

**OPINION 6**  
TIME TO LOOK  
AND ACT EAST

**WORLD 8**  
OLI IN NO MOOD TO RESIGN,  
READY TO FACE PARL: OFFICIAL

**SPORT 12**  
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RAIPUR, THURSDAY FEBRUARY 25, 2021: PAGES 12-13

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**AMITABH  
HINTS AT NEW  
BEGINNINGS  
10 VIVACITY**

# 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 primarily

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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- 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.

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 tackling Covid-19 response and management, and effectively tackling the pandemic. It has warned the States that slackening 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.



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

AHMS Director 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.

An 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.

Farm 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 Nareesh 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.

## Maoists kill cop, ITBP trooper in Chhattisgarh

STAFF REPORTER ■ NARAYANPUR

In two separate attacks, Naxalites on Wednesday killed a policeman and an ITBP trooper in Chhattisgarh's Narayanpur district.

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel expressed profound grief over the deaths and offered his condolences to the grieving families.

District Reserve Guard (DRG) jawan Kaner Usendi was injured in a gun battle with Maoists in a forest near the Maharashtra border around 10 am, Narayanpur Superintendent of Police Mohit Garg said.

He was shifted to the district hospital in Narayanpur where he died. Usendi belonged to Narayanpur district.

Around noon, Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) trooper N Balachami, who was from Tamil Nadu, sustained splinter injuries in a blast triggered by Naxalites in a forest in the Akabeda police station area, some 30 km from Sonapur, Garg said. Balachami also succumbed to his injuries, officials said.

## CAPSULE

### DISENGAGEMENT WIN-WIN SITUATION: ARMY CHIEF

New Delhi: The disengagement of Armies of India and China from north and south banks of Pangong Tso is a "very good end result" and a win-win situation for both the sides, Army Chief Gen MM Naravane said on Wednesday, stressing that there are strategies in place to address other pending issues in eastern Ladakh.

### NO OFFLINE EXAMS UP TO CLASS 8 IN DELHI

New Delhi: The Delhi Government issued guidelines to its schools on Wednesday for the assessment of students up to Class 8, ruling out offline examinations and instead, asking them to grade the students on the basis of projects and assignments.

### 'SET ON FIRE AFTER FAILED GANGRAPE ATTEMPT'

Shahjahanpur: A college student who was found lying without clothes and severely burnt along a NH in Shahjahanpur district has claimed she was set on fire after a failed attempt to gangrape her, police said on Wednesday. Police sources said a few suspects have been taken into custody for questioning and they were "very close" to cracking the case.

## Motera stadium named after PM

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A mid a controversy over a cricket stadium in Gujarat being renamed after Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Government on Wednesday said the name change involves only the Motera stadium and the sports complex where it is located will continue to be named after Sardar Patel.

Soon after President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated the world's largest cricket stadium in Ahmedabad, which will now be known as 'Narendra Modi stadium', social media was flooded with remarks including by some leaders of the Congress and other Opposition parties who alleged that the renaming exercise amounted to an "insult" to Sardar Patel.

Union Ministers Prakash Javadekar and Ravi Shankar Prasad hit out at the Congress leaders, saying those who never respected Sardar Patel were objecting to the stadium being



View of the world's largest cricket stadium, the Motera stadium, ahead of its inauguration on Wednesday in Ahmedabad. PTI

named after Modi.

Asked about the allegations, Javadekar told reporters that only the Motera stadium has been renamed and the complex where it is located continues to be named after Vallabhbhai Patel.

Prasad, who was present alongside Javadekar at the media briefing after a cabinet meeting, took a swipe at the Congress leaders, asking whether party chief Sonia Gandhi or Rahul Gandhi have so far praised the world's tallest

### Sports Complex continues to have Sardar Patel's name, clarifies Govt

stature of Sardar Patel erected at Kevadia in Gujarat.

Javadekar said the two Congress leaders have not even visited the statue.

Prasad continued, "I want to say this with full responsibility that a tourist place getting global praise has not been visited yet or praised by the two Congress leaders. What else is there to say?"

Congress leader Shashi Tharoor tweeted, "Maybe they just realised the stadium was named for a Home Minister who had banned their parent organisation! Or maybe this is advance booking to ensure the next visiting Head of State is hosted here, like Trump? Or is this the beginning of a legacy-creation-thru-labelling spree?"

## Air pollution level worst in Delhi-NCR

### 8 of top 10 most polluted cities of India in UP; Gzb, Bulandshahr at top: CSE report

SAPNA SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

The most air polluted cities in India during this winter were located in Uttar Pradesh and Delhi-NCR, according to a Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) report.

As per the report, the most polluted cluster was the Delhi-NCR with Ghaziabad, Bulandshahr, Greater Noida, Noida, and Delhi leading the pack. Eight of the top 10 most polluted cities were in UP with Ghaziabad and Bulandshahr taking the top spots, while Delhi was at number five and Bhiwadi in Rajasthan at number 10. Chandigarh is the only major city to be put among the five least polluted ones.

