratan Kumar Das, director of cardiothoracic and vascular surgery at BM Birla Heart Hospital, has stated that with the help of robotic technology, even the most critical heart patients can recover within just two days and resume activities like heavy lifting, driving, and exercising. Using just a single keyhole incision, surgeries such as bypass surgery, CABG (Coronary Artery Bypass Grafts), valve surgery, intracardiac repair, and pericardial/extracardiac repair can be performed

**ATK Kalim Group launches luxury residences**: ATK Kalim Group announced on Saturday the launch of The Burj, a premium integrated residential complex. Located in the prime area of the Park Circus-EM Bypass connector. The Burj is a luxurious residential complex that promises to redefine luxury living in Kolkata. It has both 3 BHK and 4 BHK apartments in the heart of the city.

# Centre releases ₹1,400 crore fund to West Bengal under PMAY

LoP Suvendu Adhikari claimed that Trinamul's panchayat chief at Beldanga in Murshidabad district was allotted 17 houses under the scheme

**AGENCIES** KOLKATA, 30 NOVEMBER

he Union government has released Rs 1,400 crore to West Bengal under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) scheme, a day after the Trinamul Congress-government alleged Centre's apathy, sources said.

The information surfaced just a day after the treasury Bench moved a motion on the floor of the state Assembly on Friday accusing the Union government of denying Central funds under various centrally sponsored schemes on the fifth day of the ongoing winter

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

Come tomorrow and the

Mangalpur Jute Mill in Rani-

ganj will reopen after a gap

of almost thirteen years. It is

big news for the state gov-

ernment before the next

upcoming Bengal Global

Business Summit (BGBS).

This is the only jute mill in

West Burdwan district till

former Asansol MP, state

minister and chairman of

ADDA, Bansa Gopal Choud-

hury has thanked chief min-

ister Mamata Banerjee for

taking such a positive move.

ing also everybody, including

CITU had agreed in unison

to reopen the closed jute mill

in Managalpur. Since the

first meeting I have witnessed

a very much positive outlook

"In the last tripartite meet-

District secretary of CITU in West Burdwan and also

today.

RANIGANJ, 30 NOVEMBER

Jute mill in Raniganj

to open after 13 years



session of the House.

Sources in the state government said that the last time central funds under the PMAY scheme were released was in 2022. There have been several allegations of irregu-

of CM Mamata Banerjee for

reopening this closed jute

mill and now after a gap of

almost 13 years the mill will

reopen tomorrow," added

Ghatak said that on 13 Novem-

ber this year the owner of

the private jute mill has sent

him a letter stating that the

mill will reopen after 13 years,

on 1 December. In the past

13 years, the employees of

the closed jute mill used to

get Rs 1,500 from the state

government as a monthly

grant. At present about 1,100

workers get the benefits.

When the jute mill was closed

there were 1,500 permanent

workers and 400 contract

workers. Bansa Gopal Choud-

hury, who was the chairman

of ADDA and had played a

key role in setting up the dis-

trict's first jute mill in Raniganj

during the left front regime.

But it was closed in 2011.

Labour minister Moloy

Bansa Gopal Choudhury.

larities in the allotment of houses under the scheme in West Bengal and during the last few months, there have been several instances of protests in different pockets in the state on this issue.

Potato traders

threaten strike

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE** 

Under pressure from the

state government potato

traders today threatened

to go on an indefinite strike

from Monday if the state

government does not with-

draw the freeze imposed

on potato exports and initiate

an immediate meeting to

threat, the prices of potatoes

are likely to skyrocket and

drill holes in common peo-

diktat to the chief secretary

and agriculture marketing

minister Becharam Manna

to look into the issue of

alleged export of potatoes

to other states without ful-

filling the demands of the

people of the state, the state

government launched a

crackdown on the traders

trying to smuggle potatoes

out of the state.

As a result of the strike

Following Miss Banerjee's

resolve the crisis.

ples' pockets.

KOLKATA, 30 NOVEMBER

Even on Friday, the Leader of Opposition in the West Bengal Assembly Suvendu Adhikari accused the state government and the ruling Trinamul Congress of indulging in massive irregularities in house allotment under PMAY.

Suvendu Adhikari also claimed that Trinamul's panchayat chief at Beldanga in Murshidabad district was allotted 17 houses under the scheme.

As per protocol, while the Union government bears 60 per cent of the expenditure under the PMAY scheme, the remaining 40 per cent has to be borne by the state government.

In October this year, Union home minister Amit Shah, during the inauguration of the new passenger terminal building and *Maitri Dwar* at Land Port at Petrapole in North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal, also alleged massive financial irregularities in the implementation of dif-

ferent central schemes. The Union home minister alleged that the funds provided under different centrallysponsored schemes like MGN-REGA and PMAY do not reach genuine beneficiaries. "Only those associated with Trinamul Congress are benefited out of those funds," he said.

## BSF officials seek shifting zero-line villages as HM Amit Shah calls for increased vigilance

**AGENCIES KOLKATA, 30 NOVEMBER** 

A day after Home Minister Amit Shah called for increased vigilance along the country's eastern border to prevent infiltration, a section of senior Border Security Force (BSF) officials said that unfenced portions of the border with Bangladesh and zero-line villages are a major hindrance in effective border

management. There has been lack of initiative on the part of the government of West Bengal in relocating zero-line villages, despite offers of compensation from the Centre. "West Bengal has a lion's share of the Indo-Bangladesh Border (IBB). Of the total length of 4,096.7 km, West Bengal's share is 2,216.7 km. Of this, only about 81 per cent has been fenced.

While it is difficult to fence the riverine portions of the border, the existence of zero-line villages is hindering fencing in most places. In West Bengal, there are nearly 360 zero-line villages with a population of over 70,000 people. Most of these villages are in the districts of Malda, Murshidabad and Cooch Behar," one of the officials

Under a 1975 agreement with Bangladesh, fencing is allowed 150 yards behind the zero-line (the actual border). While some smaller Indian villages were fenced off and left in the 150 yards patch, the fence could not run through larger settlements. These are the villages that have now turned into a major problem as adequate troops have to be deployed on the zero-line to prevent cross-border movement, particularly after dark.

## Bangladeshi man with fake papers nabbed in city

**STATESMAN NEWS SER-**

VICE KOLKATA, 30 NOVEMBER

The Kolkata Police (KP) arrested a Bangladeshi national and former leader of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) on Friday night who had been staying in a hotel on Marquis Street for the past two years. Police have seized fake documents like Aadhaar card and a passport from him.

He was produced before the Bankshall court on Saturday afternoon and remanded to police custody.

The arrest of Matabbar was made in Kolkata at a time when the bilateral relations between India and Bangladesh have plummeted after a Hindu monk Chinmoy Krishna Das was nabbed by Bangladeshi police at Dhaka airport.

Acting on tip-off, a team from Park Street police station raided the hotel in Marquis Street and nabbed the man who identified himself as Rabi Sharma, police officials

To corroborate his identity, Sharma produced a photocopy of what he claimed was his Aadhaar card as well as a passport. A senior police

official said, "Even after that, we felt something was amiss and questioned him further."

During interrogations, Sharma confessed to the investigating police officials that that his original name was Selim Matabbar and that he was hailed from Madaripur in Bangladesh, sources said. He fled from Bangladesh two years ago following a political dispute with the then ruling party Awami League and since then was living in Kolkata.

Since arriving in Kolkata, he had been working at the hotel on Marquis Street.

After his confession, Park Street police arrested the accused.

According to police sources, Matabbar's name came up during an investigation conducted by a team of Karnataka Police that had arrested six Bangladeshi from nationals Chitradurga.

## Four dead, 20 injured as bus plunges into gorge



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

SILIGURI, 30 NOVEMBER

At least four people were killed and 20 others injured when a passenger bus traveling from Siliguri to Gangtok veered off course and plunged into a gorge near Rangpo on Saturday afternoon. The accident occurred around 3.30 pm near the

According to Kalimpong police, the death toll may rise as several injured pas-

Atal Bridge.

sengers remain in critical condition. Rescue teams swiftly evacuated the injured and transported them to Rangpo Hospital for immediate medical attention.

Local sources suggest the bus lost control before falling into the gorge. So far, four fatalities have been confirmed, and around 20 passengers have sustained injuries. Disaster response teams are actively working at the site to assist with rescue and recovery efforts.

## CPI voices concern over communal violence against Hindus in Bangladesh

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE **KOLKATA. 30 NOVEMBER** 

Terming the attacks as violations of secular principles, equality, and justice, the CPI warned that such actions pose a significant threat to the communal harmony that underpins Bangladesh's diverse society.

Rajya Sabha MP and CPI national executive member P Sandosh Kumar condemned the violence, urging the Bangladeshi interim government to act swiftly.

Amid the controversy over the arrest of Chinmoy Krishna Das, a former ISKCON priest and recent attacks on Hindu temples, the National Council of the Communist Party of India (CPI) has expressed deep concern over communal violence targeting Hindus and other minority communities in Bangladesh.

Terming the attacks as violations of secular principles, equality, and justice, the CPI warned that such actions pose a significant threat to the



An ISKCON monk puts up pamphlets outside the organisation's headquarters against the arrest of monk Chinmay Prabhu by Dhaka police, in Kolkata on Thursday. ■ ANI

harmony that underpins Bangladesh's diverse society.

Highlighting the potential fallout of unchecked violence, the CPI noted that these incidents could escalate tensions and provoke adverse reactions across the borders, jeopard-

izing peace and stability in the region. The party emphasised the importance of maintaining communal amity for the progress and unity of both India and Bangladesh.

Rajya Sabha MP and CPI National Executive Member P Sandosh Kumar condemned the violence, urging the

Bangladeshi interim government to act swiftly.

"We call upon the government of Bangladesh to take immediate and decisive steps to stop these incidents, protect the rights and safety of Hindus and other minority communities, and ensure the perpetrators are brought to justice," he said.

The CPI also targeted the ruling BJP and its "communal outfits", cautioning the "progressive and secular forces" in India to oppose any attempts to exploit the issue to stir tensions domestically.

"The National Council of the CPI also calls upon all progressive and secular forces in India to oppose any attempts by the ruling party or its communal outfits to exploit the issue in Bangladesh as a pretext to stir communal tensions in our country," the Left party

The party further called on its members and sympathizers to remain vigilant and committed to preventing communal incidents in India.

## TMC MLA replies to notice

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA, 30 NOVEMBER** 

The rebel Trinamul Congress MLA Humayun Kabir on Friday replied to the showcause letter served to him by the disciplinary committee of the party on Wednesday evening.

His reply was a little soft in tone but full of grievances against the party leadership. The MLA of Bharatpur in Murshidabad district sub-

mitted his four-page reply to Sobhandeb Chattopadhyay, veteran minister and head of the five-member disciplinary committee, at the Assembly on Friday though the show-cause issued to him was of only one page. Abhishek Banerjee, party's national general secretary today commented on the reply, "It's his personal comments. I have made it clear in the past that I want

to work in organisation."

# Wind from Jharkhand responsible for pollution in Durgapur: IIT, WBPCB

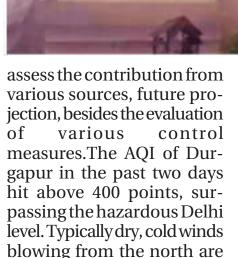
**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE DURGAPUR. 30 NOVEMBER** 

Trans-boundary movement of pollutants from Jharkhand, carried forward by the northern winds since mid of October is held responsible for causing persistent air pollution in Durgapur and its suburbs. This was revealed by the IIT, Delhi, the top environment officials of Bengal government stated today.

Bengal, as a strategic plan, has set to introduce a threelayer bio-seal with planting high-rise trees in the bordering stretch to arrest the Jharkhand pollutants, the environment officials said.

IIT Delhi was assigned by the West Bengal Pollution Control Board (WBPCB) to determine the 'culprit' factors responsible behind the soaring air quality index (AQI) of Durgapur industrial zone that harbours cluster of polluting industries like iron & steel, cement and three thermal power generation units. IIT Delhi aimed to detect the origin of pollution and take enhanced measures to neu $tralise\,the\,targeted\,pollutants$ in 10 locations of the city.

The IIT experts also exercised on the chemical specification of PM10 & PM2.5 (the key polluting particulate matters), besides identifying the source of emissions and source of receptors (CM 38) and dispersion models to



lution. "The IIT detected that the poor thermal immersion in the ground level caused by the slower movement of northern wind invited the current crisis," said Subrata Ghosh, OSD, WBPCB after an assessment meeting on growing pollution levels in Durgapur and Asansol today. He said: "IIT has held northern winds from Jharkhand as the major cause for Durgapur

pollution in winter." Besides

the local polluting iron &

steel units, the thermal power

held responsible for this pol-

units were cautioned heavily.

The wind vector at 10 metres and above ground that highly depends on local topography and instantaneous wind speed, direction has been termed as the villain for scaled up current Durgapur pollution. In Durgapur, the windier part of the year lasts for 4.3 months, as the Anemometer data gathered by the WBPCB's regional authorities claimed. The calmer wind vector of the year lasts for 7.7 months from 4 September to 26 April and the October, November months are identified as the calmest months with average wind speed of 7.89 kmph and wind gushes in mostly from North for 4.4 months between October and February.

Slow wind can cause air pollution by trapping pollutants and reducing their dis-

persal. Cold and denser air, as explained by Dr Kalyan Adhikari, a National Institute of Technology professor working with pollution: "Moves slowly than warmer air, so it traps pollutants instead of moving them away." Lighter wind, Dr Adhikari said: "Results in poor dispersion as wind in stable meteorological conditions limits vertical air movement." Also, fog prevents sunlight from warming up the ground and breaking inversions which promotes the formation of secondary pollutants high pressure. Sourav Chatterjee, SDM, urgapur, said that in the regional office of WBPCB a high-level meeting to combat the growing air pollution in the region has been held. From this meeting all the factories of Durgapur have been made aware about the growing air pollution.

## Classified =

#### **PROPERTY CHANGE OF NAME**

**DARJEELING** tea garden I AM RATNA Sikdar. I have changed my name from Ratna Sengupta to tea with resort, zero liability Ratna Sikdar both name are for the same person vide icpoobong@gmail.com affidavit dt. 29-10-2024 before the Ld. JM 1st Class at Sealdah.

The Statesman

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## **ELECTRICAL & MACHINERY BAZARI**



# Ajmer dargah survey demand: PUCL to move Supreme Court

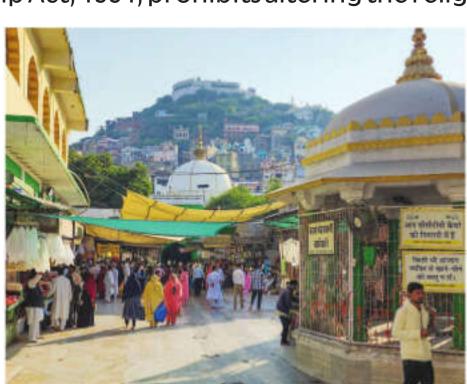
The Places of Worship Act, 1991, prohibits altering the religious character of any place of worship

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE** JAIPUR, 30 NOVEMBER

The People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) has decided move the Supreme Court against the rising demand for a survey by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) at monumental or ancient religious places.

The move is being contemplated following a petition in court demanding an ASI survey at the premises of Sufi Sant Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti's dargah in Ajmer to determine whether structures or remnants of a Shiv Mandir exist beneath the buildings at the site.

"We want to approach the apex court to safeguard peace and mitigate the effects of arbitrary statements made by leaders of different parties and outfits, without any regard for the centuries-old communal harmony in the city, PUCL national president Kavita Srivastava said here on Saturday.



The Ajmer Dargah Sharif is a symbol of faith for all, and the statements being made by various public figures after the filing of the case are feared to disturb communal harmony, especially following the listing of the petition for hearing by the Civil and Judicial

Magistrate, Srivastava said. "We will file a petition before the SC to ensure adherence to the Places of

Worship Act, 1991, and discourage the tendency of frequently raised demands for ASI surveys at such monu-

mental sites," she said.

"PUCL will also urge the Supreme Court to direct lower courts not to entertain claims that contravene the provisions of the 1991 Act, which prohibits altering the religious character of any place of worship," she said.

The submission of a peti-

tion by an outsider in the court of Civil and Judicial Magistrate (Ajmer West) Manmohan Chandel earlier this week evoked strong reactions from several political and public personalities, including Education Minister Madan Dilawar.

Annoyed by the reactions, the PUCL chief said, "We condemn the misleading claims and propaganda against the Ajmer Dargah and call for adherence to the laws governing religious places.

She said Ajmer is a city of communal harmony, home to globally significant religious sites such as the dargah of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti, the Brahma Temple in Pushkar, Jain pilgrimage centres, churches, and Parsi temples.

The dargah has existed for 800 years of the city's 1,200-year history and has long been a place of faith for people of all religions, attracting millions of devotees over the centuries. Its

development owes contributions not only to Muslim rulers but also to Hindu kings.

It is unfortunate that a person, unfamiliar with Ajmer's history, traditions, and harmony, is attempting to gain cheap popularity by claiming that a temple exists beneath the dargah, she

added. "This baseless claim has sadly been entertained by the judiciary. No such claims have ever been made in Ajmer. The dargah exemplifies communal harmony, with Jain processions, Jhulelal processions, and even RSS path marches receiving flower showers as they pass by the site," Srivastava said.

The Places of Worship Act, 1991, clearly prohibits altering the religious character of any place of worship. Section 4 of the Act mandates that "the religious character of a place of worship as it existed on August 15, 1947, shall be maintained, the PUCL chief said.

# SP delegation stopped from visiting violence-hit Sambhal; party claims state chief placed under house arrest

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE SAMBHAL. 30 NOVEMBER

The Uttar Pradesh Police on Saturday stopped a Samajwadi Party (SP) delegation from visiting violence-hit Sambhal after the District Magistrate served a notice to Leader of Opposition Mata Prasad Pandey, asking him to refrain from visiting the district given the law and order situation.

A delegation of the Samajwadi Party, led by Pandey, was scheduled to visit Sambhal today to assess the situation and meet the families of five people who were killed during the violence.

The administration's action has sparked sharp criticism from the SP, which accused the Yogi Adityanath government of stifling opposition voices and undermining democracy.

"The BJP government is murdering the Constitution and democracy! At the behest of the ruling power, the police prevented Leader of Opposition Shri Mata Prasad Pandey Ji from going to Sambhal. Highly condemnable!" the SP said. Earlier, the Samajwadi

Party claimed that the police has placed its state unit president, Shyam Lal Pal, under house arrest.

"Yogi government is scared of the SP delegation. At the behest of the ruling power, the police stopped Honorable State President Shri Shyam Lal Pal Ji from going to Sambhal and placed him under house arrest. The BJP government is shredding the Constitution and democracy to pieces," the party said, terming the police action "highly condemnable."

Meanwhile, the Congress, an INDIA alliance partner of the Samajwadi Party, has

also questioned the state government's actions and demanded that the delegation be allowed to visit Sambhal.

"What is the district administration hiding? Why does the state government not want the opposition to visit Sambhal? They should allow the delegation to visit Sambhal," senior Congress leader Pramod Tiwari said.

The SP delegation's planned visit to Sambhal comes amid heightened tensions in the area, where the situation remains sensitive following last week's violence during a court-ordered survey of the Mughal-era Shahi Jama Masjid.

## Nadda to lead World AIDS Day commemoration today

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI. 30 NOVEMBER** 

Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Jagat Prakash Nadda will inaugurate the World AIDS Day on Sunday as the chief guest, along with the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Dr. Mohan Yadav, who will grace the occasion as the guest of honour at the Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya in Indore. Madhya Pradesh will take centre stage in India's efforts against HIV/AIDS as it gears up to commemorate the observance of World AIDS Day

2024 event on December 1.

Aligned with the theme of the United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), 'Take the Rights Path', this World AIDS Daywill emphasize awareness, and rights-based approaches to treatment and eliminate discrimination against those affected by HIV/AIDS.

The National AIDS Control Organization (NACO), under the Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW) has been observing World AIDS Day annually on December 1 since 1992. Bringing together communities, youth, benefi-

ciaries, and various organizations, these observances have been fostering collaboration to address the challenges and advancements aiming at the global goal of ending HIV/AIDS by 2030. This year the programmewillfeatureimpactful activities, such as an innovative exhibition showcasing key programmatic components like the digital ecosystem adopted by NACO, community engagement, achievements made through the campaign-based approach, and a variety of hand-crafted items made by the beneficiaries.

# Jharkhand cabinet expansion: JMM suggests five-on-one formula for ministry distribution

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE RANCHI, 30 NOVEMBER

Amid ongoing discussions about the much-anticipated cabinet expansion in Jharkhand, the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), the largest constituent of the ruling Mahagathbandhan in the state, has proposed a "fiveon-one" formula for distributing ministries among alliance partners.

The proposed formula

suggests one minister for every five MLAs, resulting in a total of 11 ministers for the 56 MLAs in the alliance. However, the final decision on the cabinet composition is expected to be made by Chief Minister Hemant Soren in consultation with alliance partners. "There has been a discussion on the five-onone formula, that is, one minister for five MLAs. In such a situation, the number of our ministers will increase. One

cabinet will increase. We have 34 MLAs. In total, there are 56 MLAs. If we multiply 11 ministers, the count comes to 55 MLAs. This would be an ideal way to finalise the cabinet," JMM leader Manoj

Pandey said on Saturday. Pandey further clarified that the formula aligns with proportional representation and balances the coalition's demands. "This is the decision of high-level officials... I am just sharing the conversation

that took place among us party workers. The final decision will be taken by Hemant Soren and the leaders of the INDIA Alliance," he added.

The Congress, a key ally in the coalition, has reportedly adopted a "balanced and restrained" stance, according to Pandey. "The Congress is also very balanced and restrained. Whatever conclusion will be reached, it will be unanimous," he stated.







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# Keralatocrackdownongovt staffavailing welfare pensions

Finance department will take action to recover the full amount distributed to the ineligible people

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE** THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,

**30 NOVEMBER** 

he Kerala government has on Saturday decided to take strict action against the government employees, who illegally received social welfare pension. A meeting chaired by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan took a decision in this regard.

As per the decision, the finance department will take action to recover the full amount distributed to the ineligible people so far. The interest of the disbursed amount will also be levied from them. Disciplinary action will be taken at the departmental level against those received the pension illegal-



Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has said that strict action will be taken against the government employees who have taken welfare pension illegally.

Finance Minister KN Balagopal, Chief Secretary Sharada Muralidharan, Additional

Chief Secretary Finance Department Dr. A Jayathilak, Chief Principal Secretary to Chief Minister KM Abraham, Principal Director of Local Self-Government Department V Sambasivarao, IKM Executive Director Dr. Santosh Babu and others participated.

Earlier on Saturday, Finance Minister KN Balagopal said that the respective departments will decide what action should be taken in the case of government employees who have received social security pension illegally. The minister said that instructions were given to the departments to take appropriate action against the wrong doers. After the investigation, a criminal case will be filed, if necessary, he said. The minister informed that further inspection will be conducted to find whether

receiving pension. The Finance department has identified 1,458 government employees, including gazetted officers, assistant professors, and higher secondary teachers, who were drawing social security pension

more ineligible persons are

illegally.In light of the revelation, state Finance Minister K N Balagopal has ordered strict disciplinary action against these employees. The government has decided to recover the money from them with interest.

The two assistant professors in the list work in government colleges in Thiruvananthapuram and Palakkad. Three illegal beneficiaries are higher secondary teachers. With 373 numbers, the Health department had the highest number of illegal beneficiaries. The Information Kerala

Mission identified the illegal beneficiaries on the Finance department's instructions. The department said the checks would continue to ascertain whether there are more ineligible beneficiar-

# Accept higher compensation, allow industrial park: Telangana CM Revanth

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE** HYDERABAD, 30 NOVEMBER

Blaming the BRS for deceiving the locals in his constituency, Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy today tried to convince the farmers to part with their land for the sake of development and urged them to accept a higher amount of compensation for the industrial park coming up at Kodangal.

The CM today addressed a farmers' meeting in his home district of Mahabubnagar on the occasion of the completion of a year of his government and launched a blistering attack on former chief minister K Chandrasekhar Rao. Speaking on the Lagacherla incident, Reddy said innocent tribal people had gone to jail by believing the lies of the BRS. He said he was determined to bring the industrial park and Kodangal lift irrigation project to his constituency. "Don't fall

**Telangana chief** minister A Revanth **Reddy said innocent** tribal people had gone to jail by believing the lies of the BRS

into the traps of BRS and go to jail. Instead, take more compensation. A generation will change if there are more jobs," said Reddy who promised the industrial park will lead to employment for 25,000 people. "KCR alone has a farmhouse of 1000 acres in Gajwel. Shouldn't we have 1300 acres for an industrial estate?" he asked.

Yesterday, the Congress government withdrew the notification for land acquisition for the Pharma village in the area. Today, it has again issued a notification for land acquisition for the multi purpose industrial park in Kodangal.

He pointed out, "If officials had been attacked then would projects like Nagarjuna Sagar have been completed. For development to happen some people have to suffer. The government will provide them with the necessary compensation," and even wondered "will industries come to our area?" when officials were being attacked. He argued there would not have been projects like Nagarjunasagar, Srisailam Project or Jurala if officials had been attacked.

He claimed that Congress governments of the past had introduced loan waivers, free electricity to farmers and brought insurance for farmers. It was Congress which gave bonus of Rs 500 for paddy harvest. Farmer's welfare was patented by the Congress, he thundered. He challenged both KCR and Prime Minister Narendra Modi for a debate on achievements of respective governments.

# 239 trainees, including 29 women, graduate from Naval Academy

The Indian Naval Academy (INA), Ezhimala, hosted its Passing Out Parade (POP) today, marking the culmination of rigorous training for 239 trainees, including Midshipmen from the 107th Indian Naval Academy Course and cadets from various Naval Orientation Courses. Among the graduates were 29 women trainees and eight international cadets from four countries, showcasing the academy's global outreach and inclusive training programs. The ceremonial parade

Dinesh K Tripathi, Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS), who awarded medals to meritorious trainees. Hc was accompanied by Shashi Tripathi, President of the Naval Welfare & Wellness Association (NWWA). Other dignitaries included Vice Admiral V Srinivas, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Naval Command, and Vice Admiral CR Praveen Nair, Commandant, INA. The President's Gold Medal for the B.Tech course was awarded to Midshipman Ayush Kumar Singh, while Midshipman Karan Singh and Midshipman Kar-

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE** was reviewed by Admiral tikey V Vernekar received the CNS Silver and FOC-in-C South Bronze Medals, respectively. Women trainees were prominently recognized, with SLt Isha Shah receiving the CNS Gold Medal for the 39th Naval Orientation Course (Regular), while SLt Mathi Nesiga T earned the Commandant INA Silver Medal and the Zamorin Trophy for best all-round woman cadet. In his address, Admiral Tripathi highlighted the integration of international trainees as a testament to the INA's world-class facilities and its role in strengthening foreign cooperation.

## Ready to start work for people of Wayanad: Priyanka Gandhi

**AGENCIES** 

**KOZHIKODE. 30 NOVEMBER** 

AICC General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi, who on Thursday took oath as the Wayanad MP, reached here on Saturday.

It is her first visit to the constituency after registering a smashing victory in the November 13 bye-election.

Accompanied by her brother and Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition, Rahul Gandhi, she told the media at the Kozhikode airport that she was happy to be back.

"I am really happy to be back and am ready to start work for the people of Wayanad to help them to have a better life," said Priyanka Gandhi.

The Congress MP has a hectic programme for the day with public meetings to be held at Mukkam in the Thiruvambadi Assembly constituency of Kozhikode district, followed by receptions at Karulai in Nilambur, Wandoor, and Edavanna in Eranad by 2.15 P.M., 3.30 P.M. and 4.30 P.M. respectively.

Priyanka Gandhi clinched her electoral victory in the Wayanad Lok Sabha bypoll with a commanding margin of 4,10,931 votes.

Incidentally, she bettered the victory margin of 3.60 lakh votes of her brother Rahul Gandhi, which he got in the April Lok Sabha polls, but fell short of his margin

of 4.30 lakh votes which he won in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

The by-poll was necessitated after LoP Rahul Gandhi vacated the seat earlier this year. During the campaign, the

primary question revolved around whether Priyanka Gandhi could surpass her brother's record-breaking margin.

Priyanka Gandhi's victory marks a significant moment in her political journey, coming nearly 20 years after she first campaigned for her mother, Sonia Gandhi, in Raebareli and her brother in Amethi during the 2004 Lok Sabha elections.

Her debut as an elected

Karnataka Congress expels Gurappa



representative is seen as a pivotal step in solidifying the Congress' presence in

Kerala and revitalising the party's fortunes at the national level.

## Bipin C. Babu, CPI-M leader from Alappuzha, joins Kerala BJP

**AGENCIES** THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,

**30 NOVEMBER** 

Bipin C. Babu, a senior CPI-M leader from Kerala's Alappuzha district, joined the BJP on Saturday, hailing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's good work and hitting out at the Left for losing its secular

The exit of Babu, a member of the Alappuzha district panchayat, comes at a time when the outfit in the district has been hit by alleged factionalism, resulting in frequent outbursts of party members. Addressing the media after

joining the BJP, Babu said he decided to leave the CPI-M as it had lost its secular outlook and was being run by one group.

"I am happy to join the BJP, especially seeing the work of Prime Minister Narendra Modi," he said, predicting

an exodus from the CPI-M over the next few months. "Just see the development of national highways and the railways in Kerala," said Babu,

resign as a member of the district panchayat that he won on a CPI-M ticket. Hitting out at the alleged factionalism in CPI-M, he said, "The CPI-M was routed at the Lok Sabha polls and it suffered very badly in the

Alappuzha Lok Sabha con-

minister G. Sudhakaran, have

adding that he will soon

stituency. The CPI-M doesn't have much of a future." "Senior CPI-M leaders, like two-time former state

been sidelined by the group which runs the affairs of the party in Alappuzha," he said.

Babu, a former youth wing leader of the CPI-M, claimed soon after the party's state conference gets over in a few months, there will be an exodus of party members. Welcoming Babu, Kerala

BJP president K. Surendran claimed that many CPI-M workers are getting ready to leave the party. The state BJP got a rude jolt when just before the November 20 Palakkad Assembly bye-election, its popular youth face Sandeep Warrier joined the Congress.

## Naidu over sexual harassment charges

**AGENCIES** 

BENGALURU, 30 NOVEMBER

The Congress party in Karnataka expelled State General Secretary Gurappa Naidu on Saturday following the charges of sexual harassment surfacing against him.

The Disciplinary Committee Chairman of the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) K. Rahman Khan issued an order to expel Gurappa Naidu from the party. "In the backdrop of lodging

of sexual harassment case



against State General Secretary Gurappa Naidu, he has been expelled from the primary membership of the party for six years," the order stated.

Karnataka police had slapped an FIR against the State Congress office bearer over alleged charges of sexually harassing a teacher at a school run by him in Bengaluru on Thursday. The complaint is registered with Chennammanakere Achukattu police station against Gurappa Naidu, between 2021 and 2023. the state Congress General In her statement to the Secretary and also the Chair-

The police had registered a case under IPC Sections 354 (a) (sexual harassment), 354 (assault or criminal force against a woman with the intent to outrage her modesty),

man of the BGS Bloom School.

506 (criminal intimidation), 504 (intentional insults that provoke a breach of the peace) and 509 (acts, words, or gestures that insult a woman's modesty). These incidents are said to have occurred

police, the victim stated, "Accused Gurappa Naidu sexually exploited gullible women staffers at his school. He has been using them and also raping them. He is videorecording these acts and blackmailing them."

## R

#### NOTICE INVITING TENDER CPD/114-2024-25 **MAHA**TRANSCO fenders are invited through e-Tendering in SRM system from the registered vendors for Supply of following: Tender No. & Description of Material **Estimated Amount** Due Date & Time (Hrs.) for Submission & Opening of (in Rs. Lakhs) Tender Fee (in Rs.) SP/T-0833/1124 [RFX No.5000001325] [ 3rd Call] (Two Bid System) 1640.79 Lakh Procurement of 400 KV, 220 KV & 132 KV (N) 12.12.2024 12.12.2024 & (AF) type Porcelain long rod insulators for various Zones of MSETCL on VARIABLE Up to 17.00 Hrs. At 17:30Hrs. 25,000.00 PRICE basis. Contact Person: Office of the Executive Engineer (Gr.P&C) Tel. No.: 022-69852717/08329909813

Email: secpa@mahatransco.in, eepc@mahatransco.in, eegrp8@mahatransco.in,

For further details visit our website http://www.srmetender.mahatransco.in

Any further amendments will be published on the MSETCL website www.mahatransco.in. So bidders are requested to check the website.

Executive Engineer (P&C)

Sd/-

Executive Engineer (P&C)

### EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE

E-TENDER NOTICE FOR DIFFERENT **ELECTRICAL WORKS OPEN TENDER** FOR ELECTRICAL (TRD)

DRM (Electrical)/ TRD/ECR/ Dhanbad for e-tender for execution of the work indicated E-Tender No. : TRD-OT-9-JACKETMAST-24-25. SI, No. (1) Name of work with location and completion of work: Jacketing for protection of Masts/ Portals erected on siding loading platform goods Wharf for safety of OHE assets in TRD Dhanbad division. Completion period (03) (Three Months) (2) Approx. cost of the work: Rs. 88,56,332.40 (Cost of e-tender form - Nil) (3) Bid Security to be deposited Rs. 1,77,200/-(4) Date & Time for submission of closing and opening of E-Tender Closing of E-Tender: On 19.12.2024 at 11.00 Hrs. Opening of E-Tender: On 19.12.2024 at 11.30 Hrs. (5) Website particulars. Website: www.ireps.gov.in. Manual tender offer not accepted under e-tender. Divl. Railway Manager (Elect.)/TRD, Dhanbad

#### WESTERN RAILWAY **MISCELLANEOUS WORKS** Deputy chief Engineer (const), wester

Railway, 8th floor, station building, Churchgate Mumba- 400 020 invites E-tender Notice No: Dy.CE(C)/CCG/349 dated 28.11.2024. Name of work: Dismantling of existing Service Building, Construction of New Service Buildings, Construction /Extension miscellaneous works between Goregaon to Borivali Stations in connection with Extension of Harbour Line between Goregaon to Borivali (MUTP 3A). NIT Cost: ₹61,69,73,000.92. Bid Security: ₹32,34,900/-. Bidding Start Date: 11.12.2024. Bid Submission Closing on: 25.12.2024, 15:00 Hrs. Tender Document opening on: 25.12.2024, 15:30 Hrs. For further details please visit our website www.ireps.gov.in.

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## **NOTICE INVITING TENDER CPD/115-2024-25**

**MAHA**TRANSCO Tenders are invited through e-Tendering in SRM system from the registered vendors for Supply of

Tender No. & Description of Material	Estimated Amount (in Rs. Lakhs) Tender Fee (in Rs.)	Due Date & Time (Hrs.) for Submission & Opening of Tender
SP/P&C/T-06/1124 [RFX No.5000001331] [ 3" Call] (Two Bid System) Procurement of Van Mounted Ground EHV Cable	1647 Lakhs	09.12.2024 09.12.2024 Up to 17:00 Hrs. at 17:15 Hrs.
	25,000.00	

Contact Person: Office of the Executive Engineer (Gr.P&C) Tel. No.: 022-69852717/08329909813

Email: secpa@mahatransco.in, eepc@mahatransco.in, eepc@mahatransco.in, For further details visit our website http://www.srmetender.mahatransco.in

Any further amendments will be published on the MSETCL website www.mahatransco.in. So bidders

are requested to check the website.

Executive Engineer (P&C)

#### $\approx$ NOTICE INVITING TENDER CPD/111-2024-25 **MAHA**TRANSCO Tenders are invited through e-Tendering in SRM system from the registered vendors for Supply of following: Estimated Amount | Due Date & Time (Hrs.) for Tender No. & Description of Material Submission & Opening of (in Rs. Lakhs) Tender Tender Fee (in Rs.) SP/T-0533/1124[RFX No.5000001323] (Two Bid System) [4th Call] 6450.69 Lakhs Procurement of 3x500MVA, 765/400/33kV, 17.12.2024 17.12.2024 1- ICT along with Virgin High Grade Up to 16.00 Hrs. At 16:15Hrs. 25,000.00 Inhibited Insulating Oil conforming to IEC 60296 for 765kV R.S. Ektuni under Augmentation Scheme at Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar Zone. Contact Person: Office of the Executive Engineer (Gr.P&C) Tel. No.: 022-69852717/08329909813

Email: secpa@mahatransco.in, eepc@mahatransco.in, eegrp5@mahatransco.in,

Any further amendments will be published on the MSETCL website www.mahatransco.in.

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## ≫ **MAHATRANSCO**

PR/1613/DHN/ETRD/T/24-25/32

## NOTICE INVITING TENDER CPD/113-2024-25

Tenders are invited through e-Tendering in SRM system from the registered vendors for Supply of following:

Tender No. & Description of Material	Estimated Amount	
	(in Rs.) Tender Fee (in Rs.)	Submission & Opening of Tender
SP/T-0723/1124 [RFX No.5000001253]  [2 <sup>nt</sup> Call]  (Two Bid System)  Procurement of Emergency Restoration	176.29 Crores	18.12.2024 18.12.2024 Up to 17:00 Hrs. at 17:30 Hrs.
Systems (ERS) comprising of 10 Towers each (Suspension Towers- 6Nos. & Angle Towers – 4 Nos.) for various EHV PCC O&M Zones of MSETCL.	25,000.00	

Contact Person: Office of the Executive Engineer (Gr.P&C) Tel. No.: 022-69852717/08329909813 Email: secpa@mahatransco.in, eepc@mahatransco.in, eegrp7@mahatransco.in,

For further details visit our website http://www.srmetender.mahatransco.in Any further amendments will be published on the MSETCL website www.mahatransco.in. So bidders are requested to check the website.

Executive Engineer (P&C)

#### NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY E-Tender Notice No.: Sr.DEE/RS/ELS/CNB/2024-25/ET-12 Date: 28.11.2024 E-Tender Notice

Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer/RS/N.C. Rly./Kanpur, for and on behalf of the President of India, invite the following open E-Tender for the following work up to Tender Opening Date & Time. The details of the tenders are as under:-Tender No.: ELS-CNB-2024-25-ET-12, Name of work: Repair, reconditioning, rehabilitation, testing and supply of loco transformer for 3phase loco (transformer capacity 7775KVA/6531 KVA) for ELS/CNB.

Approximate Value (in₹): ₹ 1,37,92,113.57 (Rs. One Crore Thirty-Seven Lakh Ninety-Two Thousand One Hundred Thirteen and Fifty-Seven Paisa Only).

Bid Security (in₹): ₹ 2,19,000.00 (Rs. Two Lakh Nineteen Thousand Only). Completion period of Work: 24 Months Tender Document Cost (In₹): Nil Tender Opening Date & Time: 23.12.2024 & 15:30 hrs.

Note:- (1) The complete information along with tender document of above e-Tenders is available on website www.ireps.gov.in up to due date & time of tender opening. (2) Bids, other than in the form of E-Bids, shall not be accepted against above Tenders. For this purpose, venders are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificates issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. (3) Offer rates quoted in the form of e-tender schedule & duly signed digitally shall be final. No other documents related to offer rates shall be entertained. Tenderers are advised not to attach any document related to offer rates (except undertaking(s) asked). These documents, shall be treated as NULL and void and shall not be considered for evaluation of offer. (4) Documents being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. (5) This tender notice has also been uploaded on www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in. (6) In case of any difficulty helpdesk available

on the website of IREPS may be approached. ★ North central railways 
 ② ② CPRONCR ③ www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

# Union minister reviews Central schemes in Meghalaya

During her tour, Annapurna Devi visited villages in the district, engaging with families at the Transit Home and interacting with pregnant mothers at the Primary Health Centre in Byrnihat

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE** NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER

'nion Minister of Women and Child Development, Annapurna Devi, visited Ri Bhoi district, Meghalaya, today to review the progress of key initiatives aimed at improving the welfare of women and children. Her visit included an evaluation of various Centrally Sponsored Schemes and discussions with officials on the district's performance under the Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP).

During her tour, the Minister visited villages in the district, engaging with families at the Transit Home and interacting with pregnant mothers at the Primary Health Centre in Byrnihat. She also inspected the Anganwadi Centre in Saiden Village, where she spoke with caretakers and children involved in preschool services and Supplemental Nutrition Pro-



gramme (SNP) activities. Later, Devi held a review

meeting at the DC Conference Hall with officials from multiple departments and the district administration. Discussions covered the implementation of Central Sector and Centrally Sponsored

Schemes, addressing challenges, achievements, and annual performance targets. The Minister emphasized the need for efficient fund allocation and utilization, supported by NITI Aayog and the North Eastern Council (NEC).

She commended the state's initiatives, particularly the Early Childhood Development Mission and the Chief Minister's Safe Motherhood Scheme (CM-SMS), praising these as exemplary

practices. "This initiative is

one of the best practices,

and we will explore how it can be replicated in other aspirational districts across the country to improve maternal and child health," she stated.

Highlighting the district's achievements, the Minister noted, "Ri Bhoi's Aspirational District indicators are very promising, with the district ranking among the top in several key metrics for women and children." She also assured the Centre's support in addressing existing gaps and challenges.

The review meeting was attended by several officials, including Sampath Kumar, Principal Secretary, Health & Family Welfare, and Pravin Bakshi, Commissioner & Secretary, Social Welfare Department, among others. The Minister expressed satisfaction with the district's progress and reaffirmed the government's commitment to further advancing the well-being of women and children in the region.

# Punjab CM inaugurates subdivisional complex constructed in record time

**AGENCIES** 

SANGRUR, 30 NOVEMBER

Setting a new benchmark in public service delivery, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Saturday dedicated an ultra-modern multi-storey subdivisional complex constructed in a record time of 18 months at a cost of Rs 10.45 crore.

Dedicating the building, the Chief Minister said he had laid the foundation stone of this project in May 2023 and it has been completed in a record time span. He said the project, spread over nine acres, will benefit the masses by delivering them citizen-centric services in a time-bound manner.

CM Mann said such modern tehsil complexes were being built across the state to facilitate the people, adding that the earlier governments had never paid any heed to such initiatives to serve the people in a better manner.

"Previously the rein of the state was in the wrong hands

due to which the state had suffered adversely," he claimed.

However, Mann said ever

since assuming the charge of the Chief Minister's office, his government has been according top priority to works of immense public importance.

Announcing that such buildings were being constructed while keeping in view the future needs of people, he said the government saved Rs 1.5 crore while constructing this building against the estimated cost.

CM Mann said in the same

manner, the Subdivisional complex in Cheeme was under construction and would be dedicated to the people

He said it is a matter of pride and satisfaction for him that so far 49,427 government jobs have been provided to youth and 700 more will be given at a programme in Patiala on December 3.

He said when he assumed the charge, only 21 per cent of canal water was being used in the state. However, today 84 per cent of the canal water is being used for irrigation purposes.

## Capacity building programme on public policy for foreign civil servants ends

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER** 

The National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG) successfully concluded its 1st Capacity Building Programme on Public Policy and Administration for civil servants from Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean Region.

The two-week programme, held from 18th to 29th November, was conducted in Mussoorie and New Delhi. It brought together 30 senior officers representing key ministries from Sri Lanka, Oman, Tanzania, Kenya, Seychelles, Malaysia, Cambodia, Maldives, and Myanmar.

The programme provided participants with a platform to exchange ideas, share best practices, and discuss innovative approaches to governance and administration.

The programme focused on critical areas such as egovernance, sustainable development, transparency, and inclusivity, reflecting NCGG's commitment to fostering excellence in gover-

During the valedictory session, Dr. Surendrakumar Bagde, Director General, NCGG, interacted with the participants and highlighted India's exemplary strides in e-governance. He underscored the importance of the government's philosophy of "minimum government, maximum governance," which has led to significant improvements in transparency, efficiency, and public



Dr. Bagde also stressed the need to address pressing issues like waste management, emphasizing that effective mechanisms in this area can have far-reaching positive environmental impacts.

It featured country-specific presentations where participants showcased their governance frameworks and developmental strategies.

Oman highlighted its Vision 2040, focusing on e-governance and digital transformation. Sri Lanka shared its grassroots-driven Samurdhi Program for poverty allevi-

Maldives discussed environmental governance initiatives, while Kenya emphasized transparency through e-governance. Cambodia presented decentralization reforms and inclusive growth strategies. Tanzania showcased Vision 2025 and its involvement in the Open Government Partnership. Seychelles highlighted its Blue Economy Governance Model, Myanmar discussed its Sustainable Development Plan, and Malaysia detailed Vision 2020 and National Transformation 2050.

## NIA carries out searches in Jammu & Kashmir's Handwara, police raid various places in Srinagar

**AGENCIES** 

SRINAGAR, 30 NOVEMBER

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Saturday carried out searches in J&K's Handwara town in connection with a major drug case while the police raided various in Srinagar city under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

Sleuths of NIA, accompanied by the police and the CRPF, carried out searches in Handwara town in connection with a high-profile, multi-million drug racket case being investigated by the agency. J&K Police carried out searches at different places in the Batmaloo locality and



in the HMT area of Srinagar in connection with a UAPA case. A police statement said that the searches were in connection with the ongoing investigation against some persons, who are engaged in a criminal conspiracy with others to orchestrate false and malicious narratives through the dissemination of fabricated information to provoke people

to resort to violence. Police obtained search warrants from the designated court and conducted searches in the houses of Obais Riyaz Dar, son of Riyaz Ahmad Dar, resident of Bonpora Batmaloo, and Sahil Ahmad Bhat, son of Noor Mohammad, resident of HMT, Zainakot. The statement said electronic devices and incriminating material

were seized during searches at these places, adding that more houses belonging to suspects engaged in seditious propaganda are on the police radar for similar action in the near future. Police have again cautioned people to exercise restraint while using social media to ensure that they don't get involved in anything connected with the sharing and dissemination of false propaganda to create an antinational narrative at the behest of the enemy. It needs to be mentioned that the terrorists have started increasing their activities in J&K after they failed to disrupt the Lok Sabha and Assembly polls, which were peaceful.

[See Regulation-15 (1)(a)] / 16(3) DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL KOLKATA(DRT 3)

2-C, Jawahar Lai Nehru Road, Kolkata-70007 Case No.: TA/992/2015

of the Act, read with sub-rule (2A) of rule 5

(3) SMT KAMALA KATHAL

WEST BENGAL-743384

VILL AND PO-BAWALI, NODAKHAL

PS- BUDGE BUDGE NOW NODAKHALI SOUTH TWENTY FOUR PARGANAS,

VHEREAS, TA/992/2015 was listed before

(OA) filed against you for recovery of debt

of Rs.1119575.26/- (application along with

In accordance with sub-section (4) o

(i) to show cause within thirty days of the service of summons as to why relief prayed

for should not be granted; (ii) to disclose

particulars of properties or assets other than

properties and assets specified by the

assets or such other assets and properties disclosed under serial number 3A of the

original application, pending hearing and

disposal of the application for attachment of

properties; (iv) you shall not transfer by way

of sale, lease or otherwise, except in the

ordinary course of his business any of the

assets over which security interest is created

and/or other assets and properties specified

business and deposit such sale proceeds in

the account maintained with the bank or

financial institutions holding security interest

You are also directed to file the written

statement with a copy thereof furnished

to the applicant and to appear before

Registrar on 23/12/2024 at 10.30 A.M.

failing which the application shall be heard

Given under my hand and the seal of

Sd/- Registrar-in-Charge

Debts Recovery Tribunal-3, Kolkata

this Tribunal on this date: 25/11/2024.

and decided in your absence.

over such assets.

# Punjab Police bust arms smuggling network, eight pistols seized

service delivery.

**AGENCIES** 

CHANDIGARH. 30 NOVEMBER

In a major blow to arms smuggling networks amidst the ongoing drive to make the state safe and secure, Punjab Police's Counter Intelligence (CI) Amritsar apprehended two people when they were waiting for another operative to hand over the weapon consignment smuggled from Pakistan, said Director General of Police (DGP) Gaurav Yadav here on Saturday.

Those arrested have been identified as Jagjit Singh, alias Nikku, and Gurwinder Singh, alias Gandhi -- both residents of Kaulowal village in Amrit-

Police teams have also recovered a consignment of eight sophisticated pistols, including four Glock pistols (Austria-made), two Turkey



9mm pistols and two X-Shot Zigana.30 bore pistols, along with 10 cartridges from their possession.

DGP Yadav said that in an intelligence-led operation, teams from CI Amritsar got to know that some people have indulged in the smuggling of heavy consignments of weapons from Pakistan into India.

Acting swiftly, police teams laid a trap and arrested accused Jagjit, alias Nikku, and Gurin Amritsar when they were

waiting for someone to deliver the consignment, he said.

The DGP said that CI Amritsar has also identified the main kingpin of this module and several teams have been constituted to apprehend **Preliminary investigations** 

have revealed that the kingpin of this module was is in contact with Pakistan-based weapon smugglers via encrypted apps, he said, while adding that further investigations are on to establish backward and forward link-

A case was registered under Section 25 of the Arms Act and Section 61(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) at the Police Station State Special Operations Cell (SSOC) in Amritsar. The winder, alias Gandhi, from accused will be presented Nurpur Padhri near Gharinda before the local court to seek police remand.

## Chamathang hot springs in Ladakh being developed as eco-tourism destination

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE** JAMMU, 30 NOVEMBER

The Chamathang hot spring in Ladakh is being developed as an attractive eco-tourism destination, said the Advisor to the Lieutenant Governor UT Ladakh, Dr. Pawan Kotwal on Saturday.

Dr. Kotwal chaired a meeting regarding the development of hot spring at Chumathang. The concerned architect provided a comprehensive PowerPoint presentation on the development of Chamathang hot spring, with development area of approximately 12.5 acres of land and highlighted its salient features of the project, estimated cost, future plans, bottlenecks which impede the progress of the

project. The Advisor instructed the concerned officials to ensure the finest quality of the project, which will increase tourists footfall towards the region. Praising the collab-



orative endeavours of the officials involved in the project, the Advisor was informed about the establishment of key facilities of the project such as, food courts, pools, and Hydro therapy centers.

The prime objective of the project is to promote eco-tourism alongside hydrotherapy facilities, which include hydrotherapy centres, local Amchi stations, and a Sowa-Rigpa satellite therapy

The plan also includes provisions for tourist hospitality, a shopping centre with a kiosk market for public gathering spaces, and rehabilitation centres. The project will emphasize sustainable architecture and a Net metering plan as its core focus.

The Chumathang Hot Spring is a hot sulphur spring

government as they opened

situated in a small hamlet along the Indus River called Chumathang about 138 km from Leh. The spring originates quite close to the river itself and is believed to have medicinal properties.

The meeting was attended by the Administrative Secretary of Tourism Department Conservator of Forest; and other concerned officials.

#### section 19 of the Act, you, the defendants are directed as under:

Notice is hereby given to all that my clients have intended to purchase undivided 5/6th applicant under serial number 3A of the share of Premises No. 8A, Northern Avenue original application; (iii) you are restrained (previously 19Q/2C, Paikpara Raja Manindra from dealing with or disposing of secured Road), Kolkata - 700037 within P.S. Chitpur from its present owners/successors in interests/legal heirs/successors/legal representatives/assigns of Late Chintaharar Saha, Late Tarak Chandra Saha, Late Kanai La Saha, Late Nriprendra Chandra Saha and Late Narendra Chandra Saha (all sons of Late Kal Charan Saha & Late Haripriya Saha). Therefore any person having any objection or claim in or disclosed under serial number 3A of the respect of above referred property by way of original application without the prior approval sale, mortgage, lease, exchange, charge, lien, of the Tribunal; (v) you shall be liable to license, maintenance, inheritance, gift, account for the sale proceeds realised by sale of secured assets or other assets hypothecation or transfer of title, possession and properties in the ordinary course of or encumbrance or beneficial interest under any trust right of prescription or pre-emptor under any agreement or other disposition or under any decree, order or award otherwise claiming howsoever, are hereby requested to make the same known in writing along with all supporting documents to the undersigned within 07 (seven) days from the date of publication hereof, failing which the claim of such person shall be deemed to have been waived or abandoned and my client shall be entitled to purchase the aforementioned property in accordance with law and the claims if any of such person shall not be binding or

HIGH COURT AT CALCUTTA Kolkata - 700037

## PUBLIC NOTICE

KUNTAL MUKHERJEE, ADVOCATE

#### HP college to be renamed after former CM Virbhadra Singh **STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE** newly completed Chunjar-SHIMLA. 30 NOVEMBER

Seema College Rorhuin Shimla district of Himachal Pradesh will be named after former six-time Chief Minister late Virbhadra Singh.This announcement was made by Chief Minister Thakur Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, during the annual function of Government College Seema, Rohru on Saturday.He also announced the starting of B.Ed. course in the College from the next academic session and assured to provide liberal financial assistance for the construction of the hostel and stated that the construction of a multipurpose building in the college would be started soon.

He dedicated projects worth Rs. 100.95 crore to the people of the Rohru assembly segment, in district Shimla.



Ultra Modern Grading, Stateof-Art Cold Atmosphere (CA) Store having the capacity to the existing 700 MT, which will benefit the horticulturalists of the region immensely. The Government Ayurvedic Hospital constructed with an outlay of Rs. 2.79 crore, the

Katlah, Shalan, Melthi-Kupri water supply scheme completed at a cost of Rs. 3.92 crore and the drinking water scheme constructed for the Rohru rural area completed with an outlay of Rs. 5.03 crore.

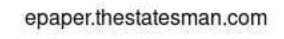
He also performed the foundation stone laying ceremony of various road projects worth Rs. 51.74 crore for the area, which include the work of strengthening Podhar-Mandiyori-Karasa road, Seema Ratnari road, Samoli-Parsa road, Rohru-Arhal-Bashla road and Mehandli Ganasidhar road. He also laid the foundation stone of the hostel to be constructed in Seema College Rohru at a cost of Rs. 8.25 crore.

Sukhu alleged that the level of education continuously declined during the tenure of the previous BJP

900 educational and health institutions without budgetary provision just for electoral gains. The state government is taking tough decisions in the public interest the positive results of which will be visible in near future soon. He said that new vocational courses would be started to ensure good education and better employment opportunities to the students. The state government is making efforts to prepare the youth for future challenges. Education Minister Rohit Thakur said that the state government was making dedicated efforts to strengthen the education sector. As many as 15 thousand posts of various categories has been approved in the education department to provide quality education. He said that road projects worth Rs. 1134 crore were

also cleared

Chamber: 8, Raj Kumar Chatterjee Road Cont. No. 9830699424/8250761455



## The Sunday Statesman

With which is incorporated The Englishman ~ founded 1821

## **Lessons Unlearned**

he recent assembly election results in Jharkhand have highlighted significant challenges for the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), led by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Despite deploying its top leadership and resources, the NDA suffered a major setback, with the Hemant Soren-led alliance decisively retaining power. This defeat reveals deep structural and strategic flaws within the NDA, offering important lessons for future battles. One of the most glaring missteps was the government's decision to arrest Chief Minister Hemant Soren. Rather than weakening his political standing, this move galvanised tribal communities and created a wave of sympathy for Mr Soren. The tribal belt, historically critical to the BJP's electoral success, overwhelmingly turned to the INDIA bloc, leaving the BJP with just one victory in the 28 tribal-reserved constituencies. This stark shift underscores the importance of understanding regional political dynamics and the risks of aggressive tactics that can backfire.

The BJP's inability to retain its traditional general-category voters further amplified its defeat. Historically loyal to the party, this segment showed a clear drift towards the JMM and Congress, reflecting dissatisfaction with the BJP's focus on tribal outreach at the cost of addressing broader developmental concerns. This shift signals the need for a more inclusive strategy that balances regional priorities with the aspirations of diverse voter groups. The NDA's failure to address local concerns effectively also played a crucial role. The BJP's campaign focused heavily on national issues, such as alleged infiltration from Bangladesh, but lacked credible local voices to anchor the narrative. This disconnect alienated voters, particularly in tribal areas, where such issues resonated less than tangible welfare initiatives. The JMM's targeted welfare schemes, including direct financial support for women and housing programmes, demonstrated a clear understanding of voter priorities, further consolidating their support base.

The role of alliances also warrants scrutiny. The BJP's ally, the All Jharkhand Students' Union (AJSU), was expected to mobilise the influential Kudmi vote. However, the emergence of Jairam Mahato as a third force splintered this crucial vote bank, resulting in significant losses for the NDA in at least 16 constituencies. This miscalculation highlights the need for better coordination and a more nuanced approach to alliance politics. Moreover, internal dissent and ineffective ground operations compounded the BJP's woes. Reports of party observers remaining disconnected from grassroots realities and accusations of sabotage within its ranks point to organisational weaknesses that require urgent redress.

The BJP's reliance on star power and high-profile campaigns, while ignoring the need for robust local strategies, proved to be a critical error. This loss has implications beyond Jharkhand. For the BJP and its allies, it serves as a wake-up call to recalibrate their strategies ahead of upcoming state and national elections. The focus must shift from polarising rhetoric and top-down campaigning to addressing local aspirations and building trust through consistent engagement. The NDA must introspect deeply and adapt its approach if it hopes to regain lost ground in this politically significant state.

## **Tense Relations**

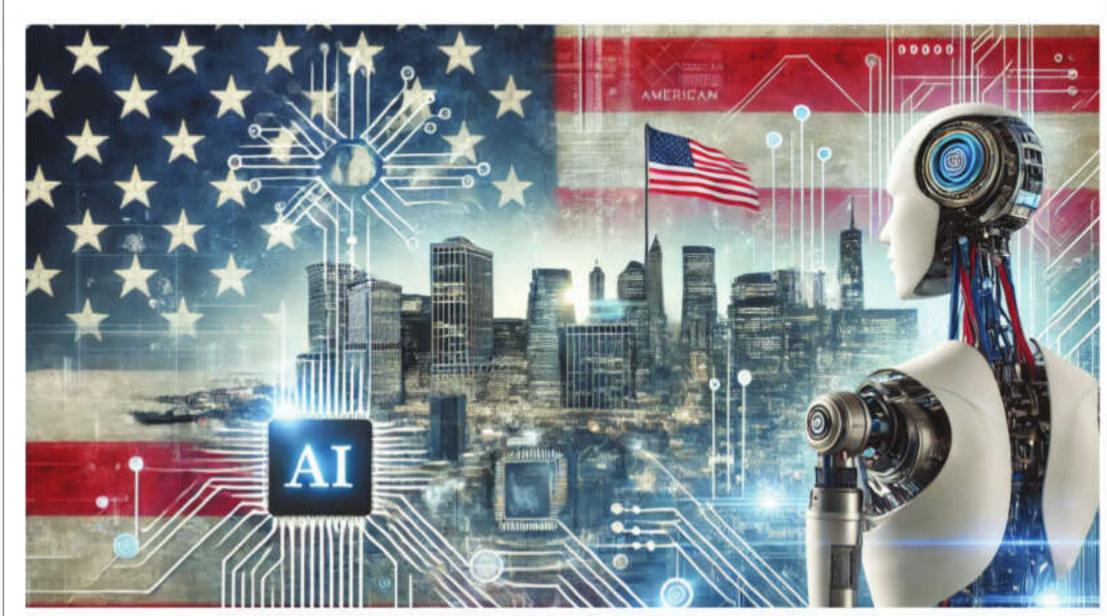
he arrest of a prominent Hindu monk in Bangladesh has sparked a diplomatic tussle with India, highlighting a recurring point of contention in the bilateral relationship: the condition of minorities in Bangladesh. This latest episode not only puts the spotlight on the treatment of minorities but also raises broader questions about governance, social harmony, and the delicate balance between justice and communal sensitivities. Bangladesh's Hindu minority, comprising around 8 per cent of the population, has historically been a barometer of the country's commitment to pluralism. The arrest of Chinmoy Krishna Das, a vocal advocate for minority rights, and the ensuing violence underscore a precarious environment where tensions can easily escalate. While Bangladesh's interim government claims the arrest is justified on charges of sedition, the perception of targeting a prominent Hindu figure risks stoking communal insecurities.

The reaction from India, expressing concern for the safety of minorities, has added a diplomatic layer to the incident. Relations between the two nations, which were robust under former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, have grown tense since her ouster. Sheikh Hasina's exile in India complicates matters further, with her presence serving as both a symbol of unresolved political turbulence in Bangladesh and a diplomatic tight-rope for India. The violence following Mr Das's arrest, resulting in the death of a Muslim lawyer, highlights the volatility of communal tensions. Such incidents reveal the thin line between maintaining law and order and preserving social cohesion. The interim government, under Muhammad Yunus, faces the dual challenge of asserting its authority while ensuring that justice is seen as impartial and inclusive. Mr Yunus's calls for calm are timely, but the perception of bias, whether real or imagined, could undermine these efforts. From a governance perspective, the incident exposes the fragility of Bangladesh's sociopolitical fabric. The nation's progress on economic and developmental fronts is already being overshadowed by recurring communal flashpoints. These challenges are exacerbated by the current political vacuum and uncertainty surrounding elections. Without a credible electoral process, Bangladesh risks further polarising its population, complicating efforts to foster unity.

For India, the issue of minority rights in Bangladesh is as much about domestic optics as it is about foreign policy. Raising concerns serves to reassure its own population of its commitment to Hindus abroad while subtly pressuring Dhaka to act responsibly. However, such interventions risk being perceived as interference, potentially straining bilateral ties further. Ultimately, Bangladesh's long-term stability hinges on its ability to uphold the principles of justice and communal harmony. Arrests, protests, and diplomatic exchanges must not be allowed to erode progress made in fostering social cohesion. The interim government must prioritise inclusivity and transparency, ensuring that all citizens, regardless of their faith, feel protected. In navigating these challenges, Bangladesh can reaffirm its commitment to being a diverse and harmonious society, a goal essential for both its internal stability and international relationships. At the moment, though, Dhaka seems to be floundering.

# Tyranny of broligarchs

Tech bros are the new Pharaohs and modern-day czars in the digital age. They are the self-appointed guardians of public trust, gatekeepers to corporate culture and thought. Tech billionaires are creating a world where the rich wax, the middle-class wanes and the poor live in hard-scrabble conditions



n his much-celebrated book, The Third Wave, futurist Alvin Toffler describes technology as "the dawn of a new civilisation". Technology has made great strides, solving many of our problems. Technology has also been part of the knowledge production system and institutions. Today, we not only use technology, we live technology.

But technology is not created in a vacuum. It is not a one-click solution either. What is worrying is the geopolitics of the big tech. High-tech has come to signify high politics too. Experience suggests that digital and tech advancements are geopolitical issues of the highest order. When technology is created, it is built with the developers' worldviews, values, beliefs and assumptions.

Today, the new plutocrats of Silicon Valley are working like predatory wolves. Must we be surprised when America's high-tech czars led by Elon Musk should be taking the country towards what Japanese economist Taichi Sakaiya called "a high-tech Middle

How has the US, the world's high-tech leader, come to such a stage? Why is the American dream cracking? The answer is obvious. The economy in the "land of the dream" has become global but politics hasn't. No wonder therefore, French sociologist Jean Baudrillard should describe the US as a land of "utopia achieved." If you "get out of your car in this centrifugal metropolis, you immediately become a delinquent: as soon as you start walking, you are a threat to public order, like a dog wandering in the road"

Innovation serves the plutocrats. Today, technological solutionism has become the romantic utopia in the US. You may call it a techno-utopian pipedream. When the technological future becomes unpredictable, policy-makers

drive in the dark.

sectors including academia. As the Washington Post writes, the Trump-aligned America First Policy Institute is working on a proposal to Make America First in AI. Marc Andreessen, a venture-capitalist billionaire, has published a "Techno-Optimist Manifesto" in which he claims, technology is the solution to environmental degradation. He further writes that AI is a 'philosopher's Stone' that can stop pandemics.

If the likes of Andreessen have their way, Trumperica will be

marching towards the 'dark academia' and 'choose your own adventure' epistemology will gain respectability. Andreessen boasts, "we are not primitives, cowering in fear of the lightning bolt... "We are the apex predator; the lightning works for us."

Musk holds the media in disdain. He has won the battle for attention against the media. His X has turned into MAGA's mouthpiece.

Brooke Harrington in his book "Offshore: Stealth Wealth and the New Colonialism" uses the term "Broligarchs" referring to America's big tech bros who are now shaping American politics. The male tech plutocrats from the Silicon Valley now run the country with their dark money. They are known for their desire for what one analyst calls power without accountability.

Tech bros are the new Pharaohs and modern-day czars in the digital age. They are the selfappointed guardians of public trust, gatekeepers to corporate culture and thought. Tech billionaires are creating a world where the rich wax, the middle-class wanes and the poor live in hard-It has also impacted other scrabble conditions.

Barrington explains that the big bros are a class apart. But they are by no account anarchists. They don't wish to break rules. In fact, they need a government. They believe they are smarter people who deserve to be above the law. They are natural allies of Trump as they see any form of democratic control as illegitimate.

Big bros claim a special status: The Sovereign Individual, to borrow the title of James Davidson and William Rees-Mogg's book.

That explains why the tech

Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy will be leading the department of government efficiency in the Trump Administration. Their task will be to dismantle the government bureaucracy, slash excess regulations, cut wasteful expenditure, and restructure federal agencies. Musk has already begun the job.

bro-in-chief, Elon

He has suggested mass-firings as is publicly identifying "fake jobs" and associated federal employees on X. These tactics are aimed at sowing terror and fear in federal employees.

The missionary big-tech oligarchs often blame the immigrants and minorities of various hues for all the ills. They may occasionally castigate the amorphous elite but never the capitalist class. What one sees in the US and elsewhere is what a columnist with The Nation Magazine Stephen Crowley calls "oligarchic capture of politics". Tech bros have found a way to deal with Trump: chin up and whistle.

How have tech bros acquired such power? The reasons are not far to seek. Both Republican and Democratic governments have weaponised the world economy by allowing the tech giants and other garden-variety oligarchs to have a stranglehold on key sectors. Business commands resources.

Cloud computing is the exclusive preserve of mega firms like Amazon and Microsoft. Communication channels have for long been monopolised by business groups. The submarine fibre cables too are in the hands of the private companies. No wonder, the private sector dominates major levers of power.

Musk is a class apart. As Time magazine writes, his monopoly of low orbit satellite communications has enabled him to hold "unprecedented level of privatised geopolitical power concentrated in the hands of a single, politically erratic tycoon." Consequence-free bad behaviour is his passport to success.

As journalist and media entrepreneur Natalia Antelava explains, "the Broligarchs of Silicon Valley have not just grabbed untold riches, they have created products that none of us can or want to live without". We are so used to this eco-system, that the power and ubiquity of these devices and their services have taken hold of our lives. Tech bros have built "the digital architecture of our lives.

The tech industry in the US is still a boys' club. The doors to the technology field remain virtually closed to women. Musk often mocks advocates of the LGBT+ community. It is anybody's guess where women will find themselves in his scheme of things. He would perhaps expect women to "follow the white rabbit."

One analyst calls Silicon Valley "feudalism with better marketing." It harbours new robber barons. They expect the Trump Administration not to Make America Great Again but to usher in a new gilded age. The broligarchs' real aim is to make America and the world in their own image.



## **ASIAN VOICES**

## **Accessibility of** healthcare in **Bangladesh**

ealth is a fundamental human right and all citizens, regardless of their socio-economic status, have the right to enjoy optimal health. This article emphasises on the issue of equity in health systems. It underlines the importance of a comprehensive multisectoral approach to improve the health system. Though Bangladesh has an adequate health infrastructure, a cause for concern is the uncontrolled growth in the private health sector. The challenge is to regulate the mushrooming private sector from exploitative cost of treatment. The aim is to ensure that the disadvantaged and vulnerable population have better access to basic healthcare without the current back-breaking cost.

The government needs strengthen the Primary Health Care (PHC) system in partnership with the NGO sector. The NGOs lead the way in community-based initiatives and outreach at the grassroots. Utilising the private sector is also a priority but needs coordination and regulation. At the macroeconomic level, initiatives need to be undertaken that nudge the Bangladesh Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW) towards reform and the adoption of new evidence-based practices that strengthen the health information system.

While the public health infrastructure in rural areas is considerable, this infrastructure needs an upgrade for maintaining quality PHC services. The

## The Bailu Star

quality of services remains a major issue, areas that need urgent attention is lack of investment in facilities.

There is also an imbalance between availability and placement of human resources in the healthcare system. Frequent staffing mismatch in relation to demand-supply affect efficiency. The regulatory process to implement policies and laws is slow and often delayed in operation.

As Bangladesh becomes increasingly urban, the government's role in establishing a PHC infrastructure to deliver services in urban areas appears to be lackadaisical at best.

Most commentators want to see the government considerably strengthen and fulfil its governance role in overseeing and monitoring aspects of health services. The government also needs to coordinate critical strategic developments, especially around the financing of this sector.

This begs the question, what should be the government's main role in health service delivery? Both the NGO and private sectors could be given specific tasks that are quantifiable to assess progress. They can develop guidelines and operational plans to help the ministry, donors, NGOs and the private sector work in a more coordinated manner.

Meanwhile, health experts in Bangladesh have felt a dire need for greater inter-ministry and intra-ministry coordination and collaboration. This is especially true between the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) and Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP), and between the MOHFW and the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (LGRD). With the latter being responsible for urban health, there is a need to decentralise the urban health system whereby city corporations can take primary responsibility for the health of

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR** 



**ASH NARAIN** 

ROY

Institute of Social Sciences,

## Lurking danger

**SIR,** Across Purba Bardhaman district, there are thousands of tea stalls, serving millions of cups of tea every morning, evening, and night. While many stalls have reintroduced clay cups for serving tea, a new danger lies hidden elsewhere ~ in the tea strainers. Be cautious wherever plastic tea strainers are used, as they pose a significant health risk.

The heat of hot tea can cause harmful chemicals like Bisphenol-A (BPA) or Phthalates to leach from plastic strainers. These chemicals can disrupt hormonal balance, reduce reproductive capacity, increase the risk of cancer, harm the liver and kidneys, reduce their functionality, and exacerbate neurological

disorders. Long-term exposure can also disrupt the endocrine system, leading to a range of diseases. Additionally, microplastics may enter the body, further aggravating health risks. Switching to alternatives like steel, ceramic, or bamboo strainers is much safer. The price difference between steel and plastic strainers is minimal, while steel strainers last significantly longer. However, due to a lack of awareness about the dangers, tea vendors continue to use plastic strainers.

Recently, a non-governmental organization carried out awareness campaigns in Burdwan town regarding this issue. However, widespread campaigns are needed across both rural and urban areas of



the district and the state. Every grassroots organization and administrative body is urged to promote the use of eco-friendly and reusable alternatives to plastic products.

This is not only essential for protecting human health but also for safeguarding the environment. Yours, etc., Sandipan Sarkar, Pallaroad, Purba Bardhaman, 28 November.

## UNFORTUNATE

**SIR,** It is unfortunate that both Houses of Parliament were adjourned twice at the beginning of the Constitution Day week on November 25 and 27. This deprives citizens of the opportunity to get a glimpse of a true and healthy picture of political problems, controversial issues and suggestions and its remedial measures through parliamentary discussions and debates.

It is unnatural that both Houses of a democratic nation where people's representatives are supposed to speak for the people are repeatedly adjourned. What is the harm in discussing matters related to Adani, Manipur and Sambal with neutrality as a priority?

Or, do the respected presiding officers want politicians to speak on the basis of unauthorized information and mislead the people at road junctions and public meetings?

The time has come to remind

## DISRUPTION

**SIR,** Donald Trump is on the warpath to make America great again, with a dream team of the best minds to assist him. In all likelihood there is going to be a disruption far greater than the Ukraine and Gaza conflicts.

The proposed tariff of 25 per cent on Chinese goods would cause a retaliation from China and as a result there would be trade war pushing up inflation in the entire world. Surprisingly, Canada too is facing a slightly lesser tariff.

India has so far been spared but there is no telling when Trump may decide otherwise. The dollar is only going to get stronger and make the Indian economy a little more fragile than it is at present.

Yours, etc., Anthony Henriques, Mumbai, 28 November.

everyone that in the interest of the people, representatives of both the opposition and the ruling parties, and respected presiding officers of both houses, must have an honest and impartial view on every issue and the ability to distinguish between good and bad.

Yours, etc., Rupam Guha, Kolkata, 28 November.

## INACTION

**SIR,** I agree with the analytical two part article "Toxic living" by Jaydev Jana. But I wonder why during the proclamation of recent by poll results political parties resorted to bursting of crackers to celebrate their victories.

The Pollution Control Board and the administration was temporarily in trance. The air and sound pollution created by such activities are never decried nor any cases registered against offenders. Yours, etc., Basudeb Dutta, Santipur, 28 November.

## **PRIORITIES**

gate their futures.

**SIR**, The Congress party's desire to regain access to paper votes poses mojar critical issues about accountability. Is criticising EVMs a technique to avoid internal failures? Given Congress' sloppy election outcomes, should it prioritise policy and voter participation instead of blame technology? How can the party restore trust with voters while correcting its own errors? These enquiries require serious thought by Congress leaders as they navi-

> Yours, etc., Anshu Bharti, Begusarai, 28 November.





# Human rights begin at home

**SANTHOSH MATHEW** 

nce, human rights were understood as the simple principle that one person's rights should never extend beyond the tip of another's nose unless invited. On December 10 each year, the world comes together to observe International Human Rights Day, a day that underscores the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family.

First recognized in 1950 under the guidance of the United Nations, this day has evolved into a global call to action for the protection and promotion of human rights worldwide. Yet, despite decades of progress, violations persist across the globe, reminding us that the fight for human rights is far from over.

The debate on human rights dates back centuries, and two of the most prominent figures in this discourse - Edmund Burke and Thomas Paine - left a lasting legacy that continues to resonate today. Burke, a supporter of the monarchy, saw the preservation of tradition and hierarchy as essential to societal stability, while Paine, a revolutionary thinker, championed liberty, equality, and the rights of individuals.

One of Paine's most famous lines, "We pity the plumage, but forget the dying bird," directly addressed the hypocrisy of focusing on superficial issues while ignoring the deeper, more urgent concerns. In modern times, these words still carry weight, highlighting how we often address surface-level concerns while systemic injustices persist, unnoticed or unchallenged.

The observance of Human Rights Day invites us to reflect on the progress made and the work still to be done. It is a reminder that the principles outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 1948, remain crucial in shaping a more just and equitable world. However, despite the ground-breaking achievements of the UDHR, widespread violations continue, and the fight for human dignity remains on-going.

Throughout history, the struggle for human rights has been a journey

fraught with obstacles. One notable turning point in this struggle occurred in the United States during the 19th century. The abolition of slavery, a monumental achievement, came about through the tireless efforts of leaders like Abraham Lincoln, who, in 1863, led the nation to abolish the institution through the 13th Amendment to the Constitution. This was a transformative moment in the history of human rights. Despite the victory, however, African-Americans continued to face systemic discrimination and segregation for many years after.

The 1954 landmark decision in Brown v. Board of Education, where the US Supreme Court declared racial segregation in public schools unconstitutional, was another significant victory for human rights in America. But even after this, African-Americans had to fight for basic rights like access to education, the vote, and an end to discriminatory laws. It was only in 1965, after decades of struggle and advocacy by civil rights leaders like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., that African-Americans were granted the right to vote under the Voting Rights Act. These achievements were monumental, but they were hard-won, demonstrating the lengths to which marginalized communities had to go in order to claim their human rights.

Internationally, the story of human rights has also been one of continuous struggle and progress. The United Nations' adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 was a defining moment. It set out, for the first time, a global standard for human rights, affirming the rights of individuals to life, liberty, and security, among other freedoms. The UDHR became the foundation upon which many countries would base their own human rights frameworks. But the road to realising these rights in full has not been easy.

Over the decades, the UDHR has been supplemented by two essential covenants - the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights - passed in 1966 to reinforce and clarify the rights outlined in the UDHR. One of the key figures behind the development of the UDHR was Eleanor Roosevelt, who, as the chairperson of the UN Human Rights



Commission, played a pivotal role in its creation. Known as the "mother of modern human rights," Roosevelt's vision for a world where all people were treated equally and with dignity shaped the discourse on human rights for generations.

Unfortunately, she did not live to see the full impact of the UDHR, passing away in 1962, but her legacy lives on. Since 1998, the Eleanor Roosevelt Award for Human Rights has been awarded annually to individuals who have made significant contributions to the protection of human rights.

As we reflect on the history of human rights, we must also acknowledge the many challenges that remain today. In the United States, for example, despite significant progress, debates about gun control and mass shootings continue to spark deep divisions. The United Nations and various human rights organizations have called for greater restrictions on firearms, but powerful interest groups like the National Rifle Association (NRA) continue to push back against any form of regulation. The on-going violence in schools and public places is a stark reminder that the struggle for human rights continues, and that the protection of human life and safety is an essential component of human rights.

In India, human rights protections are enshrined in the Constitution, which guarantees the right to life, liberty, and equality. However, even in a country with such a strong legal framework, violations of human rights are not uncommon. Discrimination based on caste, religion, gender, and disability continues to affect millions of people across the country. While the Constitution guarantees equal rights for all, the reality often falls short. The National Human Rights Commission, which works to address these issues, plays an important role, but there is

still much work to be done. The issue of discrimination remains one of the most pervasive challenges to human rights. Genderbased violence, including domestic abuse, sexual assault, and trafficking, continues to devastate the lives of women and girls around the world. In many countries, LGBTQ+ individuals face violence, discrimination, and the denial of basic rights. Refugees and migrants, fleeing war, persecution, and poverty, are often subjected to inhumane conditions and denied their rights to safety and protection.

The most vulnerable members of society, including those who are stateless, face some of the most extreme forms of discrimination, and the international community must do more to protect them. On a global scale, poverty and inequality are also significant barriers to realizing human rights. Despite progress in some areas, the gap between the rich and the poor continues to widen. Economic inequalities, along with the challenges posed by climate change, pose major threats to the realization of human rights for millions of people around the world.

The struggle for human rights is far from over. While progress has been made, there are still millions of people around the world who are denied their basic rights and dignity. The world must come together to address the root causes of discrimination, inequality, and violence. Human rights are not just abstract concepts; they are the foundation of a just and peaceful world. As we observe International Human Rights Day later this month, we must renew our commitment to these principles and work to ensure that they are upheld for all people, everywhere.

The fight for human rights is not just the responsibility of governments or international organizations. It is a responsibility shared by all of us, whether through advocacy, education, or simply standing up for justice. We must remember the words of Eleanor Roosevelt, "Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home." It is in our homes, our communities, and our everyday actions that the future of human rights will be determined.

(The writer is Associate Professor, Centre for South Asian Studies, Pondicherry Central

## **NOW AND AGAIN**

## **CASHLESS TRANSACTIONS**

**SUNIPA BASU** 

am not a great fan of cashless transactions though I am slowly beginning to appreciate the benefits. I no Llonger have to stock up small change for small purchases or wait for days for a cheque to be credited because of intervening bank holidays. Amitabh Bachchan in his popular game show "Kaun Banega Crorepati" is forever showing how UPI credits your bank account instantaneously. I however must confess that I am still thrilled to get a 10 rupee coin which I can pop into my piggy bank.

It is also to be noted that his game show is peppered with RBI warnings on online frauds with the slogan "Jankar Baniye Satark Rahiye" that inhibits people like us. Sociologists are yet to fully research the impact that cashless transactions are having on the human mind and society: whether people are more generous or stingy, cautions or reckless, practical or impractical, planned or un-planned, trusting or suspicious and whether society has become a safer place or plagued by unseen dangers in cyber space.

Just the other day, I was a witness to a novel cashless transaction closer home that provided answers to some of these questions.

Urmila, the lady fishmonger, has been a common figure in our neighbourhood. She carries a big aluminum vessel on her head, full of fish. Over the years she has built up a fixed clientele that reduces her labour and very often on festive days or home celebrations fetches her extra orders. Getting on in years, she developed knee pain that prevented her from climbing stairs.

This is where our caregiver Gita, her old friend, stepped in. Every morning she accompanied Urmila on her rounds chitchatting on the way, helping her in loading and unloading the vessel on her head, most importantly carrying it up the stairs on her behalf. Urmila gave her the fish left over at the end of the day.

Just a few fays back, Gita came in the evening with a delectable dish of Sarse (mustard) Chingri (Prawns). It so happened that Urmila got a big order of Golda Chingri (Golden Prawn) for a home occasion in our complex. Gita had helped in carrying the fish to the third floor and Urmila had saved some pieces for her friend. We were lucky to share the delicacy that Gita had cooked with loving care – two pieces for her family and two for our family. This was a cashless transaction bridging the era of the barter system before money was invented to the current one through a human relationship that is invaluable and hence cashless.

## **EXECUTE OF THE PROPERTY OF TH**

# Lessons for Opposition in poll results

very political party makes mistakes, but the smart ones learn from them and move forward. ✓ The growth and success of any party must reflect on past mistakes and use them as stepping stones for progress.

The Congress could not maintain momentum after the 2024 Lok Sabha elections six months ago when it doubled its seats.

What caused the decline in its performance? Did the Congress party, the oldest in India, fail to seize opportunities for learning and adaptation? Did the NCP and the Uddhav faction of the Shiv Sena misinterpret the signals? Did the BJP make errors in Jharkhand? The recent results from the Maharashtra and Jharkhand Assembly elections reveal missed growth opportunities.

Two things stand out in the Maharashtra and Jharkhand polls. The first is the size of the BJP-led NDA win in Maharashtra, defeating the NCP and Uddhav Shiv Sena, both of which had ruled Maharashtra earlier, and the ease with which Hemant Soren retained Iharkhand. Both were ruling their respective states.

The alliance could have performed better if Congress had learned from past experiences and made necessary adjustments. Unlike the Pachmarhi or Shimla conclaves, there has been a lack of post-election analysis.

CROSSWORD

Congress must address this lack of introspection. It could not have been due to a generational change, as change is constant. The succeeding generations must work to take the party forward. The Grand Old Party is entirely under the control of Rahul Gandhi, the Leader of the Opposition, and his chosen associates. Rahul worked hard and campaigned, but the party must still get voters to the polling booths. The results suggest they have not learnt from mistakes of the recent Haryana Assembly elections, such as relying heavily on one leader, ignoring the others, and the wrong distribution of tickets, despite being in a winning position.

The most crucial aspect the Congress Party, NCP and the Uddhav faction of Shiv Sena must address is the narrative. For the Congress, the focus on caste issues, defending the Constitution, and making personal attacks on the Prime Minister has not resonated with the voters. This disconnect is a clear sign that the party needs to reevaluate its strategy and focus on issues that truly matter to the electorate, such as the bread and butter problems. It is a pressing concern

that needs alignment. Even within the INDIA alliance, there are frictions now. After the recent results, partners in the INDIA bloc like AAP and the Trinamool Congress are pursuing their own agendas and show

little interest in joint action for the current winter session of Parliament.

Even earlier, Rahul Gandhi's attack on Savarkar did not garner any support for Congress; instead, it created friction between the Shiv Sena, which idolised Savarkar, and Congress. These parties also did not realise the political impact of the BJP's parent organisation, RSS, which worked for the party's success.

The INDIA bloc did not specify the issues as they did during the Lok Sabha elections, focusing solely on defeating the BJP and its allies. This strategy influenced the Lok Sabha results, forcing the BJP to form a government with the support of two regional parties, the JD(U) and the Telugu Desam Party. The

Maratha strongman Sharad Pawar must feel disheartened after losing his party and the election to his nephew, Ajit Pawar, whom he groomed. The warning signs became clear when Ajit joined the BJP, betraying his uncle to help form the government.

The situation worsened when the Election Commission recognised Ajit's faction as the real NCP, despite Sharad Pawar having founded and led the party to power multiple times. This decision severely undermined Pawar.

The same applies to Uddhav Thackeray, son of Sena founder Bal Thackeray, who succeeded his father, lost the party and the elections to rebel



Eknath Shinde, who helped BJP form the government in Maharashtra in a coalition. Both must introspect about what led to their loss of popularity.

On the other hand, JMM, a partner in the INDIA bloc, has demonstrated how to win despite numerous challenges. JMM Chief Minister Hemant Soren and his wife, Kalpana, faced several hardships, including a jail sentence for Soren.

In India, elections occur almost continuously in one state or the other. So, the election season has not ended. The immediate test will be the Rajva Sabha elections for six seats on December 20. The NDA is expected to

win five of the six seats, while the Trinamool Congress will likely secure one. This might result in NDA getting the majority in the Upper House, which could further weaken the Congress Party's position in the Parliament. There are eight vacancies - four in the nomination category and four in Jammu and Kashmir.

Ultimately, wins and losses in elections are seen all over the world. Every election reveals the mistakes and successes of the players. But the real winner is the one who rectifies his mistakes without losing time. Winners must not become complacent, while losers need to stay motivated.

## NO-292970

## **ACROSS**

- See two newspapers coming round for church feature
- (5,4)10 Longer and shorter periods
- reversed in final letter (5) 11 Excellent daughters returned
- to home land (5)
- 12 Designer makes Catholic dose with ecstasy during play
- 13 Artist seen in every echo? Listener's smart! (7)

drink and quencher (7)

- 14 Recline to consume honeyed
- beast (5)
- 19 Correlation shown where

18 See 20

- 20/18 It needs treatment, rough, for backing protocol row
- (7,3)
- character (7)
- 23 Hearings in case due to be
- 26 Fish served with duck`s

tongue (5)

16 Fine beer to be sent round for 27 Oil producers lie and cut pay anyway (9)

**DOWN** 

- moon follows rodent (5)
- 21 By it one develops feeling for
- 25 Money short, then endlessly
- given in tax (5)
- Busy work mounting bugs
  - famed oil worker (6,9) 2 Aura surrounding old tribe in
- Moroccan location (6) Lark circling sailor caught — a bleak prospect?
- Gypsy turning up with beer

disciplinarian (8)

- and spirits (6) 5 Large adhesive label covers
- 6 Here camels roaming spit on
- 7 Material about eastern Mediterranean region

one (4)

- 8 Reproduction Stonehenge assembled in capital
- 15 Tees upset about hypocrisy
- concerning trade 17 Notice six-footer eating cake
- 18 Deeply impressed after

heartless 18 Across, but

that's rich

- miserable
  - 21 Split in religious group that goes both ways?
  - 22 Reprieves ram trapped among
  - the French
  - 24 Poet's black book one that`s devious keeps (4)

NOTE: Due to technical reasons, we are unable to publish the solution to yesterday's crossword. We apologise to our

NOTE: Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required. (By arrangement with The Independent, London)

## **100 YEARS AGO**

## **WORK FOR THE VILLAGES**

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "STATESMAN." SIR,—In his two interesting letters on

the subject of the water-hyacinth pest in Bengal Dr. Brühl has sounded a timely warning, and now is the time for the Government and the people of Bengal to take note and move.

I remember having read in the papers of some experiments being made by Sir J. C. Bose in regard to the water-hyacinth, and I think a committee was formed to report on the matter. I do not know what has been the fate of the committee's

Dr. Brühl in his second letter notes that the "older members of the community are often apathetic and unwilling to exert themselves or even to allow others to do the work" of clearing tanks and *khals*, which is occasionally undertaken by the younger men. I happen to be associated with a small organization named the "Kodali Brigade." The activities of this society are similar to those suggested by Dr. Bruhl. The Brigade is composed of a number of young men who generally spend their Sundays in visiting villages in the interior and cleansing jungles, tanks and drains. In their operations these boys have met with queer instances of opposition from the older people. On one occasion the boys were not allowed to work in a filthy drain for the simple reason of their being mostly dressed in khaki. This the gentleman owner of the drain apprehended to be a sign of enhanced taxes payable to the municipality. It is needless to say that the young men had as much to do with the municipality as with the man in the moon!

On another occasion a rather big tree which was hanging over a little doba, and thereby polluting the water, was not allowed to be cut down. When a member of the Brigade asked why that useless tree could not be cut down, the owner replied with all soriousness that the tree was believed to shelter a "spirit" and if the tree was hewed down the wrath of the spirit would fall upon the family. The youth came back disappointed—but wiser!

> Yours, etc., ANADI MUKHERII. 3, Ultadanga Junction Road, Calcutta



# Border-dwelling Israelis still fearful of returning home

Across the border, Lebanese civilians have jammed roads in a rush to return to their homes

**ASSOCIATED PRESS** 

ean Sweetland casts his gaze over a forlorn street in the Israeli community of Kibbutz Malkiya.

KIBBUTZ MALKIYA, 30 NOVEMBER

Perched on a hill overlooking the border with Lebanon, the town stands mostly empty after being abandoned a year The daycare is closed.

The homes are unkempt. Parts of the landscape are ashen from fires sparked by fallen Hezbollah rockets. Even after a tenuous Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire designed to let Israelis return to the north, the mood here is far from celebratory.

"The ceasefire is rubbish," said Sweetland, a gardener and member of the kibbutz's civilian security squad. "Do

you expect me to ring around my friends and say, 'All the families should come home?'

Across the border, Lebanese civilians have jammed roads in a rush to return to homes in the country's south, but most residents of northern Israel have met the ceasefire with suspicion and apprehension.

"Hezbollah could still come back to the border, and who will protect us when they do?" Sweetland asked.

Israel's government seeks to bring the northern reaches of the country back to life, particularly the line of communities directly abutting Lebanon that have played a major role in staking out Israel's border.

But the fear of Hezbollah, a lack of trust in United Nations peacekeeping forces



charged with upholding the ceasefire, deep anger at the government and some Israelis' desire to keep rebuilding their lives elsewhere are keeping many from returning immediately.

When the truce took effect, about 45,000 Israelis had evacuated from the north. They fled their homes after Hezbollah began firing across the border on Oct. 8, 2023,

in solidarity with its ally Hamas in Gaza. That triggered more than a year of crossborder exchanges, with

brunt of the pain. During the truce's initial 60-day phase, Hezbollah is supposed to remove its armed presence from a broad band of southern Lebanon where

Lebanese villages in the south

and Israeli communities fac-

ing the border taking the

the military says the militant group had been digging in for years by gathering weapons and setting up rocket launch sites and other infrastructure. Under the ceasefire, a U.N. peacekeeping force known as UNIFIL and a beefed-up Lebanese army presence are supposed to ensure Hezbollah doesn't

Many residents of northern Israel are skeptical that the peace will hold.

Sarah Gould, who evacuated Kibbutz Malkiya at the start of the war with her three kids, said Hezbollah fired on the community up to and just past the minute when the ceasefire took effect early Wednesday.

"So for the government to tell me that Hezbollah is neutralized," she said, "it's a perfect lie."

## North Korea's Kimvows steadfast support for Russia's war in Ukraine

**AGENCIES** SEOUL, 30 NOVEMBER

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vowed his country will "invariably support" Russia's war in Ukraine as he met Russia's defense chief, the North's state media reported Saturday.

A Russia military delegation led by Defense Minister Andrei Belousov arrived in North Korea on Friday, amid growing international concern about the two countries' expanding cooperation after North Korea sent thousands of troops to Russia last month.

The official Korean Central News Agency said that Kim and Belousov reached "a satisfactory consensus" on boosting strategic partnership and defending each country's sovereignty, security interests and international justice in the face of the rapidly-changing international security environments in a Friday meeting.



Kim said that North Korea "will invariably support the policy of the Russian Federation to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity from the imperialists' moves for hegemony," KCNA said.

North Korea has supported Russia's invasion of Ukraine, calling it a defensive response to what both Moscow and Pyongyang call NATO's "reckless" eastward advance and U.S.-led moves to stamp out Russia's position as a powerful state.

Kim slammed a U.S. decision earlier in November to let Ukraine strike targets inside Russia with U.S.-supplied longer-range missiles as a direct intervention in the conflict. He called recent

Russian strikes on Ukraine "a timely and effective measure" demonstrate Russia's resolve, KCNA said.

According to U.S., Ukrainian and South Korean assessments, North Korea has sent more than 10,000 troops to Russia and some of them have already begun engaging in combat on the frontlines. U.S., South Korean and others say North Korea has also shipped artillery systems, missiles and other conventional weapons to replenish Russia's exhausted weapons

inventory. Both North Korea and Russia haven't formally confirmed the North Korean troops' movements, and have steadfastly denied reports of weapons ship-

South Korea, the U.S. and their partners are concerned that Russia could give North Korea advanced weapons technology in return, including help to build more powerful nuclear missiles.

# British lawmakers give initial approval to a bill to allow terminally ill adults to end their lives

LONDON, 30 NOVEMBER

British lawmakers gave initial approval on Friday to a bill to help terminally ill adults end their lives in England and Wales, following an impassioned debate that saw people sharing personal stories of loss and suffering.

Members of Parliament approved the assisted dying bill by a 330-275 vote, signaling their approval in principle for the bill, which will undergo further scrutiny before it goes to a final vote.

Friday's vote came after hours of debate—emotional at times — that touched on



issues of ethics, faith and law. There was no braying and shouting that often marks debates in the House of Commons and speeches were considered respectfully and heard in silence.

"Let's be clear, we're not talking about a choice between life or death, we are talking about giving dying people a choice about how to die,"

the bill's main sponsor, Kim Leadbeater, said as she presented the bill to a packed chamber.

Supporters said the law would provide dignity to the dying and prevent suffering, while protecting the vulner-

Opponents said the disabled and elderly were at risk of being coerced, directly or indirectly, to end their lives to save money or relieve the burden on family members. Others called for the improvement of palliative care to ease suffering as an alternative.

The proposed bill would allow adults over the age of 18 who are expected to have

fewer than six months to live to request and be provided help to end their life, subject to several safeguards.

They would have to be capable of taking the fatal drugs themselves, and two independent doctors and a High Court judge will have to sign off on any decision. The bill will not apply to Scotland or Northern Ireland.

Backers of the bill told heart-wrenching stories about constituents and family members who suffered in the final months of their lives and dying people who committed suicide in secret because it is currently a crime for anyone to provide assistance.

## Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau flies to $Florida \,to\,meet\,with\,Trump\,after\,tariffs\,threat$

WEST PALM BEACH, 30 NOVEMBER

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau flew to Florida on Friday to have dinner with President-elect Donald Trump at his Mar-a-Lago club after Trump threatened to impose sweeping tariffs on Canadian products.

Trump threatened to impose tariffs on products from Canada and Mexico if they don't stop what he called the flow of drugs and migrants across their borders. He said he would impose a 25% tax on all products entering the U.S. from Canada and Mexico as one of his first executive



orders.

A person familiar with the details called it a "positive wide-ranging dinner that lasted three hours." The official, who was not authorized to speak publicly and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity, said topics included trade, border security, fentanyl, defense, Ukraine, NATO, China and pipelines,

as well as the the Group of Seven meeting in Canada next

Although Trump once called Trudeau "weak" and "dishonest" during his first term, ties between the two countries have remained among the closest in the world. Trudeau is the first leader from the G7 countries to visit Trump since the Nov. 4 elec-

Joining Trump and Trudeau at dinner were Howard Lutnick, Trump's nominee for commerce secretary, North Dakota Gov. Doug Burgum, Trump's pick to lead the Interior Department, Mike Waltz, Trump's choice to be his national security adviser, and the three men's wives.

Also at the dinner were David McCormick, just elected U.S. senator from Pennsylvania, and his wife, Dina Powell, a former deputy national security adviser under Trump, as well as Canadian Public Safety Minister Dominic LeBlanc, whose responsibilities include border security, and Katie Telford, Trudeau's chief of staff.

McCormick posted a photo on X of the group seated at a round table on the patio of Mar-a-Lago. At the table behind the president-elect a boy can be seen mugging for the camera.

# The world gets its first glimpse inside Notre Dame Cathedral after 5 years under wraps

**AGENCIES** 

PARIS, 30 NOVEMBER

Five years after a catastrophic fire reduced Notre Dame Cathedral to a smoldering shell, journalists got a first glimpse of the Gothic masterpiece's fully restored interiors during a visit with French President Emmanuel Macron. The transformation is nothing short of breathtaking: light dances across brilliant stone, gilded accents gleam anew, and the iconic monument's majesty is reborn. From Dec. 8, visitors will once again marvel at the cathedral's blend of history and craftsmanship. The nave, once darkened

by soot and rubble, now radiates a celestial brilliance. Visitors can see the true color of the cathedral's walls: a pale Lutetian limestone — named after the Roman word for Paris, Lutecia that glows under sunlight streaming through restored stained-glass windows. The newfound blond hues highlight the soaring Gothic columns and ribbed vaults, creating a bright and uplifting atmosphere. Restorers say it's the first time in centuries the true stone has been exposed in this way.



The polished checkerboard marble floor, glistening underfoot, is so smooth it seems you could glide across it ~communicating with the gilded, golden grille partition of the choir area. Overhead, incandescent chandeliers hang majestically from each vaulted arch, stretching from west to east, casting a warm, golden light throughout the nave. The meticulous restoration process involved cleaning over 42,000 square meters of stone ~ an area equivalent to roughly six soccer fields ~ using innovative latex peels to strip away centuries of grime without causing damage.

## Ireland headed for coalition government following parliamentary election, exit poll suggests

**AGENCIES DUBLIN, 30 NOVEMBER** 

An exit poll in Ireland's parliamentary election released late Friday suggests the three biggest parties have won roughly equal shares and the country is headed for another coalition govern-

A poll released as voting ended at 10 p.m. (2200GMT) said center-right party Fine Gael was the first choice of 21% of voters, with its center-right coalition partner in the outgoing government, Fianna Fail at 19.5%. Leftof-center opposition Sinn Fein was at 21.1% in the poll.

Pollster Ipsos B&A asked



5,018 voters across the country how they had cast their ballots. The survey has a margin of error of plus or minus 1.4 percentage points.

The figures only give an indication and don't reveal which parties will form the next government. Counting of ballots starts Saturday morning and because Ireland uses a complex system of proportional representation

known as the single transferrable vote, it can take between several hours and several days for full results to be known.

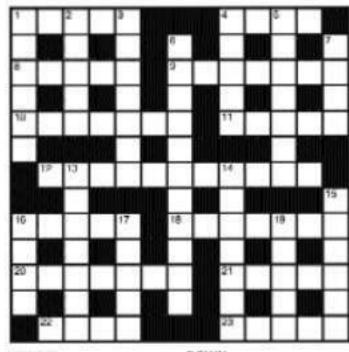
The result will show whether Ireland bucks the global trend of incumbents being ousted by disgruntled voters after years of pandemic, international instability and a cost-of-living pressures.

Sinn Fein, which had urged people to vote for

change, hailed the result. "There is every chance that Sinn Fein will emerge from these elections as the largest political party," Sinn Fein director of elections Matt Carthy told broadcaster

## **LEISURE**

## 10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



#### **ACROSS** 1 Chef's hat (5) 4 Church recess (4) 8 Tartan cloth (5)

9 Valued old item (7) 10 Permitted (7) 11 Multitude (5) 12 Type of glass (4,7) 16 Zodiac sign (5)

18 Address (5,2) 20 Ugly sight (7) 21 Jog with the elbow (5)

1. Formal headwear item (3,3) 2 Small game bird (5) 3 Bequeathed (7) 4 Garret (5) 5 Giant tree (7) 6 In difficulties (4-7)

7 Dispatch (4) 13 Apparent (7) 14 Breastbone (7) 15 Humorous drama (6) 16 Prayer ending (4) 17 Deign (S) 22 Pace (4) 19 Prestige (5)

## 23 Untidy (5)

ACROSS 13 Closet. 1 Caster. 4 Bout (Cast about), 16 Illicit, 18 Virus, Champion ship. 19 Fait accompli 9 Offal, 20 Weed, 10 Reflect, 21 Caress.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD 1 Cuckoo soit. 12 Located. 2 Staffed, 14 Scruple 3 Expel, 4 Bashful, 17 Lease. 5 Unite. 18 Viola. 6 Court, By arrangement with The Independent Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required

## **BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker**





## RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson





## DADDY DAZE/John Kovaleski HI. READY TO GO TO MAMADR







## NEED TO KNOW

FD Block Association (Amb) 9830452536, 9830181286 Happy Calcuttans 24400160 City Point Nurses Centre 2567-4113, 9831142623 People's Relief Committee 2280-4943/9444

24 hrs Medical Oxygen BOC India Ltd. 9831277777

Central Blood Bank 23510619 Lake: 2357-5293;

Ashok Laboratory 24720333 Fire Service Station Salt

S. P. (North 24-Pgns) 25423005 S.P. (South 24-Pgns) 2479-3333/1311 Bhawani Bhawan 24791761/9, 24791933

Lalbazar (Police Control

Room) 22143230

Howrah 2666-8111; Behala

Kolkata Municipal Corporation: 2286-1000 Water: 2543-1602

Changed Number

registration

1951,1952,1953 Taxi Refusal SMS 575756: Complaint and

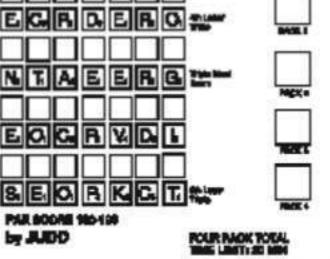
Concepts Suggestu

Howrah Station Old Complex 1331/1332 (Auto Telephone Numbers), 1310, 2638-7412/3542/2581 (manual). Sealdah: 2350-3535/3537 Shalimar Station: 2668-1121, Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway: 139.

By Days Green

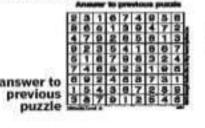
Police Toll Free No. 1073

1912 and 4403-1912



Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right, 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. Blanks used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in The Official Scrabble Players Dictionary/Merriam-Wobster) and OSW Official Scrabble Words/Chambers1.

#### 6 5 8 9 8 9 8 9 8 3 9 8 6 Difficulty Level \*\* Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with



several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the emoty squares so that no row, no column and no 3x3 box contains the same number. The difficulty level increases through the week.

# Syrian troops battle rebel offensive in Aleppo

The lightning push into Aleppo followed weeks of simmering low-level violence

**AGENCIES** 

BEIRUT, 30 NOVEMBER

housands of Syrian insurgents fanned out inside Aleppo in vehicles with improvised armor and pickups, deploying to landmarks such as the old citadel on Saturday, a day after they entered Syria's largest city facing little resistance from government troops, according to residents and

Witnesses said two airstrikes on the city's edge late Friday targeted insurgent reinforcements and hit near residential areas. A war monitor said 20 fighters were killed.

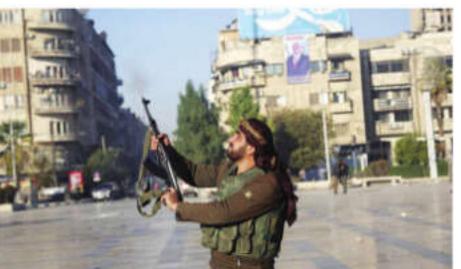
Syria's armed forces said in a statement Saturday that to absorb the large attack on Aleppo and save lives, it has redeployed and is preparing for a counterattack. The state-

ment acknowledged that insurgents entered large parts of the city but said they have not established bases or checkpoints.

Insurgents were filmed outside police headquarters, in the city center, and outside the Aleppo citadel. They tore down posters of Syrian President Bashar Assad, stepping on some and burning others.

The surprise takeover is a huge embarrassment for Assad, who managed to regain total control of the city in 2016, after expelling insurgents and thousands of civilians from its eastern neighborhoods following a grueling military campaign in which his forces were backed by Russia, Iran and its allied groups.

Aleppo has not been attacked by opposition forces since then. The 2016 battle



for Aleppo was a turning point in the war between Syrian government forces and rebel fighters after 2011 protests against Assad's rule turned into an all-out war.

The push into Aleppo followed weeks of simmering low-level violence, including government attacks on opposition-held areas. Turkey, which has backed Syrian opposition groups, failed in its diplomatic efforts to prevent the Syrian government attacks, which were seen as a violation of a 2019 agreement sponsored

The offensive came as Iranlinked groups, primarily Lebanon's Hezbollah, which has backed Syrian government forces since 2015, have been preoccupied with their own

by Russia, Turkey and Iran

to freeze the line of the con-

battles at home. A ceasefire in Hezbollah's two-month war with Israel took effect Wednesday, the day the Syrian opposition factions announced their offensive. Israel has also escalated its attacks against Hezbollah and Iran-linked targets in Syria during the last 70 days.

A witness in Aleppo said government troops remained in the city's airport and at a military academy but most of the forces have already filed out of the city from the south. Syrian Kurdish forces remained in two neighbor-

The redeployment "is a temporary measure and (the military central command and armed forces) will work to guarantee the security and peace of all our people in Aleppo," the military statement

# Bangladesh: Three Hindu temples vandalised in Chattogram

**AGENCIES DHAKA. 30 NOVEMBER** 

region.

In a disturbing incident three Hindu temples in Chattogram, Bangladesh, were vandalised by a mob shouting slogans, amid ongoing protests and violence in the

The attack occurred at around 2.30 P.M. on Friday in the Harish Chandra Munsef Lane area, targeting the Santaneshwar Matri Temple, the Shoni Temple, and the Shantaneshwari Kalibari Temple.

According to reports from BDNews24.com, a group of several hundred individuals, after attending the Friday prayers, descended upon the temples, throwing brickbats and causing damage to the Shoni Temple and the gates of the other two temples.

The temple authorities confirmed the extent of the damage, which included broken gates and other vandalised structures.



Kotwali Police Station chief Abdul Karim confirmed the attack and stated that the assailants made deliberate attempts to damage the temples.

Tapan Das, a permanent member of the Santaneshwar Matri Temple management committee, recounted the harrowing events, stating that the attackers began chanting anti-Hindu and anti-ISKCON slogans as they arrived in large numbers.

The violence has been brewing in Chattogram since the arrest of Chinmoy Krishna Das, a former member of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), who was detained on charges of disrespecting the Bangladesh national flag. The protests and unrest surrounding his arrest have escalated tensions in the region.

Tapan Das further revealed that the temple authorities did not engage with the attackers during the assault, and instead, they called for military assistance as the situation wors-

The Army responded promptly and helped restore order. By the time the mob arrived, the temple gates had been secured, but the damage to the structures had already been done. According to reports, the attack appeared to be unprovoked, and no significant resistance was made by the temple staff.

The incident has raised serious concerns about the safety of religious minorities in Bangladesh including Hindus, Christians and Buddhists.

## Iran denies allegation of violating Chemical Weapons Convention



**AGENCIES** TEHRAN, 30 NOVEMBER

Iran's permanent mission to the UN in New York has firmly rebutted claims suggesting that the nation had breached the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC),

the official news agency IRNA reported.

The Institute for the Study of War, a policy research organisation on US national security, alleged that Iran had been focussing on how to produce and deliver pharmaceutical-based chemical

agents for military use, citing a November 26 report by the US Institute for Science and International Security, Xinhua news agency report-

In response to the allegation, the Iranian diplomatic mission wrote on Thursday on social media platform X that Iran stands as a responsible signatory to the CWC, which strictly forbids the development, production, and stockpiling of chemical weapons, asserting that "over the past several decades, not a single instance of Iranian violation has been record-

It called the allegation "unfounded" and "merely an outgrowth of psychological warfare propagated by the Zionist regime (Israel) in the wake of its recent defeat on the Lebanese front."

# $China \, sentences \, journalist \, detained \, at \, meal \, \\ with \, Japanese \, diplomat \, to \, 7 \, years \, for \, espionage \,$

**AGENCIES** 

BANGKOK, 30 NOVEMBER

A court in Beijing on Friday sentenced a prominent Chinese journalist to seven in years in prison for espionage, his family said.

Dong Yuyu, a commentator and editor, was taken away by police while meeting a Japanese diplomat at a restaurant in February 2022. He has been in police custody since then.

The Beijing Number 2 Intermediate People's Court read the verdict but did not share a copy with Dong's lawyers or family. No announcement was available on the court's website or its Weibo account.

The verdict named then-Japanese ambassador Hideo Tarumi and Shanghai-based

chief diplomat Masaru Okada as agents belonging to an espionage organization, according the family's state-

ment. Dong had served as the deputy head of the editorial department at Guangming Daily, one of the five major state-owned papers in China. The paper was once considered more liberal than other state-backed papers. Dong also contributed to the Chinese edition of the New York Times.

In his published writings, including essays as well as opinion articles, Dong had voiced his support for constitutional democracy and political reform, which later were considered to be against the stance of the Communist

He had contacts with for-



eign diplomats, scholars and other journalists as part of his decades-long career and counted Tarumi, the ambassador, as a friend.

Still, his family said he knew he was always watched by state security, and therefore sought to be as open as possible while meeting his Japanese or American contacts. "With Yuyu's conviction,

every Chinese citizen, when dealing with the Japanese embassy — or perhaps any other foreign embassy and diplomat—will be expected to know that the Chinese government may consider those embassies to be 'espi-

Court read the verdict but did not share a copy with Dong's lawyers or family. No announcement was available on the court's website or its Weibo account. onage organizations," said

The Beijing Number 2

**Intermediate People's** 

the family in a statement. "Every sensible Chinese citizen should be appalled by this reasoning." The U.S. Ambassador to China, Nicholas Burns, con-

demned Dong's conviction. "Punishing Dong for exercising his freedom of speech and the press, guaranteed by the PRC's constitution for all its citizens, is unjust."

# Stealth destroyer to be home for 1st hypersonic weapon on a US warship

**AGENCIES** 

WASHINGTON, 30 NOVEMBER

The U.S. Navy is transforming a costly flub into a potent weapon with the first shipborne hypersonic weapon, which is being retrofitted aboard the first of its three stealthy destrovers.

The USS Zumwalt is at a Mississippi shipyard where workers have installed missile tubes that replace twin turrets from a gun system that was never activated because it was too expensive. Once the system is complete, the Zumwalt will provide a platform for conducting fast, precision strikes from greater distances, adding to the usefulness of the warship.

"It was a costly blunder but the Navy could take victory from the jaws of defeat here, and get some utility out of them by making them into a hypersonic platform," said Bryan Clark, a defense analyst at the Hudson Institute. The U.S. has had several

types of hypersonic weapons in development for the past two decades, but recent tests by both Russia and China have added pressure to the U.S. military to hasten their production.

Hypersonic weapons travel beyond Mach 5, five times the speed of sound, with added maneuverability making them harder to shoot down.

USA Today report.

with Arctic air, the looming



Last year, *The Washington Post* reported that among the documents leaked by former Massachusetts Air National Guard member Jack Teixeira was a defense department briefing that confirmed China had recently tested an intermediate-range hypersonic weapon called the DF-27. While the Pentagon had pre-

viously acknowledged the weapon's development, it had not recognized its test-

One of the U.S. programs in development and planned for the Zumwalt is "Conventional Prompt Strike." It would launch like a ballistic missile and then release a hypersonic glide vehicle that would travel at speeds seven to eight times faster than the speed of sound before hitting the target. The weapon system is being developed jointly by the Navy and Army. Each of the Zumwaltclass destroyers would be equipped with four missile tubes, each with three of the missiles for a total of 12 hypersonic weapons per ship.

## Iceland votes for a new parliament amid disagreements on immigration, energy policy and the economy

**AGENCIES** 

REYKJAVIK, 30 NOVEMBER

Icelanders are electing a new parliament Saturday after disagreements over immigration, energy policy and the economy forced Prime Minister Bjarni Benediktsson to pull the plug on his coalition government

and call an early election. This is Iceland's sixth general election since the 2008 financial crisis devastated the economy of the North Atlantic island nation and ushered in a new era of political instability.

Opinion polls suggest the country may be in for another upheaval, with support for the three governing parties plunging. Benediktsson, who was named prime minister in April following the resignation of his predecessor, struggled to hold together the unlikely coalition of his conservative Independence Party with the centrist Progressive Party and the Left-Green Movement.

Iceland, a nation of about 400,000 people, is proud of its democratic traditions, describing itself as arguably the world's oldest parliamentary democracy. The island's parliament, the Althingi, was founded in 930 by the Norsemen who settled the country. Fierce weather in the sub-Arctic nation threatened to hamper some voters getting to polling stations on Saturday, with heavy snow blocking roads in many areas. The weather could also delay the



delivery of ballot boxes to counting centers after polls close at 10 p.m. (2200GMT).

Voters will choose 63 members of the Althingi in an election that will allocate seats both by regional constituencies and proportional representation. Parties need at least 5% of the vote to win seats in parliament. Eight parties were represented in the outgoing parliament, and 10 parties are contesting this election.

Turnout is traditionally high by international standards, with 80% of registered voters casting ballots in the 2021 parliamentary election.

A windswept island near the Arctic Circle, Iceland normally holds elections during the warmer months of the year. But on Oct. 13 Benediktsson decided his coalition couldn't last any longer, and he asked President Halla Tómasdóttir to dissolve the

Althingi. "The weakness of this society is that we have no very strong party and we have no very strong leader of any party," said Vilhjálmur Bjarnson, a former member of parliament. "We have no charming person with a vision ... That is very difficult for us."

## $Millions\, of Americans facing frigid\, temperatures, snow$

**AGENCIES** 

**NEW YORK, 30 NOVEMBER** 

A blast of Artic air was set to unleash bone-chilling temperatures into the weekend across much of the central and eastern United States, said various weather reports.

The core of the Arctic air will be concentrated in the northern Plains and upper Midwest of the country into early next week, with highs in the single digits, 10s and 20s, according to AccuWeather, Xinhua news agency reported.

The US National Weather Service warned the region, some of which has already begun to experience heavy, lake-effect snow, to brace for "dangerously cold wind chills."

Over the long holiday weekend, the cold air will push south and east, plunging temperatures to near freezing from central Texas to northern Florida and up



to New York, according to a front will drop temperatures 10 to 20 degrees below his-Even for areas familiar torical averages for the end

of November and early

December, AccuWeather

By Saturday morning, about 196 million Americans

Over the long holiday weekend, the cold air will push south and east, plunging temperatures to near freezing from central **Texas to northern** Florida and up to New York, according to a **USA Today report.** 

will be waking up to belowfreezing temperatures, and for the millions in states along the Interstate 95 corridor, "this will be the coldest start to meteorological winter in years," the report said.

"Winter storm warnings and advisories were in place from northern Wisconsin to Michigan and western New York, where some communities could see up to 4 feet of snow by the end of the weekend. As the most intense bands pass, snow could fall at rates as high as 5 inches per hour," said USA Today about the situation.

## US retailers use Trump tariff threats to urge shoppers to buy more: Report

**AGENCIES** 

**NEW YORK, 30 NOVEMBER** 

Many US businesses are urging customers to buy now before President-elect Donald Trump's proposed tariffs potentially raise costs and prices, local media reported

Throughout his cam-

paign, Trump promised to impose tariffs of 60 per cent on all Chinese goods and across-the-board tariffs of 10 per cent to 20 per cent on goods from other countries. On Monday, he laid out plans to levy tariffs of 25 per cent on imports from Mexico and Canada, and an additional 10 per cent on goods coming from China, reported Xinhua news agency, citing The Wall Street Journal (WSJ)

on Friday. "It is unclear what tariffs will be levied and how much



they will affect prices," said the report. "Companies are pouncing at a moment when fear and uncertainty are on the rise and consumer spending is showing signs of weakness."

Most large corporations have yet to incorporate warnings about possible tariffs into their marketing campaigns, and they might not explicitly do so at all. But several have pointed out that they might need to pass on higher costs, said the report.

Hike in LPG prices in Pakistan: The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) on Saturday announced the increase in the price of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) throughout Pakistan for the December.

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY E-Tender Notice Dy. CME/Repair for Chief Workshop

Manager, N. E. Railway, Mechanica Workshop, Gorakhpur- for and on behalf of President of India invites tender through Online E-Oper Tender for the following work-S. No.:- 1.. E-Tender Notice No 8 Name of the work:- Tender No.- "14 GKP-MWS-2024-25" "Shifting installation and commissioning Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract of Servo Hydraulic Shock Absorber Testing Machine Cap. 50 KN. Make HEICO (M/c Sl.No. - H 2020-043) (Asset No. ABS-27) and Shock Absorber Testing Machine Make-Amar Engineers & Fabricato (Asset No. ABS-22) for 03 Years (30 Months).", Estimated cost (in Rs.): 3695996.00, Earnest Money (in Rs.):-73900.00, Last date of tender submission:- Upto 11.00, Date 20.12.2024, Cost of the Tender forms:- Zero, Period of Contract:-36 Months., The details of above tenders are also available on Indian Railway website "http://www.ireps.gov.in".

Dy. CME/Repair Mechanical Workshop

Do Not Smoke Bidi/Cigarette in train

CPRO/Mech-85

epaper.thestatesman.com

#### THUMBNAILS

BHEL secures order at Khavda and Nagpur: Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL), in partnership with Hitachi Energy India Limited, has secured a landmark order through competitive bidding from Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID) on behalf of its Project SPV Company for setting up a + 800kV, 6000 MW HVDC Link between the Khavda KPS2 (Gujarat) and Nagpur (Maharashtra). The HVDC link, expected to be established by 2029, will significantly contribute towards the national mission to achieve 500 GW of power from Renewable Energy by the year 2030.

8th Foundation Day ICAI (IIIPI) organised: Justice DipakMisra, Former Chief Justice of India (CJI) has said that the success of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) depends on the collective roles and coordinated actions of its stakeholders. He was speaking as the Chief Guest on the 8th Foundation Day of Indian Institute of Insolvency Professionals of ICAI (IIIPI) organized on the theme "Improving Engagement Across Stakeholders" on 26th November 2024 at India International Centre, New Delhi. "The engagement between CAs and RPs is essential for the effective and efficient implementation of the IBC. Given their complimentary skill sets, collaboration between these two professions can streamline the insolvency process and maximise value for all stakeholders," he said.

Delhivery to unlock the future of D2C growth at Kolkata summit: Delhivery to unlock the future of D2C growth at Kolkata summit: Delhivery, one of the largest logistics and supply chain services providers, is set to host its next Growth Summit in Kolkata. This event focuses on fostering the future of direct-to-consumer (D2C) growth in Tier-2 and 3 markets, underlying Delhivery`s dedication to empowering emerging businesses and advancing e-commerce expansion across the country. Bringing together close to 200 D2C founders, entrepreneurs, and eCommerce brands, the summit will explore transformative logistics solutions and technologies. Key topics include leveraging Al-driven logistics, optimising delivery networks, and scaling sustainably in high-growth regions.

Ola Electric: Ola Electric, one of the largest pure-play EV companies in India, has announced the launch of its Gig and S1 Z scooter range, designed to unlock the full potential of electric mobility for the masses. The new range of scooters offers durable, reliable, affordable, and flexible solutions, including removable batteries, fulfilling the personal and commercial use cases of rural, semi-urban, and urban customers.

Healara forays into Indian market: Healara, a skincare line from South Korea, was launched in New Delhi. This innovative brand results from a collaboration between Microalgae Ask Us, South Korea, and Amorisha **Empires LLP, India. Healara Revolutionizes** Skincare with Ocean's Power Healara is a revolutionary skincare line that harnesses the ocean's power to heal the skin. With a focus on vegan, animal cruelty-free products, Healara is committed to providing safe, effective skincare solutions for all skin types.

FIMC 2024 explores AI, business models, and **future of work**: FORE School of Management announced the conclusion of the FORE International Management Conference (FIMC) 2024, held from 28-30 November, at its campus in New Delhi. Themed "Al, Business Models, and Future of Work," the conference gathered a diverse group of global thought leaders, academics, industry practitioners, and policymakers to delve into the transformative impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on business practices and the workforce. Founded in 1981, FSM has been a pioneer in shaping future leaders through a holistic approach to learning. With a strong focus on industry relevance and academic excellence.

Blum India opens Studio Ethos: Blum India launched its firstBlum Inspiration Centre, Studio Ethos in New Delhi on 29 November. On the occasion, Blum India Managing Director-Nadeem Patni said," We want to assure interior designers, architects, and anyone interested in home design that this flagship store breaks new ground. We have rolled out of new kitchen design concept called the "Kitchen Test Drive" that gives customersa nands-on opportunity to test multiple kitcher layouts right in the store tofind the one that meets their needs. The centre unveils a new interactive space to experience our innovative furniture fittings within spiring design ideas that are essential to elevate the quality of living."

WorkIndia highlights growth in IT sector jobs amid market slowdown: WorkIndia, one of the leading tech-enabled blue-collar hiring platforms, has released its IT hiring data report, providing a comprehensive analysis of the evolving job market. The data highlights a 10 per cent overall decrease in IT job postings from 2023 to 2024, with notable variations across cities, job categories, and candidate preferences. IT job postings have witnessed a 10 per cent decline in 2024 compared to the previous year. This decline spans across various city groups, except for the top-tier (T1) cities, which have shown positive growth in IT hiring. Among the different city groups, T1 cities have bucked the overall trend with a 7 per cent increase in IT job

'Kauthig' Food Festival: Delhiites witnessing the Uttarakhand Food Festival, Kauthig from November 29 November to 8 December at Saket South Delhi. The festival showcases the rich flavours and traditional recipes of Garhwal and Kumaon, offering a true taste of the region`s lost recipes and mountain-inspired dishes, specially-curated by Chef Prateek Agrawal at Hilton Garden Inn.

opportunities from 2023 to 2024.

## $Central\,Board\,of\,Direct\,Taxes\,extends\,deadline\,for\,tax payers\,with\,international\,transactions$

**AGENCIES NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER** 

he Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) on Saturday extended the due date for filing the return of income tax for tax payers with international transactions who

are required to submit informations under section 92E. The CBDT has given the relaxation for the Assessment Year

deadline for the filing the return who is required to furnish a report

has been extended by 15 days, from November 30 to December 15 in the current year.

2024-25, as per an official state- return of Income u/s 139 (1) of ument added. the Income-tax Act. 1961 (the As per the statement the new Act) in the case of an assessee advised all taxpayers to carefully (Investigation), CBDT explained as defined under Section 6 of the into residency status.

reffered to in section 92E, is the 3th day of November of the assessment year i.e 30.11.2024 for the The due dat for furnishing the AY 2024-25," the the official doc- (ITR).

review their foreign income and that all Indian residents are Income Tax Act. assets and report them accurately in their Income Tax Returns

special edition of 'Samvad' raised awareness on proper disclosure of foreign assets and income by taxpayers. The session aimed to raise awareness among taxpayers about the need to accurately report their foreign income and assets in their Income Tax Returns

CBDT, on November 24, Bhushan Shukla, Commissioner specifically to resident taxpayers,

required to declare their foreign assets, which can include real Income Tax department in its debentures, insurance policies, or any other financial assets where they are the beneficial owner. He said that Income Tax Depart-

ment has provided a detailed step-by-step guide in the ITR form, specifically in the "Foreign Assets and Income" schedule, where taxpayers can report their foreign income and assets. He During the session, Shashi emphasised that this rule applies

Talking about the returning Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) who estate, bank accounts, shares, had foreign assets when they were living abroad, he said that even if these individuals return to India and become residents, they must disclose their foreign assets and income for the years they qualify as residents.

> The same rule applies to any foreign citizen who becomes a resident in India, as per Shukla. The requirement to disclose foreign assets applies to both residents and those who transition

## NEWSFEED



Steel Authority of India Limited signed a Memorandum of Understanding with John Cockerill India Limited (JCIL), the Indian arm of the global John Cockerill Group, on 28 November in Mumbai. Anil Kumar Tulsiani, Director (Finance), SAIL and Michael Kotas, Managing Director-Metals Division, John Cockerill India Limited signed the MoU.

## NHPC partners with GGGI to



NHPC signed a Memorandum of Understand ing with the Global Green Growth Institute at its Corporate Office, Faridabad on 28 November. The MoU was signed by VR Shrivastava, Executive irector (REGH), NHPC and Soumya Prasad Garnaik, Country Head of GGGI in the presence of UttamLal, director (personnel), NHPC and Dr DK Khare, advisor, GGGI.

#### **AHMEDABAD INTERNATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL**



Ahead of the launch of the first edition of the Ahmedabad International Book Festival the National Book Trust, India (NBT-India) held a press conference which was graced by Pratibhaben Jain, Mayor of Ahmedabad and others. The nine-day festival started from 30 November.

#### MANOHAR LAL FLAGS OFF NTPC'S **GREEN HYDROGEN BUSES AT LEH**



Manohar Lal, Minister of Power and Housing Urban Affairs flagged-off the fleet of green hydrogen buses of NTPC at Leh in the presence of senior officials of Ministry of Power, Leh Administration and NTPC on 23 November. After the flag-off, Minister travelled 12 km in one of the H2 buses from the H2 filling station to the Leh airport.

### **GAIL signs contract with 'K' LINE for LNG ship Vessel**

Looking to expand its fleet of LNG carriers, GAIL (India) Limited signed a long-term time charter contract with Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha, Ltd. ("K" LINE) through the shipowning company established in Singapore

for a new-built LNG ship. "K" LINE has expertise of 40 years in LNG transportation.

The contract was signed in the presence of RK Jain, GAIL Director (Finance), Sanjay Kumar, GAIL Director (Marketing) and R K Singhal, GAIL Director (Business Development) by S Bairagi, GAIL Executive Director (Mktg.-Shipping & Intl. LNG) and Satoshi Kanamori, Managing Executive Officer (LNG, Carbon Solution Business), "K" LINE.

## **LIC CEO inaugurates All**

Siddhartha Mohanty, CEO and MD, LIC of India. inaugurated the All India LIC Games, 2024 at the Sawai Man singh Stadium in Jaipur on November 26.

Corporation of India, which will run for four days, will be conducted in six disciplines ~ carrom, chess, table tennis, badminton,

Also present on the occasion were Salil Vishwanath, executive director (HRD), Aditya Gupta, executive director (Corporate Communications), LIC Northern Zone Zonal Manager JPS Bajaj and Senior Divisional Managers, Jaipur Division

## **HPCL** amerges as leader at FIPI Oil and Gas Awards 2023

Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL), a Maharatna Oil & Gas PSU, has emerged as a leader in the Oil and Gas industry, bagging three prestigious awards Sustainably Growing Corporate of the Year, Innovator of the Year (Team): Women Executive of the Year at the FIPI Oil and Gas Awards 2023. These awards are a testament to HPCL's unwavering commitment to innovation, sustainability, and leadership.

The objective of the FIPI Oil & Gas Awards is to celebrate the industry's most outstanding achievements.

The awards were presented



by Union Minister, Petroleum and Natural Gas, Hardeep Singh Puri, in the distinguished presence of MoS, Petroleum & Natural Gas and Tourism, Suresh Gopi, Secretary MoPNG, Pankaj Jain, and esteemed leaders from the Oil & Gas industry.

#### **GAIL re-engages** process licensor for revival of PTA manufacturing plant in Mangalore

GAIL (India) Limited, through its wholly owned subsidiary GAIL Mangalore Petrochemicals Limited (GMPL), has re-engaged with Process Licensor INEOS to support the plant's revitalisation, formalizing this renewed collaboration through an Amendment Agreement signed.

This marks a significant step towards the revival of GMPL's 1.25 MMTPA Purified Terephthalic Acid (PTA) manufacturing plant located in the Special Economic Zone (SEZ), Mangalore.

### Eastern Railway enhances safety in AC coaches to detect potential fire hazards

early, giving timely alerts and

enabling immediate action to

At Eastern Railway, passenger safety is not just a responsibility but a commitment that drives every innovation and decision. To ensure a secure journey for all, advanced Fire and Smoke Detection Systems (FSDS) and Fire Detection cum Brake Application (FDBA) systems have been implemented in air-conditioned coaches. These systems are designed

protect passengers and minimize risks. The introduction of Fire and

Smoke Detection Systems (FSDS) and Fire Detection cum Brake Application (FDBA) systems in AC coaches marks a transformative step in ensuring passenger safety. As Eastern Railway continues to adopt innovative solutions, these advancements set a benchmark in the Indian Railways' journey towards excellence in safety standards.

The goal is clear: to make every journey safe, secure, and seamless, ensuring that passengers can travel with peace of mind, no matter the desti-

nation.

### IITF's closing ceremony

On the concluding day of November 27, 2024, the curtains fell on the historic 43rd edition of the India International Trade Fair.

To commemorate this remarkable event, a closing ceremony was conducted. ShriPremjitLal, ED, ITPO happily announced that this year a good amount of business has been generated by the participants.

ITPO also conferred awards to exhibitors in different categories.

Metro Railway has taken another

step forward to sustain a green

earth and reduce carbon foot-

print for better tomorrow. Shri-

Sr.Tech/AV/Kalighathasinau-

gurated the 168 KWp grid con-

nected rooftop solar photo

voltaic power plant at Tolly-

ence of P Uday Kumar Reddy,

General Manager and other

senior officers of Metro Railway.

This power plant is spread over

the roofs of 14 buildings of A&

Cblocks of Metro staff quarters.

This is the first such endeavour

in residential quarters area.

After the inauguration General

**NHPC chairman and** 

additional charge

Raj Kumar Chaudhary,

CMD, NHPC has been

entrusted with the addi-

tional charge of the post

of Chairman and Managing

holding the post of Chair-

man and Managing Director

at NHPC, India's premier

hydropower company and

a Navratna enterprise of

the Government of India.

A seasoned professional,

Chaudhary has over 35

years of rich and vast expe-

rience in the power sector

and hydropower develop-

Chaudhary is currently

Director, SJVN Limited.

director gets

November 25, 2024 in pres-

Amitava

gungeon

168 KWp grid connected rooftop

solar photo voltaic power plant

inaugurated at Tollygungeon

Mukherjee,

### MCUpadhyay takes charge as GM & Zonal head of Bank of Maharashtra Delhi Zone

Mukesh Chandra Upadhyay, General Manager, has assumed the charge Bank of Maharashtra Delhi Zone as Zonal Head with effect from 27 November.

He started his banking career on 2 November1992 and has over 32 years of experience in diversified areas of banking.

During his tenure, he has worked in all key banking domains including credit as main function in the capacity of AGM & DGM. He headed

Manager inspected the rooftop

power plant with all senior

officers of Metro Railway and

interacted with the residents

there. This would help to supply

power to the third line of Metro

tracks in order to run the com-

This gigantic leap of Metro

Railway towards producing

clean and green power will

also pave the way to save gov-

P Uday Kumar Reddy has

expressed his hope that this

initiative of Metro Railway

would contribute significantly

towards reducing environment

pollution as well as keep mother

earth clean and green.

ernment exchequer as well.

mercial Metro services.

**During his tenure, Upad**hyay has worked in all key banking domains including credit as main function in the capacity of AGM & DGM.

Bank's Indore and Chandigarh Zones. As General Manager headed bank's MSME department. He has attended various training programmes and workshops at Bacconi University Milan-Italy, ISB Hyderabad, IIM Calcutta.

Saras Food Festival, a confluence

of taste and culture, will begin on 1 December at Handicraft Bhawan, Baba Kharak Singh Marg, Connaught Place, New Delhi. About 150 women entrepreneurs and members of selfhelp groups from 25 states

across the country are participating in more than 30 stalls in this grand arrangement. Saras Food Festival provides a glimpse of Indian culture and food to the people of the national capital and across the states. Through this festival, people can not only enjoy the 300plus delicious cuisine of 25 states but they would also witness the culture and social

### Saras Food Fest to begin from today

fabric of these states.

## **SCOPE** hosts

Standing Conference of Public Enterprises (SCOPE), an apex body of Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs), hosted its 50th Annual General Meeting (AGM) which was addressed by Sandeep Kumar Gupta, Chairman, SCOPE & CMD, GAIL

The meeting was attended by a large number of CMDs, Directors and Senior officials of member PSEs.

Public Sector.

A milestone step - SCOPE towards nation's progress.

### **GAIL receives 'initiatives in promoting** hydrogen company of the year' Award



GAIL (India) Limited has received the "Initiatives in Promoting Hydrogen Company of the Year" Award in the prestigious FIPI Oil & Gas Awards 2023.

Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas presented the award to ShriSandeep Kumar Gupta, CMD GAIL.

Hardeep S . Puri, Union

RKJain, Director (Finance),

Deepak Gupta, Director (Projects) and Ayush Gupta, Director (HR), GAIL were present at the event.

The award recognizes GAIL's significant contributions to the advancements in the field of Hydrogen and for initiatives in the field of Hydrogen through substantial capex investments and advancements in R & D.

## Bank of Baroda Kolkata Zone organises mega Kisan Melas



Bank of Baroda, one of India's leading public sector banks, organised Mega KisanMela at Konkalitala in Birbhum District of West Bengal on Monday, 18 November, as a part of the 7th Edition of the Baroda Kisan Pakhwada, which is Bank's annual, fortnight long engagement programme focused on the Indian agrarian economy. Baroda Kisan-Pakhwada 2024 took place between November 11, and November 22 with the Baroda KisanDiwas celebrations. The Bank reached approximately 20,000 farmers in Kolkata

collaboration'.

Zone during the course of the Baroda KisanPakhwada through number of outreach events. The Mega Kisan Mela was inaugurated by ShriBalaSubramaniumElango, Chief General Manager Compliance, Bank of Baroda, Sanjay Kr. Tiwary, General Manager & Zonal Head, Kolkata Zone, Sanjay Chaudhary, DGM (Business Development), Kolkata Zone, Rajesh Das, AGM & Regional Head, Burdwan Region, ADM (LA) Birbhum District, BDO Birbhum District, etc. among other dignitaries.

## BHEL ORGANISES SAMVAAD 4.0

Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) organised BHEL SAM-VAAD 4.0 - the fourth edition of its dialogue with domestic business partners, industry associations, academia, research institutes, government organisations, other ministries like DoE, DPIIT, MoP, MoSteel, Meity, Railways, etc. and CPSEs like NTPC, SAIL, MIDHANI, HAL, BPCL, IOCL, ONGC, institutions like CEA, NCI IPC, ICAT, etc. at Bharat Mandapam. The theme of the event, organised under the aegis of the Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI), was 'Strengthening self-reliance through innovation &

#### **WESTERN RAILWAY OBSERVES 75TH CONSTITUTION DAY**

On 26th November, 2024, the 75thConstitution Day of our nation was observed with great enthusiasm over Western Railway. The day commemorates the auspicious occasion when the Constitution of India was adopted on 26 November, 1949 by the Constituent Assembly. Ashok Kumar Misra, General Manager of Western Railway, administered the Preamble to railway officers and staff at WR HQs office, Churchgate. According to a press release issued by VineetAbhishek, Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, the Constitution Day was celebrated with great fervor across all Divisions of WR including stations, Training Institutes and Railway Schools. The Preamble was also read by officers, staff, trainees and students.

#### **DELHI TOURISM PARTICIPATED IN 55TH IFF IN GOA**

Delhi Tourism participated in the Film Bazaar at 55th International Film Festival, organised by NFDC, Ministry of Information and broadcasting at Goa from 20-24 November, to promote Delhi Film Policy 2022. The delegation of Delhi Tourism comprised of NiharikaRai, Managing Director & CEO, SM Ali, General Manager, Sanjeev Chugh, Chief Manager and Maniksha Bakshi, Manager Films, and promoted incredible shooting locales of Delhi with efilm Clearance portal for ease of doing film business in Delhi

#### THDC INDIA LTD COMMEMORATES **CONSTITUTION DAY**

THDC India Limited (THDCIL), a leading PSU in the power generation sector, celebrated Constitution Day with great zeal across its Corporate Office, Project sites, and Unit offices. The occasion marks the historic presentation of the Constitution by the Drafting Committee, led by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, and its adoption on November 26, 1949. RK Vishnoi, CMD, THDCIL, emphasized the significance of the Indian Constitution, calling it the foundation of the country's democracy. He stated, "The Indian Constitution is a beacon of our nation's principles—equality, justice, liberty, and fraternity. It guides us in building a stronger and more inclusive society. Observing Constitution Day reminds us of our collective responsibility to uphold and propagate these values in every aspect of our lives."

## **India LIC Games in Jaipur**

This annual sports festival of Life Insurance volleyball and athletics.

### **Haldia Refinery** wins 'Refinery of the Year' award

achieved a remarkable dou-

ment. He possesses expertise and deep knowledge in all aspects of development of a hydro-project from concept to commissioning and has contributed in development of hydropower in India and Bhutan.

IndianOil Refineries Division

ble triumph at the FIPI Oil & Gas Awards 2023, with Haldia Refinery being crowned 'Refinery of the Year' for its sustainability initiatives and innovative eco-friendly products, and Radha, Process Manager at Bongaigaon Refinery, earning the prestigious 'Young Achiever of the Year (Female)' award for her groundbreaking contributions to refinery optimization and energy efficiency.

Indian Oil's dual recognition at the FIPI Oil & Gas Awards 2023 underscores its leadership in refining excellence, environmental innovation, and nurturing young talent, reaffirming its pivotal role in India's energy sector.

## 50th AGM

and AtulSobti, DG, SCOPE.

While deliberating on the

activities and initiatives undertaken by SCOPE, the 50th AGM highlighted its unwavering commitment to policy advocacy, capacity building, collaborations, driving impactful change and excellence in the

Social Interaction Centre (SSIC) by SCOPE further emphasised SCOPE's commitment of coalescing the vision of PSEs



# Politicos slam EVMs at venue of Baba Adhav's protest fast

For now, Adhav has given up his fast, but he said that his agitation against EVMs will continue

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE** MUMBAI, 30 NOVEMBER

ven as the BJP failed to make any official announcement about who will be Maharashtra's Chief Minister for the eighth day on Saturday, senior Maharashtra politicians met Dr Baba Adhay, an old respected political activist and physician, who had been on a protest fast against the use of electronic voting machines (EVMs), demanding a return to paper ballot vot-

Interestingly, NCP leader and Deputy CM Ajit Pawar, who is a part of the winning BJP-backed Mahayuti was at the venue at Bhide Wada locality in Pune, requesting Baba Adhav to call off his three-day old fast "to save democracy and the Constitution".

Uddhav Thackeray who leads the Shiv Sena (UBT) and Jayant Patil of the Sharad Pawar-led NCP also met Adhav and requested him



to give him his fast. At least for now, Adhav has given up his fast, but he said that his agitation against

EVMs will continue. Earlier on Saturday, Sharad Pawar himself who is 83, met the medico Baba Adhav who is 96 years old, who was on a protest fast against EVMs since November 28. Significantly, Sharad Pawar expressed full support to

Baba Adhav's anti-EVM protest.

Shortly after Baba Adhav broke his fast, politicians lost no time in using the venue to target the BJPbacked Mahayuti.

Uddhav Thackeray said that "a big movement" will be organised against EVMs to "save democracy".

"Today is a day to remember, Baba is always an inspi-

ration and inspiration never grows old. Even the losers and the winners of this assembly election do not believe in this result. A spark is enough to ignite a wildfire. At this moment, Baba Adhaav is that spark. The rulers purchased Maharashtra through various schemes. EVM is a big issue because the people must understand where their votes have gone," Uddhav said.

Uddhav questioned why 76 lakh votes increased during the last one hour of voting. He also made it a point to target Maharashtra caretaker CM Eknath Shinde without openly naming him.

"Why is there no happiness in Maharashtra despite Mahayuti getting such a monstrous majority? Why are these people going to worship in the fields instead of going to Raj Bhavan (Maharashtra Governor's official residence) with their majority," Uddhav asked, targeting Eknath Shinde indirectly.

Uddhav Thackeray said

that the Maha Vikas Aghadi comprising the Shiv Sena (UBT), the Congress and the Sharad Pawar-led NCP will take the anti-EVM protest movement forward. Thackeray said that Baba Adhav should withdraw his agitation for now, but such anti-EVM agitations will continue to take place all over Maharashtra.

"This is another fight for freedom. Don't let Adani come here," Uddhav-led Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut said, taking on Gautam Adani.

Also at the venue of Adhav's fast was social activist Medha Patkar who said that several countries had abandoned EVMs.

"Nobody knows if some-

thing is being done by somebody who is sitting at the bing used to occur," he said. EVM control room. If there is a relationship between the political party in power and the Election Commission. and if votes are purchased when the code of conduct is in effect, there is a problem," Medha Patkar said.

# Congtrying to cover up failure by blaming ECI, EVMs: Rajeev Chandrasekhar

**AGENCIES** 

**NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER** 

Senior BJP leader Rajeev Chandrasekhar on Saturday lashed out at "fraudulent" Congress for blaming the **Election Commission of** India and EVMs and for its electoral losses in Maharashtra and said that it was nothing but an attempt to cover up its failure.

Talking to a news agency, the former NDA minister said that Congress, instead of working on its ideology, was blaming the judiciary, **Electronic Voting Machines** (EVMs) and poll panel for its defeat.

"They (Congress leaders) know EVMs were far better than ballot papers as earlier booth fixing and ballot grab-

He also pointed to the 'divide within the party' over Congress leaders' demand for the restoration of ballot papers and stated that their contrasting voices are coming to fore because many of them don not want to speak



He said that the Congress party harbours a policy of 'divide and rule' and advised it to accept the truth rather than blaming the constitutional agencies for their defeat.

"Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, during the Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting on Friday, said people were rejecting party high command and therefore a new strategy was required," he

Notably, during the recent

CWC meeting, Kharge hinted that "harsh decisions" should be taken in the wake of "unexpected" results in the Maharashtra and Haryana Assembly elections. He also called for correcting party's weaknesses and shortcomings at the organisational level. The CWC adopted a resolution expressing concern over the alleged compromise of the integrity of the electoral process. The resolution stated that the party would soon launch a movement in response against 'abuse' of electoral machinery. Underscoring the need for unity, he said, "The most important thing that I keep saying is that lack of unity and statements against each other harm us a lot. Unless we fight elections unitedly and stop making statements against each other, our unity will be ruined."

## Mumbai Police invoke MCOCA in Baba Siddique murder case

**AGENCIES** 

MUMBAI, 30 NOVEMBER

Mumbai Police on Saturday invoked the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) in the murder of Bab Siddique murder case.

Baba Siddique was an NCP leader who was shot dead by three assailants near his son, MLA Zeeshan Siddique's, office in Mumbai's Nirmal Nagar on October

So far, the police have arrested 26 accused, while 3 more people are wanted by the authorities.

The Lawrence Bishnoi gang has claimed responsibility for the NCP leader's

Mumbai Police investigation into the Baba Siddiqui

**AGENCIES** 

**GUWAHATI, 30 NOVEMBER** 

Assam's Bodoland Territorial

Council (BTC) Chief Pramod

Boro called on Defence Min-

ister Rajnath Singh in New

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE** 

Assam Chief Minister Himanta

Biswa Sarma on Satirday

inaugurated the India Inter-

national Science Festival

(IISF) at the Indian Institute

of Technology, Guwahati

young scholars, scientists,

and innovators, CM Sarma

emphasized the critical role

of technology in shaping the

In his keynote speech, the

Chief Minister outlined the

transformative potential of

science, stating, "In today's

world, a nation's prosperity

is tied to the integration of

technology, resources, and

capital. Among these, tech-

nology stands out as the most

future of nations.

Addressing a gathering of

(IIT-G).

**GUWAHATI. 30 NOVEMBER** 

During the meeting held



murder case has revealed that prime suspect Akashdeep Gill, arrested in Punjab, used a labourer's mobile hotspot to communicate with key conspirators, including mastermind Anmol Bishnoi, police said.

Gill was identified as the logistics coordinator in the murder plot orchestrated by notorious gangster Anmol Bishnoi.

"In a significant development in the Baba Siddique court in Mumbai sent Shiva

Bodo Council chief meets Defence Minister,

proposes special army regiment for region

murder case, Akashdeep Gill, arrested from Fazilka, Punjab, disclosed during interrogation how he communicated with key conspirators using a labourer's mobile hotspot. This method was employed to evade police detection," the Mumbai Crime Branch

"Gill admitted to using the hotspot of a labourer named Balwinder, allowing him to appear offline and avoid tracking. The Crime Branch is currently searching for Gill's mobile phone, which may hold vital evidence related to the case. Gill has been identified as a crucial logistical coordinator for the murder plot orchestrated by gangster Anmol Bishnoi," they said.

On November 12, a local

submitted a memorandum

to the Defence Minister,

proposing the creation of a

special regiment named the

"Territorial Army Home and

Hearth Battalion" for BTR.

tiative would offer a dedi-

cated platform for the

region's youth to join the

defence forces and con-

tribute to the nation's secu-

inspire greater participation

while fostering a deep sense

of patriotism and national

pride among the youth of

The Defence Minister

BTR," Pramod Boro said.

appreciated the commitment

of the BTR government to

encouraging the region's

youth and assured due con-

sideration of the proposal.

nificant step toward fostering

the region's integration with

The meeting marks a sig-

"The proposal aims to

He stated that this ini-

Kumar, one of the accused and shooter in the Baba Siddiqui murder case, along with four other accused, to

police custody. Shiva Kumar and four other accused were arrested by a joint team of Uttar **Pradesh Special Task Force** (STF) and the Mumbai Crime Branch from the Nanpara area of Uttar Pradesh's Bahraich on November 10.

NCP leader Baba Siddique was shot dead by three assailants near his son, MLA Zeeshan Siddique's, office in Mumbai's Nirmal Nagar on October 12.

Police have also arrested Salman Vohra and Akashdeep Singh in connection with the murder. Vohra has been accused of financing the murder.

**Manipur CM accuses Mizo-**

ram counterpart of fan-

have escalated between the

ning 'division': Tensions

governments of Manipur

and Mizoram, with Manipur

Chief Minister N Biren Singh

criticizing his Mizoram coun-

terpart Lalduhoma for

ly-worded statement

Manipur government

released yesterday, the

accused Lalduhoma of pro-

moting a "secessionist agen-

da" and opposing initiatives

like border fencing along

the Indo-Myanmar bound-

ary, which aims to curb ille-

gal immigration, arms traf-

ficking, and drug smuggling.

The statement alleged that

a "greater agenda" was at

play to create a Kuki-Chin

**Christian nation spanning** 

Bangladesh through illegal

with other government bodies,

aims to foster scientific temper

immigration, land acquisi-

of autonomous

councils, sns

parts of Myanmar, India, and

allegedly fueling "hatred

and division" through his

comments on the ongoing

crisis in Manipur. In a strong-

## Apex Meitei body's women wing threatens stir if missing person not rescued

**AGENCIES** 

IMPHAL, 30 NOVEMBER

The women's wing of the Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI), the apex body of the majority Meitei community, threatened to launch a series of agitations if the army failed to locate and rescue the 56-year-old

man of the community who has been missing since November 25 from Kangpokpi district.

COCOMI women's wing convenor Leirik Leima said that if the army were found to be biased, the people, particularly the mothers of Manipur, would not tolerate such actions. If the authorities fail to ensure the safe return

of Laishram Kamalbabu Singh, the people of Manipur would no longer allow the army to remain in Leimakhong in

Kangpokpi, she said. "The people of Manipur had placed their trust in the Army, which had been stationed in Leimakhongfor a long time," Leirik Leima told the media. Kamalbabu Singh, a resident

(RFx No. 6000001256)

MSETCL."

is from 25.11.2024.

division are as under:-

of Gossaipur under Cachar district in southern Assam and now staying at Loitang Khunou village in Imphal West district, left his residence on 25 November to go to the Leimakhong military station, where he was working as a supervisor for a contractor working with Military Engi-

neering Services (MES).

Chief Engineer (Projects), MSETCL

Auction

Auction

INVITATION FOR BID (IFB)

(LOCAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING)

SRM e-Tender No. T-2478/MSETCL/CO/ Projects /Pre-Tender

MSETCL invites offers by SRM e-tendering in TWO bid system

(Techno-Commercial Bid and Price Bid) from the eligible registered

"Conversion of 110kV DCDC to 132kV DCDC line from Mayani Tap to

Dighanchi Substation (Route Length-48.86 km) under Karad Zone

Interested bidders may obtain further information available on the

The date of downloading of Bid documents available on the website

pidders for the following work as detailed below.

website. https://srmetender.mahatransco.in

**MORE TENDER ADS ON PAGE 2 & 5** 

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE

Deputy Chief Engineer-II (GSU), N.C. Railway, Gwalior for and on behalf of the President of India invites Open Online e-Tenders (Single packet Systm) for the

Description of work: "VGLJ-CNB Section: Feasibility study survey and preparation of DPR for construction of ROB/RUB in lieu of 25 Nos.

Approx. Cost: 1.43 Crore Date of closing Tender: 23.12.2024 Date of completion/period from issue acceptance letter. : 06 Months

● Tender can be submitted online up to 11:00 hrs on 23.12.2024 For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website

2050/24(AS)

■ North central railways 
■ www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in 

■ 
■ CPRONCR



## Office of the Executive Engineer Road Construction Department, Road Division

Chaibasa eercdchaibasa-jhr@nic.in

1.	Name of Work	New Construction/Renovation of Inspection Bungalow under Road Division, Chaibasa for the year 2024-25	
2.	Estimated Cost (Rs.)	₹ 2,00,00,000.00 (Two Crore) Only.	
3.	Time of Completion	06 (Six) Months	
4.	Date of Publication of Tender On Website	16.12.2024 at 11.30 AM	
5.	Last date/Time for receipt of bids.	23.12.2024 Up to 3.00 P.M.	
6.	Date of Opening of Bid	24.12.2024 at 11:30 A.M.	
7.	Name & address of office Inviting tender	Office of the Executive Engineer, RCD, Road Division, Chaibasa	
8.	Contact no. of Procurement Officer	7781899686	
9.	Authority to Open the Bid	E- Procurement Officer,office of the Chie Engineer(Com), RCD, Jharkhand.	
10.	Helpline number of	0651-3510880	

Quoted rate above Schedule rate will be Outright Rejected. Estimated value me be increase or decrease

\* Further details can be seen on website http://jharkhandtender.gov.in **Executive Engineer** 

PR 340896 East Singhbhum(24-25)D RCD, Road Division, Chaibasa.

e-TENDER NOTICE KADOMBOGACHHI GRAM PANCHAYAT NIT NO: 007/KGP/15TH FC (UNTIED)/ 2024-25. Tender ID: 2024\_ZPHD\_ 776277\_1 to 3. Last date of Bid submission: 07/12/2024 (2 PM). Estimated value: 683828.00 Details on : https://wbtenders.gov.in . Mob: 8617210059

Sd/- Prodhan Kadombogachhi Gram Panchayat, Barasat-I Block, North 24 Parganas.

## e-TENDER NOTICE

Office of the BDO Banarhat Block, Jalpaiguri Notice Inviting e-Tender by the undersigned for different works vide NIT No. e-NIT NO .: BANARHAT / EO / NIT-005 2024-25. Last date of online bid submission: 09-12-24, 6-00 P.M. respectively. For further details you may visit https://wbtenders.gov.in Sd/- BDO, Banarhat Block

epaper.thestatesman.com

#### WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY No. JBP/C/170/E-Auction/Misc/24 The Bids are invited from registered entities on IREPS by Sr. DCM/JBP (ACO) through e-Auction for the commercial/NFR contracts of Earning & easing of SLRs. The Catalogues have already been published on IREPS website www.ireps.gov.in. The details of upcoming e-Auction of Jabalpur

**Asset Details** 

easing of SLR compartment of train no. 12192 (JBP-NZM), 12160 (REWA-RJT), 12187 (JBP-CSMT 22190 (REWA-JBP), 1218 12.12.2024 (REWA-RKMP), 22188 (ADTL-RKMP), 22162 (DMO-BPL), 12062 (JBP-RKMP), 20906 (REWA EKAR), 22189 (JBP-REWA), 11706 (REWA-JBP), 11751 (REWA CHRM), 19014 (KTE-BSL), 11447 JBP-HWH), 12121 (JBP-NZM) Parking Lot for Two wheelers & Four 09.12.2024 09.12.2024 wheeler at Bargawan Station for 12:30 hrs. Three years Parking Lot for Two wheelers & Four 09.12.2024 wheeler at Sagour Station for Five 12:00 hrs. 12:40 hrs. Parking Parking Lot for Two wheelers & Four 09.12.2024 heeler at KTE Up side Station for 12:50 hrs. JBP-C- Parking Lot for Two wheelers & Four 13.12.2024 Bidder are advised to visit website www.ireps.gov.in for more information related

to above e-Auction. 2. The bid has been invited through e-Auction Leasing module of IREPS website. 3. All the e-Auction related information as eligibility, scope of work, contract period, terms & conditions of contract etc., are available on IREPS. 4. Bidders can participate in e-Auction only as per the date & timing as indicated in IREPS. 5. All the prospective bidders are requested to visit website www.ireps.gov.in regularly for any corrigendum related to above e-auction Divisional Railway Manager (Commercial)

West Central Railway, Jabalpur

स्वच्छ भारत अभियान एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

 $\approx$ **MAHA**TRANSCO

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER CPD/112-2024-25** 

Tenders are invited through e-Tendering in SRM system from the registered vendors for Supply of following: Due Date & Time (Hrs.) for Tender No. & Description of Material Estimated Amount Submission & Opening of (in Rs Lakhs.) Tender Tender Fee (in Rs.) SP/T-0532/1124 [RFX No.5000001332] [ 1st Call] (Two Bid System) 8943.84 Lakhs Procurement of 200MVA, 220/132kV ICT 27.12.2024 27.12.2024 (02 Nos.); 100MVA, 220/132kV ICT (01 No.); Up to 16.00 Hrs. At 16:15 25,000.00 50MVA, 220/33kV (01 No.); 50MVA, 132/33kV Hrs. (10 Nos.); 50MVA, 132-110/33Kv (03 Nos.) and 25MVA, 220/33kV (01 No.) Transformer along with New Uninhibited Naphthenic Based High Grade Mineral Insulating Oil required for Augmentation Schemes under Amravati; Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar; Karad; Nagpur & Nashik Zone.

Contact Person: Office of the Executive Engineer (Gr.P&C) Tel. No.: 022-69852717/08329909813

Email: secpa@mahatransco.in, eepc@mahatransco.in, eegrp5@mahatransco.in, For further details visit our website http://www.srmetender.mahatransco.in

Any further amendments will be published on the MSETCL website www.mahatransco.in. So bidders are requested to check the website.

Executive Engineer (P&C)

Sd/-





on Friday, Pramod Boro

highlighted the active and

spirited participation of the

youth from the Bodoland

Territorial Region (BTR) in

recruitment rallies and other

initiatives organized by the

Indian Armed Forces.

nessing the disciplined pursuit of science, a nation can overcome resource limitations and reduce its dependence on external capital."

He further underscored how advancements in science and technology can drive social equity, alleviate poverty, and improve living standards across diverse sectors like agriculture, healthcare, environmental conservation, power generation, and trans-

Further, the BTC Chief national defence initiatives.

CM Himanta Biswa Sarma inaugurates IISF at

IIT-Guwahati, calls science the engine of growth

Highlighting India's contributions to global knowledge, CM Sarma remarked, "India has always been a beacon of technological innovation, with a rich legacy in mathematics, astronomy, medicine, and philosophy. From ancient centers like Takshila and Nalanda to luminaries such as Aryabhatta and Sushruta, our nation's contributions have inspired the world."

The Chief Minister encouraged young minds to continue their pursuit of innovation, progress.

describing science as a powerful engine driving human The India International Science Festival (IISF), an annual event organized by

the Ministry of Science &

Technology in collaboration

and promote innovation among the youth. This year's edition at IIT-Guwahati focuses on aligning scientific advancements with India's developmental goals, particularly in the North-East region. IISF serves as a platform for students, researchers, and industry leaders to exchange ideas, showcase innovations, and explore collaborative opportunities. The festival reflects India's commitment to harnessing science and technology for sustainable development. This year, the event features exhibitions, panel discussions, and workshops aimed at inspiring young talent to tackle realworld challenges through scientific solutions.

# BJP leaders slam Congress leader for his remarks on EC

Jagtap refused to apologise over his objectionable 'kutta' remark for the Election Commission

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER** 

BJP leaders on Saturday slammed Congress leader Bhai Jagtap for allegedly insulting the poll panel with derogatory remarks.

Talking to a news agency, BJP national spokesperson Shehzad Poonawala hit out at Congress leader Bhai Jagtap for his alleged 'kutta' ('dog') remark for the poll panel.

Poonawalla accused the grand old party of insulting the constitutional institution and criticised the party for doubting the Election Commission.

"Insulting the constitutional institution has become the identity of Congress. This is not a coincidence, it has become a habit of Congress...now they are doubting the Election Commission, when the election

in Jharkhand, J&K, Wayanad, Karnataka and Telangana, the Election Commission is fine...otherwise in Haryana and Maharashtra, become 'Kutta' ('dog')...they are the one who insults the Constitution.," he said.

Meanwhile, BJP leader Kirit Somaiya filed a complaint with the Mumbai Police Commissioner and wrote a letter to the Election Commission over Congress leader Bhai Jagtap's "kutta" (dog) remark regarding the poll panel.

Talking to the news agency, Somaiya said, "I have written to the Election Commission and also filed a complaint with the Mumbai Police Commissioner. Such a kind of insult, the humiliation of the Election Commission which is a constitutional body can't be tolerated. Action should be ini-



tiated against Bhai Pratap." Further, the BJP leader said Congress had been tar-

geting the Election Commission because they are scared of the local body Mumbai Municipal Corporation elections due in March

"In the last two days, Congress, Shiv Sena (UBT) everybody has been targeting the **EVM and Election Commis**sion because everyone is scared of the local body Mumbai Municipal Corporation elections due in March

2025," the BJP leader added.

Earlier, Congress leader Bhai Jagtap doubled down on his derogatory remarks against the Election Commission amid the row over the usage of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMS) and said that the country's democracy has been "disreputed" because of ECI's "sycophancy."

Notably, Jagtap refused to apologise over his objectionable "kutta" remark for the Election Commission.

"I will not apologise at all, not even a bit...If they are working under pressure from the PM and other ministers then what I have said is right. I will not apologise...The Election Commission exists to further strengthen the democracy of the country, and not to serve someone. I stand by what I said. The Election Commission should work like TN Seshan...Democracy is being disreputed because of the sycophant attitude of EC," he said.

He further said that Congress brought the EVM technology because it was being used in France, and the US, but after 2009, doubts started arising over its use.

# Atrocities against Hindus in Bangladesh must cease immediately: Hosabale

**AGENCIES NEW DELHI. 30 NOVEMBER** 

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has strongly condemned the ongoing violence and atrocities being committed against the Hindu minority in Bangladesh by Islamic fundamentalist groups.

In a statement issued on Saturday, RSS General Secretary Dattatreya Hosabale highlighted the alarming rise in attacks, murders, looting, arson, and inhuman atrocities, particularly targeting women within the Hindu community. He called for immediate action to halt these violations.

Dattatreya Hosabale expressed deep concern over the Bangladesh government's inaction, stating, "Instead of taking decisive steps to curb these attacks, the present Bangladesh government and other responsible agencies remain silent spectators. This apathy has emboldened perpetrators, ushering in a new phase of injustice and atrocities designed to suppress

the democratic voices of the Hindu community seeking self-protection." The RSS leader specifically

criticised the imprisonment of ISKCON monk Chinmoy Krishna Das, a prominent figure who was leading peaceful demonstrations for Hindu rights in Bangladesh.

"It is highly unjust of the Bangladesh government to jail a peaceful activist like Shri Chinmoy Krishna Das, whose only fault is his effort to mobilise a non-violent movement for the safety and dignity of Hindus," Hosabale stated.

The RSS urged both the Bangladesh government and the international community

to act swiftly and decisively. He said, "The RSS appeals to the Bangladeshi government to stop all atrocities against Hindus, ensure justice for the victims, and release

Chinmoy Krishna Das without delay. The RSS also appeals to the Government of India to step up efforts to safeguard the rights of Hindus and other minorities in Bangladesh." It also urged the global

community and institutions to support the victims as it is essential for world peace and the spirit of brother-

As per the latest report, three Hindu temples in Chattogram, Bangladesh, were vandalised by a mob shouting slogans, amid ongoing protests and violence in the region on Friday.

A group of several hundred individuals, after attending the Friday prayers, descended upon the temples, throwing brickbats causing damage to the Shoni Temple and the gates of the other two temples, the report said.

## $Delhi\,BJP\,chief\,accuses\,AAP\,of\,extorting\,money\,from\,public$

**AGENCIES** 

**NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER** 

Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva on Saturday accused the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) of "extorting money from the public" in the national Capital.

This accusation came after the BJP released an alleged audio clip of AAP MLA Naresh Balyan purportedly discussing extortion with a gangster to target a businessman.

Speaking to IANS, Sachdeva said, "Arvind Kejriwal's criminal face is now evident. He is out on bail, and his MLA is involved in looting the public. According to the audio clips circulating on social media, Naresh Balyan, the MLA from Uttam Nagar, is giving tips to gangsters, instructing them to threaten



people and extort money, which is then shared.'

"This is the condition of the AAP MLAs, who were elected to serve the public but are now exploiting them.

This exposes the true criminal face of the AAP," he further

said. Earlier, during a press conference, Sachdeva alleged that Balyan was directly involved in extortion and Nafe Singh," Sachdeva said. demanded that investigating agencies act swiftly.

"The MLA himself is accused of using gangsters to extort money from his close associates, including a builder. Agencies must investigate and ensure such individuals are put behind bars. The safety of Delhiites is at stake, and action is necessary based on the evidence provided," he said.

Sachdeva raised concerns about the alleged connections between Balyan and gangster Kapil Sangwan, also known as "Nandu,' who is reportedly operating from London.

"Earlier, BJP accused Naresh Balyan of collusion with Kapil Sangwan. Sangwan is a Najafgarh resident and has been accused in the murder case of INLD leader

He also hit out at AAP National Convenor Arvind Kejriwal for deflecting responsibility.

"Kejriwal always attacks the Centre for the deteriorating law and order in Delhi but never addresses issues under his purview like water supply and roads," Sachdeva told IANS.

He questioned why Kejriwal avoids discussing critical matters such as poor road conditions, water supply issues, electricity bills, or the alleged corruption related to the 'Sheesh Mahal' and the excise policy case.

"He should focus on answering for his governance failures rather than making irrelevant statements. The people of Delhi deserve accountability," Sachdeva added.



Students holds placards as they take part in the awareness rally for upcoming Kumbh Mela 2025 festival, in Prayagraj on Saturday. ■ ANI

## MPDGP retires, **IPS** daughter commands farewellparade

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE BHOPAL, 30 NOVEMBER** 

Madhya Pradesh Director General of Police Sudhir Saxena, who retired from service on Saturday, received a rare ceremonial farewell parade led by his IPS officer daughter Sonakshi Saxena, who commanded the parade and gave him the valedictory salute.

This is believed to be the first time in the country's history that an IPS officer daughter has commanded the farewell parade of her IPS officer father. The parade was held at the Motilal Nehru Police Stadium in Bhopal on Saturday evening.

Sonakshi Saxena, a 2020 batch IPS officer of the MP cadre, is currently posted as the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Intelligence) in

Sudhir Saxena is a 1987 batch IPS officer of the MP

## $CBI \, books \, CGST \, in spector \, for \, demanding$ ₹75,000 bribe from Raipur chemist

**NEW DELHI. 30 NOVEMBER** 

A Central Goods and Services Tax inspector was booked by the CBI for allegedly demanding a bribe of Rs 75,000 from a chemist shop owner in Raipur to withdraw a show cause notice issued to him.

In a written complaint on Thursday, chemist Rahul Verma, who runs a medical shop in the name Verma Medical in Amapara, Raipur, alleged that Soumya Ranjan Mallik, inspector, CGST, Range-Il, Division-3, Civil Lines, Raipur Chhattisgarh, and Elongka Minj, Superintendent of CGST, demanded a bribe amount of Rs 75,000.

The bribe was demanded to settle the matter of notice issued to him.

The accused allegedly told Verma that if he agreed to pay the bribe, no show cause notice would be issued, otherwise he would have to pay the entire amount of Rs 1,73,000 to the govern-



The complainant said he bargained with the bribe seeker and got the amount reduced to Rs 60,000. After verification of his complaint, the CBI filed a case against the CGST inspector.

The Raipur incident comes close to the federal agency apprehending K. P. Rajan, Superintendent of CGST, Indore, Madhya Pradesh, for demanding and accepting Rs 15,000 bribe from a complainant.

The CBI registered a case

against the accused Superintendent on allegations that he demanded undue advantage of Rs 15,000 from Sitaram Choudhary, a representative of an industrial unit, for unblocking/releasing Input Tax Credit of GST.

The CBI laid a trap and caught the accused Superintendent while demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 15,000 from the complainant. Searches were launched

soon after at the residential and official premises of the accused.

# Take pride in India's rich cultural heritage: Om Birla



**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE** CHANDIGARH, 30 NOVEMBER

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Saturday encouraged the students to embark on their new career journeys with pride in India's rich cultural heritage and urged them to pledge their contributions toward building a developed India.

He said this while participating as the chief guest at the 10th convocation of Manav Rachna University in Faridabad today. Over 1,500 degrees, including undergraduate, postgraduate, and PhD were conferred during the event and talented students excelling

in various fields were honoured. Haryana's Revenue and Disaster Management and Urban Local Bodies Minister Vipul Goel was the special guest at the ceremony.

The Speaker said that today India has unparalleled identity in the world. Due to India's good governance, other countries are emulating its democratic model, he said. It is the strength of our democracy that India is setting new benchmarks in several fields including, education, medicine, IT, automobiles etc, added he.

He said that every Indian is making their contribution in making India a developed

country showcasing the prime example of unity in diversity. Birla also called upon the youth to harness their energy and resources positively to contribute to national interests. He reminded the audience of India's 75 years of constitutional journey, celebrating the values of equality, liberty, and

fraternity. He motivated degree holders to move forward with enthusiasm, upholding the teachings and values instilled by their parents and teachers. He also commended the university for its 27 years of contribution to the education field.

Congratulating the graduating students, Minister Goel said that Indians hold prestigious positions in top global companies, making India the center of global attention. He urged students to uphold the values imparted by their parents and teachers and to always stay connected to Indian culture, wherever they go.

'Lacking substance': Dilip Jaiswal on Lalu, Tejashwi's claims on reservation

**AGENCIES** PATNA, 30 NOVEMBER

Bihar Minister and state BJP President Dilip Jaiswal on Saturday criticised RJD chief Lalu Prasad Yadav and his son and party leader Tejashwi Yadav over the reservation issue, saying that their statements on the subject lack substance. Dilip Jaiswal argued that the credit for implementing reservation policies in Bihar goes to Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and not the RJD leaders. "Tejashwi Yadav always claims credit for providing reservation to the people of Bihar, but the fact is that he has not done anything. It was Nitish Kumar who implemented reservations. I challenge Tejashwi Yadav to ask his father, Lalu Prasad, how much reservation was given during his tenure as CM," Jaiswal stated. Increasing the reservation percentage ofOBC, SCST to 65 per cent has emerged as a contentious issue during the winter session of the Bihar Assembly.

## Sitharaman advocates development, cultural preservation at Credit Outreach Programme in Bihar

**NEW DELHI. 30 NOVEMBER** 

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, during the Credit Outreach Programme held in Madhubani on Saturday, emphasised the importance of development and cultural preservation and handed over copies of the Constitution's new editions in Maithili and Sanskrit.

Referring to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of 'Vikas bhi, Virasat bhi (Development with Heritage)', she remarked, "Keeping that legacy in mind, on Constitution Day, PM Modi presented the Constitution of India in Maithili and Sanskrit."

As part of the event, FM Sitharaman handed over the

copies of these Constitution editions and also suggested the need for a grand Sita temple in Mithila, saying, "As the Ram Temple was built in Ayodhya, there should be a Sita temple in Mithila." Accompanied by Bihar

Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary, Sitharaman distributed sanction letters from banks to beneficiaries of various Central government schemes. "Loans worth 1,121 crore were disbursed to over 50,000 beneficiaries during the Credit Outreach Programme," the Finance Minister's office announced on

In her address, she highlighted the resilience and industrious spirit of the people of Bihar, particularly the



women of Madhubani. "I see all the women here as Ma Sita, and this is Pavan Dharti (holy land)," she said. Praising their ability to thrive despite challenges, she added, "When we speak about Bihar, especially Mithilanchal, peo-

ple here are hard-working

and do not give up even in tough situations. They pick strong representatives. The biggest challenge for Bihar remains the floods caused by the Koshi River. Many projects, such as the Vishnu Pad Mandir Corridor, have been introduced, alongside

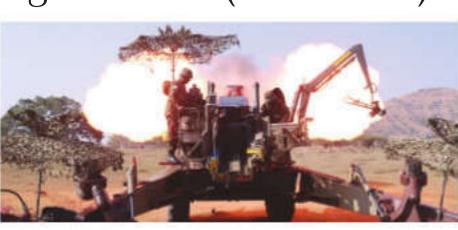
strategies to combat flood-

Highlighting the goal of 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047, when India completes 100 years of Independence, FM Sitharaman reiterated PM Modi's focus on the uplift of four key groups: The poor, women, farmers, and youth, emphasising their pivotal role in India's progress.

"Women are the driving force behind the Viksit Bharat goal, they will make it a real-

ity," she added. The Finance Minister lauded the success of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in Bihar, an initiative led by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, and assured continued support from banks to strengthen the Singapore Artillery and these groups.

## India-Singapore joint military exercise Agni Warrior (XAW-2024) concludes



**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER** 

The 13th edition of the bilateral military exercise AGNI WAR-RIOR (XAW-2024) between the Indian Army and Singapore Armed Forces concluded at the Field Firing Ranges in Devlali, Maharashtra, today. The three days exercise involved 182 personnel from

114 personnel from the Indian Army's Regiment of Artillery. The primary objective of XAW-2024 was to enhance mutual understanding of operational drills and procedures to foster joint operations under the United Nations Charter. The exercise showcased joint firepower planning, execution, and the use of next-generation artillery equipment by both armies. The event was attend-

Lieutenant General Adosh Kumar, Director General of Artillery; Lieutenant General NS Sarna, Commandant of the School of Artillery; and Colonel Ong Chiou Perng, Chief Artillery Officer of the Singapore Armed Forces, who praised the participants for their professionalism and expertise. The exercise emphasized joint preparation, coordination, and the evolution of common artillery interfaces, while also incorporating advanced technologies and exchanging best practices. It concluded with the successful integration of Singapore Armed Forces troops into intricate firepower planning and multinational force oper-

ed by key dignitaries, including

# Best FIFA Football Awards: Mbappe, Vinicius Jr, Carvajalamong nominees

Top global talent in focus as FIFA reveals nominees list for best men's player award for 2024

**AGENCIES** 

**NEW DELHI. 30 NOVEMBER** 

The nominations for the FIFA best men's player award for 2024 been announced, featuring top football talents such as Vinicius Jr., Dani Carvajal, Jude Bellingham, Kylian Mbappe, Fede Valverde, and Toni Kroos.

Barcelona's Aitana Bonmati leads the nominees for the women's award, further highlighting the diverse and impressive talent in women's football.

Voting for the best players, coaches, and goalkeepers will involve an equal distribution of votes among fans, current national team captains, and media representatives.

The date for the awards ceremony has not yet been announced.

Vinicius Jr. and his Real Madrid teammates, who boycotted the Ballon d'Or ceremony in Paris after learning that Rodri would win ahead of the Brazilian star, are now poised for another showdown. Rodri, who was instrumental in Manchester City's historic fourth consecutive Premier League title and Spain's Euro 2024 victory, where he was named the tournament's best player, is a strong favourite.

Vinicius Jr. is a significant



Toni Kroos and summer sign-

ing Kylian Mbappe. Man-

rival for Rodri, having scored 24 goals and provided 11 assists across all competitions

last season. His performance was pivotal in Real Madrid's LaLiga triumph and their Champions

League final win against Borussia Dortmund, where he scored the second goal.

chester City's Erling Haaland Real Madrid's presence and Inter Miami's Lionel is strong on the shortlist, Messi, last year's winner, are with six players nominated, also among the contenders. including the recently retired Messi, who captained Argentina to victory at the 2024 Copa America, continues to be a formidable presence in the

football world. Notably absent from the FIFA Best Men's selection is Cristiano Ronaldo, who

recently surpassed 900 career goals. Despite his recordbreaking 35 goals for Al Nassr in the Saudi Pro League last season, Ronaldo has only made the shortlist for the best attacker.

## Nistelrooy'excited'onjoining Leicester Cityas manager



**AGENCIES** 

LEICESTER, 30 NOVEMBER

Ruud van Nistelrooy has expressed his excitement on joining Leicester City as manager and said he will give his best at the job.

The 48-year-old Dutchman, who has a wealth of experience at the highest level of the game, both as a player and a coach, has agreed terms on a contract to June 2027.

He will arrive in the UK in time to be in attendance for Leicester's Premier League trip to Brentford on Saturday, before assuming full first team responsibilities from Sunday.

Gtech Community Stadium by first team coach Ben Dawson, supported by coaches Danny Alcock and Andy Hughes. Regarded as one of the Premier League's bestever strikers as a player, the former Netherlands inter-

national has since built a growing reputation as a talented manager and coach with the likes of PSV Eindhoven, Manchester United and the Dutch national team.

"I'm proud, I'm excited. Everybody that I speak to about Leicester City Football Club is enthusiastic. They have great stories about the quality of the people working at the Club, the supporters and, of course, the recent history of the Club is impressive. I'm excited to start and to get to know everyone and give everything I can for the Football Club," Nistelrooy said in a statement.

Nistelrooy enjoyed a stellar playing career with PSV Eind-The side will be led at the hoven, Manchester United, and Real Madrid, scoring 349 club goals and 35 goals in 70 international matches for the Netherlands. Known for his clinical finishing, technical skill, and leadership, he transitioned these traits into coaching.

## ISL: In-form Bengaluru FC take on tricky Odisha FC

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE BHUBANESWAR, 30 NOVEMBER

Former champions Bengaluru FC will aim to hold on to their spot at the top of the points table when they take on Odisha FC in an Indian Super League (ISL) clash at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar on Sunday.

Odisha FC come into this game on the back of an impressive 6-0 win over Hyderabad FC, having climbed to sixth in the ISL table with three wins and draws each this season. Bengaluru FC, meanwhile, sit at the top, boasting six victories and a couple of draws. The Blues recently defeated Mohammedan SC 2-1 in their last away outing.

Odisha FC have gradually begun finding their feet after an indifferent start to the season, whereas Bengaluru FC have been rolling seamlessly ever since the campaign got going. Both these sides have momentum swaying in their favour and they should try to make the most out of it, in their march forward this season.

Odisha FC have won each of their two previous ISL games against Bengaluru FC



at the Kalinga Stadium. A win here would make the Blues the fourth team that Odisha maintain a 100%-win record against at this venue (minimum two games), joining East Bengal FC, Hyderabad

FC, and NorthEast United FC. The rousing crowd support command in they Bhubaneswar can propel the Juggernauts to scale this feat.

The Juggernauts are unbeaten in their last two

encounters with Bengaluru FC in the ISL. A win or a draw would mark their longestever unbeaten streak against the Blues.

> The Blues have won two of their four away matches

this season, and it's only the second time in their history they have achieved this tally in the first four away games. The entire team has been functioning like a well-drilled unit and they are hence gradually taking the home-away factor out of consideration this year, succeeding across

venues. Bengaluru FC have netted multiple goals in each of their last two ISL matches. The last time they achieved a longer streak was a five-game run between January and February 2023. Their frontline has been boosted by the presence of Sunil Chhetri, who came off the bench to bag a brace against Mohammedan SC in the last game.

Odisha FC head coach Sergio Lobera stressed the need to get on to a positive rhythm and secure wins that can help them seal their fate towards the end of the campaign.

"The first step is the next game. For sure, we know we have six points in play in the coming couple of matches. Getting points is important to get in a good position, which will help us in the final leg of the competition," Lobera

# WorldChessChampionship: Gukesh holdsChina'sLirentoexcitingdraw



**AJEYO BASU NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER** 

Defending champion Ding Liren of China was left frustrated on Saturday as he was held to a hard-fought draw by Indian star D Gukesh in the fifth game at the World Chess Championship being held in Singapore.

It was the second draw in a row for Gukesh, who was

playing with white pieces. Saturday's result saw both players notch up an identical tally of 2.5 points each. Both Gukesh ad the Chinese star need 5 more points in order to win the title.

The 18-year-old Gukesh - the youngest ever challenger for the world title - was in superb form as he matched the reigning world champion move for move. With the

contest locked in a bitter stalemate, the two players decided to agree on a draw after 40 moves. It was the third draw of the match.

Gukesh had emerged winner in the third game on Wednesday. Liren had clinched the first game against Gukesh before the Indian managed to hold his illustrous opponent in the second and fourth games.

## ISL: Mumbai City FC ride Mehtab strike against Hyderabad FC

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE** MUMBAI, 30 NOVEMBER

Mumbai City FC rode a Mehtab Singh strike to defeat Hyderabad FC 1-0 at the Mumbai Football Arena and rise to the sixth spot in the Indian Super League (ISL) table on Saturday.

The Islanders returned to winning ways at home courtesy of a solitary goal from Mehtab Singh as Petr Kratky's men put the preceding defeat against Punjab FC behind by securing their third win of the ongoing season. With his assist, Chhangte became Mumbai City FC's outright highest goal contributor in ISL, leaving the veteran Bipin Singh behind.

The hosts started the game with extra motivation, troubling the Hyderabad FC penalty area with crosses and penetrations. The game's first chance fell to Lallianzuala Chhangte, who dropped his shoulder and lost his marker Parag Shrivas in the box before testing Lalbiakhlua Jongte with a vicious leftfooted effort. However, the Hyderabad FC goalkeeper was alert to the danger as he parried the effort to safety. The Islanders finally broke

minute when Mehtab Singh, who is ever dangerous from set-pieces made an exceptional movement to head home a corner delivered by Chhangte. Mehtab lost his marker brilliantly with his intricate movement and came

the deadlock in the 29th

up with a powerful header to beat Jongte in goal.

Mumbai City FC's celebrations were short lived as their midfield maestro Toral limped off the field making way for Brandon Fernandes. The Spaniard was struggling with an ankle injury and

despite his best efforts to play through the pain, Toral simply couldn't continue. Therefore Petr Kratky decided to deploy Brandon in the absence of Yoell Van Nieff and Jeremy Manzorro on the bench.

Ramhlunchhunga looked

like the player who could get on the scoresheet for the visitors. The youngster with his darting runs troubled the Mumbai City FC defenders. He also unleashed a vicious long range effort, forcing Lachenpa to be at his best to deny him the goal.



HEAD COACH JAYAWARDENE REFLECTS ON MI SQUAD

Mumbai Indians head coach Mahela Jayawardene reflected on adding Mitchell Santner and Allah Ghazanfar to the squad ahead of the 2025 season of the Indian Premier League. New Zealand's Mitchell Santner joined the Mumbaibased franchise during the IPL 2025 mega-auction. Coming in at the base price of Rs 2 crore, MI started the bidding for NZ's premier white-ball spinner. No other franchise showed interest, which confirmed his switch to Wankhede. Afghanistan spinner Allah Ghazanfar was picked up by Mumbai Indians for Rs 4.80 crore.

KOLKATA 01 DECEMBER 2024 The Sunday Statesman

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#### **THUMBNAILS**

Day 1 of India's two-day tour game washed out: The first day of the twoday pink ball game between India and the Australian Prime Minister's XI was washed out due to persistent rain. A steady drizzle bedding in from almost 10am right through to about 5.30pm ensured there was no chance of play during the day at the Manuka Oval in Canberra. The covers stayed firmly on throughout the period, and the Indian team came to the ground for a while but left as the showers refused to relent. Later in the day, there was a period when the rain stopped briefly, and the groundsmen peeled off the covers, with support staff of both teams being briefed by the umpires, but by around 7pm Australian time, a heavy downpour ensured no action was possible thereafter. The match is expected to resume at 2.40 pm on Sunday, and the tickets for Saturday`s play will be refunded. The tour game was the only chance of getting any game time with the pink ball under lights, especially for the likes of Rohit Sharma, who missed the Perth Test due to the birth of his second child, and is set to lead the team in the second Test. The match could also be Shubman Gill's first outing in the ongoing tour, after a thumb injury forced him out of the

# Australianot panicking after Perth Test loss to India: Boland

Pacer Scott Boland said the Australians are raring to win the Adelaide Test and turn the series around

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER

head of the Pink-Ball Test starting next week, Australia pacer Scott Boland said the hosts are raring to have a go in Adelaide. Boland believes despite the scoreline of the defeat in the first Test against India, Australia didn't do much wrong on the field in Perth.

The 35-year-old pacer, who has featured in 10 Tests so far, averages an excellent 20.3 and has 35 wickets to his name in Australian whites said that the Aussie dressing room atmosphere is still on the up. "There's definitely no panic stations in our change rooms," Boland said on Saturday. "There's obviously going to be some chats around individual performances and everyone wants to perform really well every game they play. But yeah, it's like, we've lost one game. It's not toys out of the cot, I don't think."

Boland reckoned that it was the strong 201-run opening stand between Yashasvi Jaiswal and KL Rahul in the second innings that shifted the momentum in the visiting side's favour. "We've spoken as a team about our plans for all the different Indian batters. I won't tell you those, but we've got pretty set plans. They might have a little



bit of a tweak after the guys have seen them again from Perth, because obviously (Yashasvi) Jaiswal batted really well there. KL Rahul batted well in the second dig as well and really dug in. So we'll probably have a chat over the next week and our plans might slightly change, but I'm pretty confident what we did in the first game was

good," he said. Boland made his Test debut at the age of 32, believes the Adelaide Oval as a venue is an ideal pick for a Day-Night Test. "Usually there can be two different games in the one game," he said.

"You can bowl during the get a little bit softer after 30, could feature in his first Test day when the sun's out and it doesn't do a whole lot, and then you get to the night session and the ball starts moving around a bit," he said. "I think it's been a couple of instances where the ball hasn't dominated the bat. I think maybe last year at the Gabba we took the new ball and didn't get as many wickets as what we would have hoped in that night session. But now back to Adelaide, I think they produce a really good cricket wicket that really suits the

pink ball and helps it last a

bit longer because it does

40 overs compared to a red

Hazlewood to miss **Adelaide Test** 

Australia fast bowler Josh Hazlewood has been ruled out of the second Test with a 'low grade left side injury.' Uncapped pacers Sean Abbott and Brendan Doggett have been added to the squad as cover and Australia already have right-arm pacer Boland in the squad.

Boland, who missed out on making the cut for the playing XI in Perth, is now among the frontrunners to replace Hazlewood, and since the early part of the Ashes in July 2023.

"Obviously I haven't played a heap of cricket in the start of this season, but I feel like I've played enough cricket to feel like I'm in a really good spot," he said on Saturday afternoon.

"My body's feeling really good now. I had a couple of niggles that were a little bit sore, but my knee and foot are feeling really good and I'm confident that the ball's coming out. Our last net session in Perth was for me and Josh Inglis, we went pink ball for quite a few overs."

# U19Asia Cup: Pakistan ride Shahzaib ton to beat India



**AGENCIES DUBAI, 30 NOVEMBER** 

A scintillating 159-run innings by Shahzaib Khan powered Pakistan to a 43-run victory over India in a Group-A clash of the ACC Men's U19 Asia Cup at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium on Saturday.

Shahzaib's 147-ball onslaught, adorned with five boundaries and 10 towering sixes and anchored Pakistan's innings to a competitive 281 for seven in their. The Mansehra-born opener forged a 160-run stand with Usman Khan, who contributed a composed 60 off 94 balls. This partnership set the tone for Pakistan's innings, with Shahzaib adding another vital 71 runs for the third wicket alongside Muhammad

Riazullah (27). India's bowling effort was led by Samarth Nagaraj, who claimed 3 for 45 was supported by Ayush Mhatre's economical 2 for 30.

In reply, India's chase

began on a shaky note, slipping to 81 for four inside 15 overs. Ali Raza was the pick of the bowlers, dismantling the top order with figures of 3 for 36 in nine overs. The highly talked about Vaibhav Survavanshi, who at 13-years of age was bought by Rajasthan Royals for a price tag of Rs 1.10 crore at the 2025 IPL mega auctions, was dismissed for one run A fighting 67 off 77 balls by Nikhil Kumar provided some resistance, with support from Harvansh Pangalia (26) and Kiran Chormale (20). However, the target proved insurmountable as India were bowled out for 238 in 47.1 overs. Abdul Subhan and Faham-ul-Hag chipped in with two wickets each. Shahzaib's remarkable innings earned him the Player of the Match award. Pakistan will next face the UAE on 2 December, aiming to secure a semi-final berth. India will take on Japan on the same day in hopes of turning their loss around.

## Ricky Ponting advises struggling Smith and Labuschange to trust their game like Kohli

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 30 NOVEMBER** 

Perth Test that India con-

vincingly won by 295 runs.

Former Australia captain Ricky Ponting advised struggling batters Marnus  $Labus chagne \, and \, Steve \, Smith$ to trust their game like India's star batter Virat Kohli to turn their fortunes around in the remainder of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

Continuing a prolonged batting slump, Labuschagne failed to negotiate the Indian attack led by Jasprit Bumrah in the opening Test at Perth, which the Aussies lost by a whopping 295-run margin, making a 52-ball 2 and 3. Smith looked equally out of sorts while making a firstball duck and 60-ball 17 before succumbing to Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj in the first and second innings respectively.



"Marnus looked the most tentative out of all the batters in Perth. Yes, it was high quality bowling on a difficult wicket, but he needs to find a way to turn it around," Ponting was quoted as saying by the ICC Review.

Ponting urged the two Australian batters to find their own way like Kohli, who managed to break the

shackles at Perth with his 30th Test ton, and seventh overall on Australian soil.

After falling for five in the

first innings, the prolific right-

hander made an unbeaten 100 in the second innings that helped India set a massive 534-run target.

"Virat went back to trusting his game and he looked like a different player in the second innings than he did in the first innings," Ponting said. "He (Kohli) got away from

trying to combat the opposition and focused on his strengths. That's what Marnus and (Steve) Smith need to do - find their own way and show great intent," said Ponting.

Ponting, who has 13378 runs from 168 Tests with 41 hundreds, asked the Australian batters to take more risk and apply pressure on the Indian bowlers.

"You have to find a way to take risks and put it back on those guys because you know the Bumrahs of the world they're not going to give you too many easy scoring opportunities. When they do, you've got to be ready to pounce on it and put it away and try and put some pressure back on them," he explained.

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## BGT: Indian fast bowlers share insights on pink ball ahead of second Test in Adelaide

**AGENCIES** 

CANBERRA, 30 NOVEMBER

As the Indian cricket team prepares for the upcoming pink-ball Test in Adelaide starting 6 December, fast bowlers Akash Deep and Yash Dayal have shared their experiences and observations about the challenges and nuances of bowling with the pink ball.

Reflecting on his experience, Akash Deep highlighted the unique characteristics of the pink ball compared to the traditional red ball. "It's skidding, it's difficult

for the batters, it has got more bounce," Akash explained in a video posted by BCCI on their official website. "The main thing about this ball is that it remains new for

we see with the red ball is that it starts getting old after 5-6 overs," he said. Yash Dayal, who has been bowling to Indian batting stal-

warts in the nets, shared his

a long time. Generally, what



"You have to keep the seam position straight. If you pitch the ball in the right areas, then it might change direc-

tions," he added. The Indian team heads



into this Test with renewed confidence, having secured a victory against Australia in the first Test in Perth. The memory of being bowled out for 36 in their last pink-ball Test against Australia will undoubtedly linger, but the team's recent success adds a layer of optimism. The insights from Akash Deep and Yash

Dayal provide a glimpse into

the team's preparation and strategic considerations as they aim to tackle the pinkball challenge and continue their winning momentum in the series.

In the first Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, India won the toss and elected to bat but managed only 150 runs. Nitish Kumar Reddy (41 off 59 balls, six fours, one six) and Rishabh Pant (37 off 78 balls, three fours, one six) added a crucial 48-run partnership for the sixth wicket. Josh Hazlewood (4/29) was Australia's standout bowler, while Pat Cummins, Mitchell Marsh, and Mitchell Starc claimed two wickets each.

Australia's response was dismal, collapsing to 79/9 before a late partnership between Mitchell Starc (26) and Alex Carey (21) took them to 104, conceding a 46-run lead. Jasprit Bumrah led India's bowling with 5/30, while debutant Harshit Rana impressed with 3/48.

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**In Funday Fiction: Touch of mind** 

# Tackling climate change a game of global finance

**JOYDEEP GUPTA** 

prolonged heatwave followed by a monsoon when it rained heavily or not at all—leading to a vicious cycle of droughts, floods, landslides, storms—that was climate-changed India 2024. The situation has been getting worse for around three decades, as the global average temperature has climbed to 1.2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. With business as usual, it is projected to rise by at least 2.7 degrees by the end of the century.

India finds itself in a peculiar position. It is the world's third largest emitter of greenhouse gases—mainly carbon dioxide—that are warming up the atmosphere. Only China and the US emit more. But India's per capita emission is among the world's lowest, though it is projected to go up as more people use more electricity. At the same time India is among the world's ten-worst impacted countries, with around Rs 13.35 lakh crore spent on climate adaptation in 2021-22, just over 5.5% of its GDP, according to the government. It expects to spend another Rs 57 lakh crore for the same purpose by 2029. This does not include the money being spent on renewable energy—the main way to control greenhouse gas emissions—by central and state governments, private firms and individuals.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has coordinated global efforts to combat this menace since 1995, when its first conference of parties (COP) was held. Since then, India has argued that developed countries—with 20% of the world's population—have placed 80% of the greenhouse gases in the atmosphere since the start of the Industrial Age, so developed countries must pay developing countries to deal with the problem.

This has led to protracted and ongoing debates at the annual COPs, with developed countries saying China and India now emit more and that rich countries are already paying as much as they can. India has stuck to its guns. At the 2023 COP in Dubai, it asked rich countries to provide at least \$1 trillion per year to developing countries from 2025, primarily through grants and concessional finance rather than commercial loans.

UNFCCC reportedthis September that developing countries will need between \$5.01 and \$6.85 trillion by 2030 to support the activities they have pledged to deal with climate change.

A study by New Delhi-based International Forum for Environment, Sustainability and Technology (iFOREST) has estimated that India itself will need more than \$1 trillion (Rs 84 lakh crore) by 2050 just to move away from coal mining and thermal power plants.

The 2024 COP in Baku—the capital of Azerbaijan—started with this backdrop of large finance requirements. The main aim was to finalise the "New Collective Quantified Goal" (NCQG) of climate finance.

Mukhtar Babayev, Azerbaijan's Minister for Ecology and Natural Resources and the President-designate for this year's COP, pointed out that between December 023 and May 2024, extreme weather caused damage worth \$41 billion. More recent was Hurricane Helene, which alone is estimated to have caused damage worth \$250 billionin the US. There is really no option but to control greenhouse gas emissions, and to find the money to move towards cleaner energy sources. Babayev said, "We need to work together to deliver fair and ambitious climate finance first and foremost."

UNFCCC Executive Secretary Simon Stiell said before the COP, "Over a trillion dollars was invested

in climate action last

year globally. Up from a few hundred billion a decade ago...But relative to where we need to be—this is nowhere near enough. This year we've seen hundreds of billions of dollars of damage to countries rich and poor.So, we know trillions more are needed.Doing so is a crucial investment to protect the global economy, and will be a fraction of the costs every nation will pay if we allow the climate crisis to keep running rampant, devastating more and more lives and livelihoods every year."

Many developing countries—including India—hold that climate justice demands payment from rich nations in the form of grants and soft loans. Developed countries have made it clear that they cannot afford anywhere near such amounts. So, where is the money to come from? It is now agreed by many countries that most of the money will have to come from private investors, while grants and soft loans from governments and organisations like the World Bank can play the crucial role of standing guarantor for the loans. The big tussle now is on four counts. First, how much will rich nations pay? Second, should large developing countries like China and India pay as well? Third, how low can the interest rates for private loans be? Fourth, which developing countries will have a preference over getting the money?

Stiell said in October, "Just this week the World Bank announced more concessional lending for climate. And the IMF is looking at ways to incorporate climate action and risks right across their work. This is good news. But incremental increases won't lead to an exponential surge of investment and green growth. On climate finance, we have a need for speed, and without much larger scale, all economies will

> fail. So many countries are facing debt crises that amount to fiscal straight-jackets, making it nearimpossible to invest in climate action." "At COP29 in Baku all governments must agree a new goal for international climate finance that truly responds to the

> > needs of developing

countries," the UNFCCC chief added. "It's not my job to prejudge what the new goal will look like. But it's clear public finance must be at the core. As much of this finance as possible needs to be grant or concessional, and must be made more accessible to those who need it most...It's also important we put in place mechanisms to track and ensure that the promised funds are delivered."

Right now, that is the core problem. There are lots of climate funds—the Green Climate Fund under UNFCCC, the Climate Investment Fund of the World Bank, the Adaptation Fund, the Loss and Damage Fund, the LDC Fund and so on. The trouble is these funds have nowhere near the amount they need or have been promised by rich countries. Pledges have been made with fanfare, and then routinely unmet.

This is especially true for the money needed to adapt to climate change impacts. Most of the money goes into mitigation, in the form of solar and wind projects. But even there, "The world is at risk of missing the target of tripling renewable energy capacity by 2030," according to Francesco La Camera, Director General of International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). A few weeks before the 2024 COP, he said in Baku, "The world is projected to deliver only half of the required growth in renewable power by 2030." IRENA estimated that to reach the goal, investment in renewables needs to triple to an annual \$1.5 trillion between now and 2030.

India has arguably the world's largest renewable energy addition target in this decade, 500 gigawatts (GW) of installed capacity by 2030. It had crossed 154 GW by the end of this September.But to reach the 500 GW target, annual investments in the sector must be tripled from the \$11.4 billion invested in 2023-24. Vibhuti Garg, Energy Economist and Lead India of the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis, wrote in 2022 that investments would have to be \$30-40 billion annually.

India started a green bonds scheme, and has participated in other programmes to raise money for renewables. Today, there are dozens, if not hundreds of solar and wind energy entrepreneurs all over India. They still have a problem—getting paid by the government-run distribution companies for the electricity they generate—but getting a loan for the project at a reasonable rate of interest is relatively easy. The bigger problem is finding money for adaptation and to pay for the losses and damages being constantly worsened by climate change. This money has to come from the government.

Realistically, India can expect little public money from rich countries, especially since the government likes to call itself an emerging rather than a developing country. To that contrary, India is under considerable pressure to contribute more to the various funds meant mainly for smaller developing economies. The structure of the NCQG is not going to solve that problem, but it can help catalyse much-needed funding from international private sources such as investment funds.

The writer is India Manager, Earth Journalism Network

**Editorial Note:** "This exclusive report by the subject expert was written for The Statesman prior to India's decision yesterday to oppose the COP29 finance deal'

## Love of land and language

**DOLA MITRA** 

angladesh is a country I visited at different times.

I went there as a child with my parents and sisters and recall the sheer joy of travelling through the rural areas which were dotted with ponds, each of a different colour.

Green during the day when its deep, cool waters, reflected the trees around it. Blue and silver at dawn when it mirrored the sky above. Golden when the sun went down in the horizon. It was delightful to jump into these lakes, swim or simply splash around. The countryside was also streaked with rivers of varying sizes. There were gurgling streams which we waded through on foot. There were wide, wild rivers, which we crossed on boats. The surrounding scenery seemed surreal. There were orchards of mangoes and jackfruits on the banks. The fruits dazzled like gigantic gems in the sun. It was fairytale like. Floating down those rivers on our cozy boats was no less enchanting than the simulated rivulet in Disneyland which I visited many times with my family as a child. I still recall the song, "This is a small world after all."

It is. Bangladeshi ponds and rivers are no different than Indian ones. British drew an artificial border through it. The Radcliffe Line. The utterly ugly, invisible, imaginary partition which divided us. Otherwise we are the same people with the same land, same landscape.

In childhood, it did not occur to me that we are different. I had as much fun, floating my paper boat in a village puddle during Monsoon in Bangladesh as I did in a rustic town in India, where a relative lived.

The differences, political, personal grew glaring when I visited and lived in Bangladesh's capital city Dhaka for a while when my husband got a job there. I was told that as journalist I could not work.

Yet, even then, a decade or two earlier, it was still friendly. There was mutual love between the Bangladeshi Bengalis and the Bengalis of India's West Bengal. We shared the same language, with a few differences in dialects. We shared the same culture. We shared Rabindranath Tagore as the creator of our respective national anthems.

Today's turn of events is disturbing. Religious fanatics have taken over. They are fanning flames of hatred. They have forgotten the fight from which stemmed the very idea of Bangladesh. The idea that Bengali is our common language, our common culture, our common identity.

The freedom fighters of Bangladesh, when it was East Pakistan, gave up their lives to extricate the land and the language of the Bengalis from the tyrannical and oppressive rulers of West Pakistan. Today these martyrs' images are being attacked, their statues are being defaced. Their names are being sullied. Their reputation is being tarnished.

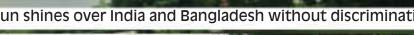
Since violence broke out in Bangladesh in August, I visited the border at Bongaon. It was telling that a wall image of Mujibur Rahman, thus far considered a founding father of Bangladesh, had been whitewashed. Elsewhere images of his visage had been blackened.

I also went to Taki, through which runs the riverine border between India and Bangladesh. I took a boat ride on the Ichhamati River, on one bank of which lies Bangladesh and on the other, India. There is an imaginary line that runs through the river. It is the border. Boats on the Indian side does not cross over to the other side. Boats from the Bangladeshi side do not cross over into this side.

Our boatman told us the tales of the camaraderie that existed between people of the two sides. "Our love for each other is really visible during the Festival of Durga Puja," he said cheerfully. "See that enclosure there?" He asked, pointing towards a canopied area on the Bangladeshi side. "That is where the Durga pratimas (clay idols) would be gathered before the immersion procession started." His face fell when he narrated the next bit. "This year there was no immersion from their side. They did not celebrate. They have completely stopped Durga Puja." Our boatman said it was a time of year he and other boatmen as well as all the locals cherished. It was a time to meet mid-stream and smile together, laugh together. Our boatman took us to the mid-point. "We do not have permission to go further."

I looked down at the deep. There was no line. There was no difference. A leaf floated in the river. It was dawn and the water was clear, blue and silver. It was a golden, fallen leaf. I did not know whether it was from a Bangladeshi tree or an Indian one. One side of it fell on the







founding leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was displayed at the Bangladesh border at Bongaon. It has since been whitewashed.

The writer is Editor of Feature, The Statesman. Photos are by the writer.

# Reading Lolita in Tehran is an evocative example of woman power

**GAUTAMAN BHASKARAN** 

ussian-American author Vladimir Nobokov's novel, Lolita, created a huge controversy with its plot point of hebephilia. And since this sat uneasily with the political powers in the US and UK, it was first published in France by Olympia Press. In India, the copies of the book were

detained at the Bombay port by the Customs for two months before Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru read the novel and decided to let the consignment come in. He said in a note: The book is certainly not pornographic in the normal sense of the word. It is, as I have said, a serious book, seriously written. If there had been no fuss about it, no question need have arisen at all of banning it or preventing its entry. It is this fuss that sometimes makes a difference because people are attracted especially to reading books which are talked about in this way." He was absolutely right.

I was at school then and overwhelmed by curiosity, somehow managed to lay my hands on a copy. Of course, I could not understand much of what was written, but the thrill of reading a book that had created such a furore excited me. Moreover, there was this talk of a ban.

The story of Lolita is simple. It describes the protagonist, a French literature professor, living in New England (US) writing under the pseudonym of Humbert Humbert, kidnapping and sexually abusing a 12year-old girl. In the film, Reading Lolita in Tehran,

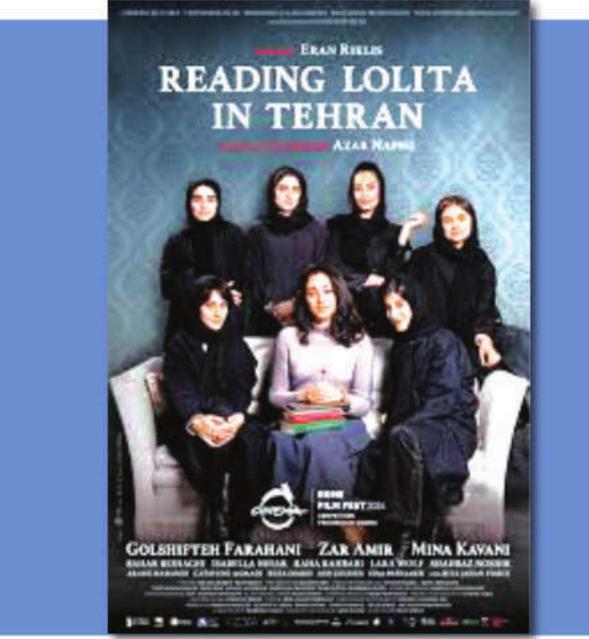
by Israel's Eran Riklis, which has been making the festival rounds, we first see university students in a class taken by professor Azar Nafisi (a wonderfully expressive Golshifteh Farahani), who is discussing literary texts like The Great Gatsby, Daisy and Lolita, all of which were opposed by the regime.

The women students soon realise that they are the Lolitas who have been denied the right to make independent choices or express themselves freely.

Adapted from the memoirs of the Iranian-American author, Prof. Nafisi, the movie captures the angst of post-revolution Iran where people's initial hopes are dashed to the ground. The atrocities by the ruling clergy are horrendous, and we can hear men and women on the streets screaming "They lied to us!"

The work – from a screenplay by Marjorie David – spans across 24 years beginning in 1979 when a young academic, Nafisi, settles down in Tehran with her husband just as Iran witnesses the revolution. It looked like the time of hope with many Iranians returning home, only to realise that they had been fed on false promises. This is apparent even as Nafisi is at the airport; she is shocked to see a rude guy at the passport control desk and an equally unfriendly officer at Customs, who shows utter disdain for the books she has brought along. One of them is Lolita, but of course, he has no clue about the controversy surrounding the book.

As the revolution takes a suffocating hold over the country, we see how conservatism begins spreading. Women who walked on the streets without a hijab soon began to cover their heads with scarves. Men in Nafisi's class talk about how the hijab will become compulsory. "One day, it will be the law," a male student hisses. When a male security guard blocks Nafisi's way at the door because she has left her hair uncovered, she says – in one of the strongest scenes -- "My grandmother was the most devout Muslim I knew. She never missed a prayer. But she wore her scarf because she was devout, not because it was a symbol (of male dominance)". She was a



great example of a woman who lived a life independent of men.

Such freedom finds expression inside Nafisi's house where in the comfort of her liberal thoughts, seven women students let their hair down. They listen with rapt attention to lectures on literature by Nafisi, who has by then quit her university job instead preferring to take classes at home. They are held in utter secrecy though, but the excitement of debating books with their bold sexual themes

overwhelms the students to such an extent that the fear of being caught by Iran's secret police no longer matters. The women sing and dance, and freely talk about even taboo subjects.

Reading Lolita in Tehran may not be a great piece of cinema, but the point it tries to drive home is extremely powerful. Women need not live as mere shadows of men.

The writer is a senior movie critic and author

"We may encounter many defeats but we must not be defeated."

Maya Angelou

# The Sunday Statesman

KOLKATA | 01 DECEMBER 2024

# Touch of mind

#### **SOMNATH MAJUMDER**

procession belonging to a political party was seen at College Street. This was a lengthy procession and its trail Lextended up to Shyambazar's fivepoint crossing. Processions are very common on different agendas in College Street. Pradipto stood near the Harrison Road College Street crossing after finishing a cup of liquor tea. He lit up a cigarette. Suchandra likes to meet Pradipto in the afternoon at around 2.30 PM. Both got to know each other via Facebook and their intimacy grew deeper via Messenger and lastly through WhatsApp.

Pradipto has been working as a proofreader in a medium size publication house and Suchandra is in a jewellery manufacturing house as an accountant. After passing B. Com Suchandra got admitted for cost accountancy, knowing very well the job market. After passing cost accountancy she got the job from a newspaper appointment column. Pradipto also understood the present job situation which was gloomy, to say the least. Working hours in the publishing house were extremely long and holidays were very few, one wasn't even allowed to take half-day leave instantly.

Suchandra told him she would reach by 2.30 PM; however, it was 3 PM now and the procession was still going on. This area was almost filled with students. Students belonging to schools, colleges, engineering, and medical colleges were present. Pradipto was in awe of the place. He used to visit this place during tiffin hours and even after Saturday half day and went to the Coffee House which he liked most. The ambience was good with different types of intellectuals and students flocking to the place. Different types of people could spend a long time here with just a cup of coffee. He also saw a few luminaries associated with a number of accomplishments. Few contemporary writers and artists used to visit the place as well.

He stood there for a long time. Suddenly he noticed that September was going to end and there was a beautiful autumn cloud forming in the western horizon. At times one could feel the bright rays of the sun while soothe congested College Street would get

covered in a shadow. Autumn light denoted that Durga puja was not far away and within a short time the festive season would arrive. He also noticed puja pandal constructions going on at full scale in some places. Pradipto felt pain in his feet due to standing for a long time. He saw it was quarter past four. He tried to contact Suchandra over mobile. But there was no reply. Strange, Pradipto thought. Is it a case of deception? He snubbed himself. He should be careful before making friends. Now there are incidents of fake Facebook identity using artificial intelligence and machine learning. It might happen that there is no actual Suchandra. This incident happens frequently and is quite common on various social networking sites. He was quite disappointed. Suddenly his mobile started ringing. He saw it was Suchandra calling him. Disgusted Prodipto said 'Is this your commitment towards time? Why are you misguiding me? I am going back."

"Please listen to my words. I can't explain the actual situation. I am in distress. Please don't mind. I have almost reached the destination. I shall explain everything after reaching the place," said Suchandra.

Pradipto noticed Suchandra crossing Harrison Road hurriedly. She wore an olive green sari and a white blouse. She was getting closer to Pradipto. With an ardent eye, she said, "Are you angry with me? I know your situation. It's quite possible that you might be angry with me." Suchandra looked exhausted. There was a symbol of tiredness in her face and her body. But there was an expectation in her eyes. Pradipto had observed it.

"I am suffering from so many issues right now. My father has been suffering from acute Pneumonia. I admitted him to a nursing home this morning. My brother was also hit by a car. There are multiple fractures in his hip and left leg. I have admitted him to N.R.S Medical College and Hospital. He had to undergo a CT Scan. It is by God's grace that there was no injury to his brain. In fact, the concerned doctor told me to wait until the CT scan report was available. It is our good luck that there was no internal haemorrhage. There is no

manpower. I now have to do everything single-handedly. That's why I couldn't pick up your phone as I was in an emergency," said

After listening to all of this, Pradipto actually felt sorry and conveyed as much.

Suchandra.

"Actually I promised to meet with you and that's why I am here. I am tired. Utterly tired. We have so many issues going on. Mainly the financial problem. My father is a retired jute mill employee. His pension amount is very small. A big portion is spent on his own medicine. My brother is studying at Polytechnic College. The job situation for a diploma engineer is grim. He must opt for some higher study like an MBA and that involves high educational expenses."

"How is your mother?" asked Pradipto.

"Mother is mentally strong and hard working. She often says that lower-middle-class people have to suffer a lot. They are the worst sufferers in our society. It is the beauty of life. Struggle to survive.'

"We need not walk," said Pradipto and hired an OLA cab. The cab passed through M.G.

