

**OPINION 6**  
TIME TO LOOK  
AND ACT EAST**WORLD 8**  
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READY TO FACE PARL: OFFICIAL**SPORT 12**  
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# Jab for 45+ with Comorbidities or 60+ from Mar 1

## Free shots in 10,000 Govt hospitals, at a fee in pvt ones

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Everyone above 60 years of age and those over 45 years with comorbidities will be able to get Covid-19 vaccine from March 1 for free in 10,000 Government medical facilities and for a charge at over 20,000 private hospitals, the Government said on Wednesday.

The rate for vaccines will be decided by the Health Ministry within the next three-four days as discussions are on with manufacturers as well as hospitals, said the Ministry.

The Cabinet, which met under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, took a decision in this regard, Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said at a media briefing here.

"The second phase of the world's largest vaccination drive will start from Monday in which anybody above 60 years, that may not be less than 10 crore people in the country, and 45 years plus with co-morbidities will be given vaccines in 10,000 Government medical facilities and also over 20,000 private hospitals," he said.

"Whoever goes to the Government centre will be administered a vaccine free of cost. The Indian Government will pay for them. The Government will purchase the necessary doses and will send



them to all the States," Javadekar said.

Those who want to get vaccinated from private hospitals will have to pay, but the amount will be decided by the Health Ministry within the next three-four days as they are in discussion with manufacturers as well as hospitals, he said.

Asked if people will have a choice on which vaccine — Covishield or Covaxin — they want to take, Javadekar said India is proud to have two vac-

cines which are both effective with proven efficacy.

While Oxford-AstraZeneca's Covishield is being manufactured by the Serum Institute, Covaxin is being produced by Bharat Biotech.

Javadekar said the world's largest vaccination drive started on January 16 with 1,07,67,000 people vaccinated and 14 lakh also having received a second dose.

"This section was primar-

ily for health workers and frontline workers and the whole expenditure was borne by the Government, they were vaccinated free," he said.

Javadekar asserted that the vaccination in India has been successful, "faultless with hardly any complaints".

Asked whether Ministers and the Prime Minister, who would now be in the category of those who can take the vaccination, will get inoculated, Javadekar said those who want

### INDIA ON THE MEND

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to take the vaccination will take it at the place of their choosing from March 1.

Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, who also briefed the media on the Cabinet decisions, said most of the Ministers are of the thinking that they will pay to get vaccinated.

The decision came as India's cumulative vaccination coverage has crossed 1.14 crore recipients.

## 8 more States witness upsurge in Covid cases

### Centre rushes high-level teams to tackle crisis

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After Maharashtra and Kerala, at least eight more States — Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Punjab, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir — have started reporting a surge in fresh coronavirus infections.

A worried Centre has rushed high-level multi-disciplinary teams to these States for supporting them in public health measures for targeted Covid-19 response and management, and effectively tackling the pandemic. It has warned the States that slacking off on rules and measures to check infection will escalate the crisis, given the emergence of new virus strains.

Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan has also written to seven States and Union Territories on the recent spurt in virus cases and has advised specific steps. AIIMS Director



Municipal workers sanitise a platform at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus in the view of the rising number of Covid-19 cases in Mumbai on Wednesday PTI

Randeep Guleria has already sounded the alarm, warning that India is also vulnerable to the second wave of coronavirus and people should continue to follow social distancing, wearing mask and other precautions.

His statement comes against the backdrop of a recent medical survey that has shown that over 70 per cent of the Indian population is still susceptible to Covid-19.

Dr RK Dhamija, Head of Neurology Department and public health expert from Dr

Lady Hardinge Hospital in New Delhi, did not rule out further surge in the cases and advised the Government to regularly conduct genome testing of the positive Covid cases.

He also suggested that focus should be on hotspots, which contribute to between 70-80 per cent of cases, and those pockets in the States which have high number of people with comorbidities such as diabetes and stroke should be given preference in vaccination.

## PM: Won't allow in-red PSUs drain taxpayers' money

### Govt committed to selling non-strategic units, iterates Modi

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday made his strongest pitch for privatisation of non-strategic PSUs, saying the Government has no business to be in business and sustaining loss-making units on taxpayers' money drains resources that could otherwise have been spent on public welfare schemes.

He said about 100 under-utilised or unutilised assets with public sector units (PSUs), such as those in the oil and gas and power sectors, will be monetised, creating Rs 2.5 lakh crore of investment opportunities.

"It is Government's duty to support enterprises and businesses. But it is not essential that it should own and run

enterprises," the Prime Minister said at a webinar on the privatisation approach in the Budget for 2021-22.

The private sector brings in investment, global best practices, top-quality managers, changes in management and modernisation, he said, adding the money generated from the stake sales will be routed to public welfare schemes in areas like water and sanitation, education and healthcare.

Modi said his Government is committed to privatising all PSUs barring four strategic sectors — atomic energy, space and defence; transport and telecommunications; power, petroleum, coal and other minerals; and banking, insurance and financial services, where the Government will retain a bare minimum presence. "The Government has no business to be in the business," he said. "Modernise and monetise is the motto we will follow."

## Ready for talks if farmers consider offer: Tomar

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Wednesday said the Government is ready to resume talks with protesting farmers if they accept its offer to put the three contentious farm laws on hold for one-and-a-half year and work out the difference during that time through a joint committee.

Speaking on the sidelines of an event, Tomar said under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Government is making efforts to double farmers' income and strengthen the Indian agriculture sector.

The Minister was replying to a query on Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) leader Rakesh Tikait threatening to march on Parliament with 40 lakh tractors if laws are not repealed.

Whether the Government is making any effort to resume talks with unions, Tomar said, "The Government has been holding discussions with farmers sympathetically. Even today, whenever their response comes, the Government is always ready to hold talks."

Thousands of farmers, mainly from Punjab, Haryana and Western Uttar Pradesh, is

protesting at Delhi borders for around three months, seeking repeal of three new farm laws and a legal guarantee of the MSP.

So far, even after 11 rounds of talks, the Government and the agitating farmers' unions have failed to reach any consensus. The last talk was held on January 22. The farmers' leaders have continued to press for the demand that the government should repeal the three laws. They have alleged that these laws will end the mandi and MSP procurement systems and leave the farmers at the mercy of big corporates, even as the Government has rejected these apprehensions as misplaced.

During the 10th round of talks held on January 20, the Centre had offered to suspend the laws for 1-1.5 years and form a joint committee to find solutions, in return for protesting farmers going back to their respective homes from Delhi borders.

Farmer groups have alleged that these agriculture laws will end the mandi (APMC) and MSP procurement systems and leave the farmers at the mercy of big corporates, even as the Government has rejected these apprehensions as misplaced.



Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Narendra Singh Tomar and MoS Agriculture Kailash Choudhary during a function of the 2nd anniversary of Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Scheme in New Delhi on Wednesday PTI

## Rajnath can resolve impasse if he is allowed to talk to farmers: Tikait

PTI ■ BARABANKI

Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) president Naresh Tikait on Wednesday called Defence Minister Rajnath Singh a "caged parrot" and said the farmers' issues could be resolved if he is given the freedom to talk with them.

He accused the BJP-led Central Government of being "stubborn" over the three new agriculture laws, which farmer unions are insisting on repeal. The protesting farmers too are not ready to go back on their demands of complete repeal of the farm laws, he said.

## Kotia issue: Opposition corners Govt in Assembly

### Matter in Supreme Court, says Min

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Opposition cornered the Odisha Government over the border dispute issue with Andhra Pradesh and other States in the State Assembly on Wednesday.

The BJP and the Congress, which raised the issue through an Adjournment Motion, blamed the State Government for neglecting the people in Kotia panchayat, where the Andhra Pradesh Government held panchayat elections recently. Leader of Opposition Pradipta Kumar Naik (BJP) said Odisha has border disputes with four States over 96 villages. "We don't see any action by the State Government to resolve the issues. In Kotia panchayat, the dispute is over 21 villages.

We had visited the area. There are no basic facilities, including roads and drinking water," said Naik. He said Kotia people are having multiple ration cards and availing benefits from both Odisha and Andhra. The villagers are alienating themselves from Odisha as the State Government has neglected them.

Opposition Chief Whip Mohan Charan Majhi (BJP) said that due to negligence and lack of foresight by the Odisha Government, neighbouring States are intruding into the Odisha territory.

Congress MLA Tara Prasad Bahinipati said the ruling BJD is only concerned about the party's interests. "Under the BJD rule, the State's land and water are not safe. An all-party meeting should be called to discuss the issue," said he. Congress MLA Suresh Routray questioned the inten-



tion of the State Government and the Chief Minister. "What were the Chief Minister and the Home Secretary doing when Andhra Pradesh held rural polls in the Kotia area? We all should visit the area under the leadership of the Chief Minister and address their issues," he suggested.

Replying to the adjournment motion debate, Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Sudam Marndi informed that Odisha has border dispute with four States in

## Odisha has border rows with 4 States

seven districts, Koraput, Baleswar, Mayurbhanj, Ganjam, Gajapati, Keonjhar and Nuapada. On the Kotia issue, the Minister said the State Government has filed a contempt petition in the Supreme Court against Andhra Pradesh.

While the Andhra Pradesh Government has submitted an affidavit on the matter on February 17, the Odisha Government has sought four weeks' time from the court to submit its counter-affidavit, the Minister said.

## BBSR hottest place in State

### Maximum temp soars

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The day temperature continued to witness a steady rise in the State with capital city Bhubaneswar emerging as the hottest place for the second consecutive day with a maximum temperature of 38 degree Celsius on Wednesday.

The capital city had recorded a day temperature of 37.3 degree on Tuesday. Nine places in State recorded day temperature above 35 degrees. The mercury soared to 36.8 in Baripada, 36.6 in Cuttack, 36.5 in Nayagarh, 36.4 in Balangir, 35.7 in Angul, 35.5 in Talcher and Bhawanipatna and 35.3 in Sambalpur. The temperature in Bhubaneswar remained 4 degree above normal and it will rise further from March. It is expected to touch 40 degree, said Regional Office of Indian Meteorological Department.

## 68 new Covid cases in State Total now 3,36,835

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State registered 68 new Covid-19 cases in 21 districts and the State pool on Wednesday, with which its total positive caseload increased to 3,36,835. Of the new cases, 40 were reported from quarantine and 28 local contact cases.

Khordha district recorded the day's highest nine cases followed by Sambalpur with seven and Baleswar, Balangir and Sundargarh with six each. Besides, one case was reported from the State pool. Currently, the number of total active cases in the State stood at 625 and cumulative samples tested were 82,30,442.



# Machkund joint electricity project AP dictates terms; abject surrender by Odisha

Project's takeover by Odisha demanded

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Even as the Andhra Pradesh (AP) Government's move in conducting elections in border villages of Odisha has evoked strong reactions, it has come to light that the neighbouring State is virtually dictating terms in the two States' collaborative Machkund joint hydroelectric project, which is located within the geographical territory of Odisha in Koraput district. That makes Odisha the rightful sovereign owner of the project. But surprisingly, Odisha officials have surren-

Lapses, subversion by officials harm State interest

dered the authority to AP for reasons best known to them. Notably, the original agreement for the project was signed between pre-Independence Orissa and AP on January 14, 1945. The original power sharing agreement was in the ratio: AP 70 per cent, Odisha 30 per cent. But the project has long outlived its financial investment made by both the parties. However the new Machkund agreement was signed between Odisha and AP on October 23, 2020. As per new agreement, Odisha paid Rs. 27.42 crore to AP in December 2020 in order to acquire additional 20 per cent share of the project. This is

bizarre and highly problematic because the project is situated in Odisha and it has already fetched many more times of what AP had invested 70 years ago thus completely outlived the financial arrangements made during pre-independence era. Where is the question of paying any money whatsoever to the guest party AP to acquire additional share in the project? It is like one is paying an outsider to acquire a share in her or his own house. As per new agreement, a Project Administrative Committee (PAC) would be notified drawing officials from both the States having

Principals Secretaries of Energy Department of both States as Chairman of the committee on rotational basis in every three years. To safeguard the interest the Odisha Government decided that the State Energy Department Principal Secretary would be declared as PAC Chairman for the first three years and according constituted the notification of PAC in November 2020. Surprisingly, Andhra Pradesh requested to reconsider the decision of Odisha and demanded that their Energy Secretary should be the Chairman of PAC for first three years. Information emanating from power corridors

confirm that some Odisha officials are conspiring against interest's of the State and making attempts to amend the PAC notification in order to declare the AP Energy Secretary as the PAC Chairman for first three years. It is not known whether these officials are working on their own or at the behest of some other authority! Similarly, as per the new agreement, Odisha must have 50 per cent share of manpower deployment (both officers and workers in regular scale) in the project. However, as on date, Odisha has not deployed any staff in Machkund Project except for a handful of three or four officials for namesake

with no authority bestowed on them. The end result of this callousness of officials is that Odisha is unnecessarily paying for AP staffs thereby incurring huge loss every month. Apart from the above glaring lapses on the part of officials leading to financial losses to Odisha, the project is marred with numerous mismanagements by Odisha officials to the extent of virtually surrendering the authority to another State for reasons which defy logic. In this scenario, the people of the State are hopeful that the Odisha Government would take remedial measures at the earliest and take over the project entirely by negotiating terms with AP in best interests of Odisha.

# Covid test centre to be set up at airport

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A Covid testing centre would be set up at the Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) here, informed Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Commissioner Prem Chandra Chaudhary on Wednesday. In the case of detection of Covid-19 symptoms in any passenger during screening, he/she would undergo mandatory test, he said. "Currently, there is no rise in the number of Covid-19 cases in Bhubaneswar. The trends are similar to that of the previous month. However, we have



taken precautionary measures and intensified the enforcement," the BMC Commissioner said. He further informed that detailed contact tracing of Covid-19 positive persons in the city has started from Tuesday. Efforts are underway to increase the number of tests. More tests would be conducted in the areas from where Covid cases are being detected, he added.

Postage stamp on Kantakabi demanded



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Utkal Sammilani members garlanded the statue of Kantakabi Laxmikanta Mohapatra here on Wednesday on the occasion of his death anniversary. Sammilani Mancheswar Branch president Dillip Dashsharma presided over function. Journalists Prabhu Kalyan Mohapatra, Guru Kalyan Mohapatra and Sita Ballabh Mohapatra recalled contributions of poet to Odia literature. The Sammilani demanded that a postage stamp be unveiled in memory of Laxmikanta. Sammilani vice-president Sital Chandra Mohanty, Basanti Tripathy, Prasanna rath, Maheshwar Biswal, Samarjan Mohanty, Dr Asit Das, Gopi Mohan Patnaik, Akshay Kumar Jethi and Prakash Samal were, among others, present and paid tributes to poet.

# MLA Panigrahi gets bail in CB case

PNS ■ CUTTACK

The Orissa High Court on Wednesday granted conditional bail to Gopalpur MLA Pradeep Panigrahi in the case registered against him by the State Crime Branch (CB). Panigrahi was granted bail with the condition of furnishing bail bonds of Rs 5 lakh each with two sureties and Rs 24 lakh cash security. However, he will not be released from the Jharpada jail in Bhubaneswar as another case filed against him by the State Vigilance pertaining to corruption charges is pending. The Crime Branch had arrested him on December 3 last in connection with a case



registered with the Cyber police station. Evidence came to light that Panigrahi collected money from people on behalf of Akash Pathak, son of suspended IFS officer Abhay Pathak, on the false promise of providing jobs in the Tata Motors. This case relates to impersonation, cheating, forgery, criminal conspiracy and other cyber offences by Akash Pathak, the Crime Branch had earlier said.

# Kharbanda new State CII chief



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Jindal Steel and Power Group Advisor, Corporate Affairs, Legal and Sustainability Manish Kharbanda was elected as the new chairman, CII Odisha State Council. His name was announced at the first meeting of the reconstituted Odisha State Council held in Puri on February 23. Chairman and Managing Director, Nalco, Sridhar Patra was elected as vice-chairman, CII Odisha State Council for the year 2021-22. Kharbanda is a seasoned professional with several years of work experience in some of the best companies in Corporate India. He is an alumnus of Harvard Business School.

# Drunk driver causes series of mishaps in city

Several cars, bikes damaged



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A drunk man driving an Innova SUV caused a series of accidents on the Vani Vihar-Baramunda stretch of NH-16 damaging several cars and motorbikes on Wednesday. Police detained him and an associate and interrogated them. Both were heavily drunk, police said. The SUV first hit a motorbike at Vani Vihar Square and moved ahead on the busy NH. Then, it hit three bikers on the over bridge near Fire Station Square at Baramunda while it speeded up in a bid to escape the police interceptor vehicle chasing it.

# OPSC invites application for Dental Surgeons

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC) has invited online applications through its website opsc.gov.in for 82 Dental Surgeon posts in Group-A (Junior Branch) of the Odisha Medical and Health Services Cadre under the Health Department. The posts are in the pay scale of Level-12 Cell 1 of ORSP Rules, 2017 with usual dearness and other allowances as may be sanctioned by the Odisha Government from time to time. The link for registration/re-registration and payment of examination fee would be available from 10.03.2021 to 09.04.2021 (Note: 16.04.2021 is the last date for submission of Registered Online Application). The posts are temporary and likely to be made permanent. A candidate must have attained the age of 21 years and must not be above the age of 32 years on the 1st day of January 2021 i.e. he/she must have been

born not earlier than 24 January 1989 and not later than 15 January 2000. The upper age limit prescribed above shall be relaxable by five years for candidates belonging to the categories of Scheduled Castes (SC.), Scheduled Tribes (ST.), Women and Ex-servicemen and by 10 years for candidates belonging to the PWD category, whose permanent disability is 40 per cent and more. Persons with Disabilities belonging to SC, ST categories are eligible for age relaxation benefit of 15 years. Provided further that, the upper age limit would be relaxed up to five years in case of in-service doctors serving under State Government or State Government undertaking on ad-hoc or contractual basis. A candidate must: have possessed a BDS or equivalent Degree from a Medical College or medical institution recognised by Dental Council of India (DCI); have possessed a Registration Certificate under Dentist Act.

# Contractors' body meets Works Secy



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

All Odisha Contractors' Association members met Works Secretary Krishan Kumar and Public Works Department Engineer-in-Chief Anil Kumar Tripathy here on Wednesday and held discussions regarding their various demands. The association demanded implementation of new schedule rates, payment of dues as per the increased rates of construction materials and wages of workers. The Secretary assured the delegation that steps would be taken by March 31 regarding the rates, dues and other demands, said association president Pravat Dash.

# 606 Asst Profs' posts to be filled

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State Government would fill up as many as 606 Assistant Professors' posts in State-run colleges soon. In this regard, Higher Education Additional Secretary JN Sarangi has written to the Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC) Special Secretary asking it to initiate a process for fresh appointment to the 606 posts by cancelling the previous notification of 2019-20. The posts of Assistant Professors would be filled under the Odisha Education Service (College Branch) Recruitment Amendment Rules 2020.

# Incentive for marrying divyangs hiked to Rs 2.5L

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State Government has increased the incentive for marrying divyang persons from Rs 50,000 to Rs 2.5 lakh per eligible couples. All district Collectors have been apprised in this connection by the Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SSEPD) Department. During implementation of this scheme, some operational problems were brought to the notice of the department, for which the incentive for marrying persons with benchmark disabilities has been enhanced from Rs 50,000 to Rs 2.5 lakh, official sources said.

# School of Cyber Peace in SSU launched

PNS ■ CUTTACK

The first-of-its-kind in the globe, the Sri Sri School of Cyber Peace and five other Centers and Faculty which will offer 20 programmes in 2021-22 in the Sri Sri University (SSU) were launched by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar on Wednesday. The Cyber Peace Foundation and Sri Sri University have joined hands in this connection. As per the Cybersecurity Ventures, there will be 3.5 million unfilled cyber security jobs globally by the end of 2021, up from one million positions in 2014. Moreover, there is a growing number of cybercrimes and threats across the globe.

Therefore, the degree programmes in the areas are a need of the hour. Gurudev Ravi Shankar said, "I congratulate Cyber Peace Foundation and encourage all to continue this journey by creating waves of excellence for growth of the students across the world."



# Khandagiri flyover by July



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The ongoing flyover construction work on National Highway-16 at the accident-prone Khandagiri Square here would be completed by July this year. About 70-per cent work has already been done, NHA1 Odisha Chief General Manager Ram Prasad Panda has informed. The flyover, which was to be completed by September 2020, is delayed by 10 months due to coronavirus pandemic. The six-lane, 2.230 km-flyover project began with an estimated cost of Rs 115 crore in June 2019.

# Plus II exams from May 18

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The School and Mass Education Department on Wednesday announced the dates for the Plus II annual examinations, which are conducted by Council of Higher Secondary Education (CHSE). The examinations for Arts, Science and Commerce streams would begin from May 18 and conclude on June 12. The examination for Vocational Courses is scheduled from May 28, informed School & Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash. Around 3.50 lakh students would appear in the Plus II examinations this year.

# NROs' Odias Bhawan inaugurated

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Around one and a half crore Odias residing outside Odisha in other States and abroad can contribute a lot for the overall development of their mother State, opined the speakers who attended the inaugural ceremony of non-resident Odias Bhawan at Unit-2 here on Wednesday. They expressed confidence that this Bhawan would play a vital role in establishing and maintaining social, cultural and emotional relationship between Odisha and non-resident Odias (NROs). Higher Education Minister Dr Arun Sahoo called upon NROs to extend active cooperation for

the social, economic and intellectual growth of Odisha. Rural Development and Labour Minister Sushant Singh also spoke. World Odisha Society chairman Kishore Dwibedi appealed to the NROs to be united for the protection of the larger interests of their motherland. The ceremony was attended by MLAs Anant Narayan Jena and Byomkesh Ray and former MP Prasanna Patsani.