Kanpur was at sixth and Lucknow at ninth spot, while Bhiwani and Palwal in Haryana and Alwar in Rajasthan were the least polluted cities.



Firefighters try to douse a fire in the forest area on the Yamuna bank near Raigarh in New Delhi on Wednesday. PTI

# Will sanction ₹100 cr for sewer project: CM

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday held a roadshow in Shalimar Bagh Bawana area ahead of the MCD by-elections to support party candidates.

Addressing the residents of Shalimar Bagh and Bawana municipal wards in Delhi, Kejriwal said that AAP has fulfilled all of its promises made in the last elections, including the provision of free and 24x7 electricity and improvement of roads, schools, and hospitals.

The Chief Minister said that it is the people's responsibility to make AAP victorious in these by-elections to change the face of MCD. "I got to know that people have been requesting for sewer line in Bawana. It is my promise that I will sanction Rs 100 crores for the sewer project here", he added.

Kejriwal was accompanied by both Sunita Mishra, who is the ward councillor of Shalimar Bagh North 62N, and

Ram Chandra, who is the ward candidate from Rohini C32N, and several MLAs.

Addressing the residents of Bawana, Kejriwal emphasized the availability of 24x7 free electricity in Delhi. He said, "We are recognized for 24-hour free electricity across the world. I remember coming here before the elections three years back. It was pouring down and the whole road was filled with potholes. I promised you that if AAP wins, we will mend this road. We have fulfilled our promise. I promised you that I will improve schools and hospitals and my Government did it," he said.

"I promise that I will sanction ₹100 crores for the sewer project in this area. If you vote for any other party, they will not lift this area and let me work. They will fight with me, as you must have seen in the case of how BJP fights with me. I have fulfilled all my promises that I made in the last elections. It is your responsibility to make AAP victorious in the opponent of your Delhi," he said.



Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal during a roadshow for MCD by-elections in Shalimar Bagh village, New Delhi, on Wednesday

Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

Kejriwal to visit Surat on Feb 26 to thank Gujarat people for voting AAP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday thanked the people of Gujarat for a landslide victory in Surat Municipal Corporation where the party ended up bagging 27 seats in the civic polls.

Kejriwal said that the people of Delhi have rejected the centuries-old politics of Congress and chosen the AAP as the main opposition party which proves that they want politics of development and work in the State.

The Chief Minister assured that every AAP volunteer and member in Gujarat will fulfill their responsibilities with full honesty. He added that he will be reaching Surat on February 26 to personally meet and thank the people of Surat for voting for AAP.

The AAP has breached BJP's citadel in Surat after it bagged 27 seats in the municipal corporation. Thanking the people of state, Kejriwal said, "The Aam Aadmi Party

has performed exceptionally well in the Gujarat Municipal Corporation Elections. I would like to thank the people of Gujarat from the bottom of my heart. The people of Surat have handed over the responsibility to the AAP as the main opposition party and rejected the 125-year old Congress," he said.

"I want to assure you that every volunteer of ours will fill each of his responsibility with full honesty and dedication. Gujarat has introduced a phase of new politics, which is politics of honesty, politics of work, politics of improved schools and hospitals, and politics of 24x7 free electricity," he added.

"We will change the face of Gujarat in coordination with the people of the state. I am coming to Surat on February 26, to personally meet and thank all of you," the CM added.

The AAP, which had fielded 470 candidates across six corporations, won 27 seats in Surat. Its workers celebrated the poll results by cutting cakes.

## Govt notifies scheme for doorstep delivery of ration

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government on Wednesday notified its flagship scheme for the doorstep delivery of ration that is likely to be rolled out from next month. Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had announced his Government's plan to launch the scheme in this year's Republic Day address.

The Mukhya Mantri Ghar Ration Yojna (MMGGRY) under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) of the National Food Security Act, 2013, was notified by the government on February

20, the officials said.

The MMGGRY involves the delivery of packed wheat flour and rice to beneficiaries at their doorsteps. According to official data, there are about 17 lakh POSs in Delhi.

The beneficiaries will have to pay the processing (conversion) charge along with the cost of subsidised foodgrains, a senior official said.

"The entire operation from the lifting of foodgrains from FCI godowns, milling, packaging and till the delivery of packaged commodities to the beneficiary will be carried out under CCTV monitoring. Commodities will be carried in



GPS-fitted vehicles," the notification stated.

As per the notified scheme, Delhi State Civil Supplies Corporation (DSCSC) will empanel millers and rice processors to lift the food-

grains for cleaning, grinding and packaging.

The packed foodgrains will be transported from millers to fair price shops and from there to the doorsteps of beneficiaries through direct home delivery (DHD) agencies to be engaged by Delhi Consumer's Co-operative Wholesale Store Ltd (OCCWS).

"Distribution of packaged items (wheat flour and rice) will be done only after successful biometric authentication using e-Pos (point of sale) devices. The cost of subsidised foodgrains and a specified amount as milling or conversion charges will be collected

from the beneficiaries," the scheme notification stated.