Road. Most of the shops and establishments started closing the shutter and the roads looked deserted. On Sundays, this area might feel haunted. The cab stops at Millennium Park, which is situated on the bank of the Ganga and is highly decorative. Beautiful flowers of different varieties added attraction. There were café and fast food stalls nearby. Majestic Ganga made the place extremely pleasant. One could observe launches while country boats caught fish in the Ganga. Suchandra looked excited and delighted. Pradipto observed her and in turn, felt excited as well.

Pradipto looked at the western horizon. Autumn clouds assembled upon Howrah and smoke was coming out from the factory chimney. There were different factories surrounding the Ramkrishnapur ghat area. Pradipto bought an ice cream from a local ice cream parlour and Suchandra was delighted, behaving like a child. She held his hand. Her hair waved in the gusty wind blowing over Ganga.

Suddenly her mobile started ringing. She picked up the phone with utter annoyance. It was Mr Ashis Chatterjee who had called

her, the HR manager of her company. While on the call, she heard Mr Chatterjee saying, "Good evening Miss Suchandra Nandi. Congratulations! There is good news for you. On the basis of your dedication, and sincerity and also as a recognition of your successful completion of ACMA (Cost Accountancy) both Intermediate and Final conducted by the Institute of Cost Accountant of India, National Jewelry Private Limited promoted to the post of Dy Manager (Finance) with effect from first April. Your salary will be increased by Rs. 15,000. You got an arrear amount of Rs. 90,000 which will be transferred to your bank account shortly. I wish

Suchandra was shaking in joy after cutting off the call.

you all-out success in your life."

She can't believe it. It is like a dream for her. With excitement, she held Pradipto's hand and informed him everything about the telephonic conversation. Pradipto gently touched her shoulder, depicting his own happiness.

Suchandra thought with a smile, "Our good days are coming"

# The Memento

## **DHRUBA BASU**

helly is an excellent craftswoman. Her beautiful, lyrically wavy embroideries are in high demand in the handicraft markets. Celebrities place their orders to her for exquisitely designed wrappers, tshirts, sarees, trousseau, etc. Shelly grew up in the school of hard knocks. After her father Raghunath's death, she and her mother took shelter in the latter's sons' houses where Shelly had to work as a domestic help. She was attacked by tuberculosis which stopped her education. Now she does not keep in touch with her real brothers because of that agonising past and because her brothers have deprived her of her share of the property Raghunath had left. She however keeps in touch with a cousin brother named Aniket

whom she calls her real brother. Shelly has an embroidery workshop where around 20 women carry out their work with their needles and threads. Shelly does not fetch much profit from this business. Still, she runs it for the sake of those marginal girls whose livelihood depends on it. She has even married off some of them on her own money. She is childless and lives with her husband who is a black sheep of his mishpacha.

A few days back, Shelly got a felicitation at the famous Gandhi Bhavan of Kolkata. The felicitation was organised by the Bhavan's non-official management committee on Interevents of the historic monument with the aims and objective of disseminating Gandhian ideals. The felicitation was a recognition of her contribution to women's empowerment through the Gandhian path.

Gandhi Bhavan of Kolkata is famous nationwide because Mahatma Gandhi had stayed in this building on the day India attained Independence observing a daylong fast. He later on successfully thwarted Hindu-Muslim riots here. Lord Mountbatten, the then Viceroy of independent India, has written, ".....In Punjab, we have 55 thousand soldiers and large-scale rioting on our hands. In Bengal, our forces consist of one man and there is no rioting. As a serving officer, as well as an administrator, may I pay tribute to the One Man Boundary Force..'

Therefore, getting honoured in this historic building has been an occasion of ace-high prestige for Shelly. Some broadsheet dailies covered the programme also with photographs. And in this grandiose event, it is Aniket who played the pivotal role from behind the curtain in all this and selected Shelly for the award. Aniket is a key person in the Gandhi Bhavan committee by virtue of him being a high-ranking government official.

But that felicitation did not bode well for Shelly in her own family. Her sister-in-law stopped talking to her for no apparent reason. Her husband, a government officer, began to yap at her occasionally. She was forced to cut off relations with Aniket and stop working from her workshop. She was not even allowed to hang her citation in her room. "We had national Women's Day who run the public enough of it. Now leave all these bogus things and your so-called brother and pay heed to household chores," Shelly's husband said to her. Shelly wept and wept in the darkness of solitude and there was nobody under the sun to give her solace.

## A world in harmony

## **RADHE GOPAL PRADHAN**

Gardens everywhere, no poverty in sight A world where billionaires donate, and all is made right One percent of their wealth, a small price to pay To end the suffering, and bring a brighter day

Zero garbage, zero pollution, a world so serene Spiritual meals shared, with love and kindness unseen Women cook once a week, men once a day Five days of spiritual meals, to nourish body and soul on the way

No child should cry, in Africa or anywhere No woman should be tortured, no one should live in fear Let us strive for peace, and non-violence too A world where love and kindness, forever shine through

PM Modi, Amartya Sen, Malala, Dalai Lama, and Donald Trump Let us appeal to world leaders, to make this vision a reality to bump No more poverty, no more pain

A world in harmony, where love and kindness reign.

The writer is a PhD scholar from JNU

## In the dark

## **CHANDRANI MUKHERJEE**

Only 28 tiny diyas flickeredIn the dark. The Goddess stood adorned in plastic ceremony. A few months old lamb bleated plaintive Awaiting torturous, sacrificial, agonizing death, nearby.

Yet tradition demanded villagers be treated To half cooked bhog.

The Goddess of strength

Had diminished in stature.... Her followers in number...

Only a few dogs celebrated her lonely homecoming

In an abandoned building Where even the priest Checked out his wages Before chanting.

The patron sat far away-Immersed in planning His next trip to the abode of the Gods!

CMYK

epaper.thestatesman.com



The writer is a poet and a teacher



## **Warm river**

## **CHANDRANI MUKHERJEE**

The moment stilled Like a pause Between the notes. The woman With a missing hand Stopped adorning herself With stone amulets.

The hall that had once echoed with laughter And tears Enveloped you Like the warm river.

Your words, stayed behind Etched in the air As silence hung around.

The writer is a poet and a teacher



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'The support she extended was definitely praiseworthy'

# Panthers of the Pink City'

**BORNINI ROY SARKAR** 

aipur, the flamboyant pink city of India, is known for its art, architecture, palaces, forts, exquisite cuisine and royal life. But just on the outskirts of the city with its huge buildings, cacophonous crowds and deafening sounds lies a small, happy, peaceful refuge where nature rules. During our recent trip to Jaipur, we visited the Jhalana Leopard Reserve, the only reserve forest in India exclusively dedicated to leopards. We did not know much about Jhalana until we visited the forest, and in the course of our safari, we got acquainted with the fascinating facts of the place.

Spread over an area of 23 square kilometres, this reserve, located on the slopes and foothills of the Aravalli ranges, is home to a wide variety of flora and fauna. However, its most famous denizens are its leopards. The reserve is home to 30–35 leopards, out of which 6–7 have their territory in the tourism area of the park. The otherwise shy cat is the apex predator here and does not have much competition for survival, which makes them confident and sightings easier.

We took a morning safari to explore the park, and the safari began exactly at 6:30 a.m. At the entrance of the gate, all plastic bottles and other items made of plastic were confiscated by the forest department officials. As we entered the forest, the crisp morning air and the soft light of the sun invigorated our senses. The sun was hiding behind the Aravalli Ranges, and our safari vehicle steered along the undulating jungle tracks. We encountered a Nilgai peacefully feasting on the grassland. But this peaceful picture was suddenly jolted by a foul smell. Just a few moments later we saw the corpse of another Nilgai that had been killed by a predator. Our guidedriver suggested that we waited at the spot as there was a chance of the animal returning to its kill. After waiting for some time, we proceeded towards a waterhole. We saw a number of peacocks gleefully engaged in the act of drinking water. Our guide explained that since Jhalana is in close proximity to a populated city, efforts have been taken to encourage sustainable, ethical tourism so as not to disturb the habitat of the predator. Leopards are extremely shy cats, and if disturbed, they are prone to venturing outside their territory, which can ultimately result in human-animal conflict. The forest department has regulated the number of vehicles going inside the park. Drivers have been given training, cameras have been installed for monitoring, water holes have been constructed, and efforts have been taken to keep a healthy prey base.

Our vehicle now left the plain terrain and started ascending the slopes of the Aravalli. After a rough ride, we came to a place where a lot of vehicles were huddled together. We could immediately sense that there was some sighting. Our guide pointed towards the slope of the hill, and amidst the thick foliage, we could only discern the vague shape of the spotted cat. The jungle here was so dense that clear sighting was impossible. We waited for some time in the hope that there would be movement, but lady luck was not in our favour.

Historically, Jhalana had been a hunting ground of the royals, and after the last tiger was shot in 1948, leopards became the apex predator, and the area remained a forest land on the fringes of a city. It was in 2016 that the forest department initiated official safaris, and since then there has been a steady influx of tourists.

Our vehicle once again started moving; we descended the slopes and were in the grassland terrain. We now spotted a herd of deer blissfully playing in the grassland. From our guide we got to know that the deer population was declining and that was a matter of concern. The sun had now fully come up and had bathed the forest in its golden hue. The chirping of birds, the morning breeze, and the blossoming flowers seemed to present a vision of a surrealistic painter. We had just crossed a waterhole when we were alerted by the shrill call of the peacock. Immediately we returned to the waterhole, and to our astonishment we could now see the tawny beast drinking water with utmost alertness. The entire place was kind of animated by the appearance of the apex predator. Just in front of us, at a distance of about 50 metres, was Gazal, the female leopard, and on one side of the waterbody was Rana, the most photographed leopard of Jhalana. We have taken safaris in quite a number of forests in India, but this was the first time we witnessed a pair of predators drinking water so peacefully. As other vehicles started arriving, the pair got alerted and slowly disappeared into the midst of the jungle, leaving us awestruck with wonder and amazement.

Jhalana's story is a shining example of how collaboration between the government, locals, and tourists has transformed a nondescript forestland into a thriving and sought-after nature reserve.

Facts about Jhalana Leopard Reserve
Distance from Jaipur – 13 km

each window was green and held nature's won-

derful beauty. How Wordsworth would have

loved staying here! Room service was nice and

prompt. The aura, elegance, feel and presence

were telling of care and conscious effort of

Windamere, was right at the onset known as

Ada Villa in 1841 and was then, at that point in

time, an English boarding house. Mrs Gertrude

Bearpark had her suite there as she ran the

place with a steadfast determination for order

and assiduity. It became the Windamere Hotel

only in the year 1939. Thus, the place has their

separate houses, each apart, and yet together,

bonded by that colonial feel that exists every-

where as well as snatches of the local people's

touching feel...in the woven tea cosy, the tray-

cloth, the smiles and the photo hangings. And

indeed, I was very lucky to have Shiva Limbu,

a prized staff member of the place, approach

us so very courteously on one of our mornings

after breakfast, eager to know how we were

feeling about the place. It was he who, to my

good luck, agreed to show me around the place.

He took me to the very first house, Ada Villa,

as it was just happenstance that I had asked

him a few curious questions. Mr Limbu was so

pleased to take me up that small hillock and

show me around each room. Each door had a

special name (The Begum Aga Khan, Yvette

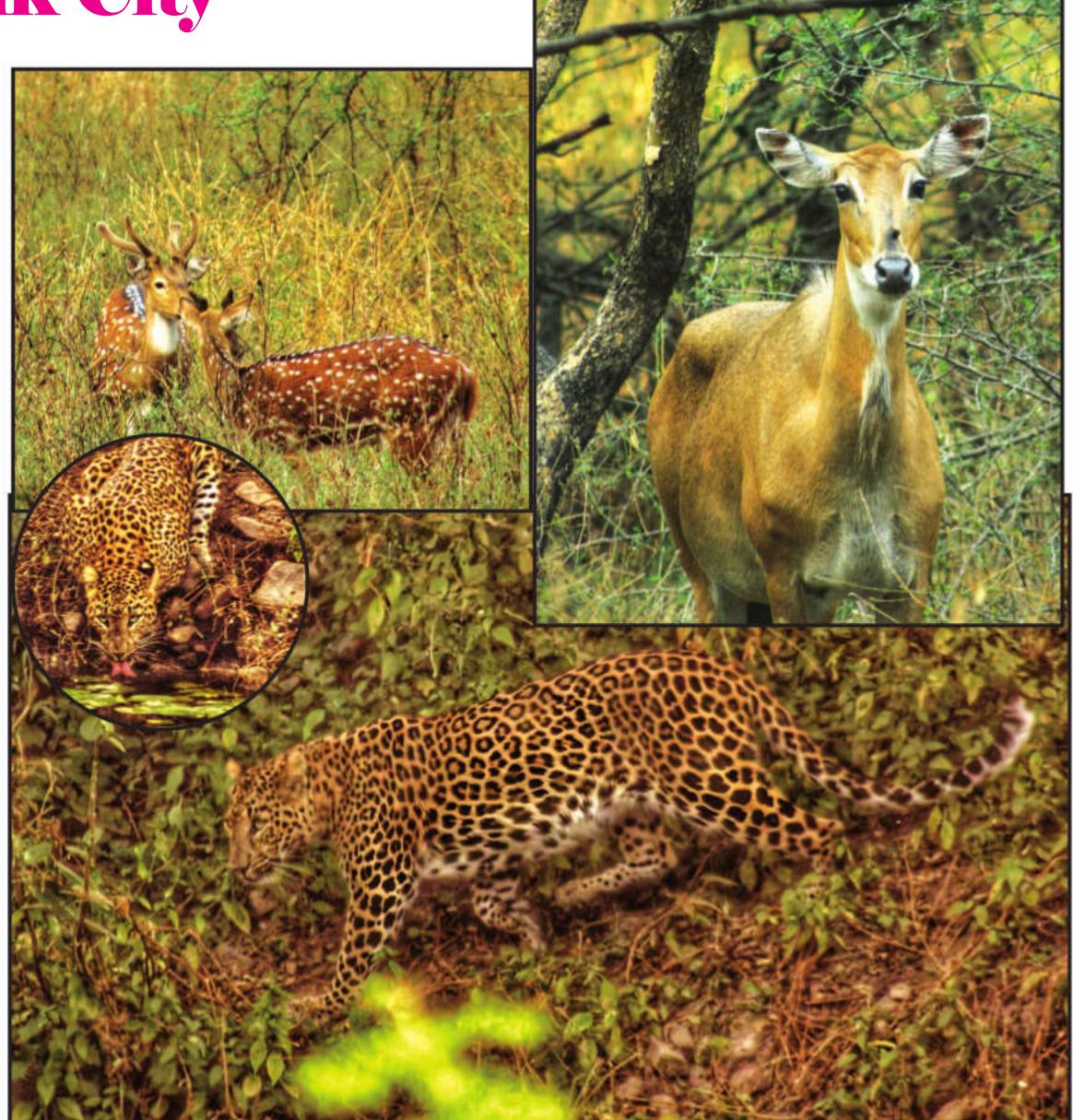
Labrousse, Princess of Sian, Chogyal of Sikkim,

Prince Peter of Greece and Denmark,

This place, which goes by the name of

Safari timings:

Morning: 6.30 a.m. to 9 a.m. Evening: 3.15 p.m. to 5.45 p.m.



## With a song in my heart

warmth.

(A week spent at Windamere Heritage Hotel in Darjeeling)

individual specifications

of the Railway Company

NAVAMALATI NEOG CHAKRABORTY

t times when life and work fog the brain and life seem to be a huge chore, a brief break works wonders. It was Lthus that the travel agents chalked out a Darjeeling trip for us and chose the Windamere Heritage Hotel in Darjeeling, famed for their 'colonial legacy', for us to nestle in for a week. Like other brief holidays indulged in earlier, I was prepared for a good time but was not really prepared to find this the best. In fact, the fact that due to low pressure, the weather had decided to pout and grouse for some two days showed us the other wondrous side of this place, so soothing, with memories of the British Raj legacy up there amidst the neighbourhood of the Himalayas. Seated before a glowing coal fire in the huge dining hall, with soft, gentle music pouring in from the more than a hundred-year-old piano from Daisy's Music Room, we felt cuddled with a gentle feel of warmth and a mellow feel of happiness. The Colonial Dining Hall (in fact, there are two big halls) is as legendary for the aura it holds. English food is as much here as is the service of the Indian dishes for the culinary tastes of the Orient. Everyone is special, and they are served likewise a full five-course meal: orthodox tea and wine, pink gins, spirits and the single malts. The way I always do, I had carried with me

my father's poetry collection, Musafirkhana, to translate if time and opportunity afforded. Such snatches of creativity have always helped me to advance with my work and not waste a minute. However, I found the staff at Windamere so warm and polite, hospitable with a brimful of smiles about them, and welcoming too. It was such that the Mirik trip, which we had to forego due to bad weather, didn't upset us in the least. The rooms here were big and airy, and the

look of the outside world from

Alexander David Neel, Viscount Knebworth 1931, etc.), which again merited looking into a past history. Years have passed since colonial times, and yet the place stands with its abundance of love and care...and romance! The touch of British times, with European furnishings, floral hangings, furniture, exclusive sanitary wares (dated), the texture of time, leters, pictures, wispy from time and a serene feel...holding on to the silence of the nineteenth century...that filled the yawning space of centuries and silence! It was here in this particular house that time slept in every nook and corner, preserving the heritage

and yet playing at hide and seek.

My eyes and mind remained riv-

eted back to that ancient period of time, not hopscotching back. There's the anteroom, a wondrous living room, a right royal lady's dressing room (not one which we nowadays share with the family), and a marvellous toilet space. One has to see it to believe it. With not a word, our colonial history awaits in these royal suites. Then there's Annandale House, Betty Tumilty, The Snuggery (the area bought from the Maharajah of Cooch Behar in 1950), Tinkerbell's Cottage, Miss Twentymen (that have rooms dwelling wondrously on the months of the year as they face the direction of the natural world that best brings out their

attributes). That was a real wonder, to have a

room to stay in that dwells on a particular

The Windamere Heritage Hotel up there in the Himalayas has the footprints of the times. The names on the doors again need one to know the story behind each separate tag. There was a huge room where the Governor of Bengal and other dignitaries stayed. The letters of famous personages are framed on the wall, pictures of the toy train, and yes, you will be so happy to know that Rabindranath Tagore, our genius of a poet and writer, too, has his letter framed and put up there on the wall, with so much love and reverence!

I will not dwell on the surrounding trees and plants and romantic bamboo groves that space the place with ivies and moon-drop creepers. There are rhododendrons, musandas and marigolds jostling all over the place. Let's pace ahead to that sip of connoisseurs delight with its unique flavour. Yeah, a cup of orange pekoe tea, Earl Grey or Darjeeling tea! We all know the history behind that cup of tea we have every morning and through the day. And yet the special feel is reserved for one who understands what flavour and the aroma of a cup of tea stand for. Tea plants that were the priority of the Chinese arrived at the portals of India and turned to a special cup, all appealing with every sip! It not only drains out the common man's fatigue and brings an energetic frame of mind, but here in Darjeeling the very service afforded by the staff brought a special appeal. And Assam too will be glad, for they have not left out their very own Maniram Dewan in that context. Mr Limbu sent up a special tray of tea as we sat watching not just a video or pics, but past times all recorded. Yes, it was all about Windamere, where people gathered about the ascent of Mount Everest; about the Baldwin Locomotive Works; the British Expedition to reach the highest mountain peak within 40 miles of Mount Everest; about the supply of materials for the expedition over the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway way back in time; about the locomotive built then under

to withstand the severest of strains...like tents, rucksacks, climbing boots, magazine rifles, lightweight tents, Barr and Stroud binoculars, climbing boots, etc. There were videos of Teddy Young, the British tea planter's contribution to the improvement of the local people; about tea gardens, and even about the unique ways of the Lama's lifestyle; about the monasteries, the advancement of dances, masks, and banners. Then there the Ghoom Monastery, the Jalapahar, where St Paul's School is. (My son had studied there.) There was Janey Anita Carter, and Captain Yongda (who ran an academy where the ambience of prayers, learning, and training in the arts was advanced); there was also Evelyn Shah. The efforts of the government to advance tourism were

also seen at that early date

from Toronto, Canada, as

a very necessary first step.

Darjeeling is a wonderful holiday point. Here, the local people are very nice and energetic. All around you, you will find the tall, stately pines; the sublime, nude beauty of a waterfall or a cataract; the riddle spelt out by the mists sitting aloft the treetops; and the delicate embrace of the moss! The Toy Train (DHR Club) is zooming past! It is a testament to Windamere's MD, who helped in the preservation of the little toy train from extinction. From the late 1990s, the little train is now on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

I am so full of the merit of my time spent at Windamere that the rhythm goes frog marching like an ancient poem within me. Sitting for breakfast, how I had looked up at those hills and the sky that came down to touch the Himalayas! There was a wondrous mystery all around: the Lama's chants, that Buddhist cave, and the boisterous schoolchildren with scrubbed, shining faces walking past. Yes... there's beauty, knowledge and listening...there are also the whispers of love for the majestic



ranges of the Himalayas, as they stand looking down at your face since time and eternity joined hands. Which face is wonderstruck? Visit the place to be moonstruck, and remember, you must have eyes to see!

The writer is an academic, poet, editor, translator, author and reviewer based in Kolkata



KOLKATA | 01 DECEMBER 2024

# A step towards empowering content creators

**ASHOK CHATTERJEE AND PRIYANJALI DAS** 

n an evening of learning, interacting and associating, Dish TV's OTT Platform Watcho launched the Watcho Storytellers Conclave, with an aim to empower filmmakers and content creators. The evening witnessed insightful masterclasses and interactive sessions which can be credited for creating and opening up new avenues for both emerging and established talents allowing them to share their unique narratives and freely showcase their artistic expressions.

Watcho held its inaugural launch of the conclave in Kolkata, featuring eminent filmmakers and creators such as Prosenjit Chatterjee, Aniruddha Roy Chowdhury, Prasun Chatterjee, and Indranil Roy Chowdhury, among others. This platform will foster an environment that encourages creativity and innovation helping emerging talents overcome traditional barriers to success and enhancing the overall entertainment landscape.

The organisers claimed the effort will revolutionise content creation with Watcho, Dish TV's popular OTT aggregation platform. This event is part of a series, with the next editions planned for Hyderabad and Mumbai.

Manoj Dobhal, CEO and executive director of Dish TV India, in a chat with The Statesman,

shared, "We have been known to take groundbreaking ideas. We have been creating and showing content for years. We want to change the perception now and tell the world that content creators can generate content and share with us. We want to come across as someone who can amplify content and enable the growth of good content."

The CEO said that India is buzzing with talent in the fields of art, literature, storytelling, short and long-form content. "Everyone is vying for a platform. This platform allows them to have complete freedom and ownership. To reach a larger audience, without compromising on their creativity or diluting their thought process, this kind of platform is unique," said Mr Dobhal.

The platform only insists upon consumable content, which is not vulgar or objectionable. We are not constraining your imagination. We will move to the south and west with Watcho. In Mumbai, we will have a confluence of national and regional content, informed Mr Dobhal.

With a vast audience combining 10 million+ households, this platform's diversely curated content will enhance audiences' visual experience with fresh, hand-picked programmes.

The launch of the visionary platform was

graced by eminent filmmakers, actors and creators with the first session hosting Prosenjit Chatterjee as a panelist engaging in a discourse on 'Masterclass on Crafting Local Stories for Global Audiences'. Prosenjit Chatterjee shared his insights, stating, "DishTV Watcho is a gamechanger for emerging filmmakers and creators. It levels the playing field, making it easier than ever to share your vision with the world."

The second session featured Indian film-makers Aniruddha Roy Chowdhury, a National Awardwinning director as well as Prasun Chatterjee, Filmfare award-winning director, Romi Maitei, National award-winning director, contributing their insights in the session 'Beyond Box Office and OTTs: Emerging Filmmakers Breaking Barriers'. While talking to The Statesman, Prasun Chatterjee shared, "The initiative that has been taken by Watcho is not just appreciative but an effective one. For films and emerging filmmakers for whom huge-scale film budgets or star casts are unfeasible, but come with exceptional storytelling and narrative content, this platform is an ideal one to showcase such talents and work."

This platform would not only initiate meaningful conversations within the film community but would help emerging filmmakers and creators better understand the journey towards traversing and overcoming the challenges associated, fostering an environment where creativity can easily thrive. Sharing the experience with The Statesman, Tanmoy Dey, an aspiring documentary filmmaker, whose work has travelled across 50+ film festivals, winning him several awards and accolades, states, "The masterclasses and sessions with such visionary personalities were extremely insightful, while the evening also paved a way for connecting and interacting with several other fellow emerging filmmakers, cre-







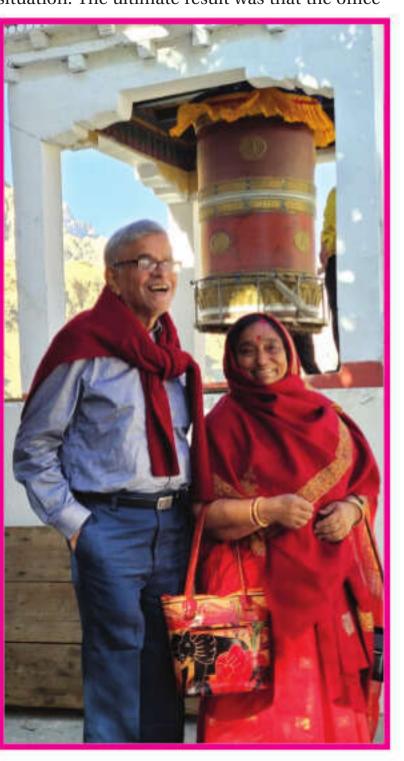
## The support she extended was definitely praiseworthy's

**DILIP KUMAR SENGUPTA** 

iven today's circumstances where often marriage appears to be fragile and fleeting, we are proud to have achieved nearly 40 years of togetherness. This December, we will touch another milestone.

I was born and brought up in Kolkata and got married to my beloved wife, in December 1984. Shikha Roy Choudhury, who subsequently became known as Shikha Sengupta, is whom I got married to. She belonged to my neighbouring area and had a background of a middle-class, educated, decent family. The renowned scientist, Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray, was one of her great-grandfathers.

I was working as an office accountant for the central government in West Bengal, while Shikha was working in the Canara Bank. During the early years of our life, not a single day passed without exchanging words on trifling matters, but it never soured our deeper relationship. Quarrels and love went on following each other. But the situation took a serious turn when our son was born in October 1986 as we both were service holders. The maternity leave as per the rule available proved inadequate to bring up the child. My wife once decided to resign from the job, but I told her to refrain from doing so. She then took a yearlong leave in phases to tackle the emergent situation. The ultimate result was that the office





management sent an adverse report, and although her service was not terminated, promotional benefits eluded her throughout her career despite having all the requisite qualifications.

Our physical health never troubled us until 2010, when I suffered a serious heart stroke, and from the local municipal hospital, I was shifted to an eminent research centre for treatment. I was diagnosed with severe blockages in two arteries and had to undergo stenosis. It took a week there, after which I was released. Although my entire expenses were financed by my office, everything required for my treatment was managed by my wife single-handedly. The support she extended was definitely praiseworthy. She even took a 15-day special leave to look after me at home.

Danger hardly comes alone. My wife also underwent a pacemaker transplant in 2014. Tensions added up from late 2023 to early 2024 when she developed a serious respiratory problem. Despite being transferred between hospitals, her condition deteriorated. Her problem remained totally unmitigated. One cardiologist diagnosed her as suffering from left ventricular ejection factor (LVEF). The pumping rate of blood dropped menacingly low, which caused severe breathing trouble. After planting a triple-chamber pacemaker, she was released from the hospital with prescribed medicinal support to continue. I suffered a lot, both physically and mentally, when shouldering the entire responsibility of her treatment in the twilight of my life. Our hearts suffered a setback, but our feelings for each other are a continuous process that will never be impeded. Love, trust and devotion are indeed essential for a happy married life.





If you have a story of success to share about your marriage, you may write to us at the email given in the **Comments Corner** mentioning your name and phone number, and we will contact you



### THE STATESMAN'S LEGACY OF HOSTING ICONIC **EVENTS**

The column "Desktop Doodles" dated 24 November presented an account of the "Best Face, Best Dress" award programme organised by The Statesman and the Dainik Statesman on 21 November in Kolkata. The contest launched 2 years ago is the newest addition to The Statesman's legacy of hosting events like the iconic Vintage Car Rally and the prestigious Rural Reporting Awards. While the classic car rally draws enthusiasts to its decades-old annual show of antique automobiles like Rolls Royce, Stude Baker and Morris Minor on Kolkata's streets, the annual rural reporting competition is a post-emergency initiative of 1979 to commemorate the courage of rural reporters who dared to publish truths of emergency excesses defying embargos.

The 'Best Face, Best Dress' contest is a deliberate and novel move by The Statesman Group to redefine beauty and elegance breaking the false dichotomy between intellect and beauty. The diversity of faces, young and old, traditional and contemporary and the union of mind, spirit and persona with suitable attire, the warmth of a smile, grace in demeanour and thoughtfulness in words attribute the true essence of beauty. An individual's intellect and appearance are not mutually exclusive but reflective of one another, as nicely narrated by Vineet Gupta, the director of The Statesman Group, who adjectified the convergence of these qualities with the term 'esoteric'. So the brain is aesthetically ordered and coherently associated with beauty.

> Sukhendu Bhattacharjee Sheoraphuli, 25 November

## **FEAST FOR THE EYES**

The uniqueness of The Statesman lies in conceiving some events that serve as a feast for the eyes of the public, and the latest event 'Best Face, Best Dress' is a case in point. The whole credit goes to the marketing team of your esteemed daily, who have offered us beauty with brains, meticulously discovered from among many contestants.

Arun Gupta Kolkata, 25 November