# HITTING THE BULL'S EYE Vaccine alone won't protect lives; safe behaviour a must



BISWARAJ PATNAIK

Guru Ramdev is an adorable spiritual leader, better than many who make huge money by teaching simple yoga techniques to gullible individuals frantic to defeat diseases and become fitter physically. But Ramdev is a bit like Trump who is wild about making public declarations without knowing the fine lines of science or law. During the terrible Covid times, Ramdev came up with a make-believe cure called 'Coronil', which

sounds believable too. Expert medical bodies had hit out instantly seeking to know on what scientific basis he made the tall claims. By now, Ramdev had transformed himself to a billionaire shopkeeper with a mix of wide-ranging wellness products and a variety of kitchen stuffs including forest honey, ghee and cooking oils. Only days ago, on February 19, he held a media event claiming his previously laughed-at 'Coronil' to be the ultimate destroyer for all strains of corona and it has received WHO certification. The event was attended by such knowledgeable luminaries, including Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan and Nitin Gadkari, who understands all basics. Ramdev furiously criticised modern medicine, equating it to 'medical terrorism' as if the orthodox allopathy system is all poison and invariably lethal. Meanwhile, the WHO's South-East Asia regional office

came forward to clarify that it has not 'reviewed or certified the effectiveness of any traditional medicine' for the treatment of Covid-19 pointedly referring to 'Coronil'. Appalled at the development, the Indian Medical Association has demanded an explanation from the Health Minister over Patanjali's claim of WHO certification, failing of which the association will provoke the National Medical Commission seeking a suo moto explanation for this 'blatant disrespect' to the code of conduct of the Medical Council of India. The IMA has also demanded that the Health Minister is duty-bound to explain his endorsement of 'Coronil'. The IMA is firm on its views that it is inappropriate and irrational to release such false projections that can mislead the country resulting in loss of precious lives. Further, the IMA has sought clarifications on the timeline for the clinical trial of 'Coronil' and whether patients

were involved in the double blind and/or single blind clinical trials. A series of questions have been asked, which include whether the patients were subjected to an informed consent for any such trials and others. The arrival of coronavirus vaccines has meant good news for so many people who wanted to resume a normal life. Unfortunately, the availability of affordable or free vaccines in India has turned at least half the population to go haywire with fear of the enormously infective virus completely gone. The governments went on spelling out 'unlock-downs' successfully and the impatient masses began to imagine corona is no more dangerous. Nearly everyone forgot the mask, hugged others merrily and washed hands only before eating a meal never otherwise. Not surprisingly, meanwhile, the virus has been springing back to active engagement in multiplying itself without hindrance. And suddenly, mankind discovers resurgence of the

pandemic in a different style. As study shows there are already hundreds of corona strains flying across human bodies that give more symptoms than the known ones like conjunctivitis, stomach problems and body aches of a peculiar kind. That's big reminder of why people need to continue practising precautionary measures weeks after getting vaccinated. While vaccines do work to generate a good immune response which acts against the pathogen, the body can sometimes take weeks to respond. In the window where one waits for the vaccine to work, one is still vulnerable to the infection. Thus, a vaccine alone won't help mankind defeat the pandemic. The stage of complacency is not yet ripe. Masks, social distancing, frequent hand-washing with soap and all other standard hygiene rules have to be followed religiously. The vaccine protects one from getting severely ill. But if one has already been infected, it may not prevent

one from spreading the virus to others. As per some expert, it is better to act as if one is not vaccinated and continue taking necessary preventive measures to keep oneself and others safe. One can still get re-infected after vaccination. But that isn't enough to protect an individual from getting sick again as is the case with a lot of people who have strangely caught the virus more than once. In some cases, antibodies and systematic immunity could taper off or it could so happen that the vaccine may not work so effectively for some, leaving room for the virus to cause problems. But for sure, ailment would be less severe or even completely asymptomatic. There is no escaping from the laid down norms, the biggest takeaway being masks and social distancing. Odisha, the model Covid-

management State, is just beginning to witness a corona comeback. Maharashtra, Kerala and Gujarat are having a panicky time yet again. Unless modified behaviour like those adopted during the peak Covid days are practised strictly, the virus will keep causing havoc nonstop as the new strains are smarter and can afflict victims in more ways than the infamous strain did in the previous months. The famous temples of Odisha be kept selectively open to devotees. The little children, the elderly, the ones with co-morbidities and those with contraindicative issues with to vaccinations be kept off. All these bits of information are popularly shared by medical experts from time to time. The Indian vaccines are just too good and respectfully accepted by many countries. The Serum Institute's version of the AstraZeneca vaccine, called Covishield, has been approved in 11 countries, including Bangladesh, Nepal, Morocco

and South Africa. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has also approved Covishield for emergency use, clearing a path for the vaccine to be deployed in the WHO's COVAX initiative, a global vaccine programme aimed at providing access to vaccines in lower- and middle-income countries. Covaxin, a purely Indian vaccine, is also rated very highly. Everyone by and large healthy and fit must avail the vaccine as soon as possible. There is no reason to suspect the vaccines made in India, the vaccine capital of the world. Incidentally, the USA has lost more lives to corona in a single year than it did in three hugely fierce wars, the two World Wars and the Vietnam War jointly. The wars claimed 4,99,000 lives, but corona has taken away 5,00,236 Americans in a single year. Indians must beware from now as the virus is going to remain active for quite some time, maybe for always.



# FM Varsity unveils Tech Business Incubator

Will create entrepreneurship: Vice-Chancellor

PNS ■ BALESWAR

Application of science and technology combined with local traditional knowledge would be very useful not only for the development of the State but also preserve and propagate its culture.

“During the last two decades, the world has moved much faster and technology has changed the lives of the people. The aspirations of students and youths need to be addressed. Everybody needs a job and government cannot provide jobs to everybody. Therefore, we in the universities and colleges need to take proactive steps to create job opportunities. Entrepreneurship development is the need of the hour,” said



Prof Dinabandhu Sahoo, Vice-Chancellor, Fakir Mohan University here while inaugurating a new initiative “Brewing Entrepreneurship” in collaboration with KIIT-TBI, Bhubaneswar & Startup Odisha at the university.

Prof Sahoo urged the students to think out of box, take risks and go for innovations. Educational institutions are the best places to nurture new ideas and can help develop entrepreneurship, he said.

Dr Mrutyunjay Suar, CEO, KIIT-TBI, Bhubaneswar, said job creation and thinking beyond the traditional way is the need of the hour. The KIIT-TBI with its vast experi-

ence and success over the years would extend all help and collaborate to promote entrepreneurship in the State. Prasanta Biswal from Startup Odisha emphasised that there are several startup companies which have been supported by the State. “We will support the FM University in promoting startups.

Dr Mrutyunjay Sahu, cofounder of a Startup company in Odisha, said how he struggled initially but today he is a job giver. Dr Padmalita Routray of FM University Management Department and in-Charge, Placement Cell, said women entrepreneurship is very important.

## Paddy purchase irregularities

# BJP gheraoes Champua Sub-Collector office

PNS ■ CHAMPUA

Aggrieved over the apathy meted out to them in the procurement of paddy and other irregularities in mandis, the BJP gheraoed the Champua Sub-Collector's office recently.

The leaders lashed out at the BJD Government alleging that by not purchasing the paddy from the farmers, it was instigating them indirectly to commit suicide.

State executive member Dr Murli Manohar Sharma, who led the farmers' agitation, said the State Government had been misleading farmers in the name of target. After receiving the token, the farmers are rushing to the mandis but are harassed their under one count or the other, he charged. BJP State vice-president Sukeshi Oram said that despite the protests in the Assembly and demonstration of farmers everywhere, the Mandi problems were not sorted out. This is because the Naveen



Government is treating the farmers as enemy of the State, she slammed. State executive member Bhavanishankar Nayak, district president Anshuman Sabuj Mahanta Varma, district general secretary Anubrat Behera, district vice president Debaprasad Mishra, Aganu Charan Mahanta, Swapna Sahu, Neelamani Mahant, Hemranjan Barik, Prakash Mallick, Vikas Saraagi and Mitrabhanu Mahakud joined the protest.

## Anti-filaria drive in K'mal from today

PNS ■ PHULBANI

Kandhamal CDMO Dr Rajyashree Pattnaik said in a Press meet that the district health administration would launch a massive drive from February 25 to eradicate filaria. As part of the programme, awareness would be created among the masses and tablets would be distributed.

The filaria tablets can be taken by all except pregnant women, child below 2 years and ill persons. The DEC and Albendazol tablets are to be distributed by the ASHAs and trend volunteers free of cost, said Dr Prabhakar Sahu.

The CDMO said that samples were collected randomly from eight villages of eight blocks in the district and out of 4,193 samples, 14 were found to be filaria positive.

She urged the people to take the tablets which have no side effects without any fear.

# No relief from pollution menace in Jharsuguda

## Massive trees felled; no compensatory afforestation

RAJ KUMAR SHARMA ■ JHARSUGUDA

Jharsuguda district is home to several coal mines and power plants that cater to a large portion of Odisha's power need. But while the industrialisation has brought in jobs and development, it has also created massive pollution leading to numerous health hazards for the residents.

While forests are a potential source to contain the pollution menace, but compensatory afforestation has not been taken up in the district though lakhs of trees in large swathes of land were felled in last two years in the Talabira region for MCL coal mines and Vedanta peripheral area. The Forest Department has failed to plant trees despite showing huge plantation in records.

Jharsuguda and its bordering areas are dotted with many plants and mines including MCL's Ib Coalfields, OPGC power plant, Vedanta plant, Talabira coal mines, SMC Power Generation Ltd, Concast Steel, TRL-Krosaki, Ultratech Cement and Bhusan Power and Steel, among others. Consequently, transportation activities have increased.

Besides the emission from the plants, the coal-laden trucks are adding to the pollution load in the district. The houses,

roads and roadside trees are covered with thick layer of coal dust. The quality of air and even the water supplied in the community has deteriorated due to fly ash discharged from power plants. The crops are also affected due to the dust pollution.

As fly ash contains harmful oxides, it affects human and animal skin, and causes stomach diseases, said environmentalist Deepak Patel. Not just skin related problem, the residents of the area are also affected by cardiovascular and lungs diseases.

“For a major part of the year, the air quality index of Jharsuguda remains in the red zone. Yet the administration remains apathetic to these concerns and pays merely lip service when it comes to combating the menace in the long term,” alleged IB Pariwesh convenor Upendra Jena.

The health of children in rural and urban Jharsuguda gets severely affected due to fly ash. Many experience breathing problems and develop skin allergies, he added.

Jharsuguda Chamber of Commerce and Industries president HL Lokchandani said, “The conditions on which the mines and power plants were allowed to operate in the district are being openly violated.”

Environmentalist Mohammad Rauf alleged, “Mines and power plants are contaminating the river and weakening the basin and the authorities are paying scant attention to it.” Jharsuguda Regional Officer (RO) OSPCB HN Nayak was unavailable for his comments.

## Paddy not sold; farmer dies of heart attack

PNS ■ SAMBALPUR

Balamani Bhoi (59), a farmer of Sambalpur village under Paikmal block of Bargarh district, died of cardiac arrest on Wednesday.

His family members said that Bhoi suffered a heart attack as he was under severe mental pressure due to not being able to sell his paddy in the mandi.

“My father couldn't sell the paddy of 140 bags in the last two months. All his efforts failed and finally he had a heart stroke leading to his death,” alleged Bhoi's son Thabir Bhoi.

Thabir further said they had got token to sell paddy in the local market yard on December 10. “We had brought 140 bags of paddy to the Lakhmara market yard.

But two months after taking the paddy to the yard, the bags could not be disposed of.”

## Girl's body recovered in Kendrapada Suspected to be attacked by crocodile

PNS ■ KENDRAPADA

The body of a 21-year-old girl, who had gone missing in Govari river on Tuesday morning, was recovered from the river water on Wednesday.

It is suspected that the deceased, Itishree Lenka, daughter of Abhiram Lenka of Kainkula village under Pattamundai police limits, might have been attacked by crocodiles.

The girl had taken a bath in the crocodile infested river by keeping her clothes and chapal on the river embankment. As she did not return, they informed the fire tender personnel.

Later with the help of locals, the fire personnel started a search and rescue operation but failed to trace the girl. On Wednesday, a local saw the body of the girl floating in the river and informed police.

# Ganjam Chamber backs Feb 26 Bharat Bandh

## ‘GST provisions ignore traders’ difficulties’

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

While supporting the Bharat Bandh by traders on February 26 demanding simplification of the GST provisions, the Ganjam Chamber of Commerce alleged that the GST Council has brought about 950 amendments in last four years without taking the traders' difficulties into account and making them just a law-abiding machine.

In a Press release, Ganjam Chamber of Commerce honorary secretary V Santosh Kumar, enlisting some of the provisions, said under the current regime, it is very difficult to do business. He also slammed Government for not



forming the Appellate Tribunal to sort out cases because of which the traders have to go to the court for every small case.

He alleged that some of the officers of GST torture traders badly across the country and force the traders to pay huge amounts of money in the department without hearing them.

If any change related to GST compliance is brought, the business is not given time to change its software nor is it given the opportunity to understand the change, due to which the traders are either forced to change business or bear heavy lose, he charged. He also said that the fees levied for late filing of return are often more than the tax.

## Padma Shri Sahu felicitated by CIFA



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A field day on aquaculture was organised at the Aquaculture Field School, Sarakana on Wednesday with a farmers-scientists interface in which a team of scientists of the ICAR-CIFA participated.

They addressed fish production-related queries and collected feedbacks from the fish farmers as to how they managed aquaculture during the Covid-19 pandemic. The fish farmers were also made aware about the latest advances in freshwater aquaculture.

The event was held to felicitate Padma Shri Batakrushna Sahu as a role model for fellow farmers practising scientific fish farming. Dr GS Saha, I/C, Social Science Section, ICAR-CIFA, welcomed the guests.

## ‘Hall of Fame’ to showcase State’s startups To be held by TiE Bhubaneswar today

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

With an objective to foster entrepreneurship through mentoring, networking, education, funding and incubation, the TiE Bhubaneswar in association with the Startup Odisha will organise the Hall of Fame, an event to showcase start-ups of the State on February 25 here.

This is a first of its kind event for start-ups as they would get an opportunity to showcase and exhibit their products and services. The exhibition is specifically curated for start-ups to showcase their innovative products. 25 selected start-ups would showcase their product and services and 10 start-ups would be pitching before investors for funding.



# Padayatra organised for clean, green Brahmapur

## Residents urged for safe disposal of polythene

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

The volunteers of Aryabhata Foundation organised a 24 km-long Padayatra from the statue of Mahatma Gandhi at Gandhi Nagar to the district headquarters town, Chhatrapur, on Monday to create an awareness on environment and plastic menace.

The rally commenced with Ramdhun and Bapu's dearest bhajan “Vaishnava Janato.” The volunteers carried placards on climate change and mitigation, water conservation, polythene menace, etc, to spread the



message to protect the environment. They conducted roadside meetings, appraised the public as to how to keep the environment clean, green and eco-friendly, and distributed leaflets.

The volunteers approached the residents door-to-door and requested the BeMC authorities to restore and renovate all the existing ponds located in and round

Brahmapur city. Later, they handed out a memorandum addressed to the CM to the Additional District Magistrate.

Chairman of the Foundation and known environmentalist Sudhir Kumar Raut, Shyama Sundar Khadanga, Susant Mohanty, Sukanta Gouda, Er Swetalina Panda, Bhimaraju Patro, K Ghanashyama and Prasanna Swain among others joined.

# Dalmia Bharat Group honours skill trainees

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Dalmia Bharat Foundation (DBF), an arm of Dalmia Bharat Group, felicitated 20 trainees from Dalmia Institute of Knowledge and Skill Harnessing (DIKSHA), who have managed to secure placement with KITEG Garments Pvt Ltd in Tamilnadu at an annual salary of Rs 1, 62,000.

The students were provided 75 days skill training in Industrial Sewing Machine Operator (ISMO) trade at Rajgangpur and Jharsuguda centres of DIKSHA. The trainees will soon travel by air from Jharsuguda airport to join their new workplace. Unit Head, Dalmia Cement (Bharat) Ltd, Rajgangpur Lokesh Bahety

congratulated all the students. Over 500 students have enrolled till now at DIKSHA centres in Rajgangpur and Jharsuguda. DBF has centres at Rourkela, Rajgangpur, Jharsuguda, Deogarh, Cuttack, Jajpur and Barkote where placement-linked skill training is provided under various trades including bed side attendant, retail sales, electrician, beauty and wellness, and sewing machine operator.



# MCL honours farmer who turns barren land green

## Benefitting through its CSR project

PNS ■ SAMBALPUR

Benefiting from MCL's community development project- ‘Utthan’, Bipin Behera, a farmer from Basiapada village under Birsingarh panchayat of Jujumura block in Sambalpur district, has transformed a barren land into a high density agriculture and horticulture paradise.

The septuagenarian was felicitated by MCL Director (Personnel) Keshav Rao for his hard work and becoming a role model for the people from

adjoining areas. The MCL has been implementing the CSR initiative in partnership with BAIF since 2019. Under its agro-horti (i.e. WADI) module, training was provided to farmers to develop underutilised piece of land 0.5 acre into green plantation with intercropping of vegetables. This gives an assured income of

around Rs 30,000 per year to the individual beneficiaries. As many as 216 such Wadi plots have been established under the project.

The accomplishments of Behera assumes importance owing to the fact that his multi-cropping has yielded a record income of Rs 68,000 since September 2019.



# Road mishaps: Poor households suffer most

## In terms of personal, income losses

1,390 persons got injured. These accidents have personal, social and financial ramifications. In Odisha it is observed that the number of deaths in road accidents in 2020 so far is much higher than the number of Covid-19 deaths. Last week, a report titled “Traffic crash injuries and disabilities- The burden on Indian society” was presented by Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari.

The report was released by the World Bank in association with the Save Life Foundation, an international NGO. The report shows a thought provoking analysis of the uneven impact of road accidents and human casualties on poverty, debt, inequality, women and rural-urban gap.

Road traffic injuries (RTIs) are eighth leading cause of death across the world. There is an irregular effect of road accidents on two classes in India as defined by the report.

These two classes are lower income households and high income households. Due to road traffic crash roughly 75 per cent of poor households perceive a sharp decline in their income as per the report.

As far as financial loss for the poor is concerned, it amounts to more than seven months' household income which is equivalent to less than one month's household income of the rich. It further shows a mindboggling data on the number of post-accident death. It depicts that the poor persons die twice in number than the rich persons in road accidents and the poor and rural folks become more physically disabled than their rich and urban counterparts.

Rural area lower income households suffer more when male members die due to accidents. It is observed that nearly 56 per cent decline in the income of rural lower income households is caused by acci-

dental deaths of earning male members while it is 29.5 per cent decline in urban lower income households for the same reason. Women irrespective of lower and higher income households are hugely affected by road accidents impact. Women take a massive burden on family responsibilities, caregiving activities and income. Nearly 50 per cent women are severely affected by a decline of their household income.

The report further says that the number of road crash in lower income countries is three times more than that in high income countries. As per WHO Report-2018, there are 400 deaths per day due to road accidents in India. It is reported that India is having only 1 per cent of world vehicles but it is responsible for 11 per cent of all road accident deaths and 6 per cent of total road crashes globally.

From the year 2010 to 2020, the statistics shows that approximately 13 lakh people died and 50 lakh people were

injured in India only. The age group of the deceased due to road accident is between 18 and 45 years. Road accident and post-accident deaths are not only personal loss to the family, but also they affect our country's GDP. If a country loses young, productive and economically active persons then automatically it suffers from economic point of view.

India sees a 3 to 4 per cent decline in GDP due to road accidents and casualties. Further, it is to know that our medical support system engages 10 per cent of its capacity to treat only road accident related cases. So, the burden of road accident is tangible in India.

The report also throws light on the migration part. It says rural -urban migration is responsible for more road accidents in India. The people who come to urban areas are not so well versed with traffic rules. Moreover, Vulnerable Road Users (VRU) in India supplement to road crash. It

constitutes the poor, especially the male road-users of working age. The VRUs have a large burden of road crashes and account for more than half of all road crash deaths and serious injuries in the country.

The report has an insightful analysis on the insurance coverage in road accident. Lower income households are the victims of unequal insurance coverage and they don't get compensation on time.

But in case of higher income households, both insurance coverage and compensation are somehow good. Besides, legal compliance and information are not up to date in lower income households.

For example, nearly 66 per cent truck drivers don't file any FIR after accidental crash. 40 per cent truck drivers are covered under life insurance and only 18 per cent have medical insurance. As per Union Minister Gadkari, 30 per cent Driving Licences (DL) are fake and it is evident that one person may be using more than

two or three DLs. India is a signatory of UN's Brasilia Declaration. The declaration was under Sustainable Development Goal. The major target of the Brazil declaration is to reduce road fatalities by 50 per cent by 2030. Now Union Minister Gadkari takes a target to reduce road accidents and deaths by 50 per cent by 2025. To achieve the milestone, some institutional support and basic changes are needed.

Automobile manufactures should come forward for this social cause. They should introduce low cost and affordable basic safety tools in vehicles. Basic safety tools include front airbags and quality standard in helmet. Preventing a single death due to road accident in India means a lot; we can save up to 90 lakh per person.

India has observed a month-long campaign "National Road Safety Month" this year instead of "Road, Safety Week", from January 18 to February 17. The theme of the year is, "Sadak Suraksha-

Jeevan Raksha.” Apart from the campaign, an Integrated Road Accident Database (iRAD) is designed with the help of World Bank to monitor the road crash data.

In India, we have nearly 6,000 identified black spots accident zone. As of now, 2,500 black spots have been rectified by the Government of India. Of course the new Motor Vehicle Act has brought some remarkable changes in the field of road and transport.

Now, the Government has come up with an idea of regular eye check-up facilities for truck drivers. Above all, there is an immediate need for the concerned department, officers and State Governments to give importance to implement a sustainable solution to enhance road safety measures.

(Dr Parida is Assistant Professor, Sociology and Development Studies, Sophitorium Group of Institutions, Khordha, Mob: 8456879522)



ABASH PARIDA

The statistics on road accident related fatalities is disturbing. Last week, 16 labourers were killed in Jalgaon, Maharashtra in a train accident. The Prime Minister of India paid homage to them. Also it is reported that there were roughly 1,461 accidents during the nationwide lockdown in which at least 750 people were killed, including 198 migrant workers. As many as





# 2 ultras killed in Anantnag

**Jammu:** Two terrorists were eliminated by the joint team of security forces in Shalgul forest area of Srigufwara Anantnag on Wednesday. The operation was launched by the Anantnag police along with 3RR after receiving intelligence inputs about the presence of a group of terrorists in the said area.

According to a police spokesman, “during the search operation as the presence of terrorists got ascertained they were given an opportunity to surrender, however, they fired indiscriminately upon the joint search party, which was retaliated leading to an encounter”. “In the ensuing encounter, two unidentified terrorists were killed and their bodies were retrieved from the site of encounter. The identification and affiliation of the killed terrorists is being ascertained” a police spokesman added.

Before confirming the identity of slain terrorists the local police authorities announced incase any family claims the killed terrorists to be their kith or kin, they can come forward for their identification at PCR Kashmir.

Arms & ammunition including 02 AK rifles and other incriminating materials were recovered from the site of encounter, a police spokesman said. **PNS**

## UP high school student gangraped, stabbed

**Gonda (UP):** In yet another shocking crime in Uttar Pradesh, a high school girl student in Mankapur Kotwali area of Gonda district was gang-raped and then stabbed by four men.

The girl was returning home from school on Tuesday evening when she was waylaid by four accused and dragged to a sugarcane field. The four men, one of whom belongs to her village, raped her by turns and then stabbed her on the hand, warning her not to report the incident. The girl returned to her home and informed her parents after which she lodged a complaint with the police.The police spokesman at Mankapur police station said that a case had been registered against the four accused for rape and under provisions of the POCSO Act. **IANS**

# Sasikala wants Amma’s loyalists to join hands for Assembly polls

**KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI**

The 73rd birth anniversary of former Chief Minister and AIADMK supremo J Jayalalithaa saw her close aide V K Sasikala asking “all Amma loyalists” to come together and fight the upcoming assembly elections to usher in Amma rule for the next 100 years.

Sasikala, who reached Chennai a fortnight ago after a 23-hour car journey from Bangalore where she was undergoing imprisonment for four years as an accused in a Disproportionate Asset case, garlanded a picture of Jayalalithaa at the former’s T Nagar bungalow and briefly spoke to her loyalists, mainly Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam (AMMK), a political outfit floated by her nephew TTV Dhinakaran.

“The true cadre of Amma should come together and win the elections to form the government. Amma has mandated that even after 100 years, our government should be there. I am confident that you would accomplish that. I will also stand by you. Very soon, I will meet the people and the cadre,” said Sasikala in her brief speech. AIADMK cadre and Tamils address Jayalalithaa as Amma as a mark of reverence.

Sasikala did not mention the name

AIADMK even once. She wanted all cadres of Amma come together to win the elections. “To achieve that, you all should stand by me. Each one of you should work like bees and offer the victory in elections to her. You should take a vow towards this and work hard,” said Sasikala giving enough indications about who the queen bee is.

Though no known AIADMK leaders were present during the small function, leaders of fringe outfits like AISMK, Naam Tamilar (a Tamil chauvinistic organisation) and P R Pandian a CPI-leader-turned-farm leader called on Sasikala along with movie maker Bharati Raja called on Sasikala.

By evening there were reports that a Third-Front under Sasikala’s leadership was being formed and film actor Vijayakanth would cast his lot with this front. Though Vijayakanth has been immobilized because of indifferent health, his spouse Premalatha who is the treasurer of the DMDK had declared her support for Sasikala.

The AIADMK is yet to commence its talks on seat sharing with prospective allies. The DMDK has been expressing restlessness over the delay in seat-allocation talks. It is expected that the talks would gather momentum once the Election Commission of India announces the poll schedule this week.

## Chikkaballapur blast: 5 nabbed, 2 K’taka cops suspended

**Chikkaballapur:** A day after an ‘accidental explosion’ in a quarry killed six persons in Karnataka’s Chikkaballapur, police arrested five persons including three partners of the mining firm, and suspended two police officers on Wednesday.

According to the police, the arrested are Raghavendra Reddy, Venkatashiva Reddy and Madhusudhan Reddy, who are partners of Sri Bhramaravasini Sanders while Praveen is a manager of this company and Mohammed Riyaz Ansari is the driver of the vehicle who drove the victims along with explosive materials.

Superintendent of Police Mithun Kumar G.K. told IANS that two police officers - Gudibande police station inspector Manjunath M.N. and sub-inspector G.R. Gopal Reddy have been suspended. He said these officers had failed to act “in time” against the owners of Bhramaravasini Sanders for illegal blasting and storage of explosives. “Since the police officials failed to arrest the accused despite complaints, they were suspended,” he said.

Following the incident on Tuesday, Karnataka Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai who had inspected the spot had directed Inspector General of Police (Central Range) M. Chandra Shekar to form three special teams to nab the culprits. Accordingly, the IGP had formed the teams under the supervision of Chikkaballapur SP Mithun Kumar. **IANS**

## DADRA NAGAR HAVELI MP’S SUICIDE

# Cong alleges UT Administrator was among officials who harassed Delkar

**TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI**

Demanding an enquiry into the alleged suicide by sitting MP Mohan S. Delkar, the ruling Congress on Wednesday turned the needle of suspicion towards Administrator of the Union Territory (UT) of Dadra, Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu and former BJP MLA Praful Patel who, it alleged, was among the UT officials that harassed Delkar leading the latter ending his life.

In a video-conference held with Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh, State Congress general secretary Sachin Sawant and party’s spokesperson Dr Raju Wagmare alluded to a video clip released by late Delkar in mid-2020 and the suicide note left by the latter and rooted for thorough investigations into the circumstances leading to the suicide by the sitting MP.

“The tragic end of Mr Delkjar needs to be investigated. He has left A 16-page suicide note in which he has mentioned the names of all the officials who harassed him. It is being discussed among people that he has mentioned the name of Praful Patel, who is currently working as the Administrator of Dadra, Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu since 2016,” Sawant and Dr Wagmare said in their representation to the State Home Minister.

“Mr Patel is a former BJP MLA from Himatnagar constituency in Gujarat for its 12th legislative Assembly. He also served as an Minister of State for Home of Gujarat and is very close to the RSS and BJP’s national leadership,” the two Congress leaders said.

“It is pertinent to note that Delkar travelled to Mumbai late on Sunday, checked into a hotel and committed ‘suicide’ by hanging himself in the room. He may have chosen to come to Mumbai committing suicide because of he was not sure to get justice in the Union Territory,” Saware and Dr Wafgmare said.

“He must have come to Mumbai with an expectation from the MVA government that the culprits who compelled him to take the extreme step would be punished by law,” the two Congress leaders stated in their letter. On his part, the State Home Minister gave a patient hearing to the Congress, accepted their two-page representation and assured them that he would direct the Mumbai Police to look into the matter.

In their interaction with Deshmukh, the two Congress leaders alluded to a video released by Delkar sometime in mid-2020, in which the latter had threatened to resign as the MP as he could no longer bear the “insults and humiliating treatment” meted out to him

## Danab Modi’s CBI grilled my Bahu: Didi

**SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ HOOGHLY**

Within 48 hours of Narendra Modi calling out for “real Poriborton (change of guards)” from a public rally in Hooghly, Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee launched a blistering attack on the Prime Minister, calling him a “dangabaji” (rioter), a “daitya” and “danab” (demon) and daring him to defeat the Trinamool Congress in the (electoral) game that was in the offing.

Banerjee’s no-holds-barred attack came a day after CBI officials questioned Rujira Narula Banerjee the wife of her nephew and TMC MP Abhishek Banerjee regarding her bank transactions in Thailand. The CBI is porbing the multi-croer coal scam.Attacking the Prime Minister for using CBI against the opposition leaders, she said earlier they were threatening us but now they are entering the households and not even sparing the young Bahus (housewives).

“They sent CBI to harass a Bahu of my house. They are calling us coal thieves ... but let me ask who is a thief . These people stay in the hotels constructed by coal mafia at Durgapur, their leaders stay in the house of the

Ruias who have ruined the Dunlop company. They are selling out BSNL, Rail, LIC, SAIL, banks and are calling us coal thieves. Are the bahus of Bengal coal thieves?”

“I will play the Goalkeeper and see how many goals you can score,” the Chief Minister said invoking the weird ‘Khela Hobey’ (there will be a game) slogan that has recently gone into circulation in the poll-bound Bengal with the opposition leaders calling it a Trinamool ploy to terrorise the voters driving fears of a “bloody game” so that they remain indoors and do not venture out to vote.

Launching a fierce personal attack she said, “today the country is being ruled by a Hodol Kutkut (Bengali for a chubby person) and a Kimbhut Kimakar (weird looking guy) who have been peddling all kinds of lies against us to win elections.”

“Let me tell you that they are bigger Tolabaji in fact they are Dangabaji (rioters) who ignite riots to win elections,” Banerjee thundered from the same Dunlop Maidan where Modi addressed his rally on Monday and used the tolabaji jibe to attack the TMC.

“The other day the self-styled tallest leader of the country who

thinks himself even taller than Mahatma Gandhi came here to tell all kind of lies ... he spoke of development done by his Government, he said that the TMC has done nothing. If I did nothing then who made the Noapara Dakshineshwar Metro Railway, who made Joka Metro, who made Dankuni Amritsar freight corridor --- all these I had cleared as a Railway Minister of which this man is cutting ribbons and taking the credit,” Banerjee said adding I have not seen a Prime Minister to tell such amount of lies.”

“The country is being ruled by a doitya and a danab (Bengali for demons). They will try to break our spine. They will infiltrate and grab Bengal its culture and everything. Do you want that? Do you want Bengal to be ruled by Gujarat ... Bengal will be ruled by Bengal and not Gujarat,” she said. Referring to the ‘great fall of Donald Trump’ she said “he (Modi had held that hands of Trump thinking that he will continue to help him everywhere but now see what has happened to him (the former US President). I tell you this man’s condition will be even worse than that of Trump.”

## AP records 94 more Covid cases, tally 8.89 lakh



**Amaravati:** Andhra Pradesh recorded 94 new Covid cases on Wednesday, raising the state’s tally over 8.89 lakh, even as 66 more persons recovered from the virus in the past 24 hours.

Chittoor district reported the highest number of cases at 21, followed by Visakhapatnam (15), Anantapur (11), Srikakulam (9) and East Godavari and Guntur (8 each) with Kadapa and Nellore (5 each), Krishna and Vizianagaram (4 each) and Kurnool and West Godavari (2 each).

East Godavari’s tally crossed 1.24 lakh, the highest among all Andhra districts, while the state’s positivity rate fell to 6.44 per cent, which is still higher than the national average of 5.18 per cent.

Surprisingly, the state’s active coronavirus cases rose back over 600 to reach 603 in the past 24 hours.

But no fatalities occurred due to the virus in the past 24 hours, retaining the total number of deaths at 7,168. Powered by 66 more recoveries, total recoveries crossed 8.81 lakh in the southern state.

With 32,494 more tests, total Covid tests in Andhra Pradesh crossed 1.38 crore. **IANS**

## Cop killed in Bihar encounter with liquor mafia

**Patna:** A Sub-Inspector in Bihar’s Sitamarhi district was killed in an encounter with a liquor mafia gang while a guard sustained injuries on Wednesday afternoon. Sources said that a smuggler was also killed.

The encounter took place in Kunwari village around 12.15 pm.

P.N. Sahu, Deputy Superintendent of Police Sitamarhi confirmed the incident.

Sahu said that there was information about Sub Inspector Dinesh Ram posted in Majorganj police station who sustained gunshot injuries and later succumbed in Sadar hospital. There strict liquor prohibition laws in Bihar. **IANS**

## At least 4 killed, 7 injured in road accident in Burdwan

**Kolkata:** In a tragic accident, a speeding truck mowed down as many as 11 people, killing at least four in the spot, in West Bengal’s Burdwan district on Wednesday.

Police said the incident took place on the National Highway (NH)-2 this evening near Palsit when the truck hit a group of passengers waiting for local transport along the highway.

At least four people were killed in the spot while seven others were taken to a nearby hospital with critical injuries. The condition of five injured passengers is really serious, sources said.

The truck was coming from Kolkata side and after the incident it fled the spot. The police have launched search drive to find the offending vehicle. **IANS**



People stand near the portion of a road which caved in, at Dalgate in Srinagar on Wednesday

PTI

# Kerala CM withdraws cases over Sabarimala, CAA protests

**Thiruvananthapuram:** Under pressure from numerous quarters, the Pinarayi Vijayan government in Kerala on Wednesday decided to withdraw cases against protesters on the Sabarimala temple issue and also against those involved in anti-Citizenship Amendment Act protests.

The state Cabinet decided to withdraw the cases as they are not serious criminal cases.

Incidentally, Vijayan was forced to take this decision after the Congress-led opposition said if they return to power, they would withdraw all these cases. Reacting to the Vijayan’s decision, Leader of Opposition Ramesh Chennithala said while he welcomes this decision, it came a bit late and the reasons why it has been made now is known to all, hinting at upcoming Assembly polls.

But BJP leader Kummanam Rajasekheran said he fails to understand why the decision appears to have come with a rider that “serious criminal

cases” will not be withdrawn.

“The government should first make things clear on which are those cases that fall under the serious category. We all expected that the government would apologise to the people for having unleashed a police raj against the Sabarimala believers and then they should have withdrawn each and every case that was registered against the believers who protested over violation of temple traditions,” said Rajasekheran.

G. Sukumaran Nair, general secretary of the Nair Service Society - the socio-cultural body of the Hindu Nairs - said this is certainly a good step of the Vijayan government.

“We were the first to demand this but I don’t think all the issues will end with this,” said Nair.

Back in 2018, Vijayan rubbed Sabarimala temple worshippers the wrong way when his government announced that it would go forward and implement the apex court order which said the temple should be

open to all women, as against the tradition and customs, no women in the age group 10 to 50 are allowed.

That led to massive protests by angry worshippers who came out in large numbers and fought a bitter battle with the police who were trying to escort women who came to break the tradition. During that period numerous cases was registered against the protesters.

Things took a turn for the worse for Vijayan when the LDF was able to win just one of the 20 Lok Sabha seats in Kerala and the single reason attributed was the anger of the Hindu community over breaking of the Sabarimala temple tradition.

And now with the Assembly polls round the corner, it remains to be seen, with the damage already done, how far this will benefit Vijayan who is aiming to become the first Chief Minister in the state’s history to return to power by winning two successive elections. **IANS**

## Shahjahanpur woman was set ablaze after failed gangrape bids

**Shahjahanpur (UP):** The BA second year student who was found half-burnt near a highway in Shahjahanpur, has now told the police that three people tried to rape her in a field near Rai Kheda village on Monday evening and when they did not succeed, they poured kerosene and set her on fire.

Superintendent of Police S. Anand said that the girl gave this statement to the investigators. She has not yet named the accused.

The victim has now been admitted to Civil Hospital in Lucknow. She has suffered more than 70 per cent burn injuries on the stomach chest and neck.

The police officer, however, said that she frequently changed her statements and also said that she was not aware how she reached the hospital from the third floor of her college building.

In CCTV footage, the girl, a student of a college run by a trust of former union minister Swami Chinmayanand, was seen coming down alone from the third floor, the police said.

The SP said, “With the help of CCTV footage, we have found that the girl went out of the college campus from a broken outer wall about 20 minutes after entering the premises and was seen walking alone on a canal road.”

Before that, the girl could be seen talking to her friends outside a classroom and visiting a library.

Three teams led by deputy superintendents of police (DSP) as well as an SOG team have been deployed. **IANS**

# Amaravati activist hits BJP leader with slipper during TV debate

**Amaravati:** A live debate on a Telugu news channel turned ugly when one of the panelists assaulted a BJP leader with a slipper.

During the political debate on Tuesday night, Kolikapudi Srinivasa Rao, an activist working against the trifurcation of Amaravati, removed his slipper and hit BJP’s Andhra Pradesh general secretary Vishnu Vardhan Reddy after a verbal duel over some comments made by Reddy on former chief ministers.

Enraged by these remarks, Rao fired back at Reddy saying he was talking “nonsense”. He was aided by condemnation from another panelist who logged in virtually from home. “You are crossing your limits,” Reddy warned Rao, but he said that he will repeat the “nonsense” word 100 times.

As the debate heated up, Reddy accused Rao that he should wear a Telugu Desam

**Enraged by these remarks, Rao fired back at Reddy saying he was talking “nonsense”. He was aided by condemnation from another panelist who logged in virtually from home**

Party (TDP) flag and then debate, hinting that he was a TDP supporter.

“Wear a TDP flag and talk or go and work in the TDP office. Who are you? Who are you to ask me? Should I do your paid artist job?” fumed Reddy.

On hearing the “paid artist” jibe, an infuriated Rao removed his slipper and struck Reddy on his face and questioned him “who is a paid artist?”

Those opposing Amaravati’s trifurcation are termed as “paid artists” by their political opponents, who allege that they are opposing trifurcation as the land value in Amaravati region will plummet. **IANS**

# Man ends life over mother-wife feud

**Moradabad (Uttar Pradesh):** Upset over a feud between his mother and wife, a 37-year-old man allegedly committed suicide by jumping off the fifth floor of a residential building in Pakhwara area of Moradabad.

The man’s wife and his mother were allegedly having an argument at the time when the incident took place on Monday night, police said.

The deceased has been identified as Sachin Saini. The man, who was lying in a pool of blood, was rushed to a private hospital on Delhi road from where he was referred to a higher facility in Delhi.

SHO Pakhwara, Rajni Dwiwedi said, “The man succumbed while on the way to Delhi. Prima facie, it appears that the man took the extreme step in a fit of rage as he was upset over frequent fights in the family. The body has been sent for post mortem. Further investigation is underway.” The deceased, who owned a crockery shop in Pakhwara area, is survived by mother, wife and son. **IANS**

## Four missing UP girls found in Uttarakhand

**Lakhimpur Kheri (UP):** The four girls who went missing on their way to school on Tuesday, were found in Uttarakhand on Wednesday. SP Vijay Dhul said that the girls had left their homes to visit Uttarakhand. They were staying at a hotel under Muni ki Reti police station in Tehri Garhwal district.

They have been safely recovered by a police team that went from here. The Uttarakhand police also helped in tracking down the girls.

The police team is now bringing the girls back.

According to the police, technical surveillance was used to track down the girls, three of whom are minors.

One of the girls, 20, a student of Class 12, had left home with Rs 25,000 cash. She, along with three minor girls aged between 15 to 16 years, were seen boarding the bus.

The SSP said, “The bus conductor, who identified the girls, said he had dropped them at Sitapur bus stand. It appears from the CCTV clips and the conductor’s account, that the girls left home on their own. We do not see anyone accompanying them.” **IANS**





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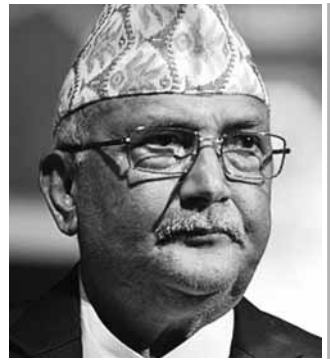
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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Trouble next door

Nepal's top court revokes PM Oli's Parliament dissolution decision, forcing him to face trust vote

In a major blow to Nepal's Prime Minister (PM) KP Sharma Oli, their Supreme Court has ruled that the Himalayan nation's Parliament, which was dissolved by Oli in December 2020, must be reconvened. The court has given Oli two weeks to reinstate the legislature, which was dissolved following protracted internal disputes within his ruling Nepal Communist Party (NCP). In what is being seen as a major slap on the wrist for Oli, the top court ruled that the PM had overstepped his powers and the dissolution of the House was an unconstitutional act. The apex court's verdict means that Oli will face a no-confidence motion when the legislators reconvene because he had dissolved Parliament about two years before its mandated five-year term was to end, to head off a no-trust motion by the rival leaders in his party. Now that he has nowhere to hide, Nepal has been pushed into another round of political instability. As of now, all indications are that Oli will respect the court's verdict and, if his advisors are to be believed, he won't consider any undemocratic move like imposing an emergency. However, both India and China will be watching the developments very closely as Oli had been re-elected in 2017 on the promise of forging stronger ties with China, a promise he kept all too well! India, which was once viewed as "big brother" to the Himalayan nation, had to play second fiddle to China as Oli danced to the tunes of Beijing and



Chinese Ambassador Hou Yanqi and initiated several major development projects as part of Chinese efforts to boost trade and transit links in the region.

Not only did this end India's monopoly in Nepal, it also led to increased tension between the neighbours as Oli issued many unsavoury and unwarranted remarks against India. The relations soured further as Beijing's influence in Nepal and its meddling in Oli's party grew. The last straw was Nepal coming out with a new political map in May 2020 claiming several areas in Uttarakhand to be part of its territory. However, to India's credit, it kept its cool with its long-time ally and made all-out efforts to mend fences. In the end, Oli did come around to better ties with India, particularly after it became clear to him that China was indifferent to his continuation in the Government if it helped avoid a split in the NCP. The shift in Oli's approach could be attributed to an attempt to reclaim the nationalist agenda that was the mainstay of his campaign that resulted in the NCP's win in 2018. That China lately appeared indifferent to his continuation in the Government is also believed to have contributed to Oli's stand. Now India and China, both jockeying for influence in Nepal, will keep a sharp eye on the political developments there. Where India is concerned, a weak coalition Government could be more supportive of New Delhi than hawkish Oli, who is seen as more interested in remaining in power in whatever way he can.

### PICTALK



A farmer checks mustard flowers at a farm on the outskirts of Amritsar

PTI

## Continuing travails

COVID-19 cases on the rise again, many States make negative RT-PCR test mandatory

It's happened so frequently in the recent history of public health in India that it's almost become a case of "so near and yet so far". Every time the authorities, the health-care workers and the good Samaritans show due diligence and together bring COVID-19 cases under control, either a new strain is detected reaching our country or people — especially those living away from the metros and tier-I cities — ignore the standard protocols and become victims and carriers of the accursed virus. Now the latest news coming in is that the COVID-19 caseload across the country has shown a northward trend for the ninth successive day, crossing 13,000 on Tuesday, which is the longest such rolling average since infections peaked in September last year. In more worrying news, the Union Health Ministry has said that two new strains of SARS-CoV-2, the virus causing COVID-19, have been detected in India. These new strains — N440K and E484K — have been detected in Kerala and Maharashtra. However, there is currently no evidence to show that the recent spike in COVID-19 cases in parts of these two States is due to these new variants.

Meanwhile, negative COVID-19 test report (negative RT-PCR test) has been made mandatory for entering several States: Delhi, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, J&K, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura, Ladakh and Chhattisgarh. Meanwhile, with the recent spurt in Coronavirus cases in five States, Delhi will make it essential for those arriving from these States to carry a negative COVID test report. People travelling to Delhi from Maharashtra, Kerala, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Punjab by flights, trains or buses will have to show a negative RT-PCR test from Saturday till March 15. But all's not bleak; there is some good news, too. The Union Cabinet has decided to provide the vaccines for free to certain sections, with Union Minister Prakash Javadekar tweeting that beginning March 1 "people over 60 years of age or over 45 with comorbidities will be able to get vaccinated at 10,000 Government facilities and many private hospitals". As of last week, there has globally been a "strong decline" in Coronavirus infections in the US and the UK since January. Inversely, however, it is very likely that such reports are offering a false sense of security to people to take it easy, which shouldn't be the case. If we let our guard down now, India with its population may find it nigh impossible to break free from the clutches of this virus. It's now or never!

# Time to look and act East

While democracy is the most sought after means of governance, it becomes a farce when core values are compromised, like in the case of Myanmar

The long-awaited goal of democracy in Myanmar was achieved in 2011 after a five-decade struggle led by civil society, international actors and agencies against an autocratic military in the country. However, the recent *coup d'état* by the national Army has once again led Myanmar to uncertain times. The coup surprised the world and it shall be seen as the outcome of a compromised leadership by Aung San Suu Kyi. Despite registering a mammoth victory in the November 2020 elections, the Suu Kyi-led National League for Democracy (NLD) was accused by the Army and Opposition of poll irregularities, corruption and unethical means in "stealing" the victory; hence, the coup.

While the Union Election Commission has refuted all claims of poll irregularities by the NLD, it was in no way possible that the Army would not act to assert its political victory, considering an uneasy ride with the NLD Government in the last six years.

Amid mounting international pressure, the military junta was forced to pave the way for the entry of democratic forces in 2010. The political prisoners were released, including Suu Kyi, but the NLD boycotted the elections over alleged irregularities by the military-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party. However, over the next five years, the NLD gained popular support which was reflected in the 2015 general elections. The NLD won 168 of the 224 seats in the Amyotha Hluttaw (House of Nationalities), with 25 per cent seats going to the Army without any contest. It indicated more space for pro-democracy leadership and restoration of the multiparty parliamentary system. In 2011, President U Thein Sein had carried out significant political and economic reforms though these were in sync with the needs and demands of the military.

For the current fiasco, one needs to look at the 2008 Constitution of the Myanmar Army as one of the root causes. The Constitution had strength-

ened the Army's role in the parliamentary system on the legal front. Considering the popularity of Suu Kyi in the new political order, the Army had especially added that a President should have a military background and none of his/her spouses be subjects of a foreign power or citizen of a foreign country to limit her chances of holding the President's office as her two sons are British citizens. The Home and the Defence portfolios can be held only by the Army, and the 25 per cent reservation was to keep the military in full control. The emergency powers have further strengthened the Army's position.

In the course of a popular public movement demanding to reinstate a democratic order, Suu Kyi's rise became synonymous to democracy. Yet she failed to condemn and control the gross human rights violations of Rohingyas in the Rakhine State. The refugee Rohingyas moved *en masse* to neighbouring Bangladesh. While the world was looking at Suu Kyi to emerge as a messiah for ethnic Rohingyas, she chose to rescue her own party. More surprisingly, she was seen labelling Rohingyas as

"illegal migrants" who were already tagged as "Islamic terrorists" by the Army. While Amnesty International stripped away her honours, there were calls to take back even the Nobel Peace Prize.

Suu Kyi may have been vocal for democracy in Myanmar but she failed to stand for it while in power. She condemned neither a State-sponsored ethnic cleansing by the Army nor the Buddhist lobby that was reportedly instrumental in the alleged brutalities. Therefore, while the world is condemning the coup, international actors are cautious in defending Suu Kyi. It is an open secret that the NLD co-existed with the Army, but the compulsions of democracy had kept them on different paths. In reality, the Generals never gave up on their political aspirations and failure through the electoral route made the coup evitable.

India has aired its voice in favour of democracy and normalcy in Myanmar. At the same time, New Delhi has opted not to slap any sanctions unlike the US, UK and the EU. As a champion of democracy, India's appeal for its restoration remains the common element across the volatile political surfaces globally. It helps New



THE CURRENT CASE OF MYANMAR IS NOTHING MORE THAN A MATTER OF COMPROMISED LEADERSHIP THAT WAS UNABLE TO BRING IN FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES IN THE ARMY'S FUNCTIONING



RISHI GUPTA

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### DISHA RAVI VINDICATED

Sir — While granting bail to activist Disha Ravi, Additional Sessions Judge Dharmender Rana demolished almost every charge levelled against her because "not even an iota of evidence was brought to the court's notice". This a rap on the knuckles of the Centre and the Delhi Police.

Interestingly, before speaking about the conscience of the nation, Judge Rana quoted the *Rig Veda* and reminded the nation: "This 5,000-year-old civilisation of ours has never been averse to ideas from varied quarters." For her part, the activist Disha Ravi said if it was sedition to highlight farmers' protest globally, she was willing to be imprisoned. She also clarified that there was no question of collaborating with the pro-Khalistani group, Poetic Justice Foundation.

But when the court has thrown this "toolkit" charge into the waste paper basket, one wonders whether it has made the BJP feel embarrassed of its own "toolkit": Charging innocent citizens with cooked-up stories, unleashing the ED, IT and/or the CBI on political opponents and toppling State Governments by way of horse trading. I strongly feel that the verdict is an encouragement to and booster for Disha Ravi to stand up against all concocted charges. One should be happy with her bail order but hope she draws a *Lakshman rekha* for herself; otherwise she may keep facing such problems in the future, too.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

### PROVIDE FREE JOBS TO SENIORS

Sir — Glad to read about the Union Government's decision to vaccinate people above the age of 60 years against Coronavirus from March 1, besides including people above 45 who suffer from comorbidities in the second phase. As per the statement made by Union Minister Prakash Javadekar, India's vaccination drive proposal has been approved by the Union Cabinet and the above-mentioned groups will receive the shot at the Government's expense and at its facilities. The announcement comes at a time when there is an alarming spurt in the

## Congress needs a major shake-up



This refers to the editorial 'Shaky leadership' (February 24). With the sun setting for the Congress in Puducherry, it's the ninth State the 'Grand Old Party' has lost since 2014. It now enjoys power in merely three States — Punjab, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh. The story of Congress' decline isn't new; it has virtually been a repeat telecast since the BJP-led NDA came to power. The ideological bankruptcy of the top

leadership has tickled down to the ranks, leading to a crisis at the grassroots.

Though the BJP has the backing of the RSS-type booth-level workers, who are dedicated to consolidating votes in favour of the saffron party, the Congress misses its Sewa Dal whose political significance has been overshadowed by a lack of intent and commitment. Also, the top leadership needs to acknowledge various inputs by the think tank within the Congress, mainly the G-23 (Group of 23 leaders) who wrote to demand leadership reforms. The party urgently needs an overhaul in ideology, besides flexibility to adapt as per the situation's demands.

By playing the card of soft Hindutva, the Congress is falling for the core competency of the BJP and it is bound to boomerang. The party needs to bridge the trust deficit, make the organisation less of a family enterprise and keep the cadres and alliance partners buoyant even in crises.

Nischai Vats | Sultanpur

number of COVID-19 cases across the country, particularly in Maharashtra, Kerala, Gujarat, Punjab, Karnataka and Jammu and Kashmir. I believe that the Centre does not have any alternative but to provide free vaccination to the citizens as quite a lot of people would not be able to afford it, thus preferring to stay back and take recourse to home-made remedies. This development, if it comes about, would totally defeat the purpose of the world's biggest inoculation programme as there would be critical gaps left uncovered in the chain of vaccinated Indians. Also, the Centre must insist that private hospitals also give free vaccines to people aged 60 and above with the cost being borne by the Government.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

### A STADIUM STANDS TALL

Sir — In India, cricket is a religion and we look at our cricketers as demigods. To stay at the pinnacle of our global success in the sport, we need to have world-class stadia

for grooming our youngsters on their way up to the highest level. In this regard, the inauguration of the world's largest cricket stadium in Ahmedabad is a giant leap towards a new era.

The stadium, which was closed for renovation in 2015, has been a witness to some major milestones in Indian cricket in its previous avatar. Sunil Gavaskar reached his 10,000 run-mark in Test cricket here against Pakistan in 1987 and, in 1994, Kapil Dev claimed his 432nd Test wicket to become the highest wicket-taker in the world, surpassing Sir Richard Hadlee. The ground has a state-of-the-art drainage system that will take just 30 minutes from the time it stops raining to flush out the water. Also, it is the only cricket stadium in the world to have four dressing rooms for the players so that back-to-back games can be played on the same day.

CK Subramaniam | Navi Mumbai

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## SOUNDBITE

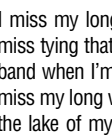
I cannot build any other capital (on the demand that Purnia be the State capital). If anyone else becomes the Chief Minister after me, they can do whatever they wish. I cannot do such a thing.

Bihar Chief Minister —Nitish Kumar



I am frustrated that (French company) Naval Group have not yet been able to finalise this contract but it will not be done at the expense of Australian industry.

Australia's Defence Minister —Linda Reynolds



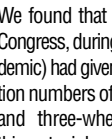
I miss my long hair. I miss tying that rubber band when I'm bare. I miss my long walks at the lake of my hometown's creek. I miss listening to my old-time playlist.

Actor —Ayushmann Khurrana



Playing 100 Tests as a fast bowler is no mean feat and playing especially in our conditions, things can get so difficult. But he (Ishant Sharma) kept working hard.

Indian captain —Virat Kohli



We found that they (the Congress, during the pandemic) had given registration numbers of scooters and three-wheelers. Is this not a joke on the people?

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister —Yogi Adityanath



## FIRST COLUMN

## TEXAS MUST READ UP ON GLOBAL WARMING

Climate change doesn't care whether you believe in it or not. And it may get worse



GWYNNE DYER

It's not funny when people die of the cold but there was some innocent amusement to be had from the indignation of Texans unable to boil their drinking water during the 'Big Freeze' because the power was still out. Things like that are not supposed to happen in a modern, developed country like the US of A. How dare they? Others, aware that Texas has cut every corner in public services that it's possible to cut, were unsurprised by the five-day mini-disaster that struck the country's second-biggest State. One blogger wrote philosophically: "Occasionally, something will happen in Texas to remind the people who live here that we live in a failed State." A winter temperature 25°C colder than usual for the time of year is rare, but this is not the first time it has snowed in Texas. The electricity failed, triggering a cascade of other disasters, mainly because of a long-standing refusal to connect the State power grid with the two main national ones. (This was done to avoid federal supervision on prices and standards). Others have cold snaps too. Germany, Russia, Canada, even northern China get much colder than Texas, but they don't end up freezing in the dark because they are prepared for it.

Texas could have been prepared for it, too, but somebody in power would have had to read science journals for that. Since they almost all got elected with donations from fossil fuel producers, that was never very likely. The "explainers" in the media talk about a rogue 'Arctic vortex', but what's really happening is much simpler.



It's just what global warming has done to the northern hemisphere's 'jet stream.' The northern jet stream is a high-speed, high-altitude atmospheric 'river' that flows from the West to the East all the way around the planet. It marks the boundary between the Polar air mass, sometimes called the 'Polar Vortex', and the warmer air masses of the mid-latitudes. East-bound airliners crossing the North Atlantic and the North Pacific often hitch a ride on the jet stream, saving up to an hour. The energy that drives the jet stream comes from the temperature difference between the two air masses it divides. However, the Arctic is warming much faster than the rest of the world, so that difference is shrinking and, with less energy the jet stream is slowing down. It used to blast straight East but even then it occasionally developed long S-shaped kinks called 'Rossby waves.' These are big loops extending far North and South of its usual track. As it has slowed down (the average speed is now 150-225 kmph), the Rossby waves have grown more frequent and bigger. They are often now great loops deviating from the straight track and bring with them cold Polar air rarely seen so far South, or warm air not seen previously so far North. That's what happened to Texas last week: One of those Rossby waves brought cold Arctic air all the way South. This pattern will recur and Texans will have to live with it.

Climate change doesn't care whether you believe in it or not. And it may get worse. In June-July 2018 record-breaking heatwaves hit western US, Western Europe and the Caucasus-Caspian Sea region, while there was extreme rainfall and flash flooding on the US east coast, in eastern Europe and Japan. It was all happening in big Rossby loops that had taken over the jet stream. All the loops, containing hot dry air or cool moist air, were stuck for over two weeks. By last year, researchers had found that over the last 20 years the same pattern of seven stalled peaks and lows over the same regions has lasted seven times for more than two weeks. In the previous 20 years (1980-2000), that had not happened even once. This suggests that the pattern is getting stronger. And, since the latitudes where the loops are stalling include most of the major "breadbasket" regions of the northern hemisphere, the crop-killing droughts and heatwaves they bring could cause a big loss in world food production. It's the unknowns that do the worst damage.

(Gwynne Dyer's new book is 'Growing Pains: The Future of Democracy and Work.' The views expressed are personal.)

## Time to tackle online gender violence

Despite the existence of regulatory mechanisms, we have not been able to effectively handle online safety challenges owing to the lack of proper implementation



SHRUTI SHREYA

SHEFALI MEHTA

The internet has evolved as an indispensable tool for transforming our society and culture. Women, especially those living in rural India, have been empowered to speak about their diverse realities, discuss common concerns and organise for change. However, the challenges of censorship and overregulation emanating from actions like blocking of LGBTQ+ sites or silencing of female voices on social media through misogynistic hate speech and trolling, make it essential to find sustainable solutions to these concerns that are threatening the online safety of vulnerable communities. After all, with the internet becoming the ultimate manifestation of our social reality, attaining online equality is paramount for ensuring the same offline.

**The feminist landscape of online hate:** The last decade has witnessed instances of cyberstalking, rape threats and other forms of gendered violence increase at an alarming rate on the internet. In stark contrast to claims that "cyberhate" is predominantly innocuous, there are a range of academic studies which prove the widespread suffering caused, owing to the consequent social, psychological and economic harm inflicted upon women due to this challenge. The problem of gendered cyberhate has become far more prevalent since the advent of web 2.0, which was marked by the shift towards a greater amount of user-generated content, collaboration, interactivity and information sharing over the web. This facilitated online antagonists to get easier access to their targets in a manner that was never possible before. According to a 2015 report by the United Nations, 73 per cent of women have experienced some form of online violence. An analysis conducted by a leading daily revealed that out of every 10 writers who receive abusive comments online, eight were women.

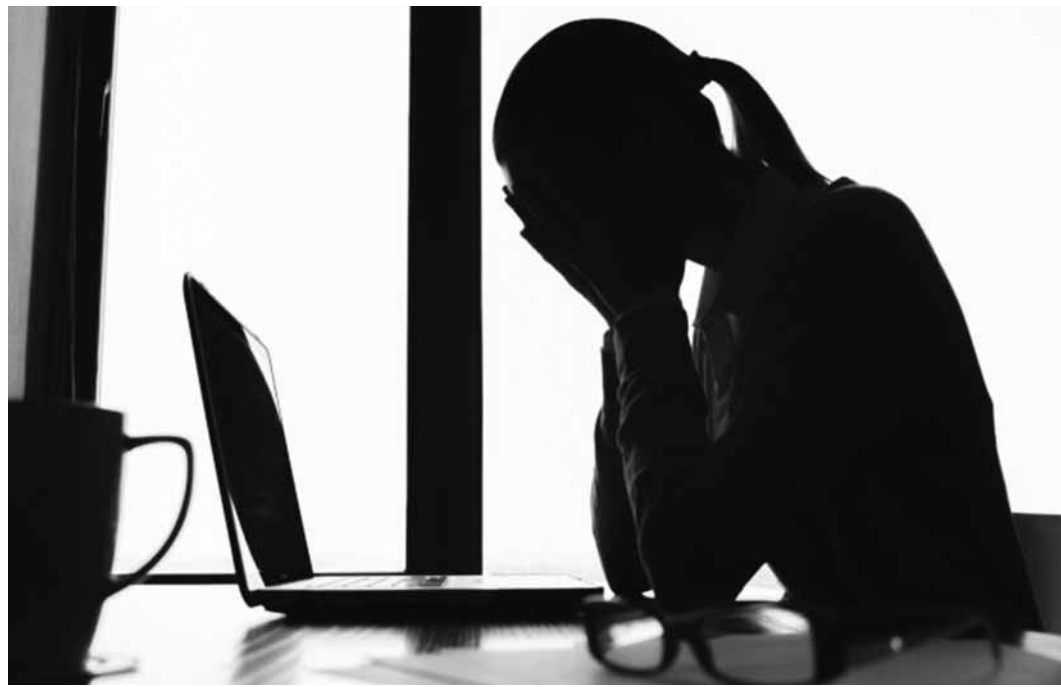
**Types of online hate:** Online abuse can be placed on a wide spectrum of violence, ranging from mildly irritating (cyberstalking) at one end to unequivocally criminal (revenge pornography) at the other. One peculiar characteristic of this challenge as seen in India and many other developing economies, is the dimension of domestic violence which is increasingly being observed as a major component of most of the cases of online harassment. Some of the most prominent forms of gendered cyberhate faced by women online include cyberbullying, a challenge whose primary target is mainly school and college girls. Then there is cyberstalking, which includes the perpetrator making unwarranted attempts to contact the target by installing a spyware on her phone or hacking her email/social media accounts. Plus there is denial of service, wherein, the online platforms disables the person to voice herself, often due to her unconventional views. Other major forms of online harm are doxing, which involves publication of personally identifiable information about a person that enables online antagonists to find their targets offline, and the most critically dangerous of all including revenge pornography (publishing sexually explicit content, often of a former partner without their consent) and sextortion (hacking webcams, installing malwares or impersonating as someone's romantic interest to obtain intimate information and images).

**Implications of the harm on users:** Extensive evidence exists to show that gendered cyberhate inflicts significant psychological, social, reputational and economic distress and harm upon women.



A SURVEY CONDUCTED BY FEMINISM IN INDIA UNDERSCORED THAT 50 PER CENT OF WOMEN IN MAJOR CITIES OF INDIA HAVE FACED ONLINE ABUSE. HOWEVER, WOMEN ARE NOT THE ONLY VICTIMS OF SUCH ABUSE. THERE IS CONCURRENTLY RAMPANT ONLINE HARASSMENT OF INDIVIDUALS FROM MARGINALISED GENDERS AND SEXUALITIES AS WELL

Shreya is Policy Research Assistant and Mehta is Strategic Engagement and Research Coordinator, The Dialogue. The views expressed are personal.



This includes putting limitations on their ability to engage in meaningful activism to respond to the challenge of gendered cyberhate itself. This leads to serious concerns of violation of both rights guaranteed under international human rights laws and the Constitution of India, including their right to free speech, right to informational privacy, right to bodily integrity and right to reputation, to name a few. As another major concern, it is seen that women who depend on the internet to earn their livelihood are more prone to receiving online hate. This causes serious repercussions for them to find and keep access to their jobs and socially and professionally network themselves — causing blatant breach of their right to livelihood and gender equality.

**Understanding and solving the problem:** We must not forget that India has not only bagged one of the top ranks for having the highest number of internet users, but it is also the country that tops the statistics of global sexual harassment. The harassment faced by women in the physical world is mirrored by the image harassment faced by them in the online world. A survey conducted by Feminism in India underscored that 50 per cent of women in major cities of India have faced online abuse. However, women are not the only victims of such abuse. There is concurrently rampant online harassment of individuals from marginalised genders and sexualities as well. A truly intersectional view of the issue demands that it is specifically

addressed through policy and law, as it is evident that the laws at present that were created with the purpose of protecting women are failing at their task to create a safe place online. Cyberhate, specifically, is a growing issue in the Indian online space. With a charged society polarised by religion and politics, the instances of hateful, violating, or mean comments that occur in the comment sections, forums and on other websites or social media have multiplied. In the case of cyberhate not all violations may be explicitly against the law, they are still serious and unacceptable as a part of online presence, as much as it would be in the physical society. It is important to recognise that to truly tackle the issue of cyberhate, our society, platforms and institutions including the Government must come together. Cyberhate must be dealt with at a societal level through awareness and change in mindsets while institutions must provide for zero tolerance and also grievance redressal. It must exist at all levels. For example, employers must show a responsibility and obligation towards staff to provide them with tools or resources to deal with the cyberhate that they might face as a consequence of the work they are required to do online. Also, legal measures and institutional methods against hate speech are unlikely to be able to tackle the sheer volume of online publications. A complete solution would be to work together with ISPs and platforms i.e. intermediaries to develop comprehensive codes of conduct or community guidelines based on

which removal of offensive content takes place. Platforms have the ability to use their technology to detect such content and thereby filter/flag or even remove it. It is equally important to enhance their responsibility in these scenarios to be able to complement the efforts of law enforcement.

**The way forward:** With the IPC, IT Act and the POCSO rules in place we have adequate laws to tackle cyberhate. The challenge is to effectively implement these laws to ensure safe online space. The Draft Intermediary Guidelines, 2018, envisaged under the IT Act received extant criticism owing to its deleterious impact on free speech and privacy of users. If implemented, it would pierce the encryption-enabled anonymity enjoyed by women and marginalised groups. This anonymity is crucial to tackle trolls with counter-speech and ensure online safety. A recent study explains how the mandate of proactive monitoring under the Draft Guidelines by using automated tools and introducing traceability, by breaking encryption, would undermine the safety of users.

Despite the existence of regulatory mechanisms, we have not been able to effectively handle online safety challenges owing to the lack of proper implementation. The onus of reform cannot be entirely placed on regulation and also lies on the participants in the ecosystem who have a major role in ensuring that progressive laws and policies are rightly implemented and followed. It is the duty of the State to effectively prosecute perpetrators of online hate.

## POINT COUNTERPOINT

FOR ME, COMING TO KERALA WAS REFRESHING AS I FOUND THAT PEOPLE ARE INTERESTED IN ISSUES. NOT SUPERFICIALLY BUT GOING INTO DETAILS.  
—CONGRESS LEADER RAHUL GANDHI



A FEW DAYS AGO HE WAS IN THE NORTH-EAST SPEWING VENOM AGAINST THE WESTERN PART OF INDIA. TODAY HE IS SPEWING VENOM AGAINST THE NORTH.  
—BJP PRESIDENT J.P. NADDA

## Bumps in the way of adoption of EVs in India

EV technology is the future of mobility but dithering Government measures mean that this amazing technology is still stuck in neutral



KOTA SRIRAJ

Rising fuel prices, a nascent electric vehicle (EV) support infrastructure and the recently-announced vehicle scrappage policy amid worrying pollution levels, are creating an unprecedented crisis of sorts for Indians as far as commuting is concerned. These conditions are exacerbated by a creaking public transport system that is bursting at the seams. The seemingly unstoppable rally of fuel price hikes is undoubtedly the most disturbing development so far for a nation that is battling a pandemic-induced economic downturn and dwindling income levels.

In view of a divided and weak Opposition, that repeatedly fails to take up key issues that affect the common man, the Government has mustered enough confidence to dish out 21 fuel hikes in the

The writer is an environmental journalist. The views expressed are personal.

first two months of the new year, if media reports are to be believed. For many of us, the rise in pollution levels and fuel prices has come as an indication to shift towards EVs or public transport, but in these times of Coronavirus-induced social distancing, jostling in a crowded public conveyance does not seem to be a natural choice.

The finality of making an alternative choice for commuting has been further strengthened by the announcement of the vehicle scrappage policy which makes owning an old vehicle in Delhi-NCR impossible and very costly elsewhere in the country. Though this policy has delighted auto manufacturers as new vehicle demand is expected to soar, the citizens whose budgets have been severely hit by the pandemic

may not share the same enthusiasm, as many of their perfectly maintained vehicles will end up in scrapyards. In the midst of this chaos, the EV industry is emerging as the apt solution for all the existent problems, but the Indian EV sector is anything but fully ready to meet the challenge.

The auto sector, which was experiencing a slowdown even before the virus' outbreak, came to its knees as the full impact of the COVID-19 contagion was unleashed. The Union Budget addressed the sector's concerns by focusing on reliefs such as tax holidays for EV startups. The setting aside of ₹2,217 crore for 'Clean Air', for 42 urban centres with a million-plus population is also a good move that can spread awareness about the environmental benefits of EVs.



Similarly, the Government's plan for strengthening the public transport sector under the Public-Private-Partnership model with an outlay of ₹18,000 crore for operating 20,000 buses is encouraging for the EV industry.

The scheme can help fight air pollution effectively. But inexplicably, this is where the Government's vision gets blurry as the Budget does not mention any EV-focused ini-

tiative or policy, including Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles (FAME).

Other expectations, including the ramping up of EV charging infrastructure, enablement of retail financing for EVs and moderation of the inverted Goods and Services Tax (GST) structure along with lowering of taxes on EV input components, including battery, were also not addressed.

The EV manufacturers were hopeful of a firmer policy commitment from the Government, especially in the duty structure pertaining to batteries. The Budget platform could have been used to fix the inverted duty structure for components such as batteries from 18 per cent to five per cent and for charging/swapping infrastructure services, too, from

18 per cent to five per cent. For instance, a lithium-ion battery fitted in an EV attracts 12 per cent GST but it is 18 per cent GST when sold separately. Correction of such issues would have lent enormous confidence to EV manufacturers and provided a much-needed push to the sector. Similarly, lowering of import duties on automotive parts instead of raising them would have had the same positive impact on the spirit of the industry, besides lowering the critical costs of production.

The absence of an aggressive push from the Government for the indigenous EV industry has raised concerns for its future. World leading EV manufacturers such as Tesla are already eyeing the huge potential of the Indian market. In fact, Tesla has already registered itself as

an entity in India in Bengaluru, with the intention of manufacturing EV cars. Hyundai's Kona and Morris Garages' ZS EV, are already making inroads in the Indian market as we speak. With competition already getting hot, Indian EV manufacturers need more support from the Government in the form of sops, tax holidays for four-wheel EV makers, better GST structures and lower import duties besides robust financing options for the consumers. These measures combined with superior nationwide charging infrastructure can render fossil fuel cars obsolete, paving the way for their phase-out.

EV technology is the future of mobility but dithering Government measures mean that this amazing technology is still stuck in neutral in the country.



# Oli in no mood to resign, ready to face Parl: Official

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Nepal Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli will not resign immediately and implement the Supreme Court's verdict against him by facing Parliament that is due to convene within two weeks, an official representing the embattled premier said on Wednesday.

In a landmark ruling, a five-member constitutional bench led by Chief Justice Chandra Shumsher on Tuesday annulled the Oli government's "unconstitutional" decision to dissolve the 275-member lower house of Parliament. The court also ordered the government to summon the House session within the next 13 days.

Nepal plunged into a political crisis on December 20 after President Bidya Devi Bhandari dissolved the House and announced fresh elections on April 30 and May 10 at the recommendation of Prime Minister Oli, amidst a tussle for power within the ruling Nepal Communist Party (NCP).

Oli's Press Advisor Surya Thapa said the prime minister,



Nepalese supporters of a splinter group in the governing Nepal Communist Party participate in a rally to celebrate the Supreme Court order in Kathmandu on Wednesday

who turned 69 this week, intends to implement the verdict of the apex court after facing Parliament that is due to convene within two weeks.

"The Supreme Court's verdict is controversial, however, it should be accepted and implemented. Its effects will be seen in the future as the decision has not provided any solution to the political problems," Thapa said. He claimed that the apex court's verdict will further fuel instability and pave way for

power-play. "The Prime Minister will face the House of Representatives to implement the verdict but will not tender his resignation as of now," Thapa was quoted as saying by The Himalayan Times.

Oli's Chief Advisor Bishnu Rimal, mirroring Thapa's sentiments, said that all will have to accept the court's decision. "However, it provides no solution to existing political complications," Rimal said.