An e-POD (proof of delivery) will be captured for records, it said. Ration card holders may draw their full entitlement of foodgrains in more than one instalment, it added.

The scheme will be optional and existing TPDS beneficiaries in Delhi will have to specify whether they want to enrol under it. Beneficiaries will be able to exercise the option at the beginning of every financial year.

The DHD agency will notify the beneficiary in advance through SMS before delivery.

## Gahlot inspects newly-built control centre at Kashmiri Gate

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Transport Minister of Delhi Kailash Gahlot inspected the newly built command and control centre at Kashmiri Gate.

The objective of the project is to ensure the safety and security of the passengers, particularly of women passengers through IP based CCTV surveillance cameras, panic buttons and GPS in the buses of DTC and Cluster scheme.

After the inspection, the minister also conducted a meeting with the officials to discuss all the issues related to the functioning of the command and control centre. He instructed the officials to submit a daily report about data monitoring and operation.

Gahlot tweeted "Today I inspected the Command & Control Centre, Kashmiri Gate for monitoring all DTC or Cluster buses fitted with CCTV, GPS, Panic buttons. I'm glad to note from initial trials, that the entire system is all set to be inaugurated by the Honourable Chief Minister soon. Delhi buses will now be safer than ever."

The Command Centre

shall be manned 24 hours for real-time monitoring of all activities in buses. The depot managers, drivers, conductors and marshals in buses have completed their training related to the operation of the installed system in buses, a senior official said.

All DTC and cluster buses are now fitted with 3 IP cameras, mNVR integrated with GPS device, 10 panic but-

tons, one display for the driver, hooter, strobe and two numbers of two-way audio communication device one each for driver and conductor, he said.

"All newly inducted buses and upcoming buses already have all the systems installed which will be integrated with the centre. Passenger, driver or conductor can press the panic button in case of any emergency or panic" he added.



## 81-yr-old retired IFS officer shoots self dead at his house

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

An 81-year-old retired Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer allegedly shot himself dead with a pistol at his house in south Delhi's Defence Colony area on Wednesday morning.

Police said that the deceased identified as Ranjeet Sethi, left a suicide note stating that he does not want to live any longer. According to Atul Kumar Thakur, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), South district, police received a Police Control Room (PCR) call at around 7:25 AM that a man had shot himself in his house in Defence Colony following which an Emergency Response Vehicle (ERV) was dispatched for the spot.

"Sethi's domestic help made a PCR call stating that he was alive and needed an ambulance. On reaching the spot, police found that Sethi had allegedly shot himself in his room. He was immediately moved to Moolchand Hospital for treatment, but later succumbed," said the DCP.

"During an enquiry, it was revealed that Sethi was discharged from BL Kapoor Hospital on Tuesday, following some illness. A suicide note has been found and further investigation is underway," said the DCP. Sethi is survived by his wife and two children, said police, adding that police are ascertaining if the pistol used by him was a licensed weapon.

## Show -ve Covid reports before entering Capital: Govt

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government is likely to ask travellers from Maharashtra, Kerala, Punjab, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh to show negative Covid-19 test reports before entering the national Capital, Government officials said on Wednesday, adding, it will be effective till March 15. Their test reports should not be older

than 72 hours prior to the commencement of journey, Delhi government said.

People travelling in flights, trains and buses from these states will have to produce negative test reports before entering Delhi, they said.

In a meeting of the Delhi

Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), the experts discussed rising coronavirus cases in five states and asked for a policy to check travellers from those states.

At present, the coronavirus situation is under control in Delhi. But the authority does not want to take any chances with the rising Covid cases in the five states.

As per officials, the DDMA

may issue an order soon in this regard. It will be mandatory for the travellers coming on airlines, trains and buses to furnish the negative RTPCR test report before starting the journey. The DDMA has already sent the file to the Deputy Governor for approval. The new rules are expected to be in force from the night of February 26 and it will continue till March 15.

## EDMC to adopt GIS-based URBGOV

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

East Delhi Municipal Corporation (EDMC) is planning to adopt a GIS-based digital platform called URBGOV for the purpose of mapping, visualisation and analysing existing services.

This system will help in identifying areas of improvement in medical facilities, schools and parks and toilets etc. The platform is developed by Center for Urban and Regional Excellence (CURE) without any financial implications to the corporation.

Chief Engineer Pradeep Kumar Khandelwal stated that there is a GIS based digital system through which all data can be collected in one place by mapping all infrastructure facilities related to health, schools, parks, toilets etc. Khandelwal informed that in view of Swachh Survekshan this system will better take care of the "special gap" between public toilets.

## Media workshop held

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A media sensitisation workshop highlighting the critical role of working donkeys/mules/horses in the lives of marginalised communities was held on Tuesday in New Delhi.

In the inaugural session of the workshop Brooke India accentuated the fact that the contribution of working equines to the economy is generally understated and rarely considered newