**OPINION 6** 

**UPPER HOUSE: TO** 

BE, OR NOT TO BE?

**WORLD 8** 

MYANMAR ANTI-COUP PROTESTERS

KEEP PRESSURE ON JUNTA

DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANES RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA

\*Late City Vol. 17 Issue 44 \*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

AJAY BEGINS SHOOT FOR MAIDAAN 10 VIVACITY

## BHUBANESWAR, MONDAY FEBRUARY 15, 2021; PAGES 12 ₹4 the pionee

### **CAPSULE**

14 KILLED AS MINI BUS HITS LORRY IN KURNOOL Kurnool: Fourteen people, including eight women and a child, were killed and four others injured when a mini

Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh early on Sunday.

Karnal: Upping the ante against the Government, Bharatiya Kisan Union leader Rakesh Tikait on Sunday said the farmers won't let it sit in peace till their demands are met.

DELHI REPORTS 150 COVID CASES. 2 DEATHS New Delhi: Delhi recorded 150 fresh Covid-19 cases and two deaths on Sunday, even as the positivity rate stood at 0.26 per cent, authorities said here. No death related to the disease was recorded in the national capital on Saturday, the second time in February when the single-day fatality count was nil.

GUJ CM COLLAPSES ON STAGE AT POLL RALLY

Vadodara: Qujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani collapsed on stage on Sunday while addressing a rally for upcoming civic polls in Nizampura area of Vadodara, BJP leaders said. Rupani was given first aid on the stage. UP: DOCTOR'S HALF-BURNT BODY FOUND IN FOREST

Amethi: The half-burnt body of a 40-year-old doctor, who had gone missing on February 11, was found in a forest area here, police said on

# **Terror plot on Pulwama anniv foiled**

www.dailypioneer.com

## 6.5 kg IED recovered from arrested nursing student in Jammu

A sinister plot to bleed Jammu on the occasion of second anniversary of "ghast-ly" Pulwama terror attack was foiled by the alert jawans of Jammu & Kashmir Police after

in Pluwania teriori attack was foiled by the alert jawans of Jammu & Kashmir Police after they recovered 6.5 kg explosives from a Kashmir-based nursing college student near Jammu bus stand late on Saturday evening.

The IED was to be used for triggering a bast at any one of the major installations in Jammu, including its famous Raghunath Mandir, railway station, bus stand and jewellery market located in the walled city area of Lakhdatta Bazar. Nursing college student from Pulwama, currently studying in Chandigarh, was directed by the Pakistan-based handlers of Al-Badr terror outfurcted by the Pakistan-based handlers of Al-Badr terror outfurcted by the pakistan fornes. Meanwhile, Jak ToGP Dilbagh Singh also made a major revelation on Sunday that terrorist commanders in Kashmir are smuggling weapons from Bihar with the help of their over ground workers network to carry out operations in the region.

He confirmed that chief commander of Lashkar-e-



Jammu & Kashmir Police personnel display arms and ammunition reed from a bus stand in Jammu on Sunday

Mustafa, a front organisation of Jaish-e-Mohammad, had con-ducted a recce of the office of NSA Ajit Doval and had also dispatched the video footage to his handler Iliyas doctor of JeM to plan a major terror strike in New Delhi.

New Delhi.

Addressing a joint Press conference here in the district police lines in Jammu, Inspector General of Police, Jammu range Mukesh Singh said they have been on high alert for the last there days as there were inputs that on the anniversary of

Pulwama attack terrorist groups may carry out some major attack in Jammu city. He said based on these inputs checking points were established at critical points

were established at critical points and on Saturday night a person namely Suhail was found roaming suspiciously in the area.

"He was carrying a bag. On being questioned and checking of the bag around 6.5 kg IED was recovered which was not active. During questioning he said he was a student of nursing college and was studying in Chandigarh. He was tasked by

Al-Badr handlers in Pakistan to place this IED at places," he said. Singh said on further ques-tioning Suhail also revealed Singh said on further ques-tioning Suhail also revealed that after placing the IED he was supposed to take a flight to Srinagar and he was to be received by a high ranking over ground worker of Al-Bad, Athar Shakeel Khan at

Srinagar.
"After meeting Athar he

know-how of this planning. He has also been picked up from Chandigarh and has been identified as Qazi Waseem and there is another person Abid Nabi associated with this outfit. He has also been arrested, he said. The IG said by his arrest and by the recovery of this IED a major terror attack has been averted.

Addressing mediapersons on the occasion, Director General of Jammu & Kashmir Police Dilbag Singh said police carried out two major successful operations and arrested two chief commanders of The Resistance Front (TRF) and Lashkare Mustafa in the last one week from different areas of James and the TRF is being the control of the control of the property of the

one week from different areas of Jammu. He said the TRF is being run by Lashkar-e-Tayyeba while the terror outfit Lashkar-e-Mustafa is being run by Jaish-e-Mohammad from across the e-Mohammad from across the border to carry out terror activ-ities not only in Jammu & Kashmir but in some other parts of the country including Delhi. "Lashkar-e-Mustafa came into being recently in August last year," he said. Singh said the chief com-mander of Lashkar-e-Mustafa, Hidayatullah Malik, who was leading this outfit and was active from the last few months, was

from the last few months, was arrested by the police from Kunjwani area of Jammu. He was supposed to become an arrested by the police from active militant. This was his planning. Another person is said Hidayatullah was working chandigarh was also in the

trial in Senate fails by 57-43 later became active to carry out terror activities sponsored by Jaish-e-Mohammad. He said Malik was tasked to expand the terror base of the out-fit from the South Kashmir areas to Jammu region. Singh said, "Hidayatullah had set up a network of OGWs to ferry arms consignment arriving from

**Trump acquitted** as impeachment

The US Senate has acquitted a defiant Donald Trump in his second impeachment trial in just

impeachment trial in just over a year, a fetr the Democrats failed once again to muster enough votes to convict the former president on a charge of inciting the deadly insurrection at the Capitol on January 6.

The Senate voted 57-43 on Saturday to convict Trump on a single impeachment count—incitement of insurrection. But that majority of all 50 Democrats in the upper chamber of the US Congress, joined by seven Republicans, [ell 10 votes short of the 67 needed for a conviction, two-thirds of the 100-member Senate.

The Senate acoutited the

thirds of the 100-member Senate.

The Senate acquitted the 74-year-old Republican leader of incitting insurrection at the US Capitol last month after he urged hundreds of his supporters to confront lawmakers as they were certifying that he had lost the November 3 presidential election to Democrat loe Biden.

He was accused of inciting riots in the Capitol which left five people, including a police officer, dead. Trump is first president in US history to be impeached by the House of Representatives twice, and first to be tried for impeachment after leaving office.

## 12 bodies pulled out from U'khand site, toll rises to 50

PNS TAPOVAN/DEHRADUN

As massive operation inentsified to reach about 30 people trapped inside tunnel began after a flash flood in Chamoli district a week ago, rescue teams on Sunday recovered 12 more bodies, including the first ness to he rulled out ered 12 more bodies, incutaing the first ones to be pulled out from the sludge-choked Tapovan tunnel. Five bodies were recovered from the Tapovan power pro-ject tunnel, six from Raini unstream and one from the

from the Tapovan power pro-ject tunnel, six from Raini upstream and one from the riverbank in Rudraprayag, tak-ing the confirmed death toll in the Uttarakhand disaster to 50. Officials said 154 people still remain missing after the February 7 devastation, possi-byl triggered by an avalanche in the upper reaches of the Alaknanda river system. A surge of water in Dhauliganga and Rishiganga rivers had ripped through two hydel projects. Bodies of vic-tims were being found at dif-ferent locations by the river over the past week, but rescuers had so far failed to reach any-one—dead or alive—in the tunnel network at the National Thermal Power Corporation's



NDRF personnel carry the mortal remains of a flash flood victim near Raini village on Sunday

project. Chamoli District
Magistrate Swati S Bhadauria
and Superintendent of Police
Yashwant Singh Chauhan
rushed to the tunnel when the
first two bodies were brought
out in the early hours of
Sunday. Three more bodies
were recovered later from the
tunnel, which is packed with
debris brought by the flash
flood. Officials said a helicopter has been kept on standby at the Tapovan

### **Get FASTag by** midnight of Feb 16 or pay double: Govt

PNS NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways on Sunday announced that all lanes in the fee plazas on National Highways will be declared as "FASTag lane of the fee plaza" from midnight of February 15, 16 of 2021.

Union Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari made it clear that the deadline for the implementation of FASTag would not be extended further, and the vehicle owners should immediately adopt the e-payment facility. The Central Government had last extended the FASTag deadline for the vehicles from January 1, 2021, to February 15, 2021

"Therefore, as per NH Fee Rules 2008, any vehicle without valid, functional FASTag entering into the FASTag lane of the fee plazas hall pay a fee equivalent to two times of the fee applicable to that category," the Ministry said in a statement.

In the statement issued by MoRTH, the Ministry clarified that this has been done to further promote fee payment through digital mode, reduce waiting time and fuel consumption, and provide for a seamless passage through fee plazas.

### Omar claims father and he under house arrest again

PNS JAMMU

Pormer Jammu & Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, along with his father Dr Farooq Abdullah (sitting Parliamentarian from Srinagar), found themselves locked up inside their Gupkar road house early Sunday mornato de Company for the Chief C

locked up inside their Gupkar road house early Sunday morning after they noticed a police van stationed outside the front gate had blocked their way.

Angry over this development, Omar Abdullah immediately took to Twiter to vent his ire against the security establishment. In a series of twest Omar wrote, "This is the against the security establishment. In a series of twest Omar wrote, "This is the haya/new JRK' after Aug 2019. We get locked up in our homes with no explanation. It's bad enough they've locked my father (astiting MP) 8 me in our home, they've locked my sister & het kids in their home as well."

In response, a Twitter handle of Srinagar police said, "Today is the 2nd anniversary of the dreaded Lethpora Terror incident. There s Due to adverse inputs, movement of VIPs/Protected Persons has been discouraged and all concerned were informed in advance NOT to plan a tour

cerned were informed in advance NOT to plan a tour today". However, unrelenting Omar Abdullah hit back ques-tioning the police claim.

### **Congress-called Odisha Bandh todav** Protest against rising fuel prices

GOVT ORDERS CLOSURE OF SCHOOLS; PVT BUSES TO STAY OFF ROADS

ASKS BBSR EMPLOYEES TO REACH BY 9:30 AM

PNS BHUBANESWAR

In view of the Odisha Bandh Call given by the Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) on Monday (February 15), all schools across the State would remain closed on the day, informed School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash on Sunday. Sunday. The decision was taken to

on Sunday.

The decision was taken to ensure the safety of students. This apart, all schools would also remain closed on Saraswati Puja on Tuesday (February 16), the Minister said. Besides, all private buses would stay off roads from 6 am to 1 pm. Private Bus Owners' Association Treasurer Barada Acharya, said the services would resume after 1 pm. Notably, the bandh call has been given by OPCC against the rising prices of petrol, diesel and natural gas. The bandh would be observed for six hours from 7 am to 1

pm. Congress workers are likely to stage road blockade at various road junctions. However, OPCC president Niranjan Patnaik on Sunday said emergency services including ambulances, vehicles carrying milk, mediapersons and examinees of educational institutions and brides and grooms would be exempted from the purview of the bandh.

from the purview of the bandh.

All State Government employees working in Bhubaneswar have been advised by the Home Department to reach their respective offices by 9:30 am on February 15 in view of the bandh call.

bandh call.

"Officers and employees of
Lok Seva Bhawan, Kharavela
Bhawan, Rajiv Bhawan and
Heads of Department
Building, etc., may be advised
to reach office latest by 9.30
am to facilitate their smooth
entry," the Home Department
said in a notification.

The front gates of the Lok
Seva Bhawan would be closed
at 10.15 am and all the passage

Seva Bhawan would be closed at 10.15 am and all the passage would be regulated through the rear gate. The connecting gate between the Red Building and Main Lok Seva Bhawan building would remain open, it said

### Stuck in house in lockdown, couple ties knot on V-Day

PNS SUNDARGARH

Four days prior to the announcement of a nation-wide lockdown due to the Covid-19 outbreak last year, Namita Majhi of Mahuldhi village under Raigangpur block of Sundargarh district had come to visit her friend Babulal Majhis house at Panchara village under Kutra block in the district.

Little did she know that her visit would turn into a fairytale visit would turn into a fairytale

said, "Hidayatullah had set up a network of CoWs to ferry arms consignment arriving from across the border to Kashmir Valley. In addition, he was also in touch with terror associates in Bihar from where he was smug-gling pistols. So far seven pistols have reached Kashmir via Chapra in Bihar?"

"Hidayatullah had also set up a network of Kashmir i stu-dents studying in different cities across Punjab and was using them to ferry these con-signments to Kashmir, be said. Referring to the modus operandi of terror outfits using tunnels, the DCP said during his interrogation Malik had also revealed that one of the active terrorist Ashiq Nengroo, who used to ferry infiltrators from Jammu to Kashmir Valley via road link, himself used the

from Jammu to Kashmir Valley via road link, himself used the tunnel route to return to Pakistan along with his family. He said now Ashiq Nengroo is working as an active handler and organising logistics support for terrorists across Jammu & Kashmir. During 2017-18 Nengroo had managed to ferry around three dozen terrorists from the International Broder to Kashmir Valley.

Little did she know that her visit would turn into a fairytale and lead to marriage with Babulal on the Valentinie's Day this year.Both got to know each other when Namita came to Panchara for attending a wedding, two years ago. She and Babulal shared their contact numbers and were regularly in



Their relationship was also approved by their family members. The elated couple tied the nuptial knot on Sunday in the presence of their kin, well-wishers and friends.

### 73 new Covid cases in State

Total rises to 3,36,174

PNS BHUBANESWAR

The State registered 73 new Covid-19 positive cases in 19 districts and from the State pool, taking its total caseload to 3,36,174 on Sunday.

reported from quarantine centres while 29 were local

contact cases. Bargarh district recorded the day's highest 14 cases followed by Angul with eight and Sambalpur six. Besides, one case was report-ed from the State pool. Currently, the number of total active cases in the State stood at 760 and the cumu-lative samples tested were

lative samples tested were 80,23,978. However, 103 more patients recovered on the day taking the total recoveries to 3,33,554.

## PM launches job-creating projects in poll bound TN, Kerala

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's day out on Sunday to Tamil Nadu and Kerala saw the dedication and commissioning of a slew of development projects in both the poll-bound States which would result in creation of thousands of jobs and savings in foreign exchange.

of jobs and savings in con-exchange.

The Prime Minister also laid foundation stones for pro-jects meant for farming, devel-opment of innovation for youths, strengthening of skill of technically qualified youths and development of tourism projects.

projects.

One of the important func-tions presided over by the Prime Minister was the hand-ing over of Arjun Mk-1A the



The windset Neutral a Wood will mail reduce the Coopenant A annian water that pepuly CM of Panneerselvam during the inauguration of Chennai Metro Rail Phase-I extension, that will link North Chennai with the Airport and Central Railway Station in Chennai on Sunday PTI

state-of-the-art main battle tank to Indian Army. The high performance tank was devel-oped by the scientists of Chennai-based Combat

Vehicles Research and Development Establishment (CVRDE), a unit of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and

other allied institutions. General MM Naravane, Chief of Army Staff, received Arjun Arjun Mk-1A from Prime Minister Modi in an elegant function held at Chennai's Indoor Stadium.

Paying homages to the soldiers ambushed at Pulwama two years ago, the Prime Minister said, 'No Indian can forget this day. Two years ago, Pulwama attack happened. We pay homage to all the martyrs we lost in that attack. We are proud of our security forces. Their bravery will continue to inspire generations.

Their bravery will continue to inspire generations?

Quoting the verses of Mahakavi Subramaniya Bharathi in Tamil, Modi said, "Let us make weapons; also make paper; let us make factories; let us also make schools;

iet us make vehicles that can move and fly — also let us make ships that can shake the world." Inspired by this vision of Subramaniya Bharathi, India has undertaken a massive effort to become self-reliant in the defence sector. Later, Modi inaugurated the Chennai Metro Rail Phase-Levtancino project compoleted.

the Chennai Metro Rail Phase-I extension project completed at a cost of ₹3,770 crore which would ease traffic flow in the city. A long time dream of the farmers in the Cauvery Delta districts (the five districts on the banks of Cauvery river) got a boost as the Prime Minister laid the foundation stone for the extension, renovation and modernisation of the Grand Anicut Canal System to be completed at a cost of ₹2,640 crore. The works would

improve the water carrying capacity of the canals which distribute water meant for irri-gating the farm lands. The Prime Minister also launched the electrification of let us make vehicles that can

launched the electrincation of the railway track between Villupuram- Cuddalore-Mayiladuthurai-Thanjavur and Mayiladuthurai-Thiruvarur stretch which is expected the save Indian Railway Rs 14.61 lakh per day in fuel cost on the Chennai-Egmore Kanyakumari stretch

stretch.

It turned out to be a golden day for Kerala as the Prime Minister dedicated to the nation the Rs 6,000 crore propylene derivatives petro-chemical complex at Kochi Refinery which would save the country foreign exchange worth Rs 4,000 crore per

annum and generate thousands of job opportunities.
This is the first unit in the
country to produce acrylic acid
and acrylates hitherto imported at high costs. The acrylic
acid unit commissioned by the
Prime Minister is world's
largest single train unit.
Prime Minister is world is also
inaugurated the Ro-Ro vessels
at the historic Willingdon
Island which will reduce distance from 30 km by road to
3.5 km on waterways. This will
help us to bring down the
transportation, and congestion
on road in Kochi, 'said the
prime Minister. Sagarika, the
international cruise terminal,
built at a cost of Rs 25.72 crore
was thrown open to service by
the Prime Minister marking was thrown open to service by the Prime Minister marking

station in the global tourism map. The terminal would cater more than a lakh tourists per year with its air conditioned halls for lounging, ten counters for customs clearance and 48 counters for immigration formalities.

malities.
Vigyana Sagar, the marine engineering training institute, with a capacity to train 114 fresh engineering graduates in different aspects of naval and architect engineering is another of the innovative establishment dedicated to the nation by the Prime Minister on Sunday. ment dedicated to the nation by the Prime Minister on Sunday. The Prime Minister also laid the foundation stone for recon-structing the south Coal Berth at Kochi to facilitate the import of ammonia meant for FACT, the public sector fertiliser giant.

## **'Bylaws on 2 BBSR temples** to be withdrawn soon'

PNS BHUBANESWAR

In the wake of a huge uproar over the controversial bylaws prepared by the National Monuments Authority (NMA) for two ancient temples in Ekamra Kshetra here, the

Ekamra Kshetra here, the Central Government has reportedly ordered to with-draw the draft notification. "The bylaws on Brahmeswar and Ananta Basudeba temples will be withdrawn soon," informed Union Minister Pratap Chandra Sarangi on Sunday. Clarifying over NMA bylaws, he said it was a draft notification, not a final order. "Like the heritage bylaws were framed for Puri Shreemandir, the NMA prepared the draft the NMA prepared the draft notification for the two temples

in Bhubaneswar. We have discussed with Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Union Minister of State for Culture and Tourism Prahlad Singh Patel in this regard and an order has been given to the MAA for withdrawal of the draft, Sarangi told media. Opposing the bylaws, he said the draft notification should not have been circulated in this manner. A'draft notification was prepared seeking public opinion for enforcing construction restrictions around national monuments. Before preparing the draft, the NMA should have consulted others. However, the

sulted others. However, the Union Culture Minister has already ordered to withdraw the bylaws," he said.Sarangi's

statement came amid wide-scale protests by servitors of the Lingaraj Temple as well as res-idents of Ekamra Kshetra demanding immediate with-drawal of the heritage bylaws on the two temples. Besides, Chief Minister

Besides, Chief Minister
Naveen Patnaik also urged the
Centre for rollback of the
bylaws for two ancient shrines.
The Samajwadi Party on
Sunday held a demonstration
in front of the Raj Bhavan here

in front of the Raj Bhavan here led by its State president Rabi Behera and submitted a memorandum to Union Culture Minister Prahallad Singh Patel through the Governor demanding immediate withdrawal of the bylaws to respect the spiritual emotion of the people of Odisha.

### **Kotia border row**

## 'Take timely action before situation worsens

Dharmendra urges Odisha Government

PNS BHUBANESWAR

The border disputes with Andhra Pradesh and other States at many times are trig-gering serious problems. If the Odisha Government

If the Odisna Government doesn't take timely action, there are chances that the situations might worsen further, said Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Sunday.
Pradhan said Andhra



at polls by crossing the geo-graphical border in Koraput, Ganjam and Gajapati districts are a matter of great concern. "It is our responsibility to safeguard geographical boundaries of our State and connect the

brothers and sisters residing in the bordering areas with us," Pradhan said. The State Government which has taken legal recourse over the Kotia issue is expect-ed to take the battle to a logi-cal conclusion.

ed to take the battle to a logi-cal conclusion.

Besides, the local adminis-tration should work to strengthen the Government welfare schemes in the border region for all-round developregion for all-round develop-ment of the local people, he said. Pradhan called upon lead-ers of all political parties, social organisations and activists in Odisha to work collectively for safeguarding the borders with holistic development of the people residing in the the people residing in the regions.

### Fire breaks out at **Botanical Garden**



PNS BHUBANESWAR

Panic gripped visitors at the State Botanical Garden near the Nandankanan Zoological Park near here as a fire broke out there on Sunday.

However, no casualty or

major damage was reported in the fire mishap. On being

informed, Fire Service personnel rushed to the spot and initiated efforts to douse the flames.

Though the reason behind he incident was yet to be ascertained, it was suspected that the fire broke out during cooking by a group of piccooking by a group of pic nickers.

## Prafulla Samantara denounces Odisha Agri Ordinance

farmers' protest

PNS BRAHMAPUR

Describing re-promulgation of The Odisha Agricultural Produce and Livestock Marketing (Promotion and



Facilitation) Ordinance as deplorable, unwanted and betrayal to farmers who are on warpath along with farmers of rest of country against the warparn auong with farmers of rest of country against the three anti-farm laws, Lok Shakti Aviyan convenor Prafulla Samantara on Sunday warned Government to stop passing of Bill in Assembly;

otherwise, farmers of Odisha would resort to agitation. While speaking to Press here, Samantara pointed out that Odisha Government's ill inten-tion is clearly visible. "After Cabinet approval, the design is to bring a draft Bill in form of an ordinance for legislation in forthcoming Budget Session

of State Assembly," he said According to him, when farmers are prepared to die demanding withdrawal of three Central legislations and when at least 220 farmers have already died for cause, it is unfortunate Odisha Government it attempting to bring a Bill to introduce a pri-

vate mandi system and demolish Government-controlled Agriculture Produce Marketing Cooperatives (APMCs). "The State Govt has a moral and Constitutional responsibility to protect marginalised and exploited farmers through an effective and strong law to ensure that the MSP is guar-

anteed," Samantara argued. He added that at least the Odisha Government should follow the Kerala, Punjab and Rajasthan Governments to bring a legis lation to counter Central law to ensure MSP as the agriculture is under the State list. He also demanded a legislation to pro-tect rights of sharecroppers.

### State gets 11 more IAS officer posts

TATHYA BHUBANESWAR

the Unio With

With the Union Government allowing one more post in the Apex Scale, the Odisha Government would now have four such posts in the IAS Cadre.
While Chief Secretary, Member of Board of Revenue, Chief Administrator KBK posts were in the Apex Scale, now the post of Development Commissioner-cum-ACS were the Apex Scale, now the Development Commissioner-cum-ACS and Convergence Department has been allowed in this scale.
So, now, four more posts can be created by the State Government making it to eight in the Additional Chief Secretary rank, said an official. The Union Government has increased the cadre strength of

increased the cadre strength of Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers by allowing 11 more posts in a recent review of

cadre. The Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions has informed the State Government in this regard, official sources said. While the cadre strength for IAS officers in Odisha was 237, it has been increased to 248. Earlier, there were 11 posts in the Principal Secretary rank and now, it has been increased to 13.

The Commissioner-cum-based in the Commissioner-cum-based in Commissioner-cum-ba

### 'Need to digitise State Archives documents'

Principal Secretary, Odia Language, Literature and Culture, Bishunpada Sethi has stressed on strengthening Odisha State Archives and focusing on digitisation of paper records. Sethi was speaking at a ceremo-ny organised to celebrate the Archives Week. rincipal Secretary, Odia

He stressed that the crucial He stressed that the CTULGAT documents need to be preserved and the records in shape of vol-umes, loose sheets, files, old gazettes, maps and newspapers housed in the archives need to be

Sethi said the documents Sethi said the documents contain the most valuable information on the history of formation of Modern Odisha such as freedom struggle, creation of Odisha province, natural calamites, first settlement in the State and account of the social customs prevailing during earlier time such as Sati and human sac-

rifice. The records also include documents from the preIndependence era. Sethi harped on collection of records of Maratha rule, Zemindars, kings and rulers. Professor Ashok Kumar Patnaik made a query about collection of documents on Pt Jawaharlal Nehru's Odisha vist and Netaji Subhas Cahndra Bose's connect with Odisha. Director Culture Ranjan Kumar Das and State Archives Superintendent Sk Soleman Ali spoke among others.



#### Kiss Day' celebration 2 youths hurt in brawl

at city bar PNS RHIIBANESWAR

PNS BHUBANESWAR

Two youths sustained critical injuries after they were allegedly attacked by bouncers with sharp weapons at a bar in the Kharavel Nagar area in Bhubaneswar on Saturday night. Both injured youths had come to the bar to celebrate the 'Kiss Day' with their friends. Sources said bouncers of bar intervened when the group created nuisance after having drinks. The bouncers attacked the two youths with knives following an altercation with them. The youths sustained multiple injuries on necks, faces and other parts of their bodies. A case was registered at Kharavel Nagar police station in connection with incident and police started investigation and took CCTV footages of bar for scrutiny, sources said.

### Book review 'Bliss of Ignorance' a bold account of dozen plus issues

RHASKAR PARICHHA

Over the past few years, India has been experienc-ing widespread changes and developments in its society, polity and economy, resulting in a variety of social move-ments. Combined with this is

ments. Combined with rink is the information explosion and mass media outbursts going in landem. More than anyone else, sociologists have an exacting role in deciphering these movements, issues and the forces behind them. This book does precisely that.

"Bliss of Ignorance' by Dr Abash Parida (Vishwamukti "Bliss of Ignorance' by Dr Abash Parida (Vishwamukti Publication/Bhubaneswar) is a refreshingly bold account of a dozen plus issues that have inflamed Indian society in the past few months.

Parida is an Assistant Professor in Sociology and Development Studies, Sophitorium Group of Institutions- Khordha. He is also a blogger "Social Pixel" and a columnist for various newspapers. This is his first book and a fascinating one at that. In the 200-page hardback, the writer has expressed a yawning disquiet with the existing social instruction and its blorchy contours that in the 200-page hardback, the writer has expressed a yawning disquiet with the existing social instruction and its blorchy contours that in the 200-page hardback, the writer has expressed a yawning disquiet with the existing social instruction and its blorchy contours that in the 200-page hardback, the writer has expressed a kaleidoscopic analysis of certain social issues which are less discussed, misrepresented and less valued! Yet another goal of this book is to clear the dust' on several information that have been disseminated to us.

Focusing specifically on India, the book delves into the

concept and definition of several social movements from diverse perspectives and offers a critical insight into the fundamentals. He also picks up the ongoing debates and treatises on these movements. It covers the dialogue on a wide range of crusades varying in locus and the spatial spread-from gender to women's body. The latitude of the book is vast, and the author has engaged himself in some very controversal issues. From female genital mutation to witch hunting, from transgender identity to homosexuality, the treatment is absorbing. Some contents in the book are case studies, some are comments and some have a perceptive analysis. Having worked in various universities abroad and in India, Parida has been a keen observer of the events that have been unfold-

worked in various universities abroad and in India, Parida has been a keen observer of the events that have been unfolding across the countries. He substantiates his viewpoint with facts and figures.

In chapter on witch hunting, for example, Dr Parida has dealt with evil practice in all its ramifications. He calls witch hunting a 'culturally induced murder' and concludes that this practice is 'unethical, harmful and no modern society can afford it.' Terming it as a spontaneous expression of anger, hate and superiority complex, hate and superiority complex, he looks at 2015 Dadri mob lynching from sociological, belowing the safe shadown of the safe shadown o



and 2019, Muslims were wrongdoers in 12 % of cases and 2019, Muslims were wrongdoers in 12 % of cases while Hindus were the perpetrators in 58 % of cases. On the present-day information boom, he says, a huge pool of information makes us confused.

he says, a huge pool of information makes us confused. We are confused not because we don't have analytical skills but in actuality we have little time to analyze this information. Information is business. Misinformation is bomb. He tries to distinguish between a private world and an alternative form of social reality. The other interesting exploration in book are social media and its multidimensional roles, new role of market replacing civil society organizations, women and technology, Islamophobia and anti-Muslim sentiments. One significant departure in chapter-planning is discussion on how Prime Minister Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) has improved quality of life in Odisha.

#### 2nd anniv of Pulwama attack

### **Utkal varsity students** pay tributes to martyrs

On the 2nd anniversary of the Pulwama attack, a mega rally was organised by the stu-dents' association of the Utkal University here as a mark of respect to the CRPF personnel who were martyred in the inci-dent.

dent.

Carrying a 120-metre-long Carrying a 120-meta-150. Tricolour, hundreds of students marched from the Vani Vihar Square to Master Canteen Square recalling the supreme sac-



rifices of the paratroopers that continue to inspire spirit of patriotism among country-men.On occasion, several per-including retired sonalities, including retired Army personnel, who partici-pated in event, were felicitated by

Students' Association. Two CRPF personnel from Odisha, Manoj Behera of Ratanpur vil-lage in Cuttack district and Prasanna Sahu of Shikhar village Prasanna Sahu of Shikhar village in Jagatsinghpur district, were among the 40 CRPF martyrs.

### 'Sabuja Sakala' annual issue unveiled

The annual issue of the Forest Park Morning Walkers' Association's publication 'Sabuja Sakala' was unweiled at the Forest Park Premises here on Sunday.

The invited guests high lighted the benefits of a healthy morning walk.

The function, presided over by association president Durga Charan Das, was inaugurated by senior journalist Pradyuma Shatapathi and Prof Birendra Kumar Tripathi.



### CONTEMPORARIES

## Let's say a big 'no' to online vigilantism



S JYOTIRANJAN

The new programme to invite citizen volunteers for policing over online contents is one of the most unwise and regressive decisions taken

by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). This will not yield the desired results and shall lead to further con-fusion and overreach on mul-tiple aspects. To begin with, the MHA circular states that the scheme will start as a pilot pro-ject in Tripura and Jammu and Kashmir, wherein citizen vol-unteers will be asked to flag and report rape, terrorism. and report rape, terrorism, child sexual abuse, rape, "rad-icalisation" and "anti-national" activities. However, ironically, under

.. vever, ironically, under the prevalent laws, it is nowhere defined as to what constitutes an 'anti-national activity'. There are umpteen examples of as to how such ambiguous terms without any

cially when common people without knowledge in law or subject to any special order are empowered with such power to decide what can pass the muster to be paraded online and what fall within the reportable category.

Apart from that, authorising ordinary people, without any locus standi, to decide what qualifies for the reportable label or flag shall ultimately land us in a scenario of rampant misuse of the provisions of the scheme and harassment of common man by the common man. The other objectional aspect of the scheme is that there is no

statutory foundation for creating such a volunteer force and there is no plan as to how they will be judiciously utilised in the process and how will they be controlled.

To take the discussion further, even if we accept that the Ministry's mission is actually to counter cybercrimes, it is not understood as to why and how a fundamental state responsibility could be delegated to such citizen volunteers, who in all probability, shall be unregulated and unaccountable to any authority and cannot be completely relied upon regarding how judiciously they would screen adscriptings fellow citizens. This, therefore, may by all chances

turn into ammunitions in the hands of the vested interest groups to satiate their agenda of political or personal vendetta and may also deepen distrust and polarisation and loosen the social fabric.

Most importantly, the whole exercise of making citzens subject to such surveillance and scrutiny without the proper sanction of law and exercise of due process of law is an infringement of their fundamental rights to freedom of speech and expression and privacy.

privacy.

Moreover, the act of the MHA is a blatant violation of the law laid down by the Supreme Court of India regarding criminalising online

speech, as the court, had cau-tioned while striking down Section 66A of the Information Technology Act, 2000 that there needs to be a distinction between speech that is simply 'offensive or annoying' and between that which is capable of inciting a 'disruption of public order, or violence'. And under the MHA's scheme, it is not practicable to expect citi-

zen volunteers to exercise such prudence capable of drawing a distinction as discussed. This programme seems to be an extension of the idea of blanket gag on online criticism of the State Government in Bihar, the Uttarakhand police's drive to scrutinise social media for 'anti-national' posts. It is

not practicable to expect citizen volunteers to exercise such

true that social media today is the new platform to initiate and lead revolutions, political battles, campaigns, electoral contests and even the ongoing

contests and even the ongoing farmer protests.
Social media seems to be all pervading and deeply penetrating into the social psychology, but such unmindful outsourcing of the Government's authority to 'sernitinise social media posts' Governments authority to scrutinise social media posts' to the volunteer's corps from amongst the common man without due regulation mech-anism in place and where scrutiny by technical and legal experts is required is both dis-turbing and against rule of law. The move will only pave the way for raising a permanent

army of vigilantes with a right to infringe on the fundamen-tal right to freedom of speech and expression and privacy of the fellow citizens and shall only strengthen the growing public perception that this Government is in favour of persecuting citizens daring to disagree and dissent, which is unwelcome in a presumably-robust democracy like that of ours.

(The writer is a lawyer and public policy expert and a Distinguished Adjunct Professor of Law & Media Studies at School of Mass Communication, KIIT University: He can be reached at sjyotiranjan3@gmail.com.)

## **Jharaphula's father threatens immolation before Assembly**

### To protest tardy progress in probe by Jajpur police

While police are yet to reveal the details in connection W the details in connection with the sensational case of death of Rama Devi Women's University student Iharaphula Nayak, her father Ramakant Nayak has threatened to set himself on fire in front of the State Assembly here. Ramakant has blamed the lajpur police for their alleged tardy progress in the investigation into the case. Ramakant said the Twin City Commissionerate police managed to crack the case of recovery of a woman's headless

recovery of a woman's headless body in Bhubaneswar within seven days while the Jaipur police are yet to make any major headway in the Jharaphula death case despite the arrest of the accused, seizure recovery of a woman's headle the arrest of the accused, seizure of the scooter used for carrying

Awoman died after sus-taining severe burn injuries while saving her hus-band, who attempted self-

'Withdraw schools'

Parents' body demands

In spite of directions of State

NOC if fees not

exempted'

in Jharsuguda

PNS ... ... JHARSLIGUDA



dences.
Notably, on January 26, accused Rakesh Swain and Jharaphula had come to the OYO Shiv Sai Guest House at Dharma Vihar in Bhubaneswar and stayed in room no. 201 of the hotel. Rakesh, said to be the hotel. Rakesh, said to be Jharaphula's boyfriend, found

of January 27. He then called up his friend Shekhar. While Shekhar drove the scooter, Rakesh rode pillion making the unconscious girl sit between them. Rakesh initially intended to hospitalise Jharaphula at SCB to hospitalise Jharaphula at SCB Medical College Hospital in Cuttack. He realised midway

## Man gets wife killed by contract killers

6 held; extramarital affair motive behind crime

PNS III NAYAGARH

The Nayagarh police have cracked the murder case of a woman in the Sarankul area of the district with the arrest of four persons, including two contract killers, on Sunday.

The four accused, whose identification were yet to be revealed by police, were forwarded to court. The deceased's husband identified as Akhi Mohapatra and his paramour were arrested and forwarded to court

that Jharaphula had died. He and Shekhar went all the way to

Woman dies trying to save hubby from immolation

connection with case earlier... The number of arrests in the case has gone up to six. The woman identified as Sasmita was found hanging at her house at Suar Sahi under the she was alone and strangulat-ed her to death. Later, they hanged her body from the ceiling fan to make it appear like a suicide.. Although

house at Suar Sahi under the Sarankul police station in the district on January 29.
Akhi was allegedly having an extra marital affair with a woman of his locality due to which the relationship with his wife had soured, said Inspector-in-Charge (IIC) of Sarankul police station Bimal Mallick.

However, Akhi hatched a plan to eliminate Sasmita and

However, Akhi hatched a plan to eliminate Sasmita and hired two contract killers for Rs 2 lakh to kill her. On night of January 29, the two supari killers along with two of their associates reportedly

Jajpur by the two-wheeler and dumped the body on roadside at Mulapala under the Kuakhia police limits.

like a suicide.. Although police initially suspected it to be a suicide case, pos-mortem reports revealed that the woman was first strangled and then hanged.

Based on treports, police initiated an investigation and arrested Akhi, who was mastermind behind murder and his paramour few days back.

During interrogation, Akhi confessed to have hired contract killers to eliminate contract killers to eliminate

Sasmita. Police have also recovered Rs 20,000 from contract killers and a motorcycle used in the crime.

condition of the couple dete-

riorated, doctors referred them to the SCB Hospital. But Bandita succumbed on the way and Shailendra is still battling for life.

15 S'pur Circle

for higher edu

PNS SAMBAL PLIR

Jail inmates enrol

At OSOU study centre

As part of the reformatory Programme, and also to provide higher education to the immates of Sambalpur Circle Jail, the authorities of the Odisha State Open University (OSOU) have taken an innov-

Odisha State Open University (CSOU) have taken an innovative step.

They have opened a study centre inside the jail so that the inmates could get higher education who could not do it outside due to various reasons. Inaugurating study centre, Vice Chancellor of university Prof Arkakumar Dasmahapatra said, "This is a golden opportunity for those who are really interested in higher education. They can also rectify themselves through it since education shows path for a better life." The OSOU would provide every scope to immates to complete their education and fulfill their hunger for knowledge, VC added. The officials of jail are also, looking at necessity of

added. The officials of jail are also, looking at necessity of noble purpose, providing all coporations to OSOU author-ities. At first phase, 15 immates have enrolled for different courses including two in Post Graduate classes. "The jail immates apart, eight jail officials have also enrolled in different courses," informed senior superintendent of Circle Jail Biren Sahu.

Biren Sahu.



MIN JENA LAYS STONES FOR PALLAHARA PROJECTS

Pallahara: Panchayali Raj Minister Pratap Jena w as welcomed by Pallahara MLA Mukesh Pal at Khamar and Pallahara on Saturday when the former came on a visit. Jena laid foundation-stone of the Rs 5.28-crore Institutional Development Project to be funded by the World Bank. He also laid foundations for renovation of the Saratachandra Club and a medical costing Rs 1.76 crore and construction of a busstand market building. The local Sub-Collector, the BDO and other administrative officers and BJD block president Gangadhar Jit were present.

WRITER RAJGURU REMEMBERED AT P'KHEMUNDI



Paralakhemundi: The 156th birth anniversary of Shyamsundar Raiguru was celebrated here on Sunday which was organised by the Odisha Sahitya Akademi. The meeting was presided over by Odisha Sahitya Akademi Member Bichitrananda Bebarta in which Purnachandra Mahapatra was chief guest and Dr Brushaketu Dash chief speaker. The speakers lauded various literary achievements of alte Raiguru for which he had been honoured by Parala Maharaja Krushnachandra Gajapati.



ALMONDS IN DEMAND ON VALENTINE'S DAY

Bhubaneswar: Some people gifted almonds along with flower bouquets to friends, family members and loved ones on the Valentine's Day as almonds are good for health, with rich protein, fibre, vitamin, agnesium, protassium, iron and nutrients. Almonds help heaple grow health utg. In



GAJAPATI GIRL WINS STATE-LEVEL ESSAY COMPETITION



Paralakhemundi: Baisali Panigrahi, a student of Class-X of the MRGH School here stood second in a State-level essay competition organised by the All India Democratic Students' Organisation (DSO) on the topic 'role of students in society'. Odisha DSO leader Sibani Mishra gave away the prizes to the winners. MRGH School Headmaster and other teachers lauded the achievements of their students.

MAN HELD FOR BLACK-MARKETING OF RLY TICKETS

wan HELD FUH BLACK-MARKETING OF RLY TICKETS
Brahmapur. A team of the Railway Protection Force (RPF) led
by CK Tiwari conducted a raid at Mandir Street in Brahmapur
and arrested a person Laxmi Sadiei on the charges of availing
railway reservation tickets illegally and selling them on
commission basis. He was unauthorisedly using 10 10s.
During search, nine tickets of value of Rs 6.828 for different
destinations ware easier & commencer and control of the destinations were seized. A case was registered under Section 143 of the Railway Act and the accused was forwarded to

and nutrients. Almonds help people grow healthy due to lower cholesterol, etc. "These are ideal occasions to exchange pleasantries and express love, care and affection with each other," said Snigdha, a student of a city college.

In reply, the Collector said that an urgent meeting would be held to implement the order in the district. In the Press meet, Association's district convener Anjad Badshah, joint convenor Babuli Behera, State organising secretary Sibaram Nayak, Punyasloka Mohanty and Mahamaya Kar were pre-sent alongwith State president Bhatta. Attack on Gajapati scribes

In reply, the Collector said

### Case registered against Andhra Pradesh officials

PNS = PARALAKEMLINDI

A case was registered at the Garbandha police station in Gajapati district on Sunday against erring officials of Andhra Pradesh Government for their attack on journalists of Odisha.

A media team consisting of A media team consisting of TV crew from Gajapati district was collecting information from people of Gangabada panchayat bordering Andhra Pradesh regarding illegal entry of AP officials to conduct panchayat elections in the Odisha revenue jurisdiction.

### Resentment as paddy not procured from 200 farmers

In Iharsuguda

lage in Kendrapada district late on Saturday night.Police identified the deceased as Bandita Mallick while her husband Sailendra was admit-

Revised target demanded

PNS ... JHARSUGUDA

In spite of directions of State Government, the private schools were not exempting fees. In this regard the parents here demanded that the State Government withdraw the NOC given to the schools.

The District Parents NOC given to the schools. The District Parents Association in a Press meet at Iharsuguda on Sunday alleged that despite order of the Orissa HC, the private schools were not curtailing their fees as per rule. The association urged the Government to take action against the schools not abiding by the direction of the HC and the Government.

Meanwhile, president of Odisha Parents Association and the Government.

Meanwhile, president of Odisha Parents Association this residential office and requested to implement fee exemption order in Jharsuguda district.

In reply, the Collector said Resentment is brewing among farmers of harsuguda district for not being able to sell their paddy to the Government. Over 200 farmers have not been issued token to sell paddy; neither were the PACSs given revised target given a buge quantity of paddy left unsold.

The Government sources

target given a huge quantity of paddy left unsold.

The Government sources said that till February 11 last, the Government had given a target for collection of 7,43,187.8 quintals paddy. Out of this, 7,08,936.25 quintals paddy has already been purchased and rest 34,281.55 quintals could notbe collected from the target.

There is a necessity for revised target of another of 308,857 quintals paddy, sources added.

The district administration and the Civil Supply Department are keeping silence over revising the procurement Protesting the apathy of the administration, the BJP bad given a three-hour road blockade call on February 13 from 10 am. On the other hand, a farmers union of the district also is getting ready for launching agitation.

The Bhusan Power & Steel (BPSL) has initiated various developmental activities in Thelkoloi village like sentisation programme in the entire village, street light installation at Brahmana Pada and Gond Pada, sprinkling of water and cleaning in village and its connecting road.

road.

Besides construction of staff quarter in Thelkoloi High School has also been taken up. The company has installed a high mast light at Thelkoloi Chawk. Apart from that company is providing drinking water through water tanker in

Iumbo terror in Jharsuguda Four houses damaged;

ted to the SCB Medical College Hospital in Cuttack in a critical condition. Reports said a heated altercation ensued between Shailendra Mallik and his



PNS JHARSUGUDA

PMS male elephant from Sambalpur forests has created havoc in Chandnimal and Tareikela villages under Kolabira Range here. Besides eating vegetables, the elephant damaged four houses injuring a woman and her son.

On Thursday night, the elephant elephant entered the Chandnimal village and damaged house of one Suresh Khadia and Sankirtan Khadia eating their rice stock. When the family members woke up and raised alarm, the elephant fled. But, Suresh's wife Sumita and son Sakt got head injuries

and raised aiarm, the eignand field. But, Suresh's wife Sumita and son Sakti got head injuries when a wall collapsed on them while sleeping. Then, the elephant damaged the vegetables of Bikram Banchor and while trying to break open the door of the house, the villagers got alert and chased away the elephant by producing noise.

Being informed, forest officers reached the villager to trace the elephant. But, the elephant then had entered the Tareikela village and dragged a rice bag breaking wall of a house of Laxmi Rout. When the villagers created noise the elephant fled to Mahulmunda forest.

Thelkoloi and in peripheral areas throughout year. Recently, in a meeting between the com-pany officials and local villagers, latter raised demand for early

latter raised demand for early completion of water project of Lapanga which is constructed under CSR activities of compa-pers, Further, the villagers request-ed for local employment, week-lyvisit of medical staff to village, construction of toilets in local high school and technical train-ing to local youths in company.

### **Busy B'pur Army** canteen causes traffic woes

wife Bandita as the woman accused him of having an and sustained critical burn transmirtal affair. However, injuries in the process. The Shailendra lost his cool and souple was rescued by neighset himself on fire after pouring kerosene on him. Bandital Hospital. As the

Residents miffed PNS III BRAHMAPUR

The parking of a large num-ber of vehicles of the cus-tomers of Army canteen locat-ed in the busiest barracks road in Old Bus stand area of the city in Oid Bus stand area of the city has been creating a serious traf-fic problem between Gandhi Nagar square and Old bus stand. This is causing serious inconvenience not only to the local public, but also to the

local public, but also to the daily commuters.

Notably, customers who come to the busy Army store every day are mostly ex-Army personnel who park their vehicles in the 30 feet wide public road causing traffic jam. They stand up in large queues stretching up to the public road of barracks street to get their desired goods from the military canteen causing inconvenience to the local public and school going children.

Repeated complaints of local public submitted to the authorities have gone unheeded so far. The local residents, therefore, have demanded that the administration direct them to park their vehicles inside the premises of the AD Center and reach with his read-

park their vehicles inside the premises of the AD Center and not on the public road.

Besides, the center should keep its main entry gate open from the south side of their premises which is a non-residential area, they demanded. This will help to decongest Barracks Road and provide relief to the locals, they added. According to the residents of the New Barracks Street, the local authorities are reportedly misleading by sending site photographs on the off-days of the AD center. The locals demanded that the Brahmapur Traffic Police immediately conduct a study on the existing traffic-flow pattern and chaotic parking practice and take necessary action.



### Puspalata murder

### Rational, scientific edu can stop gruesome crime: FPI

The Freethought Party of India (FPI) has condemned the barbaric murder of Puspalata Roul (28), a widow having a female child who had done AMOFOI wedding on December 24 last. She had married her lover Pritiranjan Pati (25), a Diploma holder in Electrical Engineering, by exchange of garlands. The couple could not live well because of Puspalata's unhappy past. Her past love affairs with driver Sanjay Das became the problem and he wanted to take revenge on her.
Puspalata did not like to ditch her husband Pritiranjan.

That was precisely the reason for which she was murdered in the cruelest way on February 3, said a FPI release.

ease. the fact of mursuppress the fact of mur-der the killer beheaded Puspalata and threw her beheaded body in Andharua area and her head at distance of 2 km. The Commissionrate police did a splendid job in catching the killer and his helper within a weeks' time. As long as there is no provision for quality English medium edu-cation for each and every child in India and as long as there is no standard law (Uniform Civil no standard law (Uniform Civil Code) to facilitate love narriage throughout India and no adop-tion of one-child family to

bring down the population of India, there would be lack of education, extreme poverty, and exploitation leading to such crime, opined FPI gener-al secretary B Ramchandra CST Voltaire. A widowed



In Sambalpur

### Family tonsures daughter-in-law for her argument

PNS III SAMBALPUR

What can be more barbaric than to tonsure a married woman in the present age when many procedures, including legal actions, are available. The matter finally reached police who took appropriate action Babuli Chhatria, a resident of Paruphbadi, village under of Paruphbadi, village under

Babuli Čhhatria, a resident of Paruabhadi village under Kuchinda sub-division married Bhumanti eight years back and they have a son and a daughter. Babuli works in a factory at Rengali. In his absence, his wife and his two sisters had hot exchanges of words over sharing of mustard produced from

their land. However, Bhumanti's family members and her two married Nanandas (sisters-in-law) treated her argument as misbehaviour to all of them. They informed matter to their relatives and seniors of beir caste. In a meeting of these people, it was decided that Bhumanti would be tonsured, and further, she would pay Rs 6,000 as fine for her misbehaviour.

6,000 as included in the following stability, who was present in meeting, requested all to increase fine amount and changedecision of tonsuring her as it is a gross insult to a woman. But seniors didn't agree.

## Gender equality webinar held by CUO

Bhusan undertakes

host of CSR works

PNS III KORAPIIT

The Internal Complaints
Committee of the Central
University of Odisha organised
a webinar titled "Gender
Mainstreaming in Workplace
Vigilance and Initiatives."
Director, School of Gender
and Development Studies,
IGNOU, Prof Nilima Srivastava
delivered the keynote address,
while chairperson, Mahila
Adhikar Abhiyan Namrata

of Hyderabad and Dr Saroiin

of Hyderabad and Dr Sarojini Sarangi, Obstetrician and Gynaecologist, Sarojini Hospital, Cuttack spoke on the occasion.

CUO VC Prof Ramabrahmam delivered the inaugural address. Assistant Professor, DBCNR and Presiding Officer, ICC Dr. Kakoli Banerjee welcomed all the dignitaries and explained the scope and significance of

ICC and gender studies. The Vice-Chancellor outlined the ICC and gender studies. In Vice-Chancellor outlined the importance of gender equality. Prof Srivastava delivered the keynote address titled 'Women at Workplace Conceptualizing Gender Mainstreaming as a Strategy'. She emphasized on issues of work valuation done by men and women in society and psychological institutional and situational barriers for women in society. Chaddha presented papers on Struggling for Survival in Unorganized Sector'. Prof Sheela

Suryanarayanan, Head, Centre for Women's Studies, University



## 6th death

Yet another elephant dies at Karlapat

reportedly died due to septicemia. It was suspected by Forest Department officials that haemorrhagic septicemia might be the reason behind the death of all elephants.

The deaths have been reported from near the Chusurigudi drain in the sanctuary. The Forest Department has sent an expert team to the protected area to find out the reason behind the deaths.

The team, headed by Prof. Viranjan Sahu from the Centre for Wildlife Health of



Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT) inspected the area on Saturday. "All the symptoms indicate that the elephants died from bacterial disease haemorrhage septicaemia," informed Sahu. Following the incident, the wildlife wing has

started immunisation of cattle in several villages situated closer to the two forest beats, where the elephants' deaths have been reported.

Besides, various water bodies have been disinfected with bleaching powders. Kalahandi (South Division) Divisional Forest Officer Ashok Kumar said that the vil-lagers have been advised not to allow their cattle inside the for-est as it is suspected that the water bodies could be conta-minated.

## **Modi dedicates Arjun** battle tank to Army

manutactured Arjun MK-1A."

"It also uses indigenous
ammunition. Tamil Nadu is
already the leading auto manufacturing hub of India. Now
I see Tamil Nadu evolving as a
tank manufacturing hub of
India." he said.

India," he said.

"A tank made in Tamil
Nadu will be used in our northern border to keep our nation
safe. This showcases India's
united spirit—Bharat's ekta
darshan," Modi added.

darshan," Modi added.
Highlighting the capabilities of the upgraded version of the Arjun MBT, officials said Arjun MK-1 Alpha is a "contemporary tank in the world with battle winning efficacy."
It is "infused" with 71 new features and would ensure fetortless mobility in all terrains, besides precise target engagement during day and night.
The production order

The production order



The Army on Sunday added muscle to its firepower capabilities when Prime Minister Narendra Modi handed over to the force the indigenously designed and manufactured Arjun Main Battle Tank (MBT) MK-1A in Chennai.

Presiding over the ceremony, Modi said the tank represented the united Indian
spirit as the weapon system
manufactured in the south will
guard the frontiers in the north.
The Arjun tank manufacturing factors at Avail, in

Chennai will shortly get an order for 118 such front-line fighting machines and the total contract is worth over ₹9,000

It is an improved and It is an improved and upgraded version of the original Arjun-MK 1 MBT which was also indigenously designed and manufactured within the country. The new tanks has incorporated more than 50 upgrades and 71 new features. The Army will get an edge over its enemies as the new tank has accurate firing capabilities during day and night thereby providing the army to launch counter-offensive with lethal effect, officials said here. At the handing over function, the Prime Minister also accepted a salute by the state-of-the-art tank, indigenously designed, developed, and man-

The production order opens up a large avenue in defence manufacturing for over 200 Indian companies and scores of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) with employment opportunities to 8,000 people, they said. Quoting from revolutionary Tamil poet and freedom fighter Mahakavi Subramanya Bharathi, Modi said inspired by the former's vision, "India has taken a massive effort to become self-reliant in the defence sector." defence sector."

Of the two defence corridors in the country, the one in Tamil Nadu has already received investment commitments of over ₹8,100 crore, Modi said.

"We will continue working." designed, developed, and man-ufactured by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)'s Combat Vehicles Research and Combat Vehicles Research and D e v e l o p m e n t Establishment(CVRDE) in Chennai. Modi later handed over a replica model of the tank to Army Chief General M M Modi said.
"We will continue working
to make our armed forces one
of the most modern forces in
the world. At the same time the
focus on making India
Atmanirbhar in the defence
sector moves with full speed,"
he said.

avane. "Today I am proud to ded-

The Indian Consulate in Dubai has issued an advisory asking Indian expatriates based there to avoid visiting the mission for consular services and instead use online means like a WhatsApp number, email or a helpline number to check the spread of Covid-19 A section of the 2.6

means like a WhatsApp number, email or a helpline number to check the spread of Covid-19. A section of the 2.6 million Indians, many of them also engaged in blue collar jobs, based there are, however, concerned over the move as a visit to the mission is necessitated only when the online means are exhausted.

"Members of the Indian community who wish to visit the Consulate for any consular services are advised to avoid such visits unless absolutely necessary. They should, instead, make use of the various electronic platforms offered by the Consulate without having to physically visit the office, the mission said in the advisory issued on Thursday on Twitter.

Being the largest expatriate community, it is the

Twitter.

It is the term of th

advisory asking expatriates

not to visit Dubai mission

Later, in a tweet, he said it was "a special day in our journey to become Aatmanibhar in the defence sector," referring to Arjun Main Battle Tank (MK-1A). Fifteen cacdemic institutions, eight labs and several MSMEs were also involved in the Arjun MK 1A.

The new tanks with its first own the Arjun MK 1A.

The new tanks with its first own the Arjun MK 1A.

The new tanks with its first own the Arjun MK 1A.

The new tanks with its first own of the most accurate tank gun in the world. This majes tic tank has indigenous Kanchan Armour strapped with DRDO developed Reactive Armour Panels.

After using in different conditions, the Army had recommended a number of improvements to MBT Arjun MK 1A. With these changes, this upgraded wersion has successfully undergone extensive trials by the Indian Army. The precise target tracking of the tank ensures accurate engagement during day and night in both static and dynamic conditions.

The country decided to

tions.

The country decided to build its own main battle tank and a project was initiated by the DRDO in the 1970s at the Combat Vehicles Research and

the DŘDÓ in the 1970s at the Combat Vehicles Research and Development Establishment (CVRDE).

The scientists were given the objective to design and build a state-of-the-art tank with superior fire power, high mobility, and excellent protection. The production of the Arjun tanks started in 1996 at the Indian Ordnance Factory's production facility in Avadi.

At present, the Army has more than 100 Arjun MK-I tanks in its armour and is like to induct 20 odd more tanks shortly. The first batch of 16 Arjun tanks were inducted into active service in 2004.

The old and new version of the MBT has a highly sophistical and the company of the service of t

The old and new version of the MBT has a highly sophisticated computer-controlled integrated fire control system with stabilised sighting that works in all lighting conditions. The secondary weapons include a coaxial 7.62-mm machine gun for anti-personnel and a 12.7-mm machine gun for anti-aircraft and ground targets.

Officials also said the new version launched by the Prime Minister gas more than 55 per cent indigenous content as com-

Disengagement in Pangong Tso Lake, Galwan areas surrender of India's rights, claims Antony



PNS III NEW DEI HI

Monthe Modi Governmen Monthe Modi Government to come clean on the Indo-china skirmishes in recent months, former defence min-ister A K Antony on Sunday alleged that disengagement in both the Galwan Valley and Pangong Tso Lake areas and the creation of a buffer zone was a "surrender" of India's rights.

rights.

Antony said he was sad that the Narendra Modi Government was not giving proper priority to national security at a time when China was getting belligerent and Pakistan continued to promote

Addressing a Press con-Addressing a Press con-ference, the senior Congress leader said that at a time when India was facing multi-ple challenges at the border and was facing a two-front war-like situation, the increase in defence budget this year is meagre and insignificant and was a "betrayal" of the coun-try

was a "betrayal" of the coun-try.

The Government had on Friday stated that India has not "conceded" any territory following the disengagement agreement with China in

agreement with China in Pangong lake areas in eastern Ladakh.

Antony said disengage-ment was good as it reduced tension but it should not be done at the cost of national

done at the cost of national security.

"Both disengagements in Galwan and Pangong Tso are a surrender," he alleged, adding that it amounted to surrendering of areas tradi-tionally controlled by India. We are surrendering our rights," he alleged, noting that Galwan Valley as Indian ter-ritory was never a disputed land even in 1962.

Galwan Valley as Indian ter-ritory was never a disputed land even in 1962.

"Disengagement and buffer zone means surrender of our land at the moment," he alleged, while warning that the Government is not under-standing the importance of this disengagement and cre-ation of the buffer zone. He warned that China can play mischief anytime by

When the whole country is facing serious challenges from both China and Pakistan, the senior Congress leader said the Armed forces are demanding support and substantial

helping Pakistan in Siachen.
"We want to know from
this Government when there
will be status quo ante as on
mid-April 2020 in the entire
India-China border," he said,
asking what was the government's plan in this regard.
He also said that the government must take the country and the people into confidence on restoration of status
quo ante at the borders.
He said the Government
always consulted leaders of all
political parties before taking
such a decision and must
keep national security in
mind.

Antony alleged that the

increase in the

defence Budget

sucn a decision and must keep national security in mind.

Antony alleged that the government did not increased the defence budget to "appease" China and to give a message that it did not want to confront them.

"To appease China, the government sent a message that to defence budget that we do not want to confront them.

"To appease China, the government sent a message budget that we do not want to confront year.

"To appease China, the government on China, we have a confront year.

"A papease to disengagement on China's terms," he alleged. The sent of the confront year to the china and pakistan, the senior Congress leader said the armed forces are demanding support and substantial increase in the defence budget.

"But compared to last year's revised defence budget, this budget has made a meagre and insufficient increase of only 1.48 per cent. It is a betrayal of the country. The government has let down our armed forces. The Government is not paying proper attention of national

## Parl panel asks Govt to examine delay in road construction under Bharatmala ph-1

PMS ■ NEW DELHI

Of the total 29,337 km length of projects, only 8,632 kms length of projects has been awarded and 1,040 kms length of projects have been appraised so far under the Bharatmala Project phase-thich is targeted to be completed by 2021-22. The Detailed Project Report for a length of 19,665 kms is still under preparation stage when only two years are left as per the schedule fixed for completion of Phase-I. Taking note of slow pace of work, a parliamentary committee on transport, tourism and culture asked the Government to examine the Government to examine the causes for delay in construction of Roads under Phase-I and take requisite remedial mea-sures expeditiously so as to remove the stumbling blocks in order to achieve the targets fixed

order to achieve the targets fixed.
"In the course of examination, it was seen that there were about 375 projects of National Highways including Bharatmala, pending due to reasons like Land Acquisition, forest clearance, utility shifting, and contractor issue and forest clearance, utilly shift-ing, and contractor issue and so on in various States. These included projects across the country namely in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himacha Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal. These projects have surpassed their date of completion and the



Government apparently has not reviewed them," the parliamentary committee said in its report, which tabled in the

liamentary committee said in tis report, which tabled in the Parliament on Tuesday.

The Committee noted with concern that some NH projects are delayed due to multiple reasons which interalia include poor performance of contractor, utility shifting, delay in environment/forest clearance, land acquisition, cash flow problem of the concessionaire/contractor and so no. Delay in the projects has resulted in increase in the verall cost of the projects.

The Committee are constrained to note that there is time and cost over-run in many projects of the Government. "Amongst them, for example, is the Char-Dham Mahamarg Vikas Priyojana - Improvement of NH Connectivity to Char-Dham (Medarnath, Badrinath, Yamunotri& Gangott') in the State of Ilieraseband four.

State of Uttarakhand, foun-dation stone of which was leid dation stone of which was laid in December, 2016 by the Hon'ble Prime Minister. It was initially targeted for com-

pletion by March 2020, but the it has been delayed due to lit it has been delayed due to lit-igation relating to forest and environment clearance in var-ious 63 courts and the exact date of completion of the pro-gramme depends on the final outcome of the case," the report said.

outcome of the case," the report said.

The Committee also recommended that 4-laning of Pune-Nashik (NH-60), Pune-Tamhini-Mangaon-Diveagar (NH-756), Hadapsar-Saswad-Igjuri-Lonand/Phaltan-Mohol (NH-965), Patas-Baramati-Akluj-Tondale (NH-65G) and 6-laning of Pune-Solapur (NH-65), Kolhapur to Vaibhavwadi-Vijaydurg under bharatmala and Alibaug to Sindhudurg coastal National Highway in the State of Maharashtra, extension of Patna-Areraj road to Bettiah, Ramgarhwa and Raxsul in the State of Bihar, road con-Patna-Atera, road:
Ramgarhwa and Raxaul in
the State of Bihar, road connecting Anmod at the border
of Goa to Londa, widening of
Sundar Bani-Seri-Jangar-Lam
Road in Rajouri district in
Jammu be taken up at the ear-

## tributes to Pulwama martyrs on 2nd anniv



and destroying their infra-structure.

On its part, the CRPF
tweeted "We did not forget, we
did not forgive". The CRPF
renewed its resolve to end tertor saying they have not forgiven or forgotten the gruesome attack.

"Be brave enough to die as
martyr", said BJP MP and former test player Gautam
Gambhir and asked people to
be "brave enough to die the
death of a martyr" as he paid
his tributes. Delhi Chief
Minister Arvind Kejriwal
offered "heartfelt homage" to
martyrs, while Union Minister
Smriti Irani said: "Salute to
brave sons of mother India". image on Instagram and cap-tioned "Jai Hind". Actor Kartik

### India recording steady decline in Covid deaths

The Centre on Sunday said I that India has been recording a steady decline in the number of daily new deaths since October 1, 2020, while the national recovery rate is amongst the highest in the world. Now the 17th most-affected country by active cases, fourth by fatality, and second by total and recovered cases, India has added 78,577 cases in the past 7 days.

"Since 1st October 2020, the nation has seen an unabated decline in Case Fatality Rate today stands below 1.5 (1.43%). With only 92 people succumbing to the deadly coronavirus disease, India's Case Fatality Rate today stands below 1.5 (1.43%). With only 92 people succumbing to the deadly coronavirus disease, India's Case Fatality Rate is one of the low-cut of the control of the low-cut of

lakhs.

A total 82,63,858 beneficiaries have been vaccinated through 1,72,852 sessions, as per the provisional report till 8 am on Sunday. These include 59,84,018 HCWs (2nd dose) and 22,56,212 FLWs (1st dose). The 2nd dose of Covid-19 vaccination started on Saturday for those beneficiaries who have completed 28 days after receipt those beneficiaries who have completed 28 days after receipt of the 1st dose. As on Day-29 of the vaccination drive (February 13), a total of 2,96,211 beneficiaries received vaccination. Out of which, 2,72,583 beneficiaries were vaccinated across 8,071 sessions for 1st dose and 23,628 HCWs received 2nd dose of vaccine. A total 82,63,858 benefi-

cinated across 8,0/1 sessions for 1st dose and 23,628 HCWs received 2nd dose of vaccine. "The country is witnessing a progressive increase in the vaccination day by day," the ministry said adding 68.55 per cent of total vaccinated beneficiaries are from 10 states. It said 81.58 per cent of the new recovered cases are observed to be concentrated in 6 States. Kerala has reported the maximum number of single day recoveries with 5,835 newly recovered cases. A total of 1,773 people recovered in Maharashtra in a span of 24 hours followed by 482 in Tamil Nadu.

#### TACKLING COVID SPREAD IMA seeks withdrawal of move letting Indian Consulate issues Ayurveda practitioners to perform surgery

PNS III NEW DELHI

The Indian Medical Association (IMA) on Association (IMA) on Sunday announced a mass petition movement from February 15 to March 31 to protest against a Central Council of Indian Medicine notification that authorises post-graduate practitioners in specified streams of ayurveda to perform general surgical procedures. The IMA said that this notification will lead to "mixopathy" and demanded its immediate withdrawal. The IMA had held a pan-India relay hunger strike from February 1-14 on the issue.

The "impractical, unscientific and unethical notification" should be immediately withdrawn, it said in a stateas Wearing face masks at all times, maintaining social distancing and avoid public gathersiad.

Many of the expatriates there will now be left with no grievance redressal mechanisms are not able to resolve their issues, a PIO settled in UAE said, adding why would a person wist the consulate if all the issues are settled online. Another expat who did not wish to be identified said it is illogical to restrict the

ment, adding that besides the

petition movement, it will also spread awareness among the people on the notification.

The IMA also said that it will submit a list of 1,000 modern medicine doctors willing to serve in remote areas of the country to counter the false claim of lack of doctors.

the false claim of fack of doctors.

"All IMA members, all modern medicine students, sall modern medicine students, all women doctors across the country will educate people about this retrograde and unscientific mixing of different systems of healthcard. All modern medicine hospitals will promote the importance of scientific ethical surgical expertise," the doctors' body said.

The IMA also announces non-cooperation movement henceforth in which modern

"henceforth in which modern medicines surgeons and aneshesiologists shall not cooperate with AYUSH persons training and performing surgery", it said.

The doctors' body has been opposing the notification by Central Council of Indian Medicine, a statutory body under the Ministry of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unam, Siddha and Homoeopathy).

The notification authorises post-graduate practitioners

es post-graduate practitioners in specified streams of Ayurveda to be trained to per-form surgical procedures such as excisions of benign tumours, amputation of gangrene, nasal and cataract surgeries.

## **AIMPLB** moves **SC** opposing plea seeking uniform grounds of maintenance, alimony

PTI ■ NEW DEI HI

Another expa who did not wish to be identified said it is illogical to restrict the Indians from visiting the consulate in the name of preventing Covid-19. There are always means to regulate the flow of visitors to a place and instead a home service should be launched to cater to such Indians who are under any kind of distress or an emergency due to lack of consular access, he further said, adding the rich and mighty cannot have exclusive access to the consulate.

consulate.

The Indian mission houses a help centre for distressed Indians -Pravasi Bharatiya Sahayata Kendra (PBSK), that runs a 24x7 toll free helpline number 800 46342 of PBSK

number 800 46342 of PBSK there are cases wherein physical interaction is also required to resolve the issues, the expats said. Other online options to connect to the mission are send-ing mean substantial of the post-option of the sending of the messages on a WhatsApp num-ber +971-54-3090571 besides using the PBSK Dubai Mobile Application.

The All India Muslim Personal Law Board has moved the Supreme Court against a plea seeking laying down of "gender and religion neutral" uniform grounds to award maintenance and alimony in matrimonial disaputes as per international disaputes as per

alimony in matrimonial dis-putes as per international conventions and Constitution. The Board has opposed the plea filed by advocate and BJP leader Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay which also seeks directions to the gov-ernment to take appropriate steps to remove the prevailing anomalies in the grounds of maintenance and alimony, and make them uni-form for all citizens without discrimination. "The applicant would like to submit that the expression



and 'Custom and Usage' in Article 13 of the Constitution does not include faith of a reli-gious denomination embed-ded in personal laws," the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) plea

said.
"The constituent assembly
was aware of the distinction
between 'personal law' and the
'Custom and Usage' and chose

advisedly to exclude personal law and include Custom and Usage in Article 13 of the Constitution," it said while seeking impleadment in the petition filed by Upadhyay. The Opposed Upadhyay's plea on the basis that personal laws cannot be tested on the anvil of Articles 14, 15, 21 and 44 of the Constitution.

Aaryan prayed for the families of those who were killed in the terrorist attack.

"On this day, two years

# **Prez, PM**, others pay





On the second anniversary of the Pulwama terror strike on Sunday, dignitaries, film actors and political leaders led by the President and the Prime Minister paid rich tributes to the OcRPF personnel killed in the attack that days after had also prompted Indian Air Force to go across borders on a 'punishing mission', hitting terror terror camps at Balakot in Pakstan. Remembering the soldiers who died in Pulwama terror attack, President Ram Nath Kovind said the nation is committed to eliminating terrorism. 'Nation salutes the sacrifice of our brave soldiers', he said. Modi described CRPF jawans' as 'exceptional individuals who devoted their lives to the country.'

On February 14, 2019, 40 personnel of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) were killed the to the Country of the

attack. Prayers for the b souls and their families. V always be in debt of yours, actor tweeted. Rest In Power Bravehearts of Pulwama!", actor Suniel Shetty

of Pulwatta: accommoder to the wrote.

While paying homage to the While paying homage to the Venkaiah Naidu said he stands in solidarity with the jawans' families.

"I toin the nation in paying

"I join the nation in paying my humble tributes to the CRPF

my humble tributes to the CRPE
personnel who were maryred in
the dastardly Pulwama terror
attack. The grateful nation will
always remember their patriotism & supreme sacrifice; the
Vice President Secretariat tweeted quoting Naidu.

Union home minister Amit
Shah said that the slain soldiers'
sacrifice will never be forgotten.
'I bow down to the brave martyrs who lost their lives in the
gruesome Pulwama attack on

"Tow down to the brave mar-trys who lost their lives in the gruesome Pulwama attack on this day in 2019. India will never forget their exceptional courage and supreme sacrifice." Shah tweeted.

"Entire nation stands unit-ed against terrorists", said the Defence Minister.

BJP president JP Nadda also remembered the sacrifice of CRPF personnel.

"India will always remem-ber their martyrdom. We should all unite to completely end terrorism from its very roots." Nadda said on Twitter. Days after the attack, the Indian Air Force on February 26 carried out multiple aerial strikes at JeM terror camps in Pakistan's Balakot, killing a "large number" of terrorists and destroying their infra-structure.

On its part, the CRPF

our nation in Pulwama

## 14 killed, 4 hurt as mini **bus hits lorry in Kurnool**

ple, including eight women and a child, were killed and four others injured when a mini bus collided with a lorry in Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh early on Sunday, police

people " from Chittoor district from Chittoor district of the state were travelling in the mini bus towards Hyderabad, a senior police official told

They were all on their way to Ajmer in Rajasthan, he

added.
Preliminary investigation
suggests that the driver of the
bus apparently lost control and
the vehicle first crashed against
the road median and then
rolled to the other side of the



Police inspect the mangled remains of a traveller van after it collided with a truck on the Hyderabad-Bengaluru National Highway, near Veldurthi in Kurnool district or Andhra Pradesh, Sunday early morning

two is stated police said.

road hitting a lorry, the official pitalised and the condition of two is stated to be serious,

### Devendra Kula Vellalar community to get delisted from SC soon, announces PM

A long pending demand of the Devendra Kula Vellalar community to delist from the Scheduled Caste and put them in the Other Backward Community would soon become a reality, according to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Addressing a public meeting

according to Prime Minister Narendra Modressing a public meeting at the International Indoor Stadium at Chennai on Sunday after laying foundation stones for various development schemes in the State including a Discovery Centre for the Indian Institute of Technology-Madras, the Prime Minister declared that the long pending demand of the Devendra Kula Vellalar community would soon become a reality. The law which meets this demand would be introduced in the Parliament when it meets the next time," said when it meets the next time," said Modi.