# Senate confirms Linda as US Ambassador to UN

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Linda Thomas-Greenfield, a veteran diplomat and Joe Biden's nominee, has been confirmed as America's next ambassador to the United Nations by the US Senate, adding a key member to the President's national security team as it seeks to reengage with the world body.

The 100-member Senate on Tuesday backed Thomas-Greenfield by 78 to 20 votes to be US' representative at the world body and a member of Biden's Cabinet. Thomas-Greenfield, 68, is a 35-year veteran of the Foreign Service who has served on four continents, most notably in Africa.

Vice President Kamala Harris is scheduled to administer her the oath of office at the White House on Wednesday.

"Today's Senate confirmation of Linda Thomas-Greenfield as the US Permanent Representative to the United Nations reinforces President Biden's commitment to restore and expand American leadership on the global stage," Secretary of State Tony Blinken said.

"Thomas-Greenfield is a seasoned diplomat, deeply committed to American values, and the right choice to rebuild our nation's standing at the UN and in other multilateral venues. I congratulate her on her confirmation, and eagerly anticipate our partnership in serving the American people and their interests," Blinken said in a statement.

# China says Iran nuclear issue at 'critical point'

Beijing: Developments surrounding Iran's nuclear programme are at a "critical point" and lifting sanctions on the country is key to breaking the deadlock, China's Foreign Ministry said on Wednesday.

Spokesperson Wang

Wenbin's comments came a day after Iran officially began restricting international inspections of its nuclear facilities in a bid to pressure European countries and the US into lifting crippling economic sanctions and restoring the 2015 nuclear deal.

# Experts fear fresh wave of prisoners in Myanmar

AP ■ JAKARTA

Whether taken from their homes in the middle of the night or grabbed off the streets during protests, hundreds of people have been arrested in the weeks since Myanmar's military coup, leading human rights groups and experts to fear a sizable expansion in the number of political prisoners in the country.

As of Tuesday, some 696 people — including monks, writers, activists, politicians and others — had been arrested in relation to the coup, according to the Assistance Association for Political



Prisoners, or AAPP, a Myanmar-based organisation. Many of those arrested were charged using a legacy of laws — some dating back to British colonial times and others instituted under previous

military regimes — that have been used against critics by every government, including the one led by Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy party, which was ousted in the Feb. 1 coup.

# Myanmar's military junta must relinquish power: US

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Myanmar's military junta must relinquish power and restore the democratically-elected government, the US has said, asserting that it stands with the people and supports their aspirations in reinstating

a civilian-led government in the country. Myanmar's military early this month toppled the government and seized power for one year, detaining top political figures, including de facto leader Aung San Suu Kyi and President U Win Myint in the bloodless coup.

# Indonesia presses regional effort to resolve Myanmar crisis

Bangkok: Regional diplomatic efforts to resolve Myanmar's political crisis gathered pace Wednesday, while protests continued in Yangon and other cities calling for the country's coup-makers to stand down and Aung San Suu Kyi's elected government to be returned to power.

# Biden would not be okay if Taliban ruled Af: White House

Washington: US President Joe Biden would not be okay if the Taliban ruled Afghanistan, the White House has said, underlining that there is an ongoing process of considering the next steps to ensure peace in the war-torn country.

The US and the Taliban reached an agreement in February 2020 that called for a permanent ceasefire, peace negotiations between the Taliban and the Afghan government, and a withdrawal of all foreign forces by May 1. There are about 2,500 US

troops currently in the country. The Taliban had their ouster at the hands of US-led troops in 2001.

"I don't think he would say he'd be okay with that," White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki told reporters on Tuesday when asked if Biden is okay with the Taliban ruling Afghanistan.

"But again, there's an ongoing process of considering the next steps in Afghanistan. That's an ongoing discussion, and I'm not going to get ahead of where that sits at this point in time," Psaki said.

# Afghan Taliban have had sanctuary in Pak: Ex-top US general

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

A former top US military official has told lawmakers that the Afghan Taliban have had sanctuary in Pakistan and the terror group originated from the madrassas in that country.

During a Congressional hearing on Tuesday, General (ret) Joseph F Dunford, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, also told lawmakers that the probability of civil war is high in the wake of a precipitous US withdrawal from Afghanistan.

# US, Bangladesh agree to address challenges in S Asia, greater Indo-Pacific region

Washington: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken spoke with Bangladesh Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen and the two leaders discussed ways to deepen economic, defence and counterterrorism cooperation while agreeing to work together to address challenges in South Asia and the greater Indo-Pacific region.

Blinken called Momen over the phone on Tuesday. During their call, they discussed Myanmar, a durable solution to the Rohingya refugee crisis, and the importance of respect for labour and human rights.

# Ghana is first nation in world to receive COVAX

Accra: Ghana has become the first country in the world to receive vaccines acquired through the United Nations-backed COVAX initiative with a delivery of 6,000 doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine made by the Serum Institute of India.

The vaccines, delivered by UNICEF, arrived at Accra's international airport early Wednesday and are part of the first wave of Covid-19 vaccines being sent by COVAX, an international cooperative programme formed to make sure low- and middle-income countries have fair access to Covid-19 vaccines.

# Putin warns of foreign efforts to destabilise Russia

Moscow: Russia's President Vladimir Putin ordered the nation's top counterintelligence agency Wednesday to redouble its efforts to address what he described as Western attempts to destabilise the country.

Speaking at a meeting of top officials of the Federal Security Service, or FSB, the main KGB successor agency, Putin pointed at the "so-called policy of containment of Russia," charging that it includes efforts to "derail our development, slow it down, create problems alongside our borders and undermine the values that unite Russian society."

# US to seek election to Human Rights Council for 2022-24 term: Blinken

Washington: Asserting that the Biden administration is placing democracy and human rights at the center of its foreign policy, Secretary of State Tony Blinken announced on Wednesday that the US will seek election to the Human Rights Council for the 2022-24 term, almost three years after it quit the UN's top rights body.

Former President Donald Trump withdrew the United States from the UN's Human Rights Council in June 2018, describing it as a "hypocritical and self-serving organisation" that displayed "unending hostility towards Israel".

The Geneva-based Human Rights Council is a 47-member inter-governmental body with-in the UN system tasked with upholding human rights.

# ENGINE BLAST, FIRE KILL 10 AFGHAN CIVILIANS

Kabul: A minivan carrying civilians caught fire on Wednesday after its engine exploded in southern Afghanistan killing 10 family members, including three children, an official said.

# SUSPECTED JEHADI REBELS KILL 10 IN NIGERIA

Maiduguri: At least 10 people were killed and about 60 others injured in an attack by suspected jihadist rebels on the northern Nigerian city of Maiduguri, officials said on Wednesday.

# THAI COURT OUSTS 3 CABINET MEMBERS

Bangkok: Three Cabinet Ministers in Thailand were forced to leave their posts after a court found them guilty of sedition for taking part in violent protests in 2013-2014 against the Government then in power.

**SEARCH FOR MISSING**



General public is hereby informed that a female (depicted in the photo), **Namely : Anupa W/o Prince R/o** 143, Village Rajpura, Gurmandi, Delhi has been missing since 12.02.2021 from her house. In this regard a case vide DD No. 43A dated 13.02.2021 has been lodged at Police Station Model Town, Delhi. Her physical description is as under :-

**Age :** About 32 Years, **Height:** 5'3", **Complexion :** Wheatish, **Face:** Round, **Built:** Strong, **Wearing :** White colour gown and blue colour jacket & green colour sleeper in feet.

Any person having any information/Clue about this missing female, may inform SHO, Model Town, Delhi at E-mail Id – [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in) or Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>

**SHO**  
Phone: 011-24368638, 24368641  
Fax No: 011-24368639  
DP/675/NW/2021

**P.S. Model Town, Delhi**  
**North-West Distt., Delhi**  
**Ph. No. 8750870230**

**SEARCH FOR MISSING**



General Public is hereby informed that a girl namely **Shahin Parveen D/o Mh. Sharif R/o** H.No. H-712, JJ Colony, Shakurpur, Delhi-34 has been missing since 16.02.2021 at 04.00 PM from her residence. In this regard a **FIR No. 64/2021 dated 16.02.2021** has been lodged at PS, Subhash Place, Delhi.

The description of missing girl is as under:

**Name:** Shahin Parveen, **Father's Name :** Mh. Sharif, **Age :** 16 years, **Height :** 4'9", **Face :** Round, **Complexion :** Wheatish, **Build :** Medium, **Wearing :** Orange Colour Suit, Orange Colour Chunnii, Sandles in feet.

If anyone having any clue/information, kindly inform the undersigned at following phone numbers.

Website : <http://cbi.nic.in>

**SHO**  
e-mail : [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)  
Ph. : 011-24368638/24368641  
Extn.-210  
Fax: 011-24368639  
DP/673/NW/2021

**P.S., Subhash Place, Delhi**  
**Ph. : 011-27356336, 27353014,**  
**09871259511, 08750870224**

**SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED**

General public is hereby informed that one girl (depicted in the photo), **Namely:** Bhagwati, **D/o:** Bindeshwar Roy, **R/o:** Village Behrampur, Distt Begusarai, Bihar, **Aged:** 14 years, has been reported missing/ kidnapped from WZ-59, Village Possangipur, Janakpuri, Delhi since 12.02.2021 at 10.00 AM. In this regard a case **FIR No. 44/21 u/s 363 IPC, dated 12.02.2021, has been registered at P.S. Janak Puri, Delhi.**

Her physical description is as under:

**Height:** 5'2" Feet, **Complexion:** Shallow, **Face:** Long, **Physique/Built:** Thin, **Clothing:** Brown Colour Sweater, Yellow Colour Salwar and Chapple in her feet.

Any person having any information/clue about this missing/ kidnapped girl, may inform SHO, Janak Puri, Delhi at E-mail : [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in) or website : <http://cbi.nic.in> Tele No. :011-24368638 or 24368641.

**S.H.O**  
**P.S. Janak Puri, Delhi**  
**Ph.: 011-25551410, 25553166**

DP/3144/WD/2021.

**SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED**

General public is hereby informed that a lady namely **Aarti Devi, W/o** Ajeet Kumar **R/o** Gali No. 4, Bihari Colony, Parnala, Line Par, Bahadur Garh, Haryana has been missing/kidnapped since 02.01.2021 from the area of PS Nangloi, Delhi. In this regard, **DD No. 83A dated 03.01.2021 has been registered at P.S. Nangloi, Delhi.** Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the missing/kidnapped lady but no clue has come to light so far. The description of the missing/kidnapped lady is as under:

**Name:** Aarti Devi, **Gender:** Female, **Age:** 30 years, **Height:** 5', **Complexion:** Fair, **Face:** Long, **Identification:** Mentally weak, **Wearing:** Green colour suit-salwar and slippers on her feet.

If anyone has any information regarding this missing/ kidnapped lady, kindly inform SHO/Nangloi, Delhi.

**E-mail : [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)**  
**Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641**  
**Fax : 011-24368639**  
**DP/654/OD/2021**

**SHO**  
**P.S. Nangloi, Delhi.**  
**Ph. No. 011-25949470, 25947225**

**SALE NOTICE**

The under mentioned Assets will be sold through auction on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" for recovery of dues as per court orders, in the following cases:-

CASE DETAILS	ASSET DETAILS
ICICI Bank Ltd vs INDERJEET KOHLI, Case No-CS (COMM) No 669/2019	Vehicle No-DL8CAN5893, Make and Model-HYUNDAI I 20 ELITE MAGNA, Manu Yr-2016
ICICI Bank Ltd vs RAM SEWAK, Case No-CS No.68/2020 (1934/19)	Vehicle No-UP14FT7944, Make and Model-CHEVROLET BEAT PS PETROL , Manu Yr-2016
ICICI Bank Ltd vs PUNIT , Case No-CS 900/2019	Vehicle No-HR55AA9780, Make and Model-MAHINDRA KUV 100 K4 PLUS D, Manu Yr-2016
ICICI Bank Ltd vs SANJEEV KUMAR, Case No-CS (COMM)2338/19	Vehicle No-DL12B2383, Make and Model-CHEVROLET SAIL LS, Manu Yr-2017
ICICI Bank Ltd vs DALER SINGH, Case No-CS (COMM) No. 1450/2019	Vehicle No-DL8CAU9121, Make and Model-HYUNDAI I-20 SPORTZ DIESEL, Manu Yr-2018
ICICI Bank Ltd vs SUBODH KUMAR, Case No-Suit No 471/17 (ID no 3180 OF 17)	Vehicle No-UP14FT7914, Make and Model-MARUTI ECS VX, Manu Yr-2006
ICICI Bank Ltd vs SAKSHAM KATHURIA, Case No-CS NO 1791/2018	Vehicle No-UP16DT8933, Make and Model-HYUNDAI XCENT, Manu Yr-2016
ICICI Bank Ltd vs CHAND SAIFI, Case No-Case no- 6/18.	Vehicle No-UP16ET2968, Make and Model-NISSAN GO T, Manu Yr-2016
ICICI Bank Ltd vs SUMIT, Case No-CS no. 2143/2017	Vehicle No-DL1LV2002, Make and Model-TATA ACE, Manu Yr-2014, Reserve price of this vehicle is Rs 90,000 and EMD amount is Rs 9000, DD/PO is to be made in favour of ICICI Bank Limited payable at Delhi.
ICICI Bank Ltd vs CHAND MOHAMAD, Case No-CS no. 3687/2017	Vehicle No-DL1LV5880, Make and Model-AL DOST, Manu Yr-2015
ICICI Bank Ltd vs AJAY SINGH, Case No-Suit No 912/2017	Vehicle No-DL1LW2931, Make and Model-AL DOST LS, Manu Yr-2015
ICICI Bank Ltd vs NIRAJ KUMAR, Case No-CS (COMM) 1340/2019	Vehicle No-DL9CAM4737, Make and Model- HONDA CITY 1.5 VX MT PETROL, Manu Yr-2016
ICICI Bank Ltd vs NIDHI SHARMA , Case No-CS (Comm) No. 1397/2019	Vehicle No-UP14DU6650, Make and Model-DUSTER RXE DCI - 85 PS HSRAWA, Manu Yr-2018

**Auction Date & Time : 05-March-2021, From 11:00 AM To 02:00PM**  
**Venue:** Godara Yard, Khewat No:166/1, Near Atul Kataria Chock, Behind Gyan Devi School, Sec-17, Sukhrali, Gurugram- 122022.  
**Contact Person – Rajeev Ranjan (8584874809)/Jitendra Kumar (7304914763)**  
**And auction of below mentioned one vehicle will be conducted at Shriram Automall**

CASE DETAILS	ASSET DETAILS
ICICI Bank Ltd vs KRISHAN PAL, Case No-CS (COMM) 68/20	Vehicle No-UP14HT9010, Make and Model-TATA ULTRA 1518, Manu Yr-2019

**Auction Date & Time : 05-March-2021, From 11:00 AM To 02:00PM**  
**Venue:** Shriram Automall, Vill-Mamurpur, Pio Maniyari Road Narela, New Delhi, Narela, Delhi, 110040.  
**Contact Person– Rajeev Ranjan (8584874809)/ Jitendra Kumar (7304914763)**

Terms of Sale

The particulars of the said asset specified herein above have been stated to the best of the information and knowledge of the undersigned, who shall however not be responsible for any error, misstatement or omission in the said particulars. The interested participant/s are therefore requested, in their own interest, to satisfy himself / themselves /itself with regard to the said asset and other relevant details pertaining to it before submitting the bids. Successfully approved bidder shall have to deposit sale amount within 5 days from the approval date by the way of pay order/demand draft/RTGS/NEFT.

The intending bidders may visit at **ICICI Bank Ltd, 1st Floor, SD Tower, Community Center, Plot no-7, Rohini Sector-8, New Delhi-110085**, for details and inspection of the said hypothecated vehicle.

**SEARCH FOR MISSING BOYS**

General public is here by informed that two boys 1. **Namely:** Keshav Rai, **S/o:** Shyam Sunder Rai, **R/o:** H.No. 49, Gali No. 10, Tikri Kalan Extn., Near Shamsan Ghat, Delhi, Age: 17 years 6 Months, **Height:** 5', **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Face:** Round, **Wearing:** Black Shirt-sky Blue Paint and Black Shoes in feet. 2. **Namely:** Shivam Rai Age: 10 years, **Height:** 4', **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Face:** Round, **Wearing:** Brown Colour Shirt, Blue Jeans and Black Shoes in Feet, has been missing since 03.02.2021 from the area of P.S. Mundka. In this regard a FIR No. 70/21 dated 03.02.2021, U/s 363 IPC has been registered at P.S. Mundka, Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this boys but no clue has come to light so far.

Any person having any information or clue about this boys kindly inform to the following.

**E-Mail: [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)**  
**Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>**  
**Fax: 011-24368639**  
**Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641**

**SHO**  
**P.S. Mundka, Delhi**  
**Ph. 8586932309**  
**DP/685/OD/2021**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given that Vimal Kumar Jain is the absolute owner of Flat no-GS-1/175-A, Ground Floor, Vides Park, New Delhi-18 having acquired by Requisitionment Deed dated 06.01.2021 (registration No. 260) executed by Mrs. Kamla Devi Jain, Mrs. Manjula Jain, Mrs. Bhansali Ranjanben Rawonrabhai, Mrs. Anita Bomb and Mr. Sanjeev Jain legal heirs of Late Lakshmi Lal Dab. All persons having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage(equitable/registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublease, agency, license, ten, charge, pledge, easement or otherwise howsoever, are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 7 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned.

**Kamal Kant Gupta (Advocate)**  
Shop No. 5 & 6, Pkt-E, CSC, Mayur Vihar-II, Delhi-81  
011-43052822, 9981006351

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

It is to inform to the public at large that Mr. Bhanu Pratap Singh S/o Sh. Jay Kishore who is purchasing the Residential Plot of Land area measuring 25 Sq. Yds., i.e. 20.90 Sq. Mtrs., out of Kharsa No. 344, situated at Vandana Vihar Khoda Colony, Pargana Loni Tehsil & District Ghaziabad, U.P. from Sh. Jay Kishore S/o Sh. Natotam Singh owner vide of Notarized General Power of Attorney dated 06.09.1993 executed by Sh. Ram Lal S/o Sh. Kishan, along with ATS, Will and same to be finance & mortgage by Vastu Housing Finance Corporation Ltd. If any Person having any type of claim/right/title/ interest over the said property, may inform in writing, at the address mentioned below, about his objections, within 7 days from today, failing which it shall be presumed that the said property is free from all type of Encumbrances, lien etc.

269, Rama House, Ground Floor, Masjid Moth, Opp. Uday Park, South Ext.II, New Delhi-49. Contact #011-40046316

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

It is to inform to the public at large that Mr. Shiv Prasad Singh S/o Sh. Jay Kishore who is purchasing the Residential Plot of Land area measuring 30 Sq. YDS., OUT OF KHARSA No. 266, SITUATED AT SHIV PARK KHODA COLONY, PARGANA LONI TEHSIL & DISTT., GHAZIABAD, U.P. from Mrs. Kamlesh W/o Mr. Rakesh Kumar owner vide of Registered GPA dated 03.07.2017 executed by Mr. Mahesh Kumar S/o Mr. Siya Ram, along with ATS, Will and same to be finance & mortgage by Vastu Housing Finance Corporation Ltd. If any Person having any type of claim/right/title/ interest over the said property, may inform in writing, at the address mentioned below, about his objections, within 7 days from today, failing which it shall be presumed that the said property is free from all type of Encumbrances, lien etc.

269, Rama House, Ground Floor, Masjid Moth, Opp. Uday Park, South Ext.II, New Delhi-49. Contact #011-40046316

**NOTICE OF BOARD MEETING**

In Pursuant to Regulation 29 of SEBI (Listing Obligation and Disclosure Requirement), 2015, notice is hereby given that the meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company is scheduled to be held on **Tuesday, March 02, 2021** inter alia, to consider and take on record the Unaudited Financial Results of the Company for the Quarter ended on **June 30, 2020**. The said information is also available on the website of the Company at [www.ojswi.in](http://www.ojswi.in) and may also be available on Stock Exchange website at [www.mseil.com](http://www.mseil.com)

By order of the Board,  
**For Ojswi Trades Investment and Finance Limited**  
Sd/-  
**Sandeep Garg**  
Director

Place: New Delhi  
Date: February 24, 2021

**BEFORE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL -II, DELHI.**

4TH FLOOR JEEVAN TARA BUILDING PARLIAMENT STREET NEW DELHI - 110001.  
OA No. 408/19 DATE: 20.02.2021  
BANK OF INDIA APPLICANT  
VERSUS  
SIKANDAR ANSARI RESPONDENT  
To, DEFENDANT  
SIKANDAR ANSARI S/O SH. ALI ANSARI R/O B-160 WEST AZAD NAGAR NEAR BHAGAT SINGH PARK DELHI - 51  
ALSO AT: L-42 1ST FLOOR L-BLOCK SECT.-12 PARTAP VIHAR GHAZIABAD UP  
Whereas the above named applicant (s) has/have instituted a case for recovery of Rs. 26,81,551/- (RUPEES TWENTY SIX LAKH EIGHTY ONE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED AND FIFTY ONE ONLY) against you and where as it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in the ordinary way therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance in the Tribunal on 14.06.2021 At 10.30 A.M.  
Take notice that in default of your appearance on the day before the mentioned, the case will be heard and determined in your absence.  
**BY ORDER OF THE TRIBUNAL, FOR REGISTRAR DRT-II, DELHI.**



# Pvt banks can do Govt-related business: FM

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The finance ministry on Wednesday allowed all private sector banks to participate in government-related business like collection of taxes pension payments and small savings schemes.

At the moment, only few large private sector are allowed to conduct government-related business.

This step is expected to further enhance customer convenience, spur competition and higher efficiency in the standards of customer services, an official statement said.

"Embargo lifted on grant of Govt business to private banks. All banks can now participate. Private banks can now be equal partners in development of the Indian economy, furthering Govt's social sector initiatives, and enhancing customer convenience," Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in a tweet.

Private sector banks, which are at the forefront of imbibing and implementing latest technology and innovation in banking, will now be equal partners in development of the Indian economy and in

furthering the social sector initiatives of the government, the statement said.

"With the lifting of the embargo, there is now no bar on RBI for authorization of private sector banks (in addition to public sector banks) for Government business, including Government agency business.

The Government has conveyed its decision to RBI," it added. The government has already announced its intent to privatise two public sector lenders, other than IDBI Bank, in the Budget 2021-22.

Sitharaman, while presenting Budget 2021-22 earlier this month, had announced the privatisation of Public Sector Banks (PSBs) as part of the disinvestment drive to garner Rs 1.75 lakh crore.

"Other than IDBI Bank, we propose to take up the privatisation of two Public Sector Banks and one General Insurance company in the year 2021-22," she had said.

The government last year consolidated 10 public sector banks into four and as a result, the total number of PSBs came down to 12 from 27 in March 2017.

## Cabinet approves ₹15,000 cr PLI scheme for pharma sector

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Wednesday approved a production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for the pharmaceutical sector, entailing an outlay of Rs 15,000 crore.

The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the scheme which will benefit domestic manufacturers, help create employment and is expected to contribute to the availability of a wider range of affordable medicines for consumers. The duration of the

scheme would be from 2020-21 to 2028-29 and is expected to promote the production of high value products in the country and increase the value addition in exports, an official release said. The total incremental sales of Rs 2,94,000 crore and total incremental exports of Rs 1,96,000 crore are estimated during six years from 2022-23 to 2027-28, it added.

The scheme is expected to generate 20,000 direct jobs and 80,000 indirect employment for both skilled and unskilled personnel, as a result of growth in the sector, the release said.

## Indian corporate bond market can double to ₹65-70 lakh cr by March 2025, says Crisil

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The supply of corporate bonds in the domestic market is expected to double to ₹65-70 lakh crore by fiscal 2025 with the financial sector contributing around 50 per cent to this growth, rating agency Crisil said.

The demand for corporate bonds, however, is likely to be ₹60-65 lakh crore by March 2025.

"Over the next five fiscals, corporate bond issuances outstanding could

more than double from around ₹ 33 lakh crore or 16 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) at the end of fiscal 2020 to ₹65-70 lakh crore – tantamount to 22-24 per cent of GDP – by the end of fiscal 2025," the agency's Managing Director Gurpreet Chhatwal said during a webinar. The financial sector will contribute around 50 per cent of the incremental supply, followed by innovation (close to 25 per cent) and infrastructure (about 20 per cent), the agency said.

## RBI concerned over impact of cryptocurrency may have on financial stability, says Das

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is concerned over the impact cryptocurrencies may have on the financial stability in the economy and has conveyed the same to the government, Governor Shaktikanta Das said on Wednesday.

"We have certain major concerns about cryptocurrencies. We have communicated them to the government.

It is under consideration in the government and I do expect and I think sooner or

later the government will take a call and if required Parliament also will consider and decide," he said in an interview with CNBC-TV18.

"I want to make it clear that the blockchain technology is different.

Blockchain technology benefits have to be exploited, that is another thing.

But on crypto we have major concerns from the financial stability angle and we have shared it with the government. The government will consider and take a call," Das said.

## Sensex zooms 1,030 pts, Nifty tops 14,950 in extended session

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark Sensex soared 1,030.28 points and the Nifty rallied over 270 points on Wednesday, tracking strong buying in financial stocks, after trading hours were extended following a technical glitch at NSE.

After resumption of trade at 3.45 pm, NSE Nifty zoomed 274.20 points or 1.86 per cent to end at 14,982.

Similarly, the 30-share BSE index settled 1,030.28 points or 2.07 per cent higher at 50,781.69.

Axis Bank was the top gainer in the Sensex pack,

surging around 5 per cent, followed by HDFC twins, ICICI Bank, Bajaj Finance and SBI.

On the other hand, PowerGrid, Dr Reddy's, TCS and Asian Paints were among the laggards.

Minutes before the scheduled closure of trade at 3.30 pm, leading bourses BSE and NSE said their equity and derivatives markets will remain open till 5 pm.

The move came after the National Stock Exchange (NSE) suffered an outage earlier in the day due to technical glitches. Trading across segments came to a halt at 1140 hrs due to connectivity issues.

## Rupee firms up 11 paise to close at 72.35 against US dollar

**Mumbai:** The rupee furthered its gains by another 11 paise to settle at 72.35 against the US dollar on Wednesday amid persistent selling of the greenback by banks and exporters.

Besides, positive domestic equities and weaker American currency in the overseas market also helped the rupee consolidate gains.

At the interbank forex market, the local unit opened at 72.35 against the greenback and witnessed an intra-day high of 72.26 and a low of 72.41.

## Gold falls ₹148, silver declines ₹886

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices on Wednesday fell Rs 148 to Rs 46,307 per 10 grams in the national capital, due to overnight selling in global prices and rupee appreciation, according to HDFC Securities.

The precious metal had closed at Rs 46,455 per 10 grams in the previous session.

Silver also declined Rs 886 to Rs 68,676 per kilogram, compared with the close of Rs 69,562 per kilogram in the previous trade.

## Flipkart plans to deploy 25K electric vehicles by 2030

**Bengaluru:** A day after Amazon India said it has deployed nearly 100 Mahindra Treo Zor three-wheelers, e-commerce marketplace Flipkart on Wednesday said it will deploy more than 25,000 electric vehicles in its supply chain by 2030.

Flipkart said it has already started piloting and deploying two-wheeler and three-wheeler electric vehicles in multiple locations for delivery across the country, including in Delhi, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Guwahati and Pune, to name a few.

## I-T refunds worth over ₹1.95 L cr issued so far this fiscal year

**New Delhi:** The Income Tax Department on Wednesday said it has issued over Rs 1.95 lakh crore worth refunds to over 1.93 crore taxpayers so far this fiscal. Of this, personal income tax refunds of Rs 69,653 crore have been issued to over 1.90 crore taxpayers and corporate tax refunds of Rs 1.26 lakh crore have been issued in 2.17 lakh cases. "CBDT issues refunds of over Rs 1,95,736 crore to more than 1.93 crore taxpayers between 1st April, 2020 to 22nd February, 2021," the I-T Department tweeted.

## First 'Made in India' piling rig launched

**New Delhi:** With aim to boost "Make in India" campaign and reduce India's dependence on construction equipment imports, Sany India launched its first "Made in India" piling rig, "SR235", for all arduous applications, from soft soil to hard rock. "With the launch of our first-ever 'made in India' SR235 piling rig, Sany India has reaffirmed its commitment to the 'vocal for local' initiative," said Sanjay Saxena, vice president & business head, heavy equipment, Sany Heavy Industry India Pvt Ltd.

### SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED



General Public is hereby informed that one girl **Namely: Anjali, D/o: Satyender, R/o: A-371, Street No. 8, Indra Enclave II, Kirai, Delhi** has been missing/ kidnapped since **30.01.2021** at 12:00 pm. from the area of P.S. Prem Nagar, Delhi. In this regard a case vide **FIR No. 80/21 U/s 363 IPC dated 03.02.2021** has been registered at P.S. Prem Nagar, Delhi.

The description of the missing girl are as under: **Age: 17 years, Sex: Female, Height: 5'3", Face: Round, Hair: Black, Complexion: Wheatish, Built: Strong, Wearing: Pink colour kurti, leggings and pink colour shoes in her feet.** Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the girl but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this girl kindly inform to the following.

**Website: http://cbi.nic.in**  
**E-mail Id - cbc@cbi.gov.in**  
**Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641**  
**Fax No. 011-24368639**  
**DP/690/RD/2021**

**SHO**  
**P.S. Prem Nagar, Delhi**  
**Ph.: 8750870322**

### SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED



General public is hereby informed that one female namely **Bhagwati Devi with son Asm (age 11 months) W/o Mangal Singh R/o 203, Gali No.3, Near Shiv Mandir, Ranhola, Delhi** has been missing/ kidnapped from the area of PS: Ranhola, Delhi since 23.01.2021. In this regard, a case **DD No. 76-A Dated 27.01.2021** has been registered at P.S. Ranhola, Delhi. The description of the missing female are as under.

**Age: 23 Years, Complexion: Fair, Height: 5', Face: Round, Wearing: Pink colour sari and sleepers in feet.** Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out her but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone has any information about the missing/kidnapped female then please inform P.S. Ranhola, New Delhi at following Tel No./e-mail: **cic@cbi.gov.in** and Website: **http://cbi.nic.in**, providing clue about the missing girl.

**Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641**  
**Fax No. 011-24368639**  
**Sd/- SHO**  
**PS: Ranhola, Delhi**  
**Ph.: 011-28363002**  
**DP/675/OD/2021**

### SALE NOTICE

The under mentioned Assets will be sold through auction on **"AS IS WHERE IS BASIS"** and **"AS IS WHAT IS BASIS"** for recovery of dues as per court orders, in the following cases:-

CASE DETAILS	ASSET DETAILS	Reserve Price	EMD Amount (10% of Reserve Price)
ICICI Bank Ltd Vs Ankit Bhadana, Case No- CM (M)- 231/2020	Vehicle No- HR38V7561, Make and Model- HYUNDAI XCENT, Manu Yr- 2015	1,00,000/-	10,000/-
ICICI Bank Ltd Vs Lalit Kumar, Case No- CM (M) 536/2020 & CM Appl. 27473/2020	Vehicle No- UP14CD4738, Make and Model- MARUTI ALTO 800 LXI CNG, Manu Yr- 2014	50,000/-	5,000/-
ICICI Bank Ltd Vs Archana Raj, Case No- CM (M) 573/2020 & CM Appl. 29273/2020	Vehicle No- UP14ET7203, Make and Model- CHEVROLET ENJOY LT, Manu Yr- 2015	60,000/-	6,000/-
ICICI Bank Ltd Vs Mohd Adil, Case No- CM (M) 599/2020 & CM Appl. 30342/2020	Vehicle No- UP14CS9040, Make and Model- MARUTI SWIFT DZIRE, Manu Yr- 2015	1,80,000/-	18,000/-
ICICI Bank Ltd Vs Mehkar Singh, Case No- CM (M) 549/2020 & CM Appl. 27986/2020	Vehicle No- UP16DT4118, Make and Model- CHEVROLET ENJOY, Manu Yr- 2015	1,60,000/-	16,000
ICICI Bank Ltd Vs Subodh Kumar, Case No- CM (M) 602/2020 & CM Appl. 30659/2020	Vehicle No- UP14FT6208, Make and Model- RENAULT LODGY RXE, Manu Yr- 2016	1,80,000/-	18,000/-

**Auction Date :** 06-March-2021  
**Venue:** Godara Yard, Khewat No: 166/1, Near Atul Kataria Chock, Behind Gyan Devi School, Sec-17, Sukhrail, Gurugram- 120222.  
**Contact Person** – Rajeev Ranjan (8584874809)/Jitendra Kumar (7304914763)  
**EMD:** DD/PO of EMD amount to be made in favour of ICICI Bank Limited, payable at Delhi.  
**Contact Person** – Rajeev Ranjan (8584874809)/Jitendra Kumar (7304914763)  
Terms of Sale  
The particulars of the said asset specified herein above have been stated to the best of the information and knowledge of the undersigned, who shall however not be responsible for any error, misstatement or omission in the said particulars. The interested participant/s are therefore requested, in their own interest, to satisfy himself / themselves/ itself with regard to the said asset and other relevant details pertaining to it before submitting the bids. All bidders are required to come at site with original DD/PO of EMD amount along with original KYC proofs to participate in the auction.  
Successfully approved bidder shall have to deposit sale amount (Excluding EMD amount) within 5 days from the auction date by the way of pay order/demand draft/RTGS/NEFT. In case if you fail to make the remaining sale amount within 5 days, your EMD amount will be forfeited.  
The intending bidders may visit at ICICI Bank Ltd, 1st Floor, SD Tower, Community Center, Plot no-7, Rohini Sector-8, New Delhi-110085, for details and inspection of the said hypothecated vehicle.

### Rajasthan Skill and Livelihoods Development Corporation

राजस्थान कौशल एवं आजीविका विकास निगम  
A Government of Rajasthan Enterprise  
EMI Campus, J-8-A, Jhalana Institutional Area, Jaipur 302004 (Rajasthan)  
Ph: +91-141-2705917, 5103248, Fax: +91-141-5103246, www.rajasthanlivelihoods.org

RFP No: RSLDC/Services (DDU-GKY)/8.75C/OCB/2020/30222-227 Date- 22.02.2021

### Notice Inviting Request for Proposals

Managing Director, Rajasthan Skills & Livelihoods Development Corporation (RSLDC)  
Dept. of Skill, Govt. of Rajasthan, invites proposals (Single Bid Two Envelope System) from reputed and experienced Agencies for Selection of a competent and qualified bidder providing services of manpower at Block Level for various Skill Development Schemes of Rajasthan Skills & Livelihoods Development Corporation (RSLDC) for effective Implementation and Monitoring of DDU-GKY Scheme in Rajasthan through deployment of Human Resources at State as well as at District & Block Levels.

The Proposal has to be submitted through online mode on <https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> and can be searched by clicking the Tab "Bid Free View" on home page of above website and then going to Live Bid/ Hot Bid by searching Department Name as "RSLDC". UBN No. SLD2021RFP0001  
Raj.Samwadi/C/20/10191 Managing Director

### DELHI JAL BOARD

### OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER WEST-III

### NANGLOI PH-III: NEAR BARAT GHAR: NEW DELHI-110041

### "STOP CORONA : Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene"

### N.I.T. No. 35 WEST-III/ (2020-21)

S. No.	Description	Amount put to tender	Tender Fee	Earnest Money	Date of release of tender in e procurement solution	Last date/time for tender download through e procurement solution
1	Improvement of water supply system by Replacement of old damaged water line from Metro Pillar no 750 to 768 on Najafgarh Road in Uttam Nagar AC 32 under EE (West) III.	Rs. 25.42,641/-	Rs.500/-	NIL (Declaration to be filled)	23.02.2021 I.D. No 2021_DJB 200454_1	12.03.2021 at 3:00 PM

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

ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER)  
Advt. No. J.S.V. 439 (2020-21)

Sd/-  
EX. ENGINEER (WEST) III  
ASHOK KUMAR  
EE (WEST) III

### APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



General Public is hereby informed that one boy namely Unknown, **S/o:** Unknown, **R/o** Unknown, **Age:** About 5 years, **Height:** 3', **Complexion:** Shallow, **Face:** Long, **Built:** Thin, wearing Fancy Blue Jeans Shirt and Khaki colour Half Pant and Yellow colour Slipper in feet, was found abandoned at Main Bazar, Pahar Ganj, Delhi on 17.08.2020 at about 10:30 PM. The is Child kept in CHG-III", Quarantine Center, Nari Niketan Building, Unit-I, Nirmal Chhaya, Delhi. In this regard a **DD No. 123A, dated 17.08.2020** has been registered at **P.S. Pahar Ganj, Delhi**.

Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the boy's family but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about their family please inform undersigned.

**Website : http://cbi.nic.in**  
**E-mail : cbc@cbi.gov.in**  
**Fax: 011-24368639**  
**Ph. No. : 011-24368638, 24368641**  
**DP/663/CD/2021**

**SHO**  
**P.S. Pahar Ganj, Delhi**  
**Ph: 8750012525, 8750042525**

### SEARCH FOR MISSING



General public is here by informed that this person (depicted in the photo) namely: **Vikash S/o Moti Lal Maharaj R/o L-17, Gali No.24, Mahendra Park, Delhi** has been missing/ kidnapped from the jurisdiction of P.S. Mahendra Park since 16.02.2020. In this regard DD No.47A Dated **18.02.2020** has been registered at **PS. Mahendra Park, Delhi**. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the person but no clue has come to light so far.

His physical description is as under:-  
**Sex:** Male, **Age:** 29 years, **Height:** 5'6", **Complexion:** Fair, **Face:** Oval, **Built:** Strong, **Wearing:** Purple Colour T-shirt and Black colour Capri.

Any person is having information or clue about this missing/ kidnapped girl may kindly inform to the following:-

**SHO**  
**P.S. Mahendra Park, Delhi**  
**Ph. No. : 011-27632501**  
**Mob. No.: 8750870227**  
**DP/677/NW/2021**

**Website: http://cbi.nic.in**  
**E-mail: cbc@cbi.gov.in**  
**Tel. No. : 011-24368638/24368641**  
**Fax No. : 011-24368639**

### SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED



General Public is hereby informed that one child/boy namely **Raj, S/o Sh. Murari, R/o Bal Sahyog, Connaught Circus, Opposite L Block Market, New Delhi, Age: 8 years, Height: 4', Hair: Black Normal, Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Round, Built: Medium, Wearing: Green Linedaar Shirt, Blue Sweater, Blue Pant and Black Colour shoes in his feet and putting cap on his head** has been missing/kidnapped from the jurisdiction of P.S. Barakhamba Road, New Delhi District on **27.11.2017**. In this regard a case **FIR No. 182/17 U/s 363 IPC, dated 28.11.2017** has been registered at **P.S. Barakhamba Road, New Delhi**.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing boy but no clue has come to light so far, if any one having any information about this boy please inform undersigned.

**E-mail : cbc@cbi.gov.nic.in**  
**Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641**  
**Fax : 011-24368639**  
**DP/228/NDD/2021**

**SHO**  
**P.S. Barakhamba Road, New Delhi**  
**Ph.: 011-23413800, 8750870527**

### SEARCH FOR MISSING WOMAN




General public is hereby informed that this woman namely Sandhya **W/o Karan Singh R/o B-104, Rajeev Nagar, Begumpur, Delhi** **Age : 21 years, Height : 5'1", Complexion : Fair, Face : Oval, wearing blue colour shirt and grey colour jeans, has been missing since 10.02.2021. In this regard DD No. 7-A, dated 11.02.2021** has been lodged at **P.S. Begumpur, Delhi**.

Any person having any information or clue about this missing woman and her son may kindly inform to the following.

**E-mail: cbc@cbi.gov.in**  
**Website: http://cbi.nic.in**  
**Fax: 24368639,**  
**Tel.: 24368638/24368641**

**SHO : P.S. Begumpur, Delhi**  
**Ph. : : 011-25951431, 25951432**

### APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



General public is hereby informed that an unidentified person **Namely : Khem Chand S/o Unknown R/o Old Delhi Railway Station, Delhi** **Age : about 50 years, Height : 5'6", Complexion : Wheatish, Wearing : White colour shirt and grey colour pant** has been found in burned condition at **Baba Balak Nath Mandir, Old Delhi Railway Station, Delhi** on 20.02.2021. He brought to LNJP Hospital, Delhi, where during treatment he died on 20.02.2021. In this regard a case vide DD No. 07A dated 20.02.2021 has been lodged at **P.S. Old Delhi Railway Station, Delhi**. Any person having any information or clue about this dead person may kindly inform to the following:-

**SHO :**  
**P.S. Old Delhi Railway Station, Delhi**  
**DP/68/RLY/2021**  
**Tel. No. 011-23961522, 23980685**

### SEARCH FOR MISSING FEMALE



General public is hereby informed that one female namely **Soni (along with her son age 8 months) W/o Sunny, R/o House No. B-2/101, Sector-20 Rohini, Delhi. Age 23 yrs., Height 5', Shallow Complexion, Thin built, Round face, wearing red colour suit-salwar** is missing since **01.02.2021** from the area of **PS Aman Vihar, Delhi**. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing female but no clue has come to light so far.

In this regard a **DD No. 83-A Dt. 03.02.2021** has been lodged at **PS Aman Vihar, Delhi**. Any person having any information or clue about this missing female may kindly inform to the following.

**E-mail: cbc@cbi.gov.in**  
**Fax: 011-23011334**  
**Ph.: 011-23014046**  
**011-23015218**  
**DP/688/RD/2021**

**S.H.O.,**  
**PS Aman Vihar, Delhi.**  
**Ph.: 011-27581812, 27581223**

### APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



The general public is hereby informed that an unidentified person about 40-45 years of age whose name, residence, and family is unknown had been found dead near **Jai Mata Dharamkant, C-Block, Prem Nagar-1, Delhi**. In this regard, a vide has been registered with **DD No: 45A, dated 08.02.2021 at PS Prem Nagar, Delhi**. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to identify the deceased person, but no clue has come to light so far.

The description of the UIDB is as under:  
**Sex:** Male, **Age:** about 40-45 years, **Height:** 5'8", **Complexion:** Shallow, **Face:** Round, **Built:** Thin, **Wearing:** Blue colour jacket, multi-colour jersey, grey colour shirt, blue colour vest, blue colour underwear.

If anyone has any information about his relatives, kindly inform the SHO/Prem Nagar, Delhi.

**E-mail : cbc@cbi.gov.in**  
**Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641**  
**Fax : 011-24368639**  
**DP/696/RD/2021**

**SHO**  
**P.S. Prem Nagar, Delhi.**  
**Ph. No. 011-25489080, 9315164042**

### PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

**See Section 82 Cr.P.C.**

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person **Sachin S/o Prakash R/o A-Block, Near Quereshi Meat Shop, Sudarshan Park, Basai Dara Pur, Delhi** has been committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **FIR No. 169/19, U/s 381 IPC** has been registered at **P.S. Kirti Nagar, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said **Sachin** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said **Sachin** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said **Sachin** accused of **FIR No. 169/19, U/s 381 IPC, P.S. Kirti Nagar, Delhi** is required to appear before this court to answer said complaint on or before **12.04.2021**.

**By Order**  
**Dr. Jagminder Singh, Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, West Distt. Room No. 146, 1st Floor, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi**  
**DP/346/WD/2021-(Court Matter)**



# BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Virtual assistants extend desired value to consumers with a human touch. MAAZ ANSARI explains how chatbot helps in instant, personal and contextual conversations

Welcome! I am a chat helper. You can start a new chat or scroll up to see previous chats.” You must have noticed these words often popping up in the bottom right section of your screen. A thought might’ve surfaced in your head, “Ah, so I have a companion for my queries.” Of course, you do! But, it isn’t a human being. It is a cognitive bot that utilises natural language to simulate conversations. It is one of the wonders of modern technology.

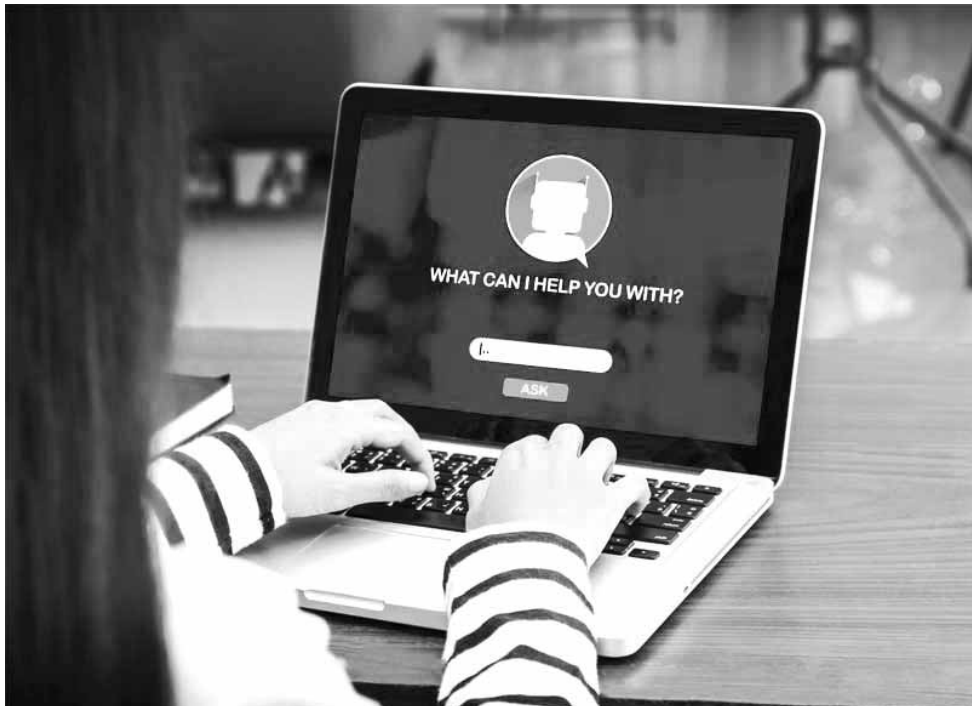
Leveraging state-of-the-art technology, these virtual assistants extend desired value to consumers with a human touch. They can also gauge diverse human emotions and intentions, thereby communicating while building on them accurately.

Consumers today are not merely looking for a product or a service, rather user experience. People look for easier ways to communicate with brands and services. It is because we are living in a world where everything is fast-paced. There’s no time to fill out a form and wait till someone calls us back. We need answers to our queries immediately.

Chatbots turn out to be the much-needed alternative that consumers can engage with. And that’s making more businesses realise that they should buckle up soon. They must deploy chatbots if they haven’t already. Keeping this in mind, let’s look at why there is a need to integrate a cognitive virtual assistant or chatbot into a business.

#### Automate customer support

In this era of digitisation, more people now dwell online. There is a high possibility that most of your potential customers going forward will discover your



business online rather than physically. They might simply search ‘nearby services’ on Google rather than asking a bystander. So, it may lead people to interact with businesses solely through digital platform or via digital platforms first.

In fact, customers are getting smarter and tend to stick with solutions that are qualitative and, at the same time, simple to use. Naturally, chatbots have become necessary and emerged as an easy solution to respond to similar and repetitive queries at no incremental costs. With deep learning, this can further be scaled to understand complex queries and initiate interactions. It will also help you achieve a stronger customer base and offer customised solutions and support.



#### Ensure 24/7 availability

Customers shopping online don’t have a specific time to shop. It is more likely that they’ll visit your website at a time convenient to them, which may possibly be at odd-hours of the day or night. At this moment, chatbots have become more relevant. They respond to customers in real-time

while providing them valuable insights about the product and your brand at your customers’ convenience. If you are a digital business and cater to a wide audience base, having a cognitive bot is of paramount importance for you. It will help you considerably scale your customer interactions across different geographies and time-zones. .

#### Boost conversions and sales

Once you start getting traffic on your platform, why not use friendly chatbots to engage these visitors? Easy and quick interaction that clear multiple doubts will help you to turn potential traffic into loyal customers. Additionally, helping users find what they are looking for faster, easier, and

with minimal effort is a win-win not only for your customers but also for your business.

#### Chatbot-powered conversational ads

Conversational advertising allows instant, personal, and real-time engagement with customers at the very beginning of the sales funnel. It allows businesses to capture focussed leads, thereby increasing the probability of conversions. By using an AI-powered chatbot, the whole process of marketing and sales can now be automated. Smart conversational marketing technologies can equip your advertisement with a chatbot, wherein a consumer interacts with your ad and your chatbot answers their queries.

#### Personalised and contextual conversations

For every business, ‘Customer is the King’ and improving customer experience is an integral part of any business strategy. In today’s world, personalisation is increasingly becoming the norm and customers expect a certain level of personalisation. That’s why investing in personalisation is the key to building business relationships, building a resonance with your audience and creating a better brand impression & brand experience. Well, this is where cognitive bots fit in and play a vital role in customer acquisition and retention. They can predict precisely what the customer is seeking and proactively suggest options based on the customers’ likes, dislikes, hobbies, interests, and other parameters. These factors can also be translated into actionable insights that help brands enhance their Customer Relationship Management (CRM) for better re-

targeting and conversions.

#### Real-time customer feedback

It is no surprise that an e-commerce assistant knows your right apparel size and even your most preferred hue of blue. But how? A chatbot-supported cognitive conversation helps businesses collect feedback and maintain a database of everything you adore or may need in the future. It is done simply by using your previous purchases and wishlists. So, you no longer need to get feedback forms filled by your trusted customers.

#### Cross-platform support in preferred languages

Chatbots are bringing a new way for businesses to communicate with the world and most importantly with their customers. With a multi-channel approach, customers can message you directly from Google Search results. Today, businesses are enabling their online customers to converse with them anytime from anywhere and pick up the same conversation from their app, WhatsApp, or other social channels. It turns out to be a highly effective approach.

As we can see, bots are becoming an integral part of almost every business. In addition to increasing business opportunities with humanised, intent-based conversational experiences, they also let you provide anytime, anywhere support to their customers. Thus, cognitive chatbots must be a part of your businesses’ operations across the value chain — from advertisement to sales to post sales support.

(The writer is co-founder and CEO of an end-to-end provider of conversational AI-powered chatbots, Ori.)

## ‘My work is immortalised’

Actor PARINEETI CHOPRA’s artist-mother has made a painting to celebrate her forthcoming release *The Girl On The Train*

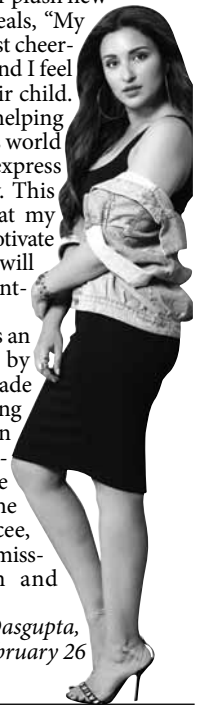
Actor Parineeti Chopra is feeling extremely proud because her mother, noted artist Reena Chopra, has made a special painting to commemorate her forthcoming release *The Girl On The Train (TGOTT)*. The painting showcases a girl standing in front of a speeding yellow train, much like Pari’s character in the film.

“My mother surprised me with this painting. I was not at all aware that she was making this for me. As most know that my mother is a professional painter and she sells her artwork but this one won’t be sold as it is very precious. She has immortalised my work in *TGOTT* through her art. This is the sweetest, warmest and most special gift that I have ever received from her,” says Parineeti and goes on to add, “She has never done this for any of my films before, so this shows the impact this film has had on her. I’m overwhelmed.”

Parineeti’s parents are the biggest pillars of strength for her and she has made special plans to put up this painting in her plush new house in Mumbai. She reveals, “My parents have been my biggest cheerleaders all through my life and I feel incredibly special to be their child. She has been my pole star, helping me navigate my path in this world and I don’t have words to express what I’m feeling right now. This precious painting will be at my home and will constantly motivate me to do more films which will get her to do more such paintings for me!”

*The Girl On The Train* is an acclaimed book written by Paula Hawkins. It was made into a Hollywood film starring Emily Blunt in the lead in 2016. In the Bollywood version, Parineeti plays the eponymous girl taking the train, an alcoholic divorcee, who becomes involved in a missing person investigation and uncovers deeper secrets.

(Directed by Ribhu Dasgupta, the film will premiere on February 26 on Netflix.)



### TREND TOOL

## The perfect routine

Here are seven effective ways to tackle maskne

The new normal has called for us to diligently abide by wearing face masks. While masks remain an absolute essential, they also have a downside. ‘Maskne’ or mask-related acne is an umbrella of skincare problems, caused by wearing a mask as we step outdoors. The impurities on the face beneath the mask slowly build up, as we breathe in and out of the confined area, creating problems, predominantly that of acne, redness, clogged pores, irritation and so much more.

Here are a few suggestions one must follow to prevent the recurrence of maskne. Amazon Beauty, features a range of products which will help you fight against maskne.

#### Minimal skincare routine

Sometimes less is more, even when it comes to curating a skincare routine. Using too many products at once can lower the impact of the quality products and cause the skin woes to aggravate. To prevent and cure the new issue of maskne, following a simple daily routine of cleanse, tone, mask, sunscreen and moisturise, is always advisable.

#### Daily cleansing

It is essential to wash your face regularly, especially once you return from the daily grind of the day. Using a mild, fragrance free cleanser is highly recommended when tackling issues like acne. Mild cleansers help maintain the moisture of your skin while removing the built-up impurities.



#### Hydrate — Don’t strip

One needs to be sure while selecting the right formula to treat ‘maskne’ at its best, while keeping the skin hydrated to minimise the chances of further breakouts. Choose a niacinamide infused serum, as it helps effectively treat issues like acne. It also helps unclog the pores and gives your skin an instant boost of rejuvenation.

#### Moisturise and nourish

Alongside the natural oils that the face produces, the skin also requires a protective layer of hydration and nourishment. Using a moisturiser is mandatory, even if you choose a minimal skincare routine. It is best advised to use mattifying or gel-based moisturisers for acne-prone skin.

#### Focus on minimal make-up

While choosing your desired make-up look, focus on bringing in the limelight to your eyes. Steer away from applying excessive face make-up within the mask area, as breathing in and out within the restrictive area causes

chemicals from the make-up products to seep into the pores of the skin. This in-turn causes massive breakouts on the face, leading to a severe case of maskne.

#### Avoid touching your face

As the emphasis on not touching our faces due to COVID remains stringent, an added reason to abstain from doing so would be to minimise the chances of additional bacteria sustaining on the face. This would further prevent breakouts, itchiness and redness caused by the impurities present on our skin, further leading to our main concern.

#### Switch your masks

One of the main reasons for maskne to remain persistent is that we seldom change our masks. When we wear a mask, the area underneath the fabric becomes moist and warm, further contributing to blemish forming. Ensure that you do not compromise on changing your masks on a weekly basis, or as and when you step out.

We may be living in times when dating is all about ‘right swipes,’ ‘right words,’ and ‘being woke.’ But old-fashioned love still hasn’t lost its charm. Many still believe in the idea of enjoying a nice film with their date while others wouldn’t think twice before serenading their love with heartfelt sonnets, songs and flowers. QuackQuack, an online dating app, released insights into how Indians are looking at dating in the forthcoming year, after having been stricken by the global pandemic. Results show that desi singles are still holding onto that thing called ‘love’ and intend to tread that path, but with precautions.

The year 2020 has been an unprecedented one. As the basic need to connect with other humans amplified during and after lockdown, more people flocked to the popular dating apps to fill that void. In an era when video calls are making it easy for us to see our partner located oceans away from us, 65 per cent still prefer to engage in longer text conversations that help them express themselves better, akin to writing long love letters back in the day. Out of the lot, women make up the major chunk with 90.8 per cent preferring to text over video call. Surprisingly, 60 per cent of people hailing from metros/bigger cities also come within the category of people preferring long text messages over quick video calls.

Simultaneously, in the backdrop of the ongoing health crisis, Indian millennials aren’t letting their guard down. 60 per cent of people in the age bracket of 18-30 wear a mask when meeting their date as they still consider themselves at risk of contracting the virus. Amongst these, women are more cautious with 90 per cent stating that they never forget to wear a mask on a date. About 74 per cent of top city people and 66 per cent of small-city folks tend to follow precautions more rigidly and prefer to wear a mask on dates to ensure their safety.

Speaking about dating people from native city or a different city, nearly 68 per cent of people aged 31 and above



## Love Aaj Kal

A survey reveals that many Indians prefer old school dates and mushy romance where a similar taste in food is the most favoured common ground that people are looking for

prefer dating from their location to avoid the risk of travelling as against majority youngsters who did prefer dating people from their location but were open to the idea of dating from other cities as well. Out of these, women (52 per cent) were more curious to meet people from other cities as compared to men who would still prefer dating from their own location. People from big cities (66 per cent) were more cautious in this regard as against those from smaller cities (58 per cent) who are more enthusiastic about dating from far off cities as well.

But surprises don’t stop just there. Known for their love for food, about

64 per cent of Indians feel that matching food taste matters as having similar food taste is a sign of great compatibility, with women (66 per cent) attaching higher importance to it compared to men (61 per cent). Majority placed in the age group of 31 and above prefer watching films over web series on their date, with women being more in number (65 per cent). Dating is also a way to move on for many. More than 70 per cent of people from both top cities and smaller cities/towns would go ahead and meet new people to get over toxic relationships. They consider meeting new people and having more choices to pick from would get them

a compatible partner.

“Despite having spent the entire last year in gloom and doom, Indians are still keeping their hopes alive in the new year and haven’t given up on the idea of finding love. The most interesting part of the survey has been the finding that many are still in for old school dates and mushy romance, with films and matching food taste topping the list of similarities that they are looking for. It is heartening to see that people are open to traveling across cities and trying new experiences for the sake of companionship. Dating apps sure have been a blessing in disguise for many given the current circumstances,” says Ravi Mittal, Founder & CEO, QuackQuack.

Dating apps have even proven to be a meaningful exercise for many. About 25 per cent of those aged 31 and above said that meeting new people online helped them overcome loneliness and 15 per cent got over depression in 2020. Looking at these trends, it can be said that the Indian dating scenario is definitely going to catch more steam in the times to come.

### TRENDBLAZER



#### AMITABH HINTS AT NEW BEGINNINGS

Bollywood icon **AMITABH BACHCHAN** on Wednesday spoke of new beginnings, dropping hint that a big announcement is in the offing.

Big B penned a rhyme with names of his forthcoming films like *Chehra*, *Jhund* and *Brahmastra*, and wrote about following up these projects with something new. He tweeted in Hindi: “*Chehra Jhund Brahmastra hai kuch aane wale pal, jald shuru honge kuch aur, futenge nariyal!*”

He also shared a photograph where he can be seen playing football.

#### fairtalk RAGHAV JUJAL



‘The journey is on right track now. As an actor I am very initial and I am doing a lot of things. As a host, it has been several years for me but I am enjoying the process and the journey. I love what I do and I make it playful. I think that is the best part about me. I don’t take things seriously. My job is to entertain, so I try to make the atmosphere around me playful too.’

#### dailytalk ROHAN MEHRA



‘On Television, your looks will decide the kind of roles you will get. If you look good, you will get a rich boy or college stud type of role. But when I saw the film *Lagaan*, I felt that Aamir Khan doesn’t look poor but his acting in the film convinced everyone. So I believe that if your look doesn’t convince the audience, your acting should.’

#### DREW SHARES TEENAGE EXPERIENCES

Hollywood actor **DREW BARRYMORE** was admitted to a psychiatric ward as a teenager when she went out of control. She recalls the time she spent in a padded room.

Drew’s mother, Jaid Barrymore admitted her to a facility when she was 13 because her behaviour was getting out of control.





**Fiscal Indicators:**

- Estimated revenue receipts ₹1 lakh 84 thousand 330 crore 13 lakh.
- Estimated revenue expenditure ₹2 lakh 8 thousand 80 crore 17 lakh.
- Estimated revenue deficit ₹23 thousand 750 crore 4 lakh.
- Estimated fiscal deficit 147 thousand 652 crore 77 lakh which is 3.98 per cent of GSDP.
- First paperless budget in the State.

**Corona management:**

- Special COVID package.
- 2000 each to 33 lakh destitute families.
- Interest free loan up to ₹50,000.
- Seed money to start-ups, five lakh each.

**Medical and health :**

- Rajasthan Model of Public Health (RMPH).
- Nursing colleges at 25 district headquarters.
- Construction of hospital buildings and increase in various facilities including beds.
- 30 new PHCs and upgrading of 50 PHCs to CHCs.
- Upgrading hospitals as district hospitals, 10 new trauma centres.
- New district hospitals at Kota with 150 beds.
- Increase of 1000 beds in different hospitals.
- 12,000 Health and Wellness Centres.
- New ICU and NICU at medical colleges and new ICU at district hospitals.
- Institute of Tropical Medicine and Virology and Institute of Cardiology at Jaipur.
- Increase of medical facilities at SMS Medical College, Jaipur.
- 'Umaid Post Graduate Institute of Maternity and Neonatology and 'Regional Cancer Institute' at Jodhpur.

**Road Safety:**

- New *Jeevan Rakshak Yojana*.
- Integrated Traffic



Management System (ITMS)

- Primary Trauma Centre at 40 CHCs.
- ₹100 cr for Dedicated Road Safety Fund.
- New DTO and Sub DTO offices.

**Education:**

- Smart TVs and set-top boxes in schools, ₹82 cr.
- 1200 new English medium-Mahatma Gandhi Schools in next two years.
- Increase in infrastructure facilities in schools, ₹1450 cr.
- Directorate of Peace and Non-Violence.
- Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Governance and Social Sciences-MGIGSS at Jaipur.

# ON TRACK

Rajasthan Chief Minister ASHOK GEHLOT presents the 2021-22 State Budget. Here are a few salient features

- Fintech Digital University at Jodhpur.
- Rajasthan Institute of Advanced Learning at Jaipur.
- New colleges including girls-Sanskrit colleges and new ITIs.
- Four new girls colleges in the name of Late MLAs Master Bhanwar Lai, Kailash Trivedi, Kiran Maheshwari and Gajendra Singh Shaktawat.
- Rajiv Gandhi Centre of Advance Technology (R-CAT) at Jaipur, ₹200 Cr.
- Science and Space Clubs in 1500 government schools.

**Youth and Employment:**

- Internship of unemployed youth under *Mukhyamantri yuva sambal yojana-2019*, hike

- of ₹1,000 in allowance.
- Constitution of Rajeev Gandhi Yuva Core, 2500 Rajeev Gandhi Yuva Mitra and 50000 Rajeev Gandhi Yuva Volunteers.
- Common Eligibility Test, one-time verification system.
- Free travel in Rajasthan Roadways for exams.
- Recruitment on more than 50,000 posts in next two years.
- Indoor stadium at Pratapgarh and Stadium at Rajasmand and Sirohi.
- Gram Panchayat, Block, District and State level Popular games tournaments, expenditure of ₹30 cr.
- Two new residential sports schools at Jodhpur and Jaipur.

- New archery academy at Dungarpur and Handball academy at Jaisalmer.

**Agriculture and Animal Husbandry:**

- Agriculture Budget from next year.
- Minifood park in each district, ₹200 Cr.
- Mega food park at Mathania-Jodhpur, ₹100 Cr.
- 1000 *Kisan Sewa Kendra*, 1000 new posts of agriculture supervisors.
- Provision of more than ₹16000 cr for agriculture electricity subsidy.
- New Agri-Discom.
- 50,000 solar pumps and 50,000 agriculture electricity connection to the farmers.
- Works of ₹1000 cr at *Krishi Upaj Mandis*.
- Kisan Complex at Jodhpur, ₹20 cr.
- Three new agriculture colleges at Dugarpur, Hindauli, Hanumangarh.

**Industries:**

- New MSME policy.
- Industrial areas at 64 sub divisions.
- Organising Rajasthan Investors Summit at Jaipur.
- Fintech Park (Financial Technology) at Jaipur.

**Social Security:**

- Announcement of Rajasthan Pattern.
- Rajasthan Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Development Law.
- Ambedkar DBT Voucher Scheme, 5000 Beneficiaries.
- Eight new ekalavya model residential schools.
- Construction of eight minority boys hostels.
- Construction of three minority girls residential schools.
- Minority boys hostels at Jaipur, Jodhpur and Kota.
- SC, ST, OBC, Minority Development Funds, ₹100 cr each.
- Increase in scholarship of special abled students.

- 2000 scooty for specially abled students and youths.

**Infrastructure Development: Roads — Urban Development:**

- New State Road Policy 2021.
- Major repair works of three prominent roads in each district, ₹1900 cr.
- Major repair works of roads in Nagar Nigam, Nagar Parishad and Nagar Palika areas.
- Development of 27 state highways, ₹3880 cr.
- DPR of high level bridge in Kota district.
- Constitutional Club at Jaipur.
- Master Drainage System for Bharatpur, ₹200 cr.

**PHED-WRD:**

- 12 new major drinking water projects under JJM, ₹4700 cr.
- Starting of six new projects worth ₹2285 cr under JJM.
- Drinking water connections to 20 lac households under JJM.
- DPR for 22 projects under JJM.
- Providing drinking water from Kumbharam lift, ₹7700 cr.

**Energy:**

- Energy Policy 2021-2050
- Green Corridor of 6.3 Gigawatts by RRVPN.

**Forest and Environment:**

- Development of Keoladeo National Park as Wetland Birds Habitat Conservation Centre.
- Wildlife Management Training Centre at Talchapar Sanctuary, Churu.
- *Kailash Sankhla Smriti Van* at Jodhpur.

**Tourism, Art and Culture :**

- Provision of ₹500 cr in Tourism Development Fund.
- Shekhawati Tourist Circuit.
- Godawad Tourist Circuit.
- Renovation of seven RTDC midways, ₹10 cr.
- Religious Tourist Circuits, ₹100 cr.

## IN SHORT

Harendra Pratap, Chief Editor, Laghu Udyog Samachar, Government of India giving away Pandit Tilakraj Memorial Honour to Sulakshana Bhatia, Senior Programme Director, ICCR, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India in Delhi.



Aluminium industry has a legacy issue of inverted duties on the primary inputs namely primary aluminium. ASMA (Aluminium Secondary Manufacturers Association) in association with IIFT, New Delhi, has done a study to understand the various anomalies associated with the tariff structure on the

primary and secondary imports in the aluminium sector. Imports from both FTA and non-FTA countries are studied, claims ASMA. It is found that India does not gain much by exporting primary aluminum but surrenders competitiveness of its downstream sector by paying higher for primary aluminum (imported or domestically bought) due to premium induced by high tariffs on import to fulfill its requirements, states ASMA.

Located atop the Malangtoli Hills in Joda Block, Pidhapokhri village, with a population of around 200 households, has been facing acute scarcity of water since decades. Due to local hydro-geological factors, it was a challenge for district administration to provide drinking water to the Joda block. Water used to be supplied in tankers, twice a day, which barely met the minimum needs of people, leading to multiple development deprivations. It is in this context that a 'Household Piped Water Supply Project' for the village was sanctioned through District Mineral Foundation at a cost of ₹2.63 cr in 2018 under the leadership of collector and DM, Keonjhar Ashish Thakare. Under the project, water sourced from a natural spring is lifted to a height of more than 300 feet using a 10 HP solar pump to an overhead tank and then supplied to households through individual tap connections, after filtration. Even though construction of the drinking water infrastructure was a major challenge, Rural Water supply and sanitation (RWSS) program which comes under Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water Department, Govt of Odisha successfully completed the project.



All the street lights of the metropolis will be rectified before the Holi festival i.e. March 28. For this, the Municipal Corporation Ghaziabad has started a campaign. There are about 65,000 street lights in all 100 wards of the metropolis. City Commissioner Mahendra Singh Tanwar informed that a team of lighting department headed by Additional Municipal Commissioner Shiv Pujan Yadav has been formed in this regard. It will monitor all the street lights to be fixed. Instructions have also been given to manage proper lighting in the parks and decorate the electrical poles. The city commissioner informed that Yogesh Srivastava, the in-charge of lighting, will inspect the internal lanes in all the five zones of the metropolis. He informed that to make this campaign a success, cooperation of RWA and councilors of various colonies is also being taken.



— PNS (Ashok Nirwan)

Along with all the awareness programmes being run on cancer, the government has now directed to provide special OPD and day care facility for cancer victims in every district hospitals. For this, on behalf of the Director General, Medical and Health Services, a district doctor and two staff nurses have been directed to be deployed in all district hospitals of the State. Dr. Kiran Garg, NCD Clinic, has been nominated on behalf of Chief Medical Superintendent of Ghaziabad District MMG District Hospital, Dr. Anurag Bhargava, CMS. Apart from this, staff nurses Tanu and Gayatri Devi have been nominated for the day care facility being launched for cancer. Dr. Kiran is posted in the NCD (Non Communicable Disease Clinic) operating in the old building of District Women's Hospital and has been instrumental in tobacco control programs for cancer prevention. In fact, the purpose behind the introduction of special OPD and day care facility for cancer in district hospitals is that the disease can be detected in the first stage itself.



— PNS (Ashok Nirwan)



Dr. J. Mitra jointly administered the vaccination programme. The available vaccines require a two-dose schedule to be administered two, three or four weeks apart. These vaccines are administered through the intramuscular route. About 120 front line workers from RPF, RPSF participated in the drive. After vaccination, all of them were observed for 30 minutes. Around 404 health workers had already received the first dose of the vaccine since the launch of the drive on February 1 in CLW. The beneficiaries who were given the first shot on Day 1 will be administered with the second dose from March 1. An exclusive observation facility under an anaesthetist and a physician is set up at the vaccination centre with beds, oxygen supply and ventilators to render supportive care.

Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) has won six awards for its efforts in field of communication at the PRSI National Awards-2020 conferred upon by the Public Relations Society of India. The awards were given away by Baby Rani Maurya, Governor of Uttarakhand and Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank, Union Minister for Education, Government of India, during a virtual ceremony on Sunday. SAIL has been awarded in the categories of House Journal (English), Best Communication Campaign (External Publics), Communications Campaign of the Year - Covid-19, Special/Prestige Publication, E-newsletter and Corporate Website categories.



# Step towards better services

Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) during its 184th Meeting held on Monday under the chairmanship of Santosh Kumar Gangwar, Minister of State for Labour & Employment (Independent Charge), Govt. of India has taken several significant decisions to improve its service delivery mechanism and strengthen the medical infrastructure benefiting its insured workers.

**◆Relaxation in contributory conditions to avail sickness benefit to the insured women availing maternity benefit**

After the enhancement in duration of maternity benefit from 12 weeks to 26 weeks, in some cases insured women were not eligible to avail sickness benefit in the corresponding benefit period after availing maternity benefit as the mandatory contributory conditions of minimum 78 days were not met.

In such cases, it has now been decided that an insured women will be qualified to claim sickness benefit in the corresponding benefit period if the contribution in her respect were paid or payable for not less than half the number of days available for working in such shorter contribution period.

**◆Relaxation in contributory conditions to avail sickness and maternity benefits for the benefit period of January to June, 2021**

The pandemic resulted in the non-entitlement to avail sickness and maternity benefits for many insured persons/women as the mandatory days of contribution couldn't be met. Considering the hardship being faced by insured persons, ESIC has now decided to extend the relief to the IPs by relaxing the contributory conditions for availing the sickness and maternity benefits for the benefit period of January to June. Now, an insured Woman will be entitled to avail maternity benefit, if the contributions in respect of her were payable not less than 35 days



in immediately preceding two consecutive contribution periods.

In case of IPs/IWs appointed before the contribution period April-September, 2020, the eligibility condition will be decided on the basis of their contribution in previous contribution period i.e. September '2019 to March '2020, whereas, the IPs/IWs appointed during the contribution period April-September, 2020 will be eligible for sickness benefit in the benefit period January-June '2021 if contribution in respect of them were payable for not less than half the number of days available for working to them during the contribution period April-September '2020.

**◆ESIC to construct 300 bedded hospital including 50 super specialty beds at Haridwar, Uttarakhand**

To meet the medical services needs of IPs in Haridwar and surrounding districts, the ESI Corporation has decided to construct 300 bedded ESIC Hospital including 50 bedded super specialty beds and staff quarters in five acres of land at Haridwar, Uttarakhand. After construction, the hospital will provide medical care services to around 2.55 lakh insured workers and their family members.

**◆ESIC to construct 350 bedded hospital with additional 50 bedded SST wing at Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh**

The ESI Corporation has approved the project of construction of 350 bedded hospital with an additional 50 bedded SST wing and 128 staff quarters in a plot area

of 8.72 acres (approx.) at Sheelanagar, Vishakhapatnam. The proposed hospital, after construction, will provide medical services to around 14 lakh beneficiaries covered under ESI scheme in Vishakhapatnam and surrounding areas.

**◆Establishment of negative pressure ICU at ESIC super specialty hospital and medical college at Hyderabad, Telangana**

The decision to establish Negative Pressure ICU at ESIC Super Specialty Hospital & Medical College at Hyderabad, Telangana was also taken during the meeting. The establishment of Negative Pressure ICU will decrease the burden of infection to the healthcare workers and the secondary infections to other critically ill patients admitted in the ICU.

**◆Revise estimates**

The ESI Corporation has also approved the revised estimates and budget estimates for the year 2020-21 & 2021-22 and performance budget for the year 2021-22 during the meeting.

Besides these, around 25 other agenda items pertaining to improvement in service delivery mechanism were also reported and approved. The other dignitaries were Apurva Chandra, Secretary, Ministry of Labour & Employment, Govt. of India, Anuradha Prasad, Additional Secretary, MoLE, GoI & Director General, ESIC, members of ESI Corporation, Sandhya Shukla, Financial Commissioner, ESIC, Garima Bhagat, CVO, ESIC and many others.

Delhi BJP President, Adesh Gupta, Member of Parliament, Meenakshi Lekhi and North Delhi Mayor, Jai Prakash inaugurated the Material Recovery Facility Centre for solid waste management under Zakhira fly-over. On the occasion Standing Committee Chairman, Chhail Bihari Goswami, Leader of House, Yogesh Verma, former Chairman Standing Committee, Veena Virmani, Councillors, Vipin Malhotra, Sunita Mishra, Former MLA, Subhash Sachdeva, Former Councillor, Bharat

Bhushan Madan and other dignitaries were present.

On the occasion, Gupta said that in the adverse conditions North Delhi Municipal Corporation is providing every possible facility to the citizens. He said that this facility centre would help North DMC in solid waste management.



Prakash said that this is first of its kind semi-automated waste management system in Delhi. He said that this centre would be operated by Chintan (NGO). Material Recovery Facility center has state of the art machineries which can process upto eight tons of waste per day. This socio-technological model for segregation and recycling

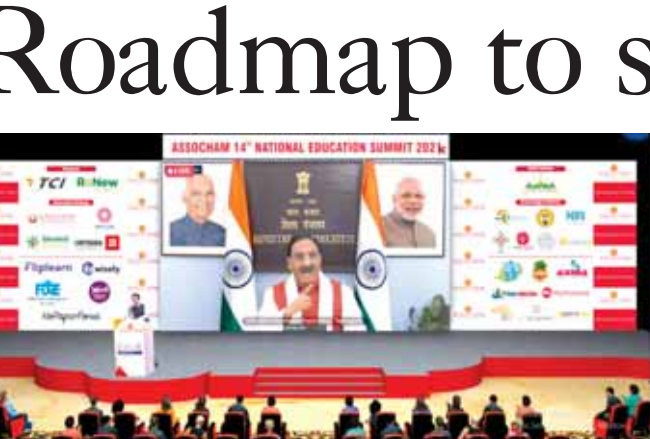
aims at developing solid waste management infrastructure for North DMC in a scientific manner in pursuance of the Swachh Bharat Mission and the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016.

Founder-Director, Chintan (NGO), Bharati Chaturvedi said, "We will work with the North DMC to reduce the waste going to the Bhalsawa landfill."

The 14th National Education Summit 2021 was organised by ASSOCHAM from February 18 to 20 2021 (virtually as well as physically) with National Book Trust, India as the knowledge partner. The three-day summit discussed the impact of the National Education Policy 2020 on transforming the educational landscape of the nation and carving a road map for its implementation. Inaugurating the summit virtually, Dr Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', Minister of Education began with the objective that NEP will prove to be the dawn of a new India as the knowledge superpower. In his inaugural address, Dr

Nishank said that the policy which has been brought after much deliberation, is being praised not only by the country but all over the world. He praised ASSOCHAM's contribution in the process of its formation.

In the next session of the program, Prof. Govind Prasad Sharma Chairman, National Book Trust, India shared his views on the "Researching Quality Assurance in Higher Education — Accreditation and Ranking of Universities" in the National Education Policy 2020. He said that quality education assurance has an important role to play in the development of any country. He praised the option of multiple entry



# Roadmap to success

and exit points afforded to the student by NEP-2020.

Yuvraj Malik, Director National Book Trust, India in the afternoon session on "Road map for universalisation of education with 100 per cent GER in school education by 2020" spoke about the five deliverables of the NEP 2020 that will help turn it from a vision document to ground reality. Affordability, accountability, equity, accessibility and quality of

education will help build a strong foundation which in turn will curate a knowledge based citizenry, a global citizen. The Guest of Honour at this session was Dr Arun Kumar Sahoo, Odisha Cabinet Minister, Higher Education.

In the physical session on "Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities — An Approach to Attain the Highest Global Standards in Quality Education", the Guest of Honour Dr Vinay Sahasrabuddhe, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha, Chairman, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sport and President

ICCR shared his thoughts with the audience. Speaking at the session, Yuvraj Malik Director, NBT said, "Our education sector is an institution for nation building that influences the collective consciousness of the nation". Talking about the NEP 2020, he said that it is a vision document for our future generation, a draft for their future and each one of us has to come together as a stakeholder, be it teachers, schools, educationists, principals, owners, private institute honors, everyone has to contribute only then can we build a nation which we can call *Atma Nirbhar Bharat*, and the developed India as a *viksit and shikshit bharat*.



# Patel dominates in Motera

## Axar's 6/38 dismantle England for 112 runs before Rohit's fifty cuts lead

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

Axar Patel's devastating six-wicket haul bundled England out for 112 before Rohit Sharma's languid elegance shone through in an unbeaten half century that handed India the edge on the opening day of the day-night third Test here on Wednesday.

The spin combination of left-arm Patel and off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin exploited the turning Motera pitch at the newly-inaugurated Narendra Modi stadium to the full and England's first innings folded in just 48.4 overs after the visitors opted to bat.

Patel (21.4-6-38-6) grabbed his second five-for in his second Test while Ashwin (16-6-26-3) took three.

At stumps, India were 99 for 3 from 33 overs with Rohit batting on 57 off 82 balls. Ajinkya Rahane (1) was giving him company following skipper Virat Kohli's dismissal (16-6-26-3) took three.

Kohli was dismissed for 27 off 58 balls by left-arm spinner Jack Leach (10-1-27-2).

India trailed by just 13 runs with seven first innings wickets in hand.

Before this, it was a nightmare that unfolded for England with the 47-run stand for the third wicket being their best.

They lost their last six wickets in the second session. The last seven wickets yielded just 38 runs.

This was after Ishant Sharma, only the second Indian fast bowler after Kapil Dev to play in 100 Tests, fittingly took India's first wicket in the third over to open the floodgates for



3rd Test. Day 2  
Live from 2:30pm IST  
STAR SPORTS 1 NETWORK

the hosts.

In reply to a below par score, India negotiated the opening spells of much-vaunted England seamers James Anderson and Stuart Broad without any damage in the tricky twilight period. Rohit and Shubman Gill (11) did not face too much trouble seeing out the precarious phase.

Anderson and Broad did not get much the desired movement with the pink ball and the dew factor did not have a big role either.

But Jofra Archer (5-2-24-1) gave England the breakthrough

in the 15th over with Gill, trying a pull shot from the off stump, top-edged for Zak Crawley to end the 33-run opening partnership.

India lost another wicket soon after in Cheteshwar Pujara with Leach getting him trapped LBW for a first-ball duck to reduce India to 34 for 2.

After that, Rohit and Virat shared 64 runs for the third wicket, rotating the strike and finding the gaps as well for regular boundaries. Kohli was dropped by Ollie Pope when he was on 24. Pope also put down

a difficult chance to dismiss Rohit when the batsman was on 52.

Earlier, after Ishant had taken the first wicket, it was an Ashwin and Patel show as the duo bamboozled the England batsmen to complete the submission. Crawley (53 off 84 balls) was the lone exception and hit a delectable half-century.

Crawley's brilliance was, however, neutralised by the Indian spinners as England were left reeling at 81 for 4 going into tea after an exciting opening session.

Two wickets fell in as many overs after the resumption of the second session, with

Ashwin and Patel taking one each, to reduce England to 81 for 6.

Ashwin sent Pope's (1) off-stump cart-wheeling with a beauty of a delivery, bowling round the wicket, before Patel trapped Ben Stokes (6) LBW in the next over with a ball that spun in.

Jofra Archer (11) did a tad better as he hit a four off the second ball he faced and another boundary off Ashwin. But Patel dismissed him soon, cleaning up his off-stump to send England innings into a mess.

# Padikkal's career-best 152 hands Karnataka big win

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Talented opening batsman Devdutt Padikkal continued his sizzling form to notch up a List A career-best score of 152 to help defending champions Karnataka register a massive 101-run win over Odisha in a Group E match of the Vijay Hazare Trophy here on Wednesday.

The 20-year-old opener smashed five sixes and 14 fours en route to his third List A century in his 16th game to propel Karnataka to 329 for five after being invited to bat at the KSCA Ground 3 in Alur.

The Royal Challengers Bangalore opener paced his innings brilliantly, taking 55 balls to reach his half-century and 119 deliveries for his ton.

But he took off in the final 10 overs as he cracked 52 runs off his last 21 balls to cruise to his maiden 150 off 138 deliveries.

Padikkal now has 301 runs from three matches, averaging 100.33 with scores of 52 and 97 in the first two matches.

In reply, Odisha were bowled out for 228 in 44 overs with Prasidh Krishna and Sheyvas Gopal grabbing three wickets each to hand Karnataka their second win from three matches to move to second spot in the standings.

In another Group E match, Kerala defeated Railways by seven runs in a high-scoring thriller at the Just Cricket Academy to register their third win on the trot and consolidate their position atop the table.

Veteran opener Robin Uthappa (100 from 104 balls; 8x4s, 5x6s) cracked his second century from three matches in company of fellow opener Vishnu Vinod (107 from 107b;



5x4s, 4x6s) before Sanju Samson took charge with an explosive 61 to power Kerala to a massive 351

for 6.

Samson, who was appointed Rajasthan Royals skipper after they parted ways with Steve Smith, clobbered six fours and four sixes in his 29-ball knock, while Vathsala Govind remained unbeaten on a 34-ball 46 (2x4s, 3x6s).

Half-centuries from Mrunal Devdhar, Arindam Ghosh, Saurabh Singh and Harsh Tyagi meant the match went down to the wire.

But medium pacer MD Nidheesh (3/83) took two wickets — Amit Mishra and Tyagi — in successive balls in the last over to take Kerala over the line in a dramatic finish.

## Baroda continue winning streak

**SURAT:** Baroda continued their winning streak in the Vijay Hazare Trophy after beating Hyderabad by 110 runs in their Elite Group A match, courtesy Kedar Devdhar's hundred and impressive show by the bowlers.

This is Baroda's third win on the trot after they had defeated Goa and Tripura.

Put into bat at the Lalbhai Contractor Stadium, Baroda rode on Devdhar's stroke-filled 131 to post a competitive 316/7 on the board, and then bundled out the opposition for 206, with Babashafi Pathan (3/37) doing the bulk of the damage.

Devdhar was back among the runs as he tore apart the Hyderabad attack with his 139-ball innings, hammering 14 boundaries and two maximums.

**PUNJAB BEAT ANDHRA**

In Group B matches at Indore, Punjab bounced back from back-to-back defeats to

beat Andhra by seven wickets to register their first win.

Punjab skipper Mandeep Singh won the toss and sent Andhra in to bat. A disciplined bowling effort from Punjab meant Andhra innings never had the momentum. Kaul picked up four wickets while left-arm medium-pacer Barinder Sran took three as Andhra were bowled out for 175 in the 49th over.

Chasing the target, Mandeep starred with an unbeaten 64 (81 balls, 8 fours) to take Punjab home in 36 overs and register their first win in the tournament.

In the second match of the group, Tamil Nadu, the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy winners, suffered their second defeat in the tournament after losing by 11 runs to Madhya Pradesh.

In the third game, Jharkhand beat Vidarbha by three wickets to top the standings with three wins from as many games. **PTI**



India's veteran fast bowler Ishant Sharma on Wednesday was accorded a guard of honour by his teammates ahead of his landmark 100th Test match before the start of 1st day play of 3rd Test between India and England at Narendra Modi Cricket stadium in Ahmedabad on Wednesday

BCCI/Twitter

# President inaugurates Narendra Modi stadium

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

India's president on Wednesday inaugurated the world's largest cricket arena here, renamed from Sardar Patel stadium to Narendra Modi stadium in honour of the Prime Minister who is credited with conceptualising the facility in its current awe-inspiring form.

The state-of-the-art stadium, inaugurated by President Ram Nath Kovind, can accommodate a jaw-dropping 1.32 lakh spectators.

"This stadium was conceptualised by Prime Minister Narendra Modi when he was Chief Minister of Gujarat. He was president of the Gujarat Cricket Association at that time," Kovind said in his address after the inauguration.

The renaming of the stadium was kept under wraps until after it was formally inaugurated.

"It represents India's aspirations and strength. India is called hub of cricket, so it is appropriate that we have the largest stadium. It will give India a new identity," Kovind said.

Also present on the occasion was Home Minister Amit Shah and Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju along with a host of other dignitaries.

"We have decided to name it after the country's Prime Minister. It was Modi ji's dream project," said Shah after the inauguration.

The President also per-



President Ram Nath Kovind and Union Home Minister Amit Shah during the Bhumi Pujan of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Sports Enclave at Motera Stadium in Ahmedabad

PTI

formed the ground-breaking ceremony for a sports complex in the stadium, to be named Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel sports enclave, for disciplines like football, hockey, basketball, kabaddi, boxing, and lawn tennis among others.

The ambitious 215-acre project, under which 20 stadiums will be built with accommodation facilities for athletes and coaches. Another sports complex is coming up in Naranpura for multi-disciplinary sporting events in future.

Spread over 63 acres, the stadium has been built at an estimated cost of ₹800 crore and with a seating capacity for 1,32,000 spectators, it has surpassed the hallowed Australia's Melbourne Cricket Ground which can accommodate 90,000.

# Woods seriously injured in roll-over car crash

AFP ■ LOS ANGELES

Tiger Woods suffered serious injuries to both legs as his car flew off the road on Tuesday near Los Angeles in a crash he was "very fortunate" to survive, law enforcement officials who found the US golf legend said.

Woods did not appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol during the early-morning incident, and underwent surgery after the roll-over collision, said Los Angeles County Sheriff Alex Villanueva.

No other vehicles or passengers were involved in the crash which occurred on a steep stretch of road known as a "hotspot" for high-speed

accidents in recent years.

"I will say that it's very fortunate that Mr Woods was able to come out of this alive," said deputy Carlos Gonzalez, the first law enforcement official to arrive on scene.

Gonzalez found Woods trapped in his vehicle but conscious, appearing "calm and lucid" and able to identify himself.

"It is my understanding that he had serious injuries to both legs," said Los Angeles County fire chief Daryl Osby.

Firefighters and paramedics extricated Woods from the wreckage of his SUV and transported him with a neck collar and backboard to a local hospital via road, where he underwent surgery.

# Advantage Chelsea

## Giroud's bicycle kick gives Blues edge over Atletico

AFP ■ BUCHAREST

Olivier Giroud's magnificent bicycle kick broke Atletico Madrid's resistance and earned Chelsea a crucial away goal on Tuesday, a 1-0 victory giving Thomas Tuchel's side a slender advantage in the Champions League last 16.

Giroud's acrobatic strike was initially ruled out for off-side but stood after VAR showed Mario Hermoso had got the final touch, delivering a huge blow to Atletico's hopes of reaching the quarter-finals.

"I didn't know what to think about the goal, I just focused on hitting the ball," said Giroud. "I love an overhead kick and I was just pleased to see the ball hit the back of the net. I had no clue about being



offside or not."

Diego Simeone's side had put on a typically disciplined defensive performance until that point but Giroud's moment of genius means they will have to score in London on March 17 if they are to avoid an early exit.


It also continues a worrying dip for Atletico, whose lead in La Liga is also under threat after one win in four

matches.

Chelsea, meanwhile, passed their biggest test since Tuchel was appointed at the end of January, backing up a strong run against lesser lights in the Premier League with a polished display against one of Europe's elite.

Giroud's goal in the 68th minute was only the third Atletico have conceded in 14 home legs of the Champions League knockout stages under Simeone, even if this fixture was at home only in name.

Their defeat makes it three home losses out of three for Spain's teams in the Champions League last 16 so far, after Barcelona were thrashed by Paris Saint-Germain and Sevilla were beaten by Borussia Dortmund last week.



**BHUBANESWAR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION**  
C-529

**e-Procurement Notice**  
e- Mail: ee1@bmc.gov.in

1. Bid Reference No. : BMC-DIV-1/ 11 2020-21Dt. **24.02.2021**

2. Tender Call Notice No : **14037** dtd. **24.02.2021**

3. No. of works : **22** (Twenty Two)

4. Bid Value : Rs. 5,08,839/- to Rs. 81,84,157/-

5. Period of Completion : 45 days to 90 days

**Date and Time Schedule**

Start	End	Opening
11.00 A.M of 26.02.2021	5.00 P.M of 09.03.2021	4.30 P.M of 10.03.2021

6.Tender details can be seen for the e-Procurement portal <https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in> & BMC Website <https://www.bmc.gov.in>

Sd/-  
**Executive Engineer**  
**BMC Division-1**

OIPR-13002/11/0103/2021

**OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR**  
**ACHARYA HARIHAR POST GRADUATE INSTITUTE OF CANCER, CUTTACK**  
E-593 Tender Notice No. **805** /dated **23.02.2021**  
S-15/20-21

Sealed tenders are invited in two-bid system by the Director, AcharyaHariharPost Graduate Institute of Cancer, Cuttack-753007 for supply of books. The bid document and all details can be downloaded from the website of AHPGIC, www.ahrccc.in. The tender schedule dates are as mentioned below:

Sl. No.	Particulars	Date & Time
1	Last date & time of tender submission (by speed post/registered post)	19.03.2021 at 4 PM
2	Date and time of pre-bid meeting	08.03.2021 at 4 PM
3	Date & time of opening of technical bid (in presence of bidders/their authorized agents)	22.03.2021 at 4 PM
4	Date of opening of price bid	To be informed to qualified bidders

The authority reserves the right to accept/reject any/all bids without assigning any reasons thereof. **Any charges/ modifications made in the tender paper after the pre-bid meeting shall be updated in the website of AHPGIC only and non corrigendum in this regards shall be published in newspaper.**

Sd/-  
**Director**

OIPR-10052/11/0012/2021



**ODISHA HYDRO POWER CORPORATION LTD.,**  
O/o Sr. GENERAL MANAGER, HIRAKUD HYDRO ELECTRIC PROJECT,  
POST BOX NO. 6, BURLA - 758017, DISTRICT: SAMBALPUR (ODISHA).  
PHONE: 0663-2430187/(O), 2430741(R), FAX: 0663 2430712  
E-Mail : srgrm@hpc, burla@yahoo.co.in

**No. HHEP/Tech-W-92/874** **Date :24.02.2021**  
CAD-1341 **e-TENDER NOTICE NO. HHEP-13/2021**


Unit Head, HHEP, Burla invites e-tender from the firm / agency / eligible class of contractor, registered with the Govt. of Odisha and contractor of equivalent grade / class registered with Central Govt/ MES / Railway to be received **online mode only** for the following work in the portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>. Only those bidders who successfully remit their cost of tender paper & EMD online would be able to eligible in the tender.

Sl. No	Name of work	Approx. tender value of work (in Rs.)	Cost of tender (Non-Refundable)	EMD in Rs.
1	Up-keeping and cleaning of different areas of Burla Power House premises under HHEP, Burla	2662944/-	Rs. 7080/- (Rs. 6000/- + GST 18%)	267000/-

- Availability of bids online: 08.03.2021(11.00AM) to 17.03.2021(05.00PM)
- Last date and time of receipt of bid online : 17.03.2021 upto 05.00 PM
- Date & time of opening of tender : 18.03.2021 at 11.30 AM
- The bidders shall have to participate in online only in the portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in> / [www.ohpccltd.com](http://www.ohpccltd.com) Sd/-  
Unit Head, HHEP, Burla

OIPR-04007/11/0030/2021



**e-Procurement Notice for Road Work Identification No.**  
**09/ EERW/BLS/2020-21**

0-1131

1. Name of the Work :- Road

2. Total No. of Works :- 1 No

3. Estimated Cost :- Estimated Cost Rs 20.33 Lakh

4. Class of Contractor :- 'C' & 'B' Class

5. Time of Completion :- 15 Days (Fifteen Days)

6. Other Details :-

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No	Availability of Tender On-line for bidding	Last date & time of seeking tender clarification	Date & time of opening of tender in the Office of the Executive Engineer, R.W. Division, Balasore	
1	2	3	4	5	6
Executive Engineer Rural Works Division: Balasore	09/ EERW/ BLS / 2020-21	26.02.2021 at 11.00 A.M.	04.03.2021 up to 5.00 P.M.	04.03.2021 up to 1.00 P.M.	06.03.2021 at 11.00 A.M

Further details can be seen from the web site- [www.tendersodisha.gov.in](http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in) Sd/-  
OIPR-25108/11/0003/2021 Executive Engineer R.W.Division, Balasore