Modi.
The demand of Puthiya
Tamilakam, representing the
scheduled caste community was

to merge the seven sub sects Pallar, Kudumbar, Pannadi, Kaaladi, Kadayar, Devendra Kulataar and Vadhiriyaar and rename the integrated entity as Devendra Kula Vallalar, according to Dr Krishnasami, party presi-dent.

to Dr Krismiasa...., dent. The Prime Minister said in his speech that the Devendra Kula Vellalar was a community his speech una un. Devenua.
Kula Vellalar was a community
in search of its original identity.
He remembered the meeting he
had with the representatives of the
community sometime back in
Chennai. "Their craving for the
rechamation of their original identity was discernible and I had
sasured them that the demand
would be considered favourably;
said Modi.
According to Dr Krishnasami,
the DRV constituted eight per
cent of the Tamil Nadu population
which means that there were 90
lakh members belonging to the
community.

community.

The DKV leaders had asked the State and Centre to delist them

from the status of Scheduled Caste and they be included in the OBC list. "It was a travesty of history that a community which was experts in wet-land farming was expessessed of their land and listed as scheduled caste by the colonial Britishers. Sreenivasan Pillai, the then leader of our community had written to the British administrators that we were culturally and traditionally different administrators that we were cul-turally and traditionally different from Adi-Dravidar," said Dr Krishnasami who also disclosed that because of the poor financial status of the community, they could not travel to London to

argue their case. He said the stigma attached to He said the stigma attached to the community could be removed only after it was delisted from the Scheduled Caste and incorporat-ed in the list of OBC. According to Dr Krishnasami, hundreds of thousands of DKV had been forced to get converted into Christianity because of the harass-ment meted out to the community members by caste Hindus.

## 80 Shia orphans donate money for Ram Temple

Over 80 orphans from the Saadatganj orphanage of the All India Shia Orphanage in Lucknow and peo-ple from the minority community donated more than Rs 1.5 lakh for the construction of the Ram temple.

The donations ranged from Rs 1,100 to Rs 10 and Rs 100. Former chairman of Shia Waqf Board, Wasim Rizvi, said: "Such an initiative will send a message of unity to those who work to divide people in the name of reli-

gion."
RSS executive member, Indresh Kumar, said a new chapter of mutual harmony would be written with the construction of the Ram temple.
The Shri Ram Janambhoomi Teerth Kshetra trust is conducting a mass contact and fund-raising campaigrom January 15 till February 27 for the construction of

from January 15 till February 27 for the construction of the grand temple in Ayodhya.
Shri Ram Janambhoomi Teerth Kshetra Secretary Champat Rai was quoted as saying: "The accounts of the trust in three nationalized banks show an amount of over Rs 1,000 crore. Nearly 1.50 lakh VHP activists are collecting funds for the Ram temple. 37 activists have been deputed to deposit the donations in the bank accounts.

### Army personnel killed by unidentified men in UP

Prayagraj (Uttar Pradesh): An Army personnel, on a visit to his home, was attacked and killed by unidentified miscreants. His body was found on Saturday with severe head injuries in his car from the

head injuries in his car from the Neem Sarai area here. Police have registered an FIR against unidentified assailants and a woman, who was with the army man in his car at the time of the incident. Police have detained the woman

in his car at the time of the incident. Police have detained the woman and are also looking into her allegation that she was gang-raped by the assailants. Reports said the army havildar's blood-stained body was found by his family members on the information given by the woman. They rushed him to the Military Hospital in Prayagray, where the doctors declared him dead.

Superintendent of Police (City) Dinesh Kumar Singh said, "The 38-year-old victim, identified as Ashutosh Kumar Singh said, "The 38-year-old victim, identified as Ashutosh Kumar Singh said," The 38-year-old victim, identified as working on the post of havildar in the Indian Army and was posted at Udhampur in Jammu and Kashmir. He had come home on leave a few weeks back and was set to return back soon."

His father Ashok Kumar Singh informed the police that Ashutosh kentender and the police that Ashutosh left home on Friday night on some errand. Later that night, Ashutosh's wife received a call on her mobile phone from a woman who informed

wife received a call on her mobile phone from a woman who informed her that Ashutosh was seriously injured and that his car was parked

at a ground in Neem Sarai area. The family members soon rushed to the site and found him with severe injuries.

ries. The woman informed the vic-The woman informed the vic-tim's kin that she was accompanying Ashutosh to check on a plot of land when they decided to buy momos but lost the way and ended up at Neem Sarai. Suddenly, they were interrupted by a few men who were blocking the

by a few men who were blocking the with Ashutosh when he asked them to give way for the car to pass. The men attacked Ashutosh with bricks causing him serious injuries on the head. The SP said that on the complaint of the family members, an FIR has been registered against the woman who was accompanying Ashutosh and unidentified miscreants in connection with the crime. "We have detained the young woman named by the family mem-

"We have detained the young woman named by the family members in the FIR. During questioning she first claimed that the unidentified miscreams also tried to rape her. However, she later changed her statement and claimed that she had been gang-raped. In the light of her conflicting statements, we are getting a medical examination of the woman conducted and have also sent her clothes for forensic examination," he dedded. "The body of the victim has been sent for a post-mortem examination. Efforts are now on to identify and arrest the miscreants," the police official said.

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## Girl thrown off terrace after failed rape bid

Pilibhi (Uttar Pradesh): A 16-year-old girl was allegedly thrown off a terrace after a failed rape attempt by two of her neighbours, police said on Sunday.

The two pushed the girl down when they saw her father enter the house, alleged the family. The girl has suffered several fractures and internal injuries, said her father while lodging a complaint with the police in Jahanabad area.

Harish Vardhan Singh, Station House Officer (SHO), said the accused, identified as Arvind and Mahendra, have been booked under IPC section 354 (applying force to a woman with intent to utrage her modesty), 504 (intentional insult) and 323 (causing hurt), besides provisions of the SC/ST Act and the POCSO Act.

The police have set up teams to arrest

the two youths who are now absconding. According to reports the incident took place on Saturday. The minor's father alleged that he found his daughter missing from her room. On searching, he discovered the mobile phone of the key accused, a 21-year-old youth who resides in the neighbour-hood.He went to the youth's house to enquire about the whereabouts of his daughter. He claimed he was just in time to prevent them from sexually assaulting his daughter.

The two youths allegedly abused him, making casteist remarks against him. They then threw his daughter off the roof.

When she regained consciousness, she narrated her ordeal, saying the duo had tried to outrage her modesty. IANS

Lucknow: Six students of B.A. (Hons) final year in Lucknow University (LU) have launched Mission Zindagi, an online blood donor group, to extend a helping hand to people facing medical emergency.

The students are creating online database of students, teachers and staff who are regular donors or are keen to donate and coordinate to make donors available to the needy, Group coordinator, Devansh Krishna Srivastava, said: "We have created a link, Mission Zindagi, on the website where interested people may register themselves by providing their details and suitable time for donation. A registered donor closest to the patient's location will be alerted for help."

Lucknow Varsity students form blood donors' group "Any resident who requires blood may go to the Lucknow University website where contact numbers of "Mission Zindagi" mem-bers are available. They can call our team and we will provide help at the earliest," he added added

The biggest benefit of the initiative is that

The biggest benefit of the initiative is that it would save time and help save lives. 
"Students will receive calls and coordinate blood donation round the clock. More members from all undergraduate and postgraduate courses will be added later," he said.
Other members of group are Mangesh

Other members of group are Mangesh Kumar Vishwakarma, Ayushi Tripathi, Shivangi Srivastava, Utkarsh Chitranshi and Sriya. IANS

### Yogi Govt to celebrate Suheldev anniversary to appease Rajbhars

Lucknow: With the exit of Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party (SBSP) from the alliance with the BJP last year, the Yogi Adityanath Government has now chalked out an elaborate plan to commemorate the contribution of Maharaja Suheldev in national integration and reach out to the Rajbhar community according to the government spokesman, various programmes will be organised across the state and a grand memorial will also be built at Chittaura in Bahraich where a huge statue of Raja Suheldev, who is revered by the backward Rajbhar community in eastern Uttar

at Chittaura in Bahraich where a huge statue of Raja Suheldev, who is revered by the backward Rajbhar community in eastern Uttar Pradesh, will be installed.

The event to mark the birth anniversary celebration on February 16 will be addressed virtually by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

This is the first time that the government is celebrating Suheldev's anniversary. "While the Prime Minister Will address the programme virtually. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will be in Bahraich and is expected to announce major projects for Bahraich and Shravasti. Among other projects, the memorial of Suheldev in the middle of Chittaura Lake will also get a facelift. Earlier, BJP had issued a postal ticket and also announced a train in his memory," the spokesman said.

The programmes will also include poetry recitation by renowned poets followed by lighting of 1.25 lakh diyas' and other cultural events. Bahraich district magistrate, Shambhu Kumar, said: "The state government has Bahraich district magistrate, Shambhu Kumar, said: "The state government has decided to organise the Maharaja Suheldev birth anniversary programmes across the state. The chief minister will visit Bahraich, the birth place of Maharaja Suheldev, and inaugurate the ceremony."

birth place of Maharaja Suheldev, and inau-gurate the ceremony."

He further said, "The Basic Shiksha Adhikari (BSA) has been entrusted with the

responsibility of lighting 1.25 lakh diyas."

BSA Dinesh Kumar Yadav said at least 300
people had been engaged for off the work.

The move is apparently designed to appease the Rajibar community, which constitutes around 17-18 per cent of the population in the Purvanchar legion.

The Chief Minister has issued directives to hold events to mark Suheldev's birth anniversary at the memorials of martyrs in all districts. An officer in the state tourism department said the government would expand Chittaura as a tourist spot and a memorial would be built which would have a meeting hall with the seating capacity of 2,000 people. The memorial would be built on 82 bighas of land belonging to the royal family of Payagpur.

Availability of land was the biggest obstacle for the construction of Maharaja Suheldev Memorial. Most of the land here is owned by the Payagpur royal family.

Raja Yashuvendra Vikram Singh has been appointed the lifetime vice-president of Maharaja Suheldev Memorial Committee while the Bahraich district magistrate would be the honorary president.

"The temple of Maharaja Suheldev was

while the Bahraich district magistrate would be the honorary president.

"The temple of Maharaja Suheldev was built by Raja Virendra Vikram Singh of the royal family and his father Raja Yadvendra Singh has been the president of the temple," Raja Yashuvendra Vikram Singh said. Suheldev was a legendary king of Shravasti (in present day north-eastern Uttar Pradesh) who is known to have defeated and killed the Ghaznavi general, Ghazi Saiyyad Salar Masud, in Bahraich in the early 11th century.

Raja Suheldev finds mention in 'Mirati-Masudi', a 17th century Persian-language historical account. According to the legend, Suhaldev was the eldest son of King Mordhwaj of Shravasti.

### Tributes paid to late Malti Mohinder on her second death anniversary

New Delhi: On the occasion of second death anniversary of late Malti Mohinder Singh, the

ate Mait Mohinder Singh, the inspiration and guide to teachres in the field of education, it was resolved to follow the path always paved by them. Tributes were paid to the late Malati Mohinder Singh on her second death anniversary with devotional songs held at the Srl Sathya Sai International Center in New Delhi. Former Union Minister for Women and Child Development, Smt Maneka Sanjay Gandhi while paying tribute to the late Smt. Malti Mohinder Singh and said that the path paved by them will always be exemplary for all of us. Former Haryana Chief Minister Om Prakash Chautala, Shri Chautala, Shri Singh, IAS, Prakash Chautaia, Shii Devendra Singh, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Haryana, Dr.



Sonia Rajesh Khullar and other dignitaries paid homage paid to late Malti Mohinder Singh. It is noteworthy that in the way to encourage and honor teachers, Malti Gyanpeeth Awards were started in the year 2013 in Punjab. Under the Malti Jnanpith Awards the best 15 teachers of state and government aided high schools and senior secondary schools of Punjab are given award of Rs. 01 lakh for each every year.

### 73 new Covid cases in J&K

### Army helps douse major forest fire along China border in Arunachal

Cases in J&K
Jammu: J&K saw 73 new
Covid cases on Sunday while
65 patients were discharged from different hospitals after recovery during the last 24 hours.

An official bulletin said that of the new cases, 15 were from the Jammu division and 58 from the Kashmir division.

No far, 125,341 people have been infected with coronavirus in J&K out of which 122,768 have recovered, while 1,951 people succumbed, including two on Sunday.

The number of active cases is now 622 out of which 160 are from the Jammu division and 462 from the Kashmir division.

IANS

saved lives and property. The local authorities and members of civil administration lauded the Indian

Army's effort in averting a major tragedy in the area. Last month, the Army, Indian Air Force, National and State Disaster Response Force, local volunteers and Response Force, local volunteers and administration jointly doused a major wildfire in the famous Dzukou Valley on Nagaland-Manipur borders after two weeks of battle.

The forest fire caused huge damage to the flora and fauna, forest and environment of the Dzukou Valley, which is one of the 10 most beautiful

environment of the Dzukou Valley, which is one of the 10 most beautiful places in the mountainous northeast India.

The Dzukou valley, situated at an altitude of 2,452 metres above the sea level and 30 km from Nagaland cap-tial Kohlima, is also a sanctuary for the endangered Blyth's tragopan -Nagaland's state bird - and other species of birds and animals. IANS

### Yogi assures seers of development in Braj region

Mathura: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Sunday met saints and seers in Vrindavan town and assured them of the development of the Braj region. "The government is working in tandem with the religious leaders for the development of this region. We will take this region to the global level," he said while addressing saints. He said that after Independence, the governments had not worked for

He said that after Independence, the governments had not worked for religious tourism."The Kashi Vishwanath corridor work is being done under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The Kumbh

Minister Narendra Modi. The Kumbh Mela in Prayagra jis another example of development of religious tourism. Ayodhya is also coming up as a world class city," he said.
Yogi Adityanath said he had set up the Braj Teerth Vikas Parishad and various developmental projects were being taken up.The Chief Minister also visited the famous Banke Bihari temple and offered prayers. IANS

### Three held in UP for making fake HSRP

Making take HSRP

Meerut (UP): Three persons have been arrested in Meerut for allegedly manufacturing and selling fake high security registration plates (HSRP).

In a surprise raid on the intervening night
of Friday/Saturday in Mohanpuri area, the
police recovered about 400 finished plates and
more than 300 'empty' ones on which number
was yet to be written.

Abdul Rehman Siddlqui, station in-charge of
Civil Lines police station said: "We have arrested manufacturing unit owner, Tanuj Agarwal, his
associate Shriram and a seller named Sandeep
Kumar who was picked up from Gurdwara Road
and possessed at least 18 fake plates. Police are
searching for fourth associate Mohd Wasim. We
have also seized machines and
equipment, including hydraulic press, fake holograms, dye, etc. used to make these fake number plates."

equipment, including induation (persons, take nom-per plates."

During questioning, the accused have revealed that machinery; plates and equipment were brought from Delhi and were being sold to various shop owners that claimed to provide the high security number plate to prospective buy-ers who had no idea that the plate was fake.

ANS

## Fancy garb, gowns, siblings in fray in Andhra panchayat polls

Amaravati: Being held under the Covid shadow, the ongoing panchayat polls in Andhra Pradesh are witnessing the same colour, theatrics and human interest stories that accompany elections in India at all levels.

Though there was uncertainty whether the polls to the rural local bodies would be held as announced by the State Election Commission, the Supreme Court's dismissal of the state government's appeal to defer them led to the four phase elections kick off

phase elections kick off.

As the polls are midway,
some interesting aspects
include village volunteers contesting polls, a contestant wearing a gown to campaign, siblings testing electoral waters
and alcohol and money
allegedly being distributed as
usual. In Nellore district, two
siblings are contesting but for
different panchayats.

Piduru Venugopal Reddy contested the election In Nellurupalli village while his younger sister Sannareddy Rajani fought for the Nellaballi

Rajani fought for the Nellaballi panchayati.

In Vizianagaram district, a government official's mother is in the fray. Krishna District Joint Collector Lotheti Sivashankar's mother Lotheti S

testing, and a few have also won.

Three former village volunteers managed to win the Sarpanch posts in Visakhapatnam district. Ainampudi Bhaskar Rajiu won in Melipaka, Padmarekha in Mangalapuram and Karaka Rajyalakshmi in Jamaculapalem.

adulapalem. Subhalekha, a former vil-

ngs in fray in

lage volunteer from
Muthyalacheruvu village in
Ananthapur district's Kadiri
mandal, has filed her nomination for the sarpanch post and
so did three others. However,
all three withdrew them,
recognising the service
Subhalekha rendered as a volunteer, enabling her to win
unanimously. A young Russiaeducated doctor contested the
Sarpanch election in Guntur
district recently.
Jada Jitin Dev, who was
working as a doctor in Guntur
district recently.
Jada Jitin Dev, who was
working as a doctor in Guntur
district recently.
In Guntur district's
Pedakurapadu village of
Krosuru mandal, former
sarpanch, Picchayya
Chowdary, donned the garb of
Satyaharischanduru, a mythological character to campaign
and propel Janga
Soubaghyalakshmi's electoral

prospects for the sarpanch

Meanwhile. Gundepudi

post.

Meanwhile, Gundepudi village in Krishna district has emerged as one of the smallest panchayats in fray during the second phase of elections which happened on Saturday. Gundepudi separated from Polukonda panchayati in 1956. It is 20 km far away from Xandiwada, with a population of just 196 people, out of which 150 are voters.

Among these 150, 74 were men and 76 women. Despite being one of the smallest panchayats, the village hasn't seen unanimous elections until now, though bigger villages with far larger populations were going for unanimous polls.

Setting an example that always keep fighting, a contestant in Guntur district straight-away went from the hospital to file her nomination papers.

Eluru Aruna was suffering from an ailment related to the nerves. She even had to be put on a ventilator but on the last day of nominations and in a better condition after treatment, she drove down to Chamallamudi office to file her papers. papers.
As she reached the office,

papers.
As she reached the office, the poll officials, empathising with her, went to her car to take her papers.
In East Godavari district's Kadiyam village, famous for horticulture, a 92-year-old woman mustered all her strength to personally visit the office and file nomination for a ward member's post.
In a peculiar development, a panchayat election contestant at Gummalaxmipuram in Vizianagaram district literally wore his election symbol — a gown — to impress upon the voters to cast their vote in his favour.

IANS



Artists perform Jhumur dance during a workshop of Folk Safar festival at Mohor Kun in Kolkata on Sunday

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- PAPER WITH PASSION-

## **Halfway through**

Round one of first-phase COVID-19 vaccination drive over, India gets its act together to accolades

ndia has begun the second round of its phase one COVID-19 vaccination drive. The first round that began on January 16 saw 58,65,813 healthcare workers and 19,00,506 front-line workers being inoculated till February 12. Once India administers both the shots, the vaccination process for the first lot of chosen people will be complete. Thankfully, from the time the venture got underway, the number of infections and casualties has seen a downward spiral. According to the Union Health Ministry, on February 11 the country reported 12,923 new infections in 24 hours, taking the number of those infected to 10,871,294. There are 142,562 active cases and 10,573,372 recoveries as India's death toll stood at 155,360 with 108 deaths during the same period. India is witnessing a consistent decline in the number of infections reported daily since the



peak in mid-September 2020. This has earned the Government a pat on the back from the World Health Organisation (WHO), as has the fact that over seven million people have been inoculated since the world's largest vaccination drive began in January. "It's the fastest rate of vaccination happening," Roderico Ofrin, the WHO's India representative, has said. However, despite its relative success, the first round was not without challenges. For instance, there was the issue of procuring enough vaccines, which still remains. AstraZeneca's Covishield, which is the main vaccine being administered, is given in two doses, four weeks

apart. This means that India needs 60 crore shots for the first phase.

The Serum Institute of India (SII), which makes Covishield, has said it has a stockpile of five-seven crore doses and aims to produce 50 crore shots by July 2021. So, by the SII's own admission, there will be shortages in the first half of 2021. However, this shortage will ease when other vaccines are cleared for use. But other issues like inadequate cold storage facilities will continue to haunt the system in the second round too. The fact that more than 52 per cent of the country's 29,000 cold chain points and 40 per cent of the equipment are concentrated in just six States doesn't help. As the drive speeds up, the Government will have to increase the number of cold chain facilities, keeping in focus the States without an adequate infrastructure. Plus, Bharat Biotech's Covaxin, the other approved vaccine, can be kept at room temperature for at least a week. So the Government needs to ensure that going forward the campaign has a healthy mix of both the vaccines. But, for that to happen, the people's hesitation in using Covaxin needs to be overcome by releasing its efficacy data. Also, with the registration process being mostly electronic till now, the Government should ensure some amount of "on-the-spot" registration as not everyone has a mobile phone and internet connection in a poor country like ours. With Indians developing antibodies faster than the Government can get the jabs, there is hope for the country. But for a lot of people, as for the economy, it would have come a bit too late.



## **Foolhardy acts**

Uttarakhand's fragile ecosystem is being abused by the builders' lobby in cahoots with babus and netas

ne calamity leads to another and if it is a man-made disaster it most certainly will, unless extraordinary steps are taken to forestall the impending danger. What is happening in Uttarakhand is a case in point, if aerial surveys are anything to go by, ebris accompanying the deluge earlier this week has blocked a stream that joins the Rishi Ganga river, forming a temporary lake which if it breaches can cause further devastation. With the threat still looming, if authorities fail to take timely and adequate precautionary measures, the loss to life, property and flora and fauna may be colossal.



Due to (often illegal) rampant construction, mining and blasting activity in the hills — to most of which the complacent babus and their political masters turn a blind eye — the fragile local ecosystem is facing an existential crisis. We might pompously bellow about our sustainable development goals but the reality is to the contrary. In our quest for development, we have messed up the region's biodiversity and pushed many exotic and indigenous varieties of plants and animals to the verge of extinction.

Not only that, we have been quite an ignoramus people with respect to the importance of knowledge as passed down by the local generations. The villagers and tribals have traditional wisdom to fore-

see any catastrophe by studying the signs of nature, changes in the behaviour of domestic and wild animals, insects, change in wind speed and direction and so on. This begs the question as to how many times have successive Governments made serious attempts to tap this traditional knowledge base as a means of forewarning against natural or man-made disasters? But, more importantly, what should be done for now? Should the authorities work on a contingency rehabilitation plan, or should a safety valve be drilled to drain out the water from this temporary lake? Are the authorities in a position at all to regulate the flow? Or will the Government leave the people to their fate, only to announce compensations later? These and other such questions will keep crossing our mind. According to a report by the Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology, an autonomous research institute under the Department of Science and Technology, the assessment of the actual magnitude of risks involved due to this impoundment of water requires a detailed survey. However, the scientists, NGOs and the Government must put their heads together and work out an action plan before it gets too late

# Upper House: To be, or not to be



Political parties need to realise and decide whether they wish to make serious use of the Upper House or exploit it for their convenience

s expressed in this journal, others have voiced, from time to the utility of the Upper House of legislature whether in the States or at the Centre. The cause of these doubts is the notcause of these doubts is the not-so-infrequent misuse of the Rajya Sabha as well as the Vidhan Parishads. As Sanjay Gandhi's influence grew in the 1970s, many of his friends were lifted into the Rajya Sabha. were lifted into the Rajya Sabha. Fortunately for them, the election rule-framers prescribed the minimum age for such candidates as 30. Hence, like the minimum age of 25 years for the Lok Sabha, anyone who was over 30 years was eligible for the Upper House. In many ways, this was the first reason of misuse.

ways, this was the first reason of misuse.

The Upper House was never meant for the young woman or man to get into. They, being young and fit, should cultivate the common folk, broaden the party base and, in due course, contest a Lok Sabha seat. The young and raw individuals reflected on the House discipline as well as the quality of debates and and raw individuals reflected on the House discipline as well as the quality of debates and their contribution to Parliament. The purpose of the Upper House, whether at the Centre or in States, was the exact opposite: Older, mature individuals, preferably well educated who could devote time to study issues and then speak on them in an informed manner. They may or may not relate to the common folk of a constituency, nor perhaps may constituency, nor perhaps may the mass voters relate to such nbers. The Upper House should

The Upper House should be used to accommodate leaders who made competent Ministers and had to get elected within six months of their appointment by the Prime Minister or a Chief Minister. One recent example is that of Yogi Adityanath. He was in the Lok Sabha when the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections were held in 2017 and he had not contested from any constituency. Yet he was selected to be the Chief Minister and,



Sabha. Generally, the speak-ers in the Upper House ensured that they had stud-ied and reflected on the subied and reflected on the sub-ject they spoke on whereas, in the Lok Sabha, more members spoke off the cuff; most of them had spent time in their constituencies over the weekend. Many of them regularly left Delhi on Friday afternoons, if not on Thursday evenings, to return on Monday morrnings. The Rajya Sabha members could afford to spend the weekends



THE UPPER HOUSE SHOULD BE USED TO ACCOMMODATE LEADERS WHO WOULD MAKE COMPETENT MINISTERS AND HAVE TO GET ELECTED WITHIN SIX MONTHS OF THEIR APPOINTMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER OR A CHIEF MINISTER in Delhi and read up before speaking the following week. The Communist parties had a commendable system;

had a commendable system; most of their Upper House members spent the weekends in Delhi. They not only studied the contemporary subjects but also collected the Bills coming up for debate and passed on their notes to their Lok Sabha colleagues. I offered to organise a small secretariat at my cost for all my party members so that all of us could be better prepared for discussions. Being in power after long and with a lenient leadership, the general mood in the party was one of overconfidence. Little wonder then that the 2004 general election was lost on

wonder then that the 2004 general election was lost on a manifesto which projected "India shining." To every Indian shining. The ever citizens not shining. In India, our constituencies are large and the voters are much more varied than, say, in western countries. Moreover, our diversity makes it useful for the Members of Parliament and even Assemblies to know other parts of the country. other parts of the country. The Upper House members would have the leisure to do

this kind of work during the weeks when the House

this kind of work during the weeks when the House does not sit. The Lower House members cannot normally have much leisure; their focus has to be on their own voters. If the legislators do not take their knowledge side seriously, they would yield helplessly to the dominance of the Executive or the Ministers.

It is for the political parties to realise and decide whether they wish to make serious use of the Upper House or exploit it for their convenience. But, truly, these chambers can be useful as knowledge-cum-wisdom banks for the parties as well as for the country. They can help raise the quality of politics. of politics.

can help raise the quality of politics.

Getting elected by lakhs of people is related to popularity or, at least, acceptability whereas knowledge depends on education and experience. Both are necessary virtues; the Lower House more for the party while the Upper House more for the country in the long run, if used wisely.

(The writer is a well-known columnist and an author. The views expressed are personal.)

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### INDIA CANNOT BE A SURVEILLANCE STATE

INDIA CANNOT BE A SURVEILLANCE STATE
Sir— The Union Home Ministry's call for
citizens to become "cyber volunteers" and
identify, flag and report illegal, unlawful and
"anti-national" online content is perhaps the
most brazen and dangerous sign of an
attempt to turn our democratic and free
society into a "surveillance State".

Though vigilante activities directed
against individuals, social groups and communities have increased in the past few
years and the Government has ignored and
sometimes even patronised these, it was
not expected off it to move towards setting
up a virtual vigilante force. The pilot project is to be implemented in Jammu and up a virtual vigilante force. The pilot project is to be implemented in Jammu and Kashmir and Tripura, and then extended to other States. This will have dangerous consequences for citizens, as it will curtail their rights and will jeopardise freedom of society. It is illegal as it violates the basic tenets of the Constitution which guarantee freedom of speech and privacy to every individual.

These volunteers will act like secret police service agents reporting to the Government and its machinery about any post or comment which they dislike or disp-prove of. Where we are moving? Its really a matter of great concern. A time will come when these volunteers will dictate terms to the common man and will assume the role of courts. They will pronounce judgments

of courts. They will pronounce judgments on social media and will lynch anybody they feel like without any fear. We are building a "Taliban" State.

Shovanlal Chakraborty | Kolkata

FUEL PRICE RISE WILL HIT POOR FARMERS FULL PRICE HISE WILL HII PUUH HAMMENS
Sir —In March 2020, international oil
prices were raised due to the COVID-19
pandemic. The Central Government is not
taking immediate steps to reduce taxes on
oil or petroleum. The retail petrol and
diesel rates are governed by international prices. India is 85 per cent dependent
on oil imports to meet its needs. Of course,
it is well known that Central and State
taxes account for about 60 percent of retail taxes account for about 60 per cent of retail prices. But the Union Budget included petrol and diesel among those products,

### TMC is shaken to the core



he Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress is shaken to its core as many big leaders are leaving the party to join the BJP. The recent jolt came on Friday when Rajya Sabha MP and former Railway Minister Dinesh Trivedi announced his resignation from the Rajya Sabha on the floor of the House. It is no secret that these defections are fanned by the BJP leaders who

are making all-out efforts to weaken the TMC when State Assembly elections are round the corner. These will likely prove a grave setback to the TMC and will diminish its prospects of making to the power corridors in one of the most politically sensitive State.

The BJP, which enjoys power at the Centre, knows that winning the battle of West Bengal is easier said than done. However, if the old quard and most trusted lieutenants of Chief Minister Banerjee are leaving the party's fold at such a crucial time, it indicates that something is not well internally. The fault lines are now apparent. Not to mention, these leaders are disgrunted by the party leadership and the alleged dictatorial manner of Didi who is the party sugremo.

These defections will also be a setback to the BJP's image in the long run as the saffron

I nese defections will also use a sequence to the BJP's image in the long run as the saffron party is already infamous for creating rifts and fanning defections in opposite camps.

Yash Pal Ralhan I Jalandhar

on which a new agricultural structure and development cess has been imposed. Fuel prices are increasing time to time in Pakistan and Nepal but in India, relatively high rates will trouble the oil consumers or end users. By increasing the rates of petrol and diesel, the Central and State Governments will generate more revenue from taxation. But this will only enrage the common people as the prices of commodities would increase. The oil expenditure of a farmer who operates various agricultural apparatus and machines like diesel pumps, generators and so on, will increase but the income will not rise proportionately. Hence the Centre and the State Governments should reconsider relaxing the prices keeping in mind the interests of marginal farmers and common oil consumers.

oil consumers.

Yugal Kishore Sharma | Faridabad

DON'T IMPOSE MORALITY ON CHILDREN Sir — Parents must stop telling their chil-dren that the attraction they feel towards

the opposite gender is merely infatuation and love has nothing to do with it. By doing so they are suffocating their children, demoralising their spirit and also doubting their sense of judgment. Most of the parents do it because they think that in this way they would prevent the young minds from getting distracted. They are unaware of the fact that by imposing sanctions and unnecessary high moral principles on their children, they are actually making them weak from within.

Gradually and slowly, such children will stop discussing their problems with their parents. The distance between them will increase which will have adverse consequences for the family. Adolescents who have reached the age of puberty need to be convinced that their love is real and that if they marry for love, then they will have a great deal of parental support.

Srinivas Reddy | Hyderabad

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



The overriding priorities of 2021 are to defeat the pandemic, accelerate the country's economic recovery, implement economic reforms and fight corruption.

I'm truly overwhelmed with the love that I'm receiving from the people here in the Northeast. I have met all those who have been kind enough



It is disappointing not to get 100 but I have been working hard on my batting.

The reign of suppression and ter-ror in Kashmir is the unvarnished and

Government of India wants to hide from the rest of the country.

## **FIRST COLUMN**

### UNDERSTANDING **ENERGY CONCERNS**

A grasp of the methods of transition in the past, from one energy era to another, is important



VINAYSHII GAUTAM

ach social grouping has its mythology. The sense in which the phrase social groupings is being used in this text refers to human aggregations popularly clubbed as a category, such as "the rich", "the poor", "the professional", "the sallor" and so on. The rich have a sub-category that is derisvely referred to. This sub-category is called "the nouveau riche," which is supposed to be loud in its display of recently acquired wealth Whether as a characterist this is the or recently-acquired wealth. Whether as a characteristic this is true or not has never been empirically tested, however it is believed to be true. Similarly, many professional groups such as engineers, doctors, et al look down upon history as a discipline. A professional his-

today of an look of which the state of the state of the which the mellowness which any "serious" professional would have been. So be it!

Applying this yardstick of traits to the profession of energy specialists, the same kind of syndrome can be found. Unexplained professional myopia prevents many of them from recognising that the need for green energy is not a first energy shift that has ever touched the human civilisation. Energy shifts are as old as humanity. When the physical energy of human beings was used to break down aggre-gations of natural material, such as branches or boulders, the substitution of physical human energy by power of draft animal energy was a major energy revolution. For any kind of traction or movement being substituted with the use of animal energy, there was an equal-



Ostensibly human beings took a long time to recognise that they need not walk to move from one point to another but they could instead ride an animal. This too was nearly as big a revolution as any. Lions remained untameable, elephants lost on speed what they gained on bulk. The horse was the clear winner and its popularity became so much that horse power became the unit of measurement and even much that horse power became the unit of measurement and even today the strength of an engine is explained in terms of how many horse powers it represents. The message is simple. Each source of energy was a process which had its era of dominance. The shift from one era to another was as fundamental, drastic and dramatic as the shift one talks of today for an aspirational or needed change from fossil fuel to green energy.

Be that as it may, any such shift needed a change in technolo-

gy. Other collaterals followed in the process of evolution: Size of the circle (often referred to as the wheel) and the concomitant size of the case which would contain the machinery (called the equipment). This meant change in the service industry and indeed the full gamut of ancillary skills. Hence, to understand green energy and the era in which many front-edge communities are locked in today, in a mod-ule of learning, is a complicated process. In the prevailing dominant social culture of 'fast food', 'Even have the time to pause and con-sider the nature of the problem.

There isn't any serious dissertation available on how long any era lasted before it gave way to the next era of energy usage. To recognise and change this framework of reference to a more holistic one is the need of the hour. The present obsession with one form of green energy or another, be it solar, wind, hydro, oceanic or biomass is proving good almost only for talking shop and he industry. There is a clear need to get our perspective right on the significance of power, per se. Energy is the underprining of human civilisation. Its charac-terisation determines the periods of history. Understanding the methods of transition in the past, from one energy era to another, will help us to find solutions to the current energy concerns better. (The writer is a well-known management consultant of international repute. The views expressed are personal.)

## Need for affordable housing and microfinance for all



While India continues to record improvement in dealing with poverty, homelessness has elicited a poor response from our policymakers

A mong the many challenges that need urgent attention, more so after the COVID. This vital segment need as cientific and creative intervention to make it a sustainable proposition. Lack of proper housing is one of the reasons, apart from loss of jobs, that led to the mass migration of labourers from cities to the villages, during the initial days of the countrywide lockdown. Hence, expanding access to affordable housing is essential not just for equitable development but also for social stability.

expanding access to affordable housing is essential not just for equitable development but also for social stability.

Looking at the gravity of the issue, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her Budget speech announced the extension of the tax holiday on affordable housing projects for one more year. The Government has done this to ensure affordable housing for migrant workers. The affordable rental housing projects are part of the \*Pradhan Mantri Awas \*Spana (Urban)\*.

While we continue to record improvement in dealing with poverty, homelessness has elicited a poor response from our policymakers. Consequently, slums constitute 17 per cent of urban households in India and in Mumbai they make up 42 per cent of the households. These slum clusters lack necessary amenities like private toilets and potable water. A high population density and a weak public healthcare system mean more susceptibility to COVID-19 and other diseases and epidemics. Necessary precautions like social distancing to stay safe of the Coronavirus cannot be practised under such deplorable living conditions that prevail in slums and \*Jhuggi jho-pri clusters.

Human health and well-beine depends on a

pri clusters. Human health and well-being depends on a Human health and well-being depends on a range of interconnected social, economic and physical factors that impact the environment in which we live and sustain ourselves. The key to good housing is to ensure that residents have access to transportation, affordable healthcare, jobs, education as well as other essential services. A decent habitat and shelter can contribute in not just individual or societal well-being but also have the potential to catalyse overall economic growth. It is, thus, critical to reconsise housing investment It is, thus, critical to recognise housing investment as a basic, fundamental building block of econom-

Housing is not a standalone issue and is close-Housing is not a standalone issue and is close-timetrwined with other factors and lack of sus-tainable housing is often the cause of a slew of health and developmental problems. Poor ven-tilation and the inability to maintain basic hygiene are major causes of poor health. Fragile building structures undermine safety and increase vulnerability to disaster. Lack of lighting and space limits the ability of children to study. Inadequate privacy and lack of sanitation contribute to a host of diseases, hence perpetuating poverty. For many people in the developing world, the land on which they live is their only asset. If that property is not recognised as legally theirs, they lose out on several social benefits. Land owner-ship is often the bedrock of other development interventions. Owning land boosts nutrition, edu-cational outcomes and gender equality. The con-

cational outcomes and gender equality. The con-verse is equally true. Where land security is absent or weak —when men and women do not have recognised legal rights to their land and can thus be easily displaced — all other development efforts



LOW-INCOME
VILLAGERS
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THEIR LAND FOR
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COULD OBTAIN
ACCESS TO SEVERAL PUBLIC BENEFITS,



go in vain and conflict arises

go in vain and conflict arises.

Many who live in slums have little or no control over the ownership of the property they live upon. The lack of official land titles is a major impediment to the acquisition of housing finance. People do not have documentary proof of being owners of the land on which they live and are, therefore, legally insecure.

they live and are, therefore, legally insecure.

Many low-income villagers have owned their land for generations but lack formal ownership documents. Hence, they do not have access to formal financial services. Once their inhabited land gets formally titled, they could obtain access to several public ben-

efits, including loans.

Traditional housing fir Iraditional nousing finance has not been able to offer much help to people in the low-income group. But a range of financial institutions are applying good microfinance practices, thus promotting housing. The increased provision of housing microfinance has resulted in sate and healthy housing conditions for millions. Successful housing microfinance providers have married the core principles of micro-credinance providers have married the core principles of micro-credinance providers have married the core principles of micro-credinance principles of micro-credinance principles. This model has been highly successful wherever Governments are offering long-term tenancies has not been able to offer much help

and shared-ownership housing. But the sector is still in need of more sustainable business models to get

But the sector is still in need of more sustainable business models to get legitimacy in mainstream finance. Housing micro-finance can include a range of financial services that support improving or upgrading housing such as home repair and expansions, additional cooking space, water and sanitation services, energy efficiency upgrades, the purchase of inhabitable land or permanent structures and the construction of new housing.

The demand for housing micro-finance is high. The clients are already channelising a good portion of micro-enterprise loans for home improvement, micro-entrepreneurs also use their homes as productive assets for generating income. A home can be a place to store inventory, produce goods and run a business. A home is also a personal asset that usually appreciates in value over time. Home improvement, thus, not only enhances living conditions but is also an investment.

The Government also needs to use creative approaches for making rental housing a safe option for house owners. Its share in overall housing has been steadily declining. There is clearly a need to replace the current rent control laws with modern tenancy laws, so as to give full freedom to tenants and owners

modern tenancy laws, so as to give full freedom to tenants and owners to negotiate the rent and the length

of the lease.

Rules with respect to eviction
also need to be reformed to restore

the balance between the rights of

tenants and the owners. We need a differently struc-We need a differently structed and more professional market rental sector. A model Rent Act is needed to promote rental housing. There should be mutual agreement between the landlord and the tenant for a stipulated lease period prior to which the tenant can't be evicted and after the expiry of the lease period, the tenant will not be permitted to continue in the housing unit.

However, rent control laws give tenants so much security that landlords worry that they may not regain possession of their property at the end of the lease period. People often leave their properties

regain possession of their properregain possession of their properties
varies and the lease period.
People often leave their properties
vacant until they get a tenant they
are comfortable with.

It is time the Government puts
rental housing to use. Its share in
overall housing has been steadily
declining. There is a need for
replacing current rent control laws
with a modern tenancy law, which
would give full freedom to tenants
and owners to negotiate the rent
and the length of the lease.
Policymakers, financial institutions and housing experts also
need to evaluate their current policies, cultures and ways of working.
With a thoughtful approach, they
can be better prepared to tackle this
humongous problem. The
Government will have to change
course and shift away from the legacourse and shift away from the lega-cy mindset before the problem gets out of hand.

### **POINTCOUNTERPOINT**

NOT JUST DINESH TRIVEDI, WHOEVER WANTS TO DO HONEST WORK CANNOT STAY IN THE TMC. IF HE WANTS TO JOIN THE BJP. WE WILL WELCOME HIM. -BJP NATIONAL GENERAL SECRETARY

KAILASH VIJAYVARGIYA





I AM VERY GRATEFUL TO THE BJP AND ITS SENIOR LEADERS. I WAS TOLD THEY HAVE SAID THAT I AM WELCOME, BUT LET ME SETTLE DOWN FIRST. —FORMER TMC MP

## China in a tizzy to prevent 'feminisation' of male adolescents

The writer is a well-known developm professional. The vie

This will eventually be resolved, as these things usually are, by the magic of generational turnover. The young will outlive the old and become the majority

It seemed innocent enough at the start: Just a surge in the number of boys coming to school with notes from doctors saying they were excused from playing contact sports. But pretty soon high schools all over China were having trouble finding enough willing young men to make up a football team. It was around the same time that attendance at the compulsory classes in Marxistthat attendance at the com-pulsory classes in Marxist-Leninist-Xi-Jinping-Thought crashed. Even when boys started talking about their feelings and trying to look like K-Pop stars, people tried to laugh it all off and dubbed them "little fresh meats." But some far-sighted people understood that the nation's soul was at stake here. As early as last June, Si

As early as last June, Si Zefu, member of the Standing Committee of the 13th Chinese People's Political



GWYNNE DYER

Consultative Conference's National Committee and chairman of Harbin Electric Corporation, was warning that many of China's young males had become "weak, timid and self-abasing." From not playing football to not wanting to be an "army hero" is a short. Simpery slowe.

wanting to be an "army hero" is a short, slippery slope.

This "feminisation", Si harrumphed, "would inevitably endanger the survival and development of the Chinese nation unless effectively managed." And even as espoke, limp- wristed young men with flowers in their hair were spotted lolling about in the street outside.

Just as Oscar Wilde her alded the fall of the British empire and hippie "peace and love" caused the US to lose the Vietnam War and start its long decline, so too, young Chinese men wearing

young Chinese men wearing make-up....Stop! Are you sure

that the Party wants you to go down this particular rhetorical road?
Well, okay, maybe not exactly those examples. But what would the veterans of the Long March say about these effeminate young girlymen? You can't turn them into proper soldiers. China will be easy meat for the first manly country that comes

will be easy meat for the first manly country that comes along. Harrumph!
China has a very big bureaucracy, so it takes a while for an issue to come to the top of the pile but by early this year it had arrived. Its not clear if President-for-Life Xi Jinping took a personal interest in the issue but his enthusiasm for football as a symbol of national strength and manliness is well-known, so the policy-makers knew they

policy-makers knew they were on a safe track. The Education Ministry took the lead, with the pub-



lication of a policy document last week entitled, Proposal to Prevent the Feminisation of Male Adolescents'. No, really, I sweat I'm not making this up. Check it out online.

The document claims that China needs to hire

that China needs to hire more male teachers to serve as role models (at present four out of five teachers in urban

areas are women) and "vigor-ously develop" sports like football to "cultivate the stu-dents' masculinity." The official Chinese news

The official Chinese news agency Xinhua instantly took up the cause, condemning androgynous' young men as "slender but weak as willows," and there was a suspiciously instant chorus of support on social media for the notion that traditional forms of masculinity are the foundation of national military strength.

It probably sounds fresh to an adult generation of Chinese who don't even know their own country's real history. To people elsewhere, it sounds like a bunch of early strength with the summer of v Xinhua instantly took

"the battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton." (No, it wasn't. It was won when Blücher's Prussian

army joined the battle in the afternoon after a forced march.) It sounds like a bunch of

march.)
It sounds like a bunch of late imperial claptrap, because that's what it is. Playing football sometimes makes you better at playing football. It does not make you better at dominating foreigners or fighting wars — and why do you want to do that anyway? It's, therefore, pleasing to report that the response in Chinese official and social media was far from unanimously enthusiastion. The semination of the properties o

be encouraged among femi-nine and masculine men

alike. There is probably no

country on Earth where the generational divergence of opinions, especially among the male half, is greater than it is in China. From an almost entirely hierarchical society as entirely hierarchical society as late as the 1980s (Confucianism reinforced by the 'democratic centralism' of Communism) to a younger generation that is egalitarian and gender-fluid (at least in the big cities) is one hell of a

the big cities) is one hell of a leap.
It will eventually be resolved, as these things usually are, by the magic of generational turnover. The young will outlive the old and become the majority. And here is the authentic voice of the young, summed up in a single tweet: "There are 70 million more men than women in this country. No country in the world has such a deformed sex ratio. Isn't that masculine enough?" Isn't that masculine enough?'

Gwynne Dyer's new boo is 'Growing Pains: The Future of Democracy an Work.' The

Biden admin appoints

2 Indian-origin experts

to key positions

### AFTER SECOND IMPEACHMENT ACQUITTAL-

# **Trump indicates active public life**

Donald Trump has told millions of his supporters that he is ready for yet another phase of active public life after the US Senate acquitted him in its second impeachment trial. Following four days of the impeachment trial, the 100-member Senate voted to impeach the former US president by 57-43 votes, 10 votes short of the two-thirds majority needed for conviction. Trump, a Republican, is the first-ever president to have been impeachment after leaving office.

office.

Trump, 74, faced the charge of incitement of insurrection over the deadly January 6 assault of the US Capitol by

6 assault of the US Capitol by his supporters.
"Our historic, patriotic and beautiful movement to Make America Great Again has only just begun. In the months ahead I have much to share with you, and I look forward to

Wellington: New Zealand's largest city of Auckland will be placed in a three-day lockdown beginning just before midnight Sunday following the discovery

of three unexplained coronavirus virus in the community.

JAPAN APPROVES ITS FIRST COVID VACCINE

Tokyo: Japan on Sunday formally approved its first Covid-19 vaccine and said it would start nationwide inoculations within days, but months behind the US and

many other countries. Japan's health ministry said it had

neatin ministry said in Rad approved the vaccine co-developed and supplied by Pfizer Inc. The announcement comes after a Government panel on Friday confirmed that final results of clinical testing done in Japan showed that the vaccine had an efficacy similar to what overseas tests showed.

Pristina: Kosovo's voters defied freezing weather to take part in

an early parliamentary election Sunday to form a new government amid the

economic downturn and stalled negotiations with wartime foe Serbia. Some 1.8 million eligible voters on Sunday are expected to cast their ballots in 2,400

polling stations. They're electing 120 lawmakers among more

TURKEY SAYS 13 OF ITS CITIZENS KILLED IN N IRAQ Ankara: Troops have found the bodies of 13 Turkish citizens abducted by Kurdish insurgents

in a cave complex in northern Irag, the Turkish defense

Akar said 12 of the victims we shot in the head and one died of a shoulder bullet wound. They were discovered in the Gara region near the Turkish border

coronavirus pandemic. an

**GLOBE** 



continuing our incredible jour ney together to achieve American greatness for all of our people. There has never been anything like it!" Trump said in a statement.

emerge with a vision for a bright, radiant, and limitless American future, Trump, who received 74 million votes in the November 3 presidential elec-tion, higher than that of any president before him

his resort in Pain Breat.
Florida, where he has been staying since then.
Trump has been banned from almost all the major social media platforms including Twitter and Facebook.
Meanwhile, several Republican leaders slammed the party's Senators who voted against Trump.
The seven Senators are Richard Burr, Bill Cassidy, Susan Collins, Lisa Murkowski, Mitt Romney, Ben Sasse and Pat Toomey.

pointment over the votes cast Saturday by Sens. Richard Burr and Pat Toomey," Politico reported. "The moves are the latest in a series of censures and disci-plinary actions doled out to lawmakers deemed to be crit-ical of the former president in "Our cherished Constitutional Republic was founded on the impartial rule of law, the indispensable safe-guard for our liberties, our rights and our freedoms," Trump said.

After the end of his term on January 20, Trump flew to his resort in Palm Beach Florida, where he has been

ical of the former president in the wake of the Capitol riot," it added.

Republican Senator John Cornyn said that he had con-Cornyn said that he had con-cerns about this snap impeach-ment from the start.

"The arguments of the House Impeachment Managers that the Constitution permits the impeachment of a private citizen, the free speech protections of the First Amendment don't apply, the due process clause of the Fifth Amendment is optional, and that the trial may include a presiding officer who also serves as a juror all were a bridge too far," he said.

claims that they have gone on strike.

The military seized power on February 1, detaining Suu Kyi and members of her gov-ernment and preventing recently elected lawmakers

ly noticed by the leadership in Washington. Kulkarni's appointment, Kulkarni's appointment, along with Nijhawan and Dan Kohl, reflects "the Biden administration's commitment to diverse leadership," accord-ing to the release by AmeriCarns.

administration's commitment to diverse leadership," according to the release by AmeriCorps.

In their roles, these leaders will use service to support the administration's agenda, focusing on four of the most urgent challenges of our time. Covid-19, economic recovery, racial-19, economic recovery racial-19, economic recov

Nijhawan has committed her career to developing lead-ers and growing national ser-vice. Most recently, she devel-oped and served as the execu-tive director of Stockton Service Corps, a six-year, USD 12 mil-lion initiative to address local needs through AmeriCorps. Her professional back-



In their roles, these leaders will use service to support the administration's agenda, focusing on

four of the most urgent challenges of our time: Covid-19. economic recovery. racial equity, and climate change, the AmeriCorps said

ground also includes extensive experience in education, AmeriCorps said in a press

Inspired by the students, families, and AmeriCorps community she met, she went on to help found City Year Sacramento and launch the organisation's 22nd site with 50 new AmeriCorps members. Nijhawan also served as the California director of Education Pioneers where she recruited, placed, and supported managers in urban school systems and education non-profits, empowering people to

systems and education non-profits, empowering people to challenge the status quo of our public education system. She earned a bachelor's in education and psychology from Marquette University and a master's in social work from the University of Maryland, Baltimore.

## "We have so much work ahead of us, and soon we will

remained quiet on his post-presidency life, speculation has been rife that he might run for the presidency in 2024 or encourage someone from his family to fight out a battle for the White House.

## Myanmar anti-coup protesters keep pressure on junta sion. Civil servants have been very active in the protests, and social media postings on Sunday indicated that state railway workers have joined them, with some unconfirmed claims that they have gone on etrike

Vast numbers of people all over Myanmar flouted orders against demonstrations and marched again on Sunday to protest the military takeover

to protest the military takeover that ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi. Large demonstrations were held in the major cities of Yangon, Mandalay and the capital, Naypyitaw, as well as in far-flung areas dominated by ethnic minorities. Resistance also took place in cyberspace, as a group calling itself BrotherHood of Myanmar Hackers defaced the government's Myanmar Digital

Myanmar Hackers etaced the government's Myanmar Digital News website, replacing con-tent on its home page with words and pictures against the military takeover. Protesters in Yangon again rallied outside the Chinese and U.S. Embassies. They accuse



A large image that has an X mark on the face of Commander in chief Senior Gen Min Aung Hlaing, also chairman of the State Administrative Council, lies on a road as anti-coup protesters gather outside the Hledan Centre in Yangon, Myanmar on

agitation against House dissolution

Kathmandu: The Nepal Communist Party's splinter faction led by Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' on Sunday announced a fresh agitation programme against the dissolution of the House of Representatives by Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli.

Nepa blumped into a polic.

Prachanda-led group announces fresh

January 26 to February 10 under the third phase of protests against the dissolution of the House. Defending his move to dissolve Parliament, Oli recently said some leaders tried to obstruct the functioning of his government and he had no other alternative other than seaking a fresh wandete.

had no other alternative other than seeking a fresh mandate.

"As some leaders tried to make Parliament defunct and obstruct the government's functioning, I was compelled to go for the fresh mandate. Such a situation was created in which

go for the fresh mandate. Such a situation was created in which the government was unable to move forward, which prompted ed us to go for elections," he said on February 5. Following the House disso-lution, both the factions of the north, you had by Prochanda

party, one led by Prachanda and the other by Oli have been staging public meetings and mass rallies across Nepal to show their strength. *PTI* 

Archaeologists unearth ancient beer factory in Abydos

show that the people of Myanmar want democracy. We stand with them," said a state-ment Saturday on the U.S. Embassy's Twitter account. Other protesters carried

one former president might part ways with the Republican Party to form his own party. However, there has been no statement on this from Trump. "Our

signs urging people to boycott businesses linked to the mili-

businesses linked to the military.
Sunday's activism took
Place after the ruling junta
issued a new order suspending
several basic civil liberties.
The order, issued late
staturday and published Sunday
in state newspapers, suspends
provisions in an existing law on
security and privacy protection,
allowing the authorities to
carry out searches and make
arrests without court warrants.
It also allows the interception of electronic and other
communications without a
warrant and permits the detention of detainess for more than
24 hours without court permis-

2 killed, 2 hurt

in NYC subway

stabbing attacks

New York: An unidentified man could be responsible for four separate stabbings that occurred within a few hours in the New York City subwes, leaving two people dead, author-ities said. The assaults hap-pened between Friday morning and early Saturday, New York Police Department officials said during a news conference.

Police Department officials said during a news conference.
Authorities believe all four victims were homeless.
Police said they were searching for a man they suspect could be behind all of the attacks. They were reviewing subway security camera footage as part of the investigation. All four stabbings occurred along the A subway line.
One of the victims was discovered dead on a train is

covered dead on a train in Queens at about midnight on Friday with several stab wounds to his neck and torso.

# recently elected lawmakers from opening a new session of Parliament. The junta, led by Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, said it was forced to step in because the government failed to properly investigate allegations of fraud in last year's election, which Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy party won in a landslide. The state election commission refuted that contention, saying there is no evidence to support it. UK PM to host virtual meeting of G7 leaders

UK Prime Minister Boris
Johnson is to host fellow
G7 leaders for a virtual meeting on February 19 ahead of its
presidency of a summit in
June of the Group of Seven
countries including the UK,
Canada, France, Germany,
Italy, Japan and the
US, Downing Street said on

US, Downing Street said on Sunday.

The virtual meeting, the first hosted by Johnson as part of the UK's G7 Presidency this year and the first gathering of G7 leaders since April 2020, will bring together the world leaders to discuss how leading democracies can work together to ensure equitable distribution of companyins vaccines ution of coronavirus vaccines around the world and prevent

G/Summit in Cornwall in June after India was invited as a guest country by the UK, alongside South Korea and

alongside South Korea and Australia.

"The solutions to the challenges we face — from the colossal mission to get vaccines to every single country, to the fight to reverse the damage done to our ecosystems and lead a sustainable recovery from coronavirus — lie in the discussions we have with our friends and partners around the world," said Johnson.

"Quantum leaps in science have given us the vaccines we need to end this pandemic for good. Now world governments have a responsibility to work together to put those vaccines to the best possible use. I hope to the proper the property of the property of

to the best possible use. I hope 2021 will be remembered as the year humanity worked togeth-er like never before to defeat a common foe," he said.

### **White House** aide resigns after threatening reporter

AP ■ WASHINGTON

White House deputy press secretary TJ Ducklo has resigned, the day after he was suspended for issuing a sexist and profane threat to a journal-ist seeking to cover his relation-ship with another

ist seeking to cover us semi-ship with another reporter.

Ducklo had been put on a weeklong suspension without pay on Friday after a report sur-faced in Vanity Fair outlining his sexist threats against a female Politico journalist to try to suppress a story about his relationship, telling her "I will destroy you."

destroy you."

The journalist had been seeking to report on his rela-tionship with a political reporter at Axios who had previously covered the Biden campaign and transition.

### China fires back at US allegations of lack of transparency

Beijing: China fired back at the US On Sunday over allegations from the White House that Beijing withheld some information about the coronavirus outbreak from World Health Organization investigators. In a statement on Saturday, White House National Security Adviser Lies Sullivan, eaid

White House National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan said Washington had "deep con-cerns about the way in which the early findings of the Covid-19 investigation were commu-nicated and questions about the process used to reach them."

process used to reach them."
"It is imperative that this report be independent, with expert findings free from intervention or alteration by the Chinese government," he said, referring to the WHO mission reterring to the WHO mission investigating the origins of the pandemic in the central city of Wuhan. "To better understand this pandemic and prepare for the next one, China must make

Minister KP Sharma Oli.
Nepal plunged into a political crisis on December 20
after Oli, in a suprise move,
recommended dissolving the
275-member House, amidst a
tussle for power with the chairman of the Nepal Communist
Party's (NCP) splinter faction
led by 'Prachanda'.
Acting on the prime minister's recommendation,
President Bidya Devi Bhandari
dissolved the House the same
day and announced fresh elec-

day and announced fresh elec-tions on April 30 and May 10 sparking protests from a large section of the NCP led by 'Prachanda', also a co-chair of

available its data from the ear-liest days of the outbreak," Sullivan's statement said. China responded Sunday with a statement from its Washington Embassy that said the US Had already "gravely damaged international cooper-ation on Covid-19" and was now "position flowers at other now "pointing fingers at other countries who have been faith-fully supporting the WHO and at the WHO itself."

While it welcomed President Joe Biden's decision to President Joe Biden's decision to reverse the Trump administra-tion's move to leave the WHO. China hopes the U.S. Will "Hold itself to the highest standards, take a serious, earnest, transpar-ent and responsible attitude, shoulder its rightful responsibility, support the WHO's work with real actions and make due contribution to the international cooperation on Covid-19," the statement said. AP

on Sunday, in est rugge com-mittee led by leader of the fac-tion Narayan Kaji Shrestha said a human chain will be formed on February 19 around in Kathmandu as a symbolic protest against 'the House dis-solution' and corruption. The protest rallies will be staged in various districts across the country including capital city Kathmandu from February 17 to 24. The party will also launch a campaign to collect signatures against the dissolution from February 19 to 27 at various public places. The agitating faction had earlier staged protests from

AP ■ CAIRO

American and Egyptian Archaeologists have unearthed what could be the oldest known beer factory at one of the most prominent archaeological sites of ancient Egypt, a top antiquities official said Saturday.

Mostafa Waziri, secretary general of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, said the factory was found in Abydos, an ancient burial ground located in the desert west of the Nile River, over 450 kilometres (280 miles) south of Cairo.

He said the factory apparently dates back to the region of Kim Narmer, who is widely known for his unification of ancient Egypt at the beginning of the First Dynastic Period (3150 BC-2613 BC).

Archaeologists found eight huge units — each is 20 meters (about 65 feet) long and 2.5 metres (about 65 feet) long and 2.5 metres (about 65 feet) side. Each unit includes some 40 pottery basins in two rows, which had been used to heat up a mixture of grains and water



This photo provided by the Egyptian Antiquities Ministry shows pottery basins, which archaeologists say had been used to heat up a mixture of grains and water to produce beer, in Abydos, some 450 km (280 milles) south of Cairo, Egypt AP

to produce beer, Waziri said.
The joint mission is co-chaired by Dr. Matthew Adams of the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, and Deborah Vischak, assistant professor of ancient Egyptian art history and archaeology at Princeton University.
Adams said the factory

was apparently built in this area to provide royal rituals with beer, given that archaeologists found evidences showing the use of beer in sacrificial rites of

ancient Egyptians.
British archaeologists were
the first to mention the existence of that factory early
1900s, but they couldn't deter-

mine its location, the antiquities ministry said.
With its vast cemeteries and temples from the earliest times of ancient Egypt, Abydos was known for monuments honoring Osiris, ancient Egypt's god of underworld and the deity responsible for judging souls in the afterlife.

### **Anti-viral coating on** face masks may kill corona, UK study finds

PTI ■ LONDON

Cientists at the University of Cambridge working with an anti-viral coating technology called DioX believe that it could protect facemask users by killing the deadly coronavirus in as little as an hour.

According to 'The Daily Telegraph', the invisible coating on facemasks, attacks the virus

Telegraph; the invisible coating on facemasks attacks the virus by rapturing its outer layer, effectively eliminating all new mutant variants, including the UK's so-called Kent variant and the South African variant. "The antiviral agent within the coating of the mask kills the virus by breaching its protective outer membrane, which is known as its envelope. Unlike other parts of the virus, the membrane remains the same regardless of any type of mutantion. Hence this way of attacking the pathogen will work on

any new variant of coronavirus," Dr Graham Christie, senior lecturer at the Department of Chemical Engineering and Biotechnology at the University of Cambridge, told the newspaper.

"In fact, you could mutate the entire genome of the virus and it would have no effect on the envelope. We expect to see the same response regardless of the strain of coronavirus because structurally they are all very similar," he said.

The technology called DiOX is based on quaternary ammonium salts — organic compounds widely used in the textile industry for their antimicrobial properties. Laboratory tests showed that the mask coaded with it killed 95 per cent of pathogens on its surface within one hour and they were undetectable after four hours.

## **GST** officers to suspend taxpayer's registration for 'anomalies' in sales return

pend registration of taxpayers whose sales return or GSTR-1 forms show "significant dif-ferences or anomalies" from the return filed by their suppliers, a move aimed at curbing tax eva-

their suppliers, a move aimed at curbing tax evasion and safeguarding revenues.

The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has issued a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for suspension of registration of a person on observance of such discrepancies/anomalies which indicate violation of the GST Act.

As per the SOP, the registration of specified taxpayers shall be suspended and system generated intimation for suspension and notice for cancellation of registration in form GST REG. 31, containing the reasons of suspension, shall be sent to such taxpayers on their registered e-mail address.

mail address.

The registration would be suspended in cases where a comparison of the returns furnished by a registered person with the details of outward supplies furnished in form GSTR-1, or the details of inward supplies durished by his suppliers in their GSTR-1, show significant

to reduce cost

New Delhi: Doing away with restrictive conditions for use of steel in highways construc-tion, the government on Sunday announced that all kinds of steel will be allowed for

Govt eases curbs on steel

for highway construction

differences or anomalies', indicating contravention of the provisions of the GST Act.

"Ill the time functionality for FORM REG-31 is made available on portal, such notice/intimation shall be made available to the taxpayer

on their dashboard on the common portal in Form GST REG-17.

"The taxpayers will be able to view the notice in the View/Notice and Order' tab post login," the SOP said.

the SOP said.
Goods and Services Tax (GST) officers have already intensified their drive against fake invoicing and this has also contributed to increase in tax collections in the past couple of months.
GST collections have crossed the Rs 1 lakh

crore mark for four consecutive months and surged to an all-time high of about Rs 1.20 lakh

surged to an all-time high of about 8s 1.20 lakh crore in January.

The SOP further said the taxpayers whose registrations are suspended would be required to furnish reply to the jurisdictional tax officer within 30 days from the receipt of such notice / intimation, explaining the discrepancies / landia (Irdai).

In order to promote the istration should not be cancelled.

PTI

### Irdai asks insurers to issue Digilocker to policyholders to preserve documents

New Delhi: Insurance sector reg-ulator Irdai has asked insurers to issue digital policies to their policyholders and also tell them how to use these documents. The regulator has reasoned that the step will not only bring down the cost but also help speed up claim settle-ment process. In its circular issued to all insurers excluding GIC Re,

In its circular issued to all insurers excluding GIC Re, Lloyds (India) and FRBs (foreign re-insurance branches). Irdai said that Digilocker will drive reduction in costs, elimination of customer complaints relating to non-delivery of policy copy, improved turnaround time of insurance services, faster claims processing and settlement, reduction in disputes, reduction fraud and improvement in customer contactability.

On the whole it is expect-

insurance sector, the Authority advises all insurers to enable their IT systems to interact with Digilocker facility to enable policyholders to use Digilocker for preserving all their policy documents.

The insurers should inform their retail policyholders about Digilocker and how to use it. Insurers are also advised to enable the process by which the

Digilocker and how to use it.
Insurers are also advised to
enable the process by which the
policyholders can place their
policies in the digilocker, said
the regulator.

As per the circular, the
Digilocker team in NeGD
(National e-Governance
Division) under Ministry of
Electronics and Information
Technology will provide necessary technical guidance and
logistic support to facilitate
adoption of Digilocker.

Digilocker is an initiative
under the Digital India programme by the government
where citizens can get authentic documents/ certificate in
digital format from original
issuers of these certificates.

It aims at eliminating or

minimising the use of physical documents and will enhance effectiveness of service delivery, making these hassle free and friendly for the citizens. Notably, the decision of

Notably, the decision of Irdai has came against the backdrop of a letter written by Sanjay Dhotre, Minister of State for Electronics & IT, Communications and Human Communications and Human Resource Development, to Anurag Singh Thakur, Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs with regards to issuance of digital insurance policies to citizen's DigiLocker

Dollates to citizen's DigiLocker accounts.

In the letter, Dhotre had requested Thakur to advise Irdai to issue an advisory to all insurance companies to make available the digital insurance policy of all policy holders via their Digilocker account and acceptance of Digilocker issued documents as valid documents.

This will provide an alternate channel to access and manage all their insurance policies in a safe and authentic manner.

### Petrol with additives cross ₹100 mark in Maharashtra's Parbhani district

Aurangabad: The rate of petrol with additives has crossed the Rs 100 mark for a litre in Maharashtra's Parbhani

litre in Maharashtra's Parbhani district on Sunday morning, an office bearer of a petrol dealers' association said.

After a 28 paise rise on Sunday morning, the per-litre ate of petrol with additives for retail sale crossed Rs 100.

Parbhani District Petrol Dealers' Association President Amol Bhedsurkar told PTI, "The rates of petrol with additives in Parbhani has reached to 100.16 rupees for one litre. The cost of unleaded petrol is 97.38

The cost of petrol in Parbhani is one of the costliest in Maharashtra. The cost is higher due to longer distance of

transportation.
Fuel in Parbhani comes from Manmad in the Nashik district, which is at a distance of 340 km.

of 340 km.

"We need Rs 3,000 extra for every tanker if prices go up by 10 paise. Hence, the investment in buying fuel has also gone up," Bhedsurkar said.

The transportation cost for fuel stands at nearly 21 paise a litre now, he added.

PTI

### Sebi mulls cybersecurity fusion centre for securities market

New Delhi: Markets regulator Sebi is in the process of setting up a cybersecurity fusion centre, a move aimed at detecting cyber threats faster and resolve such incidents efficiently and effectively. In its annual report for 2019-20, Sebi noted that cyber attacks

threats faster and resolve such incidents efficiently and effectively. In its annual report for 2019-20, Seb in oted that cyber attacks and threats attempt to compromise the confidentiality, integrity and availability of the computer systems, networks and databases in the markets ecosystem. Establishing a cybersecurity fusion centre or a cyber lab is part of Sebi's three-tier structure for monitoring cybersecurity-related events in the securities markets and taking actions as deemed necessary in the interest of protection of the securities market. The three-tier structure would strengthen the cybersecurity preparedness or resilience of the entire securities market ecosystem. Under the tier-1, high-powered steering committee on cybersecurity chaired by a whole-time member of Sebi has been set up and a cybersecurity fusion centre would be established under the tier-2, the regulator said.

In the tier-3, division of technology and cybersecurity on Sebi would coordinate with the steering committee, cyber security lab security and operations centres at the respective market infrastructure institutions (MIIs).

This is to notify the public at large that our client, Mrs. Mahboob Barak, wife of Sh. Abdul Sabre Barak is applying to the Secretary to the Government of India in the Ministry of India in the India in th

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to notify the poblic at large
that our client, Mr. Abdul Saber Barak,
son of Sh. Abdul Jabit is applying to
the Secretary to the Government of
India in the Ministry of Home Affairs,
the Secretary to the Government
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A. Tondor Document Saleri Download Start Date - 11.02.2021; 10:00 Mrs.

B. Tender Document Saleri Download End Date - 17.02.2021; 12:00 Noon.

No. DIPJ-4155-P/20

Sdf - Executive Engineer
Dated - 13-02-2021

Electric Division, JPDCL Batob

### ZEL JEWELLERS LIMITED

REGD. OFFICE: 1-5. South Extension, Part-II, New Delhi-110 040
IN- L7489D1.1984PLC058382 Website:www.nkjwellers.in
Landline: (91)-11-02652416. 011-02265958, FAX1-14-1464689
Email ID:zeljewellers@yaho.co.in
ract of Unavdited Standahors Financial Regulst for the Third Quarter
Ended December 31, 2019
(Rs in Less, except per sha

	(Rs in Lacs, except per share date		
PARTICULARS	QUARTER ENDED 31-12-2020 UN-AUDITED	QUARTER ENDED 31-12-2019 UN-AUDITED	NINE MONTHS ENGED 31-12-2020 UN-AUDITED
Total Income from operations Net Profit/(Loss) for the Period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary (tems)	1504.42 89.87	1181.31 48.22	2045.84 148.61
Net Profit/(Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary Items)	89.87	48.22	148.61
Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary Items)	66.73	37.29	110.34
Total Comprehensive Income for the Period (Comprising Profit/ (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)	66.73	37.29	110.34
Equity Share Capital (In Oty.) Earnings Per Share (of Rs. 10/- each) (for continuing and discontinued operations)	355.00	355.00	355.00

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Place: New Delhi Date: 14th February, 2021

ONGC takes leaf out of Reliance's book

### Floats subsidiary to buy own gas

DUY OWN gas

New Delhi: Takinga leaf out of
Reliance Industries Ltd's playbook, state-owned Oil and
Natural Gas Corporation
(ONGC) is forming a new subsidiary for gas business that
could be used to bid and buy gas
from the firm's own fields.

The board of ONGC at its
meeting on February 13
approved creation of a new
wholly-owned subsidiary company for gas and liquefied natural gas (LNG) business value
chain subject to necessary
approvals, according to the
firm's third quarter earnings
announcement.

The company is being approval. The move is based on the analysis and discussions with stakeholders and also technical opinion. In view of the increase in

In view of the increase in steel prices, which can impact the cost of building national highways, Road Transport & Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari had suggested the need to re-look at all conditions which could be restrictive, without impacting the quality of material used for highway construction. construction.

With this step, the supplier base for steel used in the construction of national highways would increase, leading to

announcement, is being formed with the objective of sourcing, marketing and trading of natural gas, LNG business, Hydrogen enriched CNG (HCNG), gas to power business, bio-energy/ bio-pas/ bio methane/ other biofuels business, etc," it said.

ONGC may use the new subsidiary to buy any new gas ways would increase, leading to more competition and better price discovery by the markets, the statement said. This is also part of the con-tinuous effort by the Minister to reduce costs through use

to reduce costs through use of new technology, reducing restrictions on suppliers and making the procurement sys-tem transparent, it added. *PTI* 

that the firm produces from fields such as KG-D5 in the Krishna Godavari basin, people with direct knowledge of the matter said.

matter said.

The government had in October 2020 allowed affiliates of gas producers to buy the fuel in open auction.

This policy change allowed Reliance to buy two-thirds out of the additional 7.5 million standard cubic metres per day of

standard cubic metres per day of gas it along with partner BP plc of UK plans to produce this year from the new fields in KG-D6 block.
"ONGC too can look at this
"The new subsidiary
"ction

"ONGC too can look at this option now. The new subsidiary can participate in any auction that ONGC will do for incremental gas from KG-D5 block," a source said.

Besides ensuring competition and fair price discovery, the ONGC subsidiary can then sell the gas so sourced to firms such as Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd (MRPL) at

Petrochemicais Ltu (MIGE L.) on a margin. This would help ONGC earn better margins on the gas produced. "Right now gas is a loss-making business for ONGC.

becomes a viable proposition," the source said.

The government has given operators the freedom to dis-

The government controls gas price which is less than cost of production," the source said. The government has fixed a price of USD 1.79 per million British thermal unit for ONGC's fields. This is half of the cost of production.

production.

It allows a higher rate of production.

It allows a higher rate of USD 4.06 per mmBtu for difficult fields such as deepsea fields (KG-D6 and KG-D6) but even hat is less than the cost of production from highly capital intensive projects.

The current regulation means even if Reliance discovered a price equivalent of USD 6.7 per mmBtu for the 7.5 mms.cmd of new gas from KG-D6, it would get only USD 4.06 till March 31.

The same would apply for ONGC. It might discover a rate higher for the 15 mms.cmd incremental gas planned from KG-D5 block-but it can get only USD 4.06 as per current price. "So essentially the ONGC (25 gas subsidiary can bid and buy KG-D5 lock-but it can get only USD 4.06 for per mmBtu but can sell to MRTL or any once a sell to MRTL or any other than the consumer at a Pt of the gas business

er market prices but this rate

operations the needed that has cover market prices but this rate is subject to a pricing ceiling or ap that the government notifies every six months. The cap for six months to March 31, 2021 is USD 4.06 per mmBtu.

In the February 5 auction, Reliance O2C Limited, an affiliate of Reliance Industries Itd, picked up 4.8 mmscmd out of the 7.5 mmscmd gas auctioned. State gas utility GAIL (India) Ltd won 0.85 mmscmd of supplies while Shell picked up 0.7 mmscmd.

Adani Total Gas Ltd got 0.1 mmscmd, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) 0.2 mmscmd and Torrest Gas 0.02 umscmd. Other buyers includ mmscmd. Other buyers includ

mmscmd. Other buyers included IRM Energy (0.1 mmscmd), PIL (0.35 mmscmd) and IGS (0.35 mmscmd), they said. Sources said the gas was bought at a price of USD 0.18 per million British thermal unit discount to JKM (Japan/Korea liquefied natural gas import price), that is price of JKM (minus) USD 0.18 with tenures ranging from 3 to 5 years. PTI

# Sunday announced that all kinds of steel will be allowed for highways provided these meet the quality parameters. Earlier, the contract provisions required use of steel produced by primary/integrate steel producers only. The move is aimed at ensuring cost reduction in highways construction using steel. "The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has issued orders that all steel whether produced from ore, beliefs, pellets or melting of scrap-would be allowed to be used for National Highway construction, as long as it meets the standards required for specific grades of steel," the Ministry said in a statement. The steel proposed to be used would be tested in NABL-accredited laboratories as a third party check before Keeping close eye on cost structure amid rising | NCLAT asks Devas Multimedia commodity prices: Maruti Suzuki official

New Delhi: Increasing commodity prices, specially those of rhodium and palladium, which are used in catalysers to meet strict emission norms, are putting cost pressure on automobile makers, according to a senior official of Maruti Suzuki

India.

The company, which had hiked prices of its vehicles in January, however is not planning to pass on the burden to consumers in the near future although it is keeping a close eye on its cost structure. With the supply of semi-conductors becoming a challenge for the automotive industry. Warful is well as the control of the company of the conductors becoming a challenge for the automotive industry. Marriel Surghi is also

lenge for the automotive indus-try, Maruti Suzuki is also watching the situation closely although it will have normal supply this month. "In commodities, prices have gone up dramatically this year, especially that of steel, and rhodium and palladium, which are used in catalysers of BS-VI vehicles.

"Demand across the world has gone up but its mining hap-pens only in Russia and South Africa. There, the mining was much lesser because of the pandemic," Maruti Suzuki

pandemic, Maruti Suzuki India Executive Director (Marketing & Sales) Shashank Srivastava told PTI. Supply was less and glob-al demand is very high because all Euro VI, BS-VI and China all Euro VI, BS-VI and China VI vehicles require catalysers, he said adding, so, the demand has gone up, whereas supply is constant and 80 per cent of demand for rhodium and pal-ladium comes from the auto industry."

industry."

When asked if the issue is as critical as that of semiconductor, he said, "for rhodium and palladium, supply is not an issue but price is a problem but in semiconductor supply is a "schlem"

problem."

Commenting on Maruti
Suzuki's position with regards
to semiconductor supplies,

Srivastava said, "right now for semiconductors we don't have an issue. January was normal for us. February seems to be normal but there is a major semiconductor shortage in the auto industry. So, we are watch ing the situation very careful ly. Right now we are not affect

On whether the compan

# shareholder to approach NCLT

On whether the company plans to pass on the burden of increased rhodium and palladium prices to consumers. Srivastava replied in the negative stating the company had hiked vehicle prices in January because of increase in commodity prices. We keep watching the increased prices largely because of the increase in commodity prices. We keep watching the cost structure, how the costs are evolving and take decisions accordingly.

Now we have to take care of the demand.

PTI

Indid ilsposing of its plea, Multimedia plant being client being client being client being client being control of the company.

While disposing of its plea, Multimedia point of the laboration of the Multimedia and has been a provisional liquidator for the company.

It had also directed the pro-visional liquidator to take con-trol of the management, prop-erties and actionable claims of Devas Multimedia.

Devas Multimedia.

The NCLT order was challenged before the NCLAT by Devas Employees Mauritius, which holds 3.48 per cent of issued equity share of Devas Multimedia.

'Order of Admission' is passed at the initial stage, the Appellant's interest is not like-ly to be affected or prejudicial because latent and patent rea-

Devas Multimedia.

The NCLAT by Devas Employees Mauritius, which holds 3.48 per cent of issued equity share of Devas Multimedia.

Devas Employees Mauritius, which holds 3.48 per cent of issued equity share of Devas Multimedia.

Devas Employees Mauritius has submitted that being a shareholder of Devas Multimedia, being its constituent Board Member and owner and hence it has a say in the manner in which the company, its affairs, management care carried out.

According to the petitioner, the NCLT order of Januer, 19, affects its right to participate in the affairs and management of Devas Multimedia.

However, the NCLAT to be affected or prejudicial because latent and patent read-on that still it may get an apportunity to be heard when the provide the value of the telling provided with the still it may get an apportunity to be heard when the provided when the stelling to the telling provided with the sum of the tribunal (Pulcia) Balvinder Sing the distribution of the tribunal (NCLT) seeking permission to implead itself in the main pending Company facts/reasons for the same, and NCLAT in its order passed on February 11.

## SRM inks MoU with TANUVAS for joint research

Kattankulathur: SRM Institute of Science and Technology Kattankulathur has signed

Kattankulathur has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (TANUVAS). The signing was between the Department of Food Process Engineering, SCADIST and College of Food and Dairy Technology, Koduvalli, TANUVAS.

Koduvalli, TANUVAS.

As per the MoU, both institutes will have a broad scope to carry out faculty and student exchange programme to carry out training and research activities for a shorter duration. The area will be extended to joint research activities to explore opportunities to undertake research funding from external funding agencies. This agreement will also facilitate to con-

duct joint academic events duct joint academic events such as short courses, seminars, workshops, or conferences based on mutual interests and available expertise in both the institutions. Both institutes can share and carry out joint research in technology for distance and computer-based learning.

research in technology for dis-tance and computer-based learning.

The MoU was exchanged between Dr. C. Balachandran, Vice Chancellor, TANUVAS and Dr. C. Muthamizhchelvan Pro Vice Chancellor (E&T), SRMIST in the presence of TANUVAS officials Dr. PTEnsingh Gnanaraj, Registrar, Dr. Ceclila Joseph, Director Research; Dr. V. Appa Rao, Dean Research and Dr. Premnath Manoharan, professor & HoD Food Processor Engineering, SRMIST officials Dr. S. Ponnusamy, Registrar; Dr. TV. Gopal, Dean College of Engineering and Technology;



the departments and faculty members.

the departments and faculty members.

Speaking at the signing ceremony Dr. C. Balachandran, Vice Chancellor, TANUVAS said, 'The outcome of this MoU may bring new innovative ideas and solutions for the growing demand and recurring issues of the Food Processing and Health sector in India. Both the universities can now share knowledge, technology, and faculty exchange program. We need engineers when it comes to technology hence the scope is more in this sector."

Dr. C. Muthamizhchelvan, Fro Vice Chancellor (E&T), SRMIST said, 'Gone are the days when we worked as individuals, now it is important that we work with other with institutes' universities. Such collaborations open up new avenues and will benefit both parties."

mental peace?

Mental health
when disturbed

# **PLAY YOUR M**

Positive mental health helps athletes handle the pressure and boosts their performance on ground, AMRUTA KARKHANIS DESHMUKH shares how



Sports players are considered as fit individuals who showcase flexibility to flex their bodies through tough circumstances and pull through teur bodies through tough circumstances and pull through their sport performance. They train day in and out to have command over their body and techniques. Every sport has their own demands and likewise a training schedule is devised by their coaches and followed by players and their parents for optimal performance. Long ago it was identified that despite best body and technique, something was stopping the players to achieve their best. On deeper investigation it was found that mind

had a role to play in performance which was often not understood. With time, coaches, parents and players recognised this gap and started understanding the need for mental training.

Despite increased awareness, the taboo of visiting a mental health professional acts as a huge barrier to adopt a positive and progresive change. Over years sport psychology (area of specialisation that uses psychological interventions in sports set up) has found its space and parents, coaches and players are reaching out to professionals for performance enhancement.

Winning is still the biggest moti-

everyone involved in sports. Even after having an emphasis on participation and excellence, achieving success and avoiding failures takes centre stage for one and all. Whether one is playing an individual sport or a team sport, chief coach to subordinate coaches, sport science experts along with player's parents make a crucial part of the team which together influences the course of action for long.

Management of sports players involves binding the entire team

strongly and keeping them on the same page. In this competitive world, increased exposure to international competitive events, advances in support from corporate and government sectors has led to increased performance pressure. With time, sports has moved from mere joy, sense of satisfaction to pride and professionalism. The demand to perform is so strong that it comes with the tag of "Success at any cost." But do we really need success at the cost of our mental peace? affects one's ability to recognise the self-potential and gets bogged down by stress. Talent wasted due to lack of professional help at right time can never stand the spirit of sports. Hence, it becomes essential to learn the mind-body connection and mental toughness to become resilient in testing moments of matches. It's scientifically proven that exercise promotes positive mental health but sometimes this observation doesn't hold true. With increasing competitive stress,

tion doesn't hold true. With increas-ing competition, competitive stress, pressure of expectations, financial crisis, logistic issues and infrastruc-tural concerns, the challenges to per-form good are not just vested in tal-ent but in things beyond one's con-trol too.

form good are not just vested in talent but in things beyond one's control too.

Anxiety, depression, personality disorder, mood disorders, panic,
PTSD, eating disorders as well as
more serious mental health issues
are coming to surface in population as young as age 10. The
peak years of sport performance and the onset of multiple mental health issues
coincide and thus, this fact
of understanding the
underlying issues which
end attention are simply
side-lined. While the
mind of a player is most
important, even the
mind-set of their coaches and the parents are
equally important. It is
essential to create a holistic
approach in bringing a
change in their perspectives
towards winning and success. Lack
of time, resources, myths that it is
only for elite players have been
wiped-out; the need of the hour is
mental health training for all.

(The writer is a sports psychologist.)

В BED



BEHIND HER EYES (SEASON 1)

BEHIND HER EYES (SEASON 1) A single mother enters a world of twisted mind games when she begins an affair with her psychiatrist boss while secretly befriending his mysterious wife. Starring Simona Brown, Eve Hewson and Tom Bateman, the TV drama releases on February 17 on Netflix.



I CARE A LOT (2021)
A court-appointed legal guardian defrauds her older clients and traps them under her care. But her latest mark comes with some unexpected baggage. Starring Rosamund Pike, Peter Dinklage and Eiza González, the film releases on February 19 on Netflix.



PELÉ (2021)
Against the backdrop of a turbulent era in Brazil, this documentary captures Pelé's extraordinary path from breakthrough talent to national hero. It releases on February 23 on Netflix.

A rjun Kapoor and Ranveer Singh's Gunday was a bit as audiences really loved their camaraderie. Past the seventh anniversary of the film's release, Arjun shares why Gunday is and will always be one of his favourite films.

□What did you love about the film that made you sign it instantly?

At the time I was starting my career, I was hardly six months old in the business and Adi sir (Aditya Chopra) offered me a film which was a two-hero ensemble, big commercial set-up. When I met Ali (Abbas Zafar), I loved his energy and excitement towards treating it like a larger than life adventure. It was like a throwback and a tribute to the 70's & 80's cinema that I grew up watching. The 'Mukul Anand, Subhash Chai space of cinema' and at the same time a film about brotherhood and agnagsters. When you are a young time a film about brotherhood and gangsters. When you are a young actor starting out, these are all trappings that you love exploring and doing in mainstream cinema. You want to establish yourself at the beginning. You want to do mainstream stuff with a sense of heightened reality and that's what Gunday was all about. I got really excited about doing something so front footed and mainstream.

### □Your bromance with Ranveer in

Diour bromance with Ranveer in the film was an instant hit. Tell us what made the bonhomie so special.

I think it was the off-camera love and respect we had for each other because we realised we have too much in common. In fact we are born in the many large and the second of the s much in common. In fact we are born just ten days apart from each other. It was much simpler for us to bond than we realised. And when you are starting out, you are not thinking about your career and rivalry. You are not thinking about your career and rivalry. You are and I also knew each other before the film so it made it a little simpler to break the ice onset. Credit to Ali for writing a film that allowed us to be best friends. He was a big factor for bringing me and Ranweer closer. It just happened, it was just the flow. It's like chalk and cheese where even



## Larger than life

Past the seventh anniversary of Gunday, actor ARJUN KAPOOR shares his love for the role and how his on-screen bromance with RANVEER SINGH instantly became a hit

though we are poles apart, we still manage to fit together. It's like sugar and spice, they are opposites but both sound good together. We were two people who were completely different but ended up getting along and working well together. People realised this when they saw the trailer where both of us looked good together.

☐The film presented you in an all new avatar. What did you love the

new avatar. What did you love the most about your character? Costumes. To play a character in the 70s, a gangster, it's always excit-ing to go into. It was my first-peri-od film at that time. The way I was styled, presented, the low angle trol-leys and just being treated larger than life, running in slow motion, that introduction coming out of the train,

landing on a coal train and much more. I think the presentation was by bigger than any third film could have gotten me and it was cool, unique and exciting. You usually feel that you need to work a lot, before you get that kind of scale but here I was immediately, in the third film, within the first six/eight months of my career.

□What do you think was the film's

USP?

I think the camaraderie between Ranveer and me and the big star cast coming together, was special. After a long time, there was a two-hero film and the youth loved the music. I know for a fact that the music and trailer made all the difference.

#### Here are five common myths around organic skincare products

Today consumers have become more aware and conscious of harmful chemicals hidden in their skincare products. They are skeptical of using skincare that wear the claim of being 'organic' and ''all natural', often questioning if these claims are just marketing gimmicks. Dr. Jagvir Singh, Founder and President, Refresh Botanicals lists five common misconceptions about organic skinconceptions about organic skin-care that will make you rethink your regimen.

MYTH 1: Using DIY masks is

MYTH 1: Using DIY masks is same as using organic products. People believe that whipping up a yogurt and honey smoothie in your blender and using it as a face mask will benefit their skin as much as an organic face mask. While we're all up for a DIY face treatment once in a while, the ingredients you find in your kitchen can't really compare to the active ingredients found in organic skincare products. These special ingredients are usually extracted at the molecular level leaving behind the most active and potent part for your skin care.

### MYTH 2: Organic products are

ineffective

Many people are afraid of change and stick to a product that they are familiar with and have used for years. Unfortunately, many drugstore products have been diluted, watered down, and filled with an abundance of chemical presentation to evolution. filled with an abundance of chemical preservatives to extend the lifespan. This means that while the product may offer quick results, you shouldn't hold your breath waiting to see any real long-term benefits for the health of your skin.

Organic products, on the

#### TREND T 0 0 L



other hand, are jam-packed with vital nutrients, antioxidants, vitamins and minerals at high con-centrations that truly feeds your skin. You'll instantly get that radiant, hydrated and clear skin.

### MYTH 3: Organic products need preservatives to last

longer
Highly organic products Highly organic products often require premium packaging that are equipped with air-less pumps. This prevents the highly organic plant material from oxidising, thus spoiling. When looking for organic skin-care, look for airless pumps—meaning that the product is being pumped through literally being pushed out of the container.

MYTH 4: Eating healthy is enough for great skin There is no argument with the benefits of eating clean, antioxidant-rich foods and drinking tons of water. However,

a healthy diet alone is not nec-essarily enough for great skin. While everything you eat does have an impact on your skin, food cannot cleanse away impurities and environmental toxins the way a good face wash can, or provide a protective barrier on the skin the way a moisturiser on the skin the way a moisturiser on the skin the and the strength of the skin of the

### MYTH 5: All "Natural Types" of skincare are created equal

MYTH 5: All "Natural Types" of skincare are created equal
There is a thin line between organic and natural products. Note that we use the word natural bren, and not organic. While many products may claim to be "all-natural" on their label; if doesn't mean that their ingredients are in fact "organic." Natural products often contain natural

ingredients but may contain pesticides and other harmful

pesticides and chemicals.

For a skin care brand to be able the claim of "organic," For a skin care brand to be able to wear the claim of "organic," ingredient suppliers have to undergo a rigorous process where they are monitored for many years to ensure that their farming methods are free of pesticides, herbicides and chemicals. Additionally, skin care brands must ensure that their manufacturers follow stringent practices to ensure there is no cross contamination of organic and inorganic materials.

In today's time awareness about chemical-laden products is gaining momentum, which is high increased awareness is making more people to switch to organic making more people to switch to organic monthly the size of the content of the switch and the content of the content of

increased awareness is making more people to switch to organic products. While more people are making the transition, more become mindful about the use of chemicals in regular everyday products and are adapting to the natural organic skincare regime.

### TREND BLAZER

### AJAY BEGINS SHOOT FOR MAIDAAN

AJAY DEVGN began shooting for the final schedule of his forthcoming sports film *Maidaan* on Valentine's Day in Mumbai. The film is slated for a

Dussehra release this year.

The film is inspired by the true story of Indian football coach Syed Abdul Rahim, who coached and managed the Indian national team from 1950 till his death in 1963, and is considered by many as the man who changed the face of modern Indian football. Major portions of the film, helmed by Amit Ravindernath Sharma, have been shot across Lucknow, Kolkata and



'At home. I tend to create a lot of drama. So, my daughter says that I am dramatic about everything. I tell her that is because of my profession. I feel as an actor, you play various characters. You leave a part of yourself in every character, and a bit of every character stays back in you. So you are really not the per-son that you are claiming



'Every time there has been an adversity, my life seems to fall in place rather than fall apart. From failing exams, getting fired to heartbreaks, major sick-ness and serious injuries, my life has only fallen in place after every such event. I'm not exactly a super positive about every-thing kind of person but if it can happen to me, it can happen to you too."

### JANNEY PRAISES HER CO-STARS

Actress Allison Janney Actiess ALLISON JANNEY enjoyed working with Mila Kunis, Regina Hall and Awkwafina in the film *Breaking News In Yuba County,* and has praises to shower on each of

"The script really grabbed me from the start. It was incredibly exciting, dark, funny, and violent - a great mix, said Janney.









A taadi hai toh sab hai (where there is freedom there is everything)," said Rehana Begum, who along with her husband and children, was rescued from a Municipal Corporation toilet compound in 2017. Originally from Purnia in Bihar, the family moved states looking for work opportunities. "My husband and I were married without the permission from our families, so we had no place to fall back on, that is the price one pays for being a woman who dares to love," said Rehana.

back on, that is the price one pays for being a woman who dares to love," said Rehana.

"Initially, we were offered ₹5,000. As we lived in a rented space, the idea of moving into the complex full time seemed lucrative. As our entire family moved into the complex, I had to do double shifts of guarding the toilet and on several occasions, had to clean it as well. My work started at nine in the morning until 11 at night," added she. Taking care of three children, cleaning toilets and juggling housework, clearly took a toll on her.

She shared, "Living on the site permanently, we worked in the compound day in and day out. Our wages were stopped and when I refused to work, I was threatened with sexual violence. I had fallen sick at one point and was diagnosed with pneumonia but was not allowed to go to a hospital for proper treatment. The only saving grace is that I am clandally free. I family were rescued.

am finally tree."
Rehana and her family were rescued
by National Campaign Committee for

## BREAKING CHA

Innovative solutions are needed to prevent bonded labour, says Sumedha Pal

bonded labour, says Sumedha Pal.

Eradication of Bonded Labour (NCCBL). A court case is pending in Court case in Court case in the West and South, also have such pockets.

Desperate and vulnerable populations of the Court case in the West and South, also have such pockets.

Desperate and vulnerable population of unorganised workers, who are in one situ workers, who are in one position to negotiate wages or their tights, have become a massive pool for in Suth in the May in the proposition to no gostition to negotiate wages or their tights, have become a massive pool for in other part in the West and South, also have such pockets.

Desperate and vulnerable population of unorganised workers, who are in one position to negotiate wages or their tights, have become a massive pool for in the proposition of unorganised workers, who are in one stimulation of workers, who are in one stimulation of which is trying hard to find a job as a domestic worker. It family family the part is trying hard to find a job as a domestic worker, who are in one of the position of unorganised workers, who are in one stimulation of which is trying hard to find the proposition of unorganised workers, who are in one of the part of the substitution of unorganised workers, who are in one of the position of unorganised workers, who are in the West and South, also ave such pockets.

To study position to the destroy of the position of unorganised workers, who are in the West and South, also not possition to negotiate wages or their tights, have become a massive pool for fights, have become a massive pool for fight

promised ₹1,500 per person per week by the contractor. The same person promised to pay the same amount for two of her children, giving them a chance of making more money. Explaining what transpired at the kiln, she said, "The only means for us

Explaining what transpired at the kiln, she said, "The only means for us to have made money was to move cities. My children were taken to Himachal Pradesh. Instead of ₹1,500, we were paid only ₹500 every week or even less. With no money and no clue of our children, there was a sense of feeling trapped. I remember working around the clock carrying bricks on my back. It feels like a blur to me, the life that I lived for five years."

Prinki survived by living in a makeshift tent, eating corn kernels and bread. She was finally rescued in 2017 along with her husband by NCBL As per the wages promised to the couple, the contractors owed them over one lakh rupees. However, the family hasn't received a single penny so far.

For her, losing her children and never getting to see them again was the biggest trauma. "I was beaten up several times, I was not paid for my work, but losing my children was the scariest part's aid she.

she. The COVID-19 pandemic and the The COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown imposed to contain the spread of the virus has worsened the situation for the bonded labours as rescue operations have also come to halt. Nirmal Gorana of the National Campaign Committee for Eradication of Bonded

Labour (NCCBL) responsible for conducting rescue operations across India said, "Amid the pandemic, many were trapped in the sites of exploitation as rescue operations remained stalled. As the nationwide lockdown was announced, brick kiln sites, several construction sites in remote parts of the country, including the agricultural sector continued to function."

However, the meagre wages that the bonded labourers were getting was also stopped. They had appealed in the Chandigarh High Court, but the state was overburdened at that point and undertaking rescue operations became difficult. Even those who could be rescued were not being given repartation and police protection, making their chances of falling back in the trap of bonded labour much higher.

Though bonded labour was outlawed in 1976 when the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act came into force, the news of rescues is fairly common. Convictions, however, are a few.

A senior official in the Central Labour Ministry on the condition of anonymity said, "There is widespread prevalence of violence in case of the bonded labour and the assistance, especially during the times of COVID has been delayed. However, when it comes to rescues, the responsibility lies with the respective states to act on these complaints.

The Centrally Sponsored Plan Scheme for Rehabilitate hose rescued. As part of this scheme, adult male rescuers are entitled to the financial assistance of ₹1 lakh, while those who come under special categories, such as women and children are entitled to ₹2 lakh. Others, who are rescued from forced or bonded labour from more extreme conditions like sexual exploitation, brothels or trafficking, as deemed by the District Magistrate, are eligible for financial assistance of ₹3 lakh along with some non-cash assistance from the state governments.

This financial assistance is funded by the centre but comes only after conviction. A person who is rescued is eligible to ₹20,000 as immediate assistance, from the State State and State assistance, the political series and substituted to a state-issued rescue certificate (RC), which makes them eligible for the rehabilitation measures; however, those getting the certificates remain absymally low.

None of the people the writer spoke to had been provided with the compensation. Despite a large number of womenworkers. Women's work is unaccounted for and their labour is not r



## Towards a better society

To change the current situation, the lifestyles of the people need to change. savs Rajyogi Brahmakumar Nikunj ji

Says FALYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKINJ J

Population, when unchecked, increases at a geometrical ratio. Subsistence increases only in an arithmetical ratio..., said Thomas Malthus in his thesis, titled An Essay on the Principle of Population, which was published in 1798. When he made this observation, the world-population was not even on ebillion. During the last 200 years, it has grown to around 7.8 billion. And the prediction of Malthus that the world would run out of food due to its growing population, has not yet come exactly rine. There is no doubt, Malthus did not foresee that at some time in the future, there would be a spectacular increase in food produce cactly in arthmetic progression, yet no sensible person can deny that, after all, here is an upper limit to production of subsistence by the upper limit to production of subsistence by the earth. But, strangely, we find that there is no effective clarity in regard to this hard fact in the minds of those who formulate national policies.

One can see that. One can see that, even today, in most of the under developed countries, the situation is still Malthusian and the people there do not have enough food. It is a well-established fact.



have enough tood. It is a well-established fact that the population growth-rate in these countries makes it extremely difficult for their governments to enadicate poverty and unemployment. So the living conditions for large sections of people there are really poor. In such a critical situation of stark poverty, high incidence of disease and extreme scarcity of health care facilities, many welfare and social service agencies voluntarily help the impoverished, the sick, the handicapped and the mentally unwell people. No doubt, immediate help in the form of food, medicine, shelter, health-care, etc. is needed for quite a large number of people and these chartable insist two commendable social a service. Newmorthed seeds and the mental service to the control of the service of the

Nevertheless, the basic problem remains because the root of all these maladies is not eradicated. The population in these poor countries continues to rise enormously and, alongside it, the number of poor unemployed, diseased and hungry people also continue to multiply. The reason for this is that no sincere and concrete steps are taken to give a high degree of clarity to the people.

Another factor that is responsible for this critical situation is the highly consumeristic and wasteful lifestyle of affluent nations or of affinent sections of society in the same country. It is not known to many that about 80 per cent of the gross world-products are consumed by the developed countries which constitute only 20 per cent of the world-population while remaining world population that dwell in developing countries gets only 15 per cent of gross world products. So again there is need to give clarity to the people about the urgent need for simplicity in life. Hence, what people of developing nations should made to be understood that mere chartly cannot solve the problems of poverty and hunger, created by exploitation, social injustice and the utterly self-ish and wasteful life-style of some nations or some sections of society. In fact, some people have recently raised this vital question about the end-result of charity after a controversial documentary was made by a popular director in the West on charity work done by the organisations there.

Many scholarly people across the globe

in the West on charity work done by the organisations there.

Many scholarly people across the globe have made a strong observation and said that charity alone would not serve the purpose. One has, therefore or eiterate that when the more is clarity, by means of such knowledge that brings in its wale, the highly needed moral values of social justice, brotherhood, love, abstance from sex-lust and inspiration for a simple litestyle. Remember, to change the current situation, the lifestyles of the people need to change.

# Irain together, stay together

Working out with your partner can have psychological benefits, shares SOHRAB KHUSHRUSHAHI



by National Campaign Committed.

You are most influenced by the people you surround yourself with, so choose wisely. This was some really good advice I was some really good advice I was some really good advice I was given very early on in life. In my opinion, one of the biggest reasons sure. So what happens when your spouse or partner joins you on this journey of yours? Would that make your life easier? Would it had help you stick to your plan and process? Most likely, yes!

The pandemic has been a huge learning curve for a lot of people. Not only have their priorities changed, but also their attitude towards health and fitness. For someone like me, fitness has been a part of life since a very young age and even though I've suffered through my fair share of family or peer pressure, its never actually made me waiver. My wife never really worthey do it life to be honest. The only time she started taking her fitness seriously was after we had our first child. She's always been thin, but fit is something she's had to work on and really hard. I wasn't really enthused about the idea of us working out together If In being absolutely honest, but having a goal and working on it togethers have a sufficient of the some protection of

me an opportunity to make her push a little because I know if she trains alone, she isn't going to work as hard as she should. For people who are just start-

ing out, the peer and family pressure can get a bit too much and nine times out of 10 they will falthat can benefit both parties.

□It improves the emotional bond

Jit improves the emotional bond you share with your partner According to various studies, working out with your partner like sprinting or jogging at the same pace, rhythmic weight-training or any workout has a plethora of pos-

itive effects. As a result, couples who work out together may feel more "emotionally attuned" with one another as compared to oth

□Accountability Working out together sets the accountability for both partners

ers.

It brings happiness to your relationship
Exercise makes you a happiner person individually, thanks to all the endorphins you release during and after your workout. If you work out with your partner, you get to experience that together.

er.
Pushing and motivating each
other, then seeing the results of
all the hard work you've put in,

and each one motivates the other to achieve goals, both as individuals and as a couple. And let's be honest, we have our bad days where we don't feel like working out, on such days your partner could be the person who pushes you to get the work done. If one

creates positivity for your relationship.

□It's a commitment to each

"It's a commitment to each other

If you and your partner make working out together a regular thing, you establish a common goal and respect that physical activity is important for yourselves and your relationship. There are a bunch of studies that show that individuals are more likely to make a positive health behaviour change if their partner dues too.

Overall, fitness regimes can be made more interesting and working out as a couple is one of the ways to make that happen. What adds to the fun are those moments of slight humour in between workouts adds to the contact hads, following health and a fun thing to do if the same is a fun thing to do if the same is shared. Hence, the saying 'couples who train together, stay togeth-er'.

(The writer is the founder of Sohfit.)

"

#### Don't let yesterday take up too much of today. -Will Rogers

### APPS THAT MAY ENHANCE YOUR PERSONALITY

team of researchers have developed a smartphone app that may help people who are looking to work on their personality

The majority of participants, who used the app for three months, said that they wanted to reduce their emotional vulnerability, increase their

conscientiousness or

participated in the intervention for more than three months reported greater success in achieving their change g than the control group who took part for only two m indicated the findings published in the journal Procei of the National Academy of Sciences.

or the National Academy of Sciences. "The participants and their friends alike reported that three months after the end of the intervention, the personality changes brought about by using the app had persisted," sale researcher Mathias Allemand from the University of Zurich in Switzerland.

### GREEN VEGGIES MAY UP THINKING SKILLS

eople who eat a
Mediterranean-style
diet — particularly one
rich in green leafy
vegetables and low in meat
— are more likely to stay
mentally sharp in later life, a
eturly shows.

nme times out of 10 they will fal-ter. So having your partner or spouse join you on your journey will only make it easier. Having said all of the above, there are documented advantages of working out with your spouse



mentally sharp in later life, a study shows. The study indicated study shows. The study indicated that higher scores in a range of memory and thinking tests among adults in their late 70s.

"Eating more green leafly vegetables and cutting down on red meat might be two key food elements that contribute to the benefits of the Mediterranean-Syle diel," said researcher Janie Corley from the University of Edinburgh. The individual components of the diel that appeared to be most strongly associated with better thinking skills were green leafly vegetables and a lower red meat Intake.

"In our sample, the positive relationship between a ""

"In our sample, the positive relationship between a Mediterranean diet and thinking skills is not accounted for by having a healthier brain structure, as one might expect," said Corley.

### STRESS LINKED TO RISK OF HEART ATTACK

aking stress may be not be good for your heart as a new study suggests that long-term stress may lead to increased risk of heart attack.

• Increased risk of heart attack. The study, published in the journal Scientific Reports, indicated that people with hipher levels of cortisol are at an increased risk of heart attack.

"The levels of the stress hormone cortisol differed between people who have had a heart attack and those not affected. This suggests that cortisol in hat may be a cortisol in hair may be a new risk marker for heart

attacks," said Tomas
Faresjo from the Linkoping
University in Sweden

Faresjo from the Linkoping
University in Sweden.
Cortisol is a steroid
hormone that regulates a
wide range of processes throughout the body, including
metabolism and the immune response. It also has a very
important role in helping the body respond to stress.
The researchers showed that patients who suffered a
heart attack had statistically significant higher levels of cortisol
during the month preceding the event.

### VR-BASED APP TO TREAT FEAR OF HEIGHTS

team of researchers have developed a virtual reality (VR)-based app for smartphones to reduce fear of heights.

The findings indicated that trial participants who spent a total of four hours training with the app at home had an improvement in their ability to handle real

aonity to nanote real height situations. What is new, however, is that smartphones can be used to produce the virtual scenarios that previously required a technically complicated type of treatment, and this makes it much more accessible, "said lead author Dorothee Bentz, from the University of Basel in Switzerland.

Fear of heights is a widespread phenomenon Approximately five per cent of the general population experiences a debilitating level of discomfort in height situations.

#### DOUBLE MASKS REDUCE EXPOSURE TO VIRUS

he US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention The US Centers for Disease control and Trochisco.

(CDC) has recently conducted experiments to improve the fit of masks amid COVID-19 pandemic, suggesting that combining cloth mask and medical procedure mask could reduce a wearer's exposure to

virus by over 90 per cent.

In January, the CDC conducted experiments to assess two ways of improving the fit of medical procedure masks: Fitting a cloth mask over a medical procedure

procedure mask, and knotting the ear loops of a medical then tucking



then tucking in and flattening the extra material close to the face, the Xinhua news agency reported.

Each modification substantially improved source control and reduced wearer exposure, according to a report released by the CDC on Wednesday.

# **ASHWIN SPINS OUT ENG**

India take firm control of 2nd Test after Ashwin & Co wreak havoc on Chepauk track

2nd Test. Day 3 STAR SPORTS 1 NETWORK

India took command of the second Test after an exhilarating day two when 15 wickets fell on a rapidly deteriorating pitch with star spinner Ravichandran Ashwin ensuring a massive first innings lead for the hosts with his 29th five-wicket haul, here on Sunday.

Resuming the day at 300 for Rishabh Pant took India to

Resuming the day at 300 for six, Rishabh Pant took India to 329 in their first innings with an unbeaten 58 before running out of partners.

Ashwin (5/43) and company then bundled out England for 134 on a pitch that is getting more vicious by each passing session. The 34-year-old picked up his second five-wicket haul of the series by uprooting the stumps of number 11 Stuart Broad.

By close of play, India were 53 for one in the second innings, extending their lead to 249 runs.

Wickets fell in a heap on Sunday but it was by no means an unplayable surface, as demonstrated by Rohit Sharma on the opening day and with 25 off 62, he was going strong even by stumps on day two. Cheteshwar Pujara (7) batting off 18) was at the other end.

However, barring Ben Foakes not out), England batsmen (42 not out), England batsmen had no answers to the challenge posed by the Indian bowlers. The sweep shot that came to their rescue in much easier conditions in the previous Test, brought their downfall including Root. So far, the script has played out perfectly for India, who won the all important toss on the opening day and put up a decent enough total on a dustbowl in their bid to level the series. Ishant provided the first



### Sorry Bhajju pa: Ashwin after breaking Harbhajan's record

former India teammaté's number of Test wickets in the country.

With 266 scalps, Ashiwn is an only behind spin legend Anil Kumble's 550 wickets in home Tests. Ashwin went past Harbhajan, who took 265 wickets in India at an average of 28.76, by dismissing Ben Stokes with a perfect off-spinner on the second

breakthrough for India when he had left-handed opener Rory Burns LBW for a duck with a ball that nipped back and beat his

day of the second Test.
"When I was watching the 2001 series where Bhajjin Pa (Harbhajan) was playing, I didn't even imagine that I would go out and become an off-spinner for the

and become an oit-spinner for the country.

"I was still a batsman for mr state, trying to accelerate a career towards batting and playing for the country, I wasn't sure whether I would go on and become a player for the Indian team," Ashwin

The other opener Dom Sibley (16) was the next to go, caught by Virat Kohli at leg-slip off Ashwin,

said at a post-day conference. The 34-year-old Ashwin, who has so far taken 391 wickets from 76 Tests at an impressive average of 25.26, was not aware of his feat until he had come for the media interaction at the end of the day's play.

play.
According to Ashwin, a lot of his teammates, when he was young, would make fun of him as he used to try bowling like Harbhajan.

which was given by the third umpire after India chose to review as the on-field umpire turned down the appeal for a catch.

"Lot of my teammates from that age, from that generation, you know, used to make fun of me, because I used to bowl like *Bhajju Pa*, my action, I used to try and bowl like him and all that.

bowl like him and all that.
"So, from there on to come one and actually break the record of something that he possesses, has to be incredibly special. I didn't know of it, now that I do know of it, I feel happy. Sorry, Bhajjiu Pa...," said Ashwin.
PTI

The big wicket of captain Joe Root (6), who tormented the host bowlers in the first Test, was taken by debutant Axar Patel

### SINGLES

BAYERN MUNICH SNAPS UP UPAMECANO MUNICH: Bayern Munich is signing French defender Dayot Upamecano from Bundesliga rival Leipzig in its first transfer for next season. The Bavarian powerhouse said in a statement on Sunday that the 22-year-old Salo in a statement on Sunday that the 22-year-out Upanecano had agreed a five-year deal through June 2026 effective from July 1. Bayern is making use of a 42.5 million euro (\$51.5 million) buyout clause in Upanecano's current contract at Leipzig, which would otherwise have run to 2023.

ANKITA RALLIES TO WIN TOUR OPENER
MEADOUNE: Indian tennis player Ankita Raina
recorded her first videry in the singles main draw of a
WTA Tour event with a three-set win over Elisabetta
Cociaretta at the Phillip Island Trophy her on Sucky
Ankita came from belind to beat the Italian 5-7, 6-1, 62 in the opening round of the 2255,238 hard vident
tournament. The two-hour and 11 minutes win will take
Ankita to her new career-high insighes rank of 156 on
181. If she goes deep, then she will ensure her place in
ton-150.

ASIAN RECORDS FOR PRAVEEN, NISHAD Dusax: Teenaged high jumpers Praveen Kumar and Nishad Kumar produced their personal best effort take a Gold each and set new Asian records as the curtains came down on the 12th Fazza Internal World Para Athletics Grand Prix here. Praveen's and Nishards Gold medal-winning efforts were the high points for India who also had three Silver and a Bronze on Saturday to end their campainn at the on Saturday, to end their campaign at the championships with 23 medals. At the end of the competition, India were among the top finishers in the medal tally with Thailand returning home with 34 medals, while Turkey, Kenya and India finished with 23

#### SPEZIA STUNS SERIE A LEADER AC MILAN

SPEZIA SIMIS SEER A LEAVER AC PILLIN
SPEZIA AG Milan missed the chance to extend its lead
in Serie A when it lost 2-0 at Spezia, which was playing
its first match under new American owners. Guilo
Maggiore and Simone Bastoni scored their first Serie A
goals as Spezia dominated and stunned Milan in the
second half on Saturday. Milan did not even have a shot
on target. The Rossoneri remained two points clear of second nair on Saturday. Milan did not even have a snot on target. The Rossoneri remained two points clear of second-placed Inter Milan, which could leapfrog its city rival on Sunday with a win at home to Lazio.

MAN UTD TITLE PUSH LOSES STEAM
WEST BROWNICH: Manchester United squandered a
chance to put pressure on Premier League leaders
Manchester (Div as Bruno Fernames' equaliser spared
their blushes in a 1-1 draw at struggling West
Bromwich on Sunday, 0le Guman Golskjaer's side were
rocked by Mbaye Diagne's second-minute opener for
Albino at the Hawthorns, Portugal middleder Fername
season in all competitions. But United were unable to
find a break down second-bottom Albinon again and had
to settle for a third damaging draw in their last four
league matches. They moved above Leicester into
second place, but sit seven points behind City, who
have a game in hand.

Agorcies

## Pant needs break from constant comparisons: Ash | Caribbeans pull off | Pak hand Proteas fourth

Give Rishabh Pant a "break" from constant comparisons and let him go from strength to strength, his senior India teammate Ravichandran Ashiwn suggested on Sunday.

Be it for his keeping or batting, be it with one of India's greatest or any other player, Pant needs a break from all sorts of comparisons,

Indias greatest or any other player, Pant needs a break from all sorts of comparisons, expressed Ashiwn, who has been keeping the young stumper on his toes with deliveries that look like fetch-ing their team wickets every now and then.

mg tien team wickets every mow and then.

"He was constantly compared with the great MS Dhoni for a long time. Now he gets compared for his wicket-keeping with (Wriddhiman). Saha, this that and all that, sometimes it's just better to give a break and let people build on confidence," Ashwin said at the end of the second day's play during which he collected his 29th five-for in Test cricket.

Test cricket.
On his swashbuckling wicketkeeper-batsman, Ashwin continued, "With respect to Rishabh's keeping,



surface that is what I am going to say. In terms of me commenting on the pitch I think that is for someone above me to look at.

"It was incredibly challenging on that surface for us on day two. Theirs is obviously a very skilled spin attack as well on their own conditions. And it was a very good toss to win," Thorpe said at press conference.

when I am watching games from home where he is play-ing the white-ball format. "He has definitely got the ability, that is why he is here

the name of the game is confidence right, he has been batting well, he has been working incredibly hard on his keeping as well..

"And sometimes, when

Chennai pitch is incredibly challenging

CHENNAI: It is an incredibly challenging surface, said England assistant coach England assistant coach Graham Thorpe as India took upper hand after dis-missing England for 134 in their first innings on Sunday. "It is a very challenging surface that is what I am

Decisions by the third

pared to someone who has done well for years, it can be really hard, I really do feel for Rishabh, on a lot occasions,

umpire have come in for criticism in the match so far and on Sunday there was an issue over Rohit Sharma being ruled not out on review after he was ruled out by the on-field umpire.

However, Thorpe offered straight bat, saying "we have to accept the decision."

"we have to accept the deci-sion."
"We have to trust the technology...That's really all I can say," the former England batsman said to a question if there was a sense of frustration with the Decision Review System. Asked how the England batsmen would need to bat on a tricky pitch like the one here, Thorpe said the bats men had plans but could not execute. PTI

India's incredible series win in Australia last month, Pant said the comparisons with Dhoni are flattering but added he wants to carve his own identity in the game.

## another thrilling win

The West Indies beat Bangladesh by 17 runs in the second Test on Sunday to complete a 2-0

series sweep. Rahkeem Cornwall claimed 4/105 and com

series sweep.
Rahkeem Cornwall claimed 4/105 and completed a superb catch at first slip to end the match as the tourists bowled out Bangladesh for 213 in the second innings on the fourth day, 18 runs short of their victory target.
While Cornwall took centerstage, Kraigg Brathwaite (3/25) and Jonel Warrican (3/47) grabbed the remaining wickets as Bangladesh were bowled out for 213 on the fourth day.
The West Indies made 409 and 117 runs in their two innings and Bangladesh were all out for 296 in their first innings. The tourists had won their strong the st

"Coming over here with all the protocols in place, it is huge," he added.
"Very thankful for this opportunity. I'm very proud of the boys. It means everything back home."

## straight T20 series loss

Pakistan clinched a four-wicket vic

Pakistan clinched a four-wicket vic-tory over South Africa in the third and final T201 with eight balls to spare at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore on Sunday to clinch the series 2-1. South Africa were all at sea despite heroits from David Miller, who scored an unbeaten 85, and dabraiz Shamsi's career-best of 4-25, Pakistan were too good for the visitors as Hasan Ali and Mohammad Nawaz clubbed 20 runs off the penultimate over, bowled by Andile Phehlukvayo (2.4-0.37-0), to clinch the game and the series with some space to spare.

(2.40-37-0), to clinch the game and the series with some space to spare.

Babar Azam had won the toss and had asked Heinrich Klaasen's men to bat first. South Africa had slumped to 48 for six and 67 for seven before Miller sephotis pushed the South Africa exploits pushed the South African effort to a respectable 164 for eight.

Miller clubbed five boundaries and seven sixes, four of which came the final over of the innings, bowled by Faheem Ashraf (3-0-38-0), in his 45-ball lanings after the entire South African batting order had been caught like a deer in the headlights.

deer in the headlights.

In reply, Shamsi had bamboozled the Pakistan top-order to leave South Africa with hope of clinching a victory from the jaws of defeat but a lack of



support proved the difference as Pakıstan reached 169 for six with still eight balls remaining in the match. The only support Miller received in the South African effort was from open-granneman Malan. The Cobras man struck three fours and a six from 17 balls before being trapped leg before from debutant legspinner, Zihad Mahmood (40-40-40.3).

For Pakistan, Mohammad Rizwan, who scored a century and a fifty in the

For Pakistan, Mohammad Kızwan, who scored a century and a fifty in the first two games, along with new partner Haider Ali (15), gave the home side a good start with an opening stand of 51 from just 37 balls.

## Osaka, Serena prevail in three-setters

Gutsy Naomi Osaka saved two match points to outlast Garbine Muguruza in a tense comeback while Serena Williams was pushed to a decider but prevailed against Aryna Sabalenka in a thriller on Sunday and reach the Australian Open quarter-finals.

Hisch Su-wei swept into her first Grand Slam quarter-final after 16 years of trying becoming the oldest player to make a last-eight debut in the Open Era. Also, Simona Halep fought back from a set down to beat French Open champion Iga Swiatek 3-6, 6-1, 6-4.

serve in the third set before rattling off four points in a row. She then twice broke the serve of the two-time Grand Slam winner of the two-time Grand Slam winner Muguruza to prevall 4-6, 4-7.5 in one hour and 55 minutes of gripping action on an empty Rod Laver Arena.

She will now have an all-Asian quarter-final against Chinese Taipei veteran Histh Su-wei, who upset 19th seed Marketa Vondrousova 6-



opening set and never looked trou-bled in win over the 19th seed, a player she also toppled in an Abu Dhabi warm-up event in January.

### SERENA SURVIVES ONSLAUGHT

SERENA SURVIVES ONSIAUGHT

Serena Williams outlasted bightting Arryna Sabalenka in a three-set thriller to make Australian Open quarter-finals.

The American withstood a barage from the seventh seed to prevail 6-4, 2-6, 6-4 in two hours and nine minutes and set up a mouth-watering clash with world number two Simona Halep.

Williams, 39, had never before layed the Belarusian, who has collected more trophies than anyone else since last year French Open but never reached the quarter-finals of a Slam. Sabalenka, who has spoken about modelling her big-hitting game on Williams, showed off her power with blistering serves and groundstrokes in the high-octane contest.

A composed Williams, swatched

contest.

A composed Williams, watched by older sister Venus in the stands, counter-attacked superbly in the early stages and broke Sabalenka's serve in the 10th game to win the

Sabalenka, who was born four months after Williams made he forand Slam debut in 1998, was unperturbed and stepped up her assault to dominate Williams usually reliable serve.

The 22-year-old admonished herself before drawing level by pouncing on Williams's faltering first serve, which she landed just 36% of the time in the second set.

Williams regrouped and raced to a commanding 4-1 lead in the third set as a frustrated Sabalenka slammed her racquet to the ground as the match began to slip away.

Sabalenka won three

ground as the match began to alip away.

Sabalenka won three straight games to get back on terms but Williams's experience saw her through as she maintained her unbeaten run since emerging from 14-day quarantine in Australia.

Halep exacted revenge on Swiatek with a comeback three-set victory, which set up a blockbuster quarter-final with Serena Williams.

The world No 2 was thrashed by the 19-year-old at Roland Garros, winning just three games, but turned the tide in Melbburne.

## 300th Slam win for Djoker

AFP MELBOURNE

AFP MELBOURNE

Aired-looking Dominic Thiem hecame the highest seed to fall at this year's Australian Open when the US Open champion was sent tumbling out in straight sets by Grigor Dimitrov in the fourth round on Sunday while ailing world No 1 Novak Djokovic battled past Milos Ranoli to keep his title defence alive.

The night match's scheduling gave Djokovic the maximum amount of time to recover from a midriff muscle injury sustained in his five-set win over American Taylor Fritz late on Friday. And not operating at his best, Djokovic dropped a set but won 7-6(4), 4-6, 6-1, 6-4 in a bruising battle. It was the Serb's win No 300 in Grand Slam events.

Erdiger Thiem, the Austrian.

the Settles with Notes events.

Earlier, Thiem, the Austrian third seed and last year's losing finalist, appeared to lack energy after rallying to beat Nick Kyrgios over five gruelling sets on Friday in front of a raucous crowd. He struggled to match the intensity of the 18th-seed-



ed Bulgarian on a silent, fan-free

ed Bulgarian on a silent, fan-free Rod Lawer Arena and slumped out 6-4, 6-4, 6-0 in 2hr 1 min. Former world No 3 Dimitrov will now play giant-killing Russian qualifier Asian Karatsev in the quarter-finals after he stunned 20th seed Felix Auger-Aliassine over five sets. The power-hitting 27-year-old, a virtual unknown before the tournament started, battled back from two sets down to upset the Canadian

3-6, 1-6, 6-3, 6-3, 6-4 on Margaret Court Arena. Also, Alexander Zverev totted up his 50th Grand Slam win when he beat Serbia's Dusan Lajovic in straight sets to reach the quarter-finals.

finals.

The German sixth seed was tested in the first two sets but found it easier in the third, sealing his 6-4, 7-6 (7/5), 6-3 victory with an ace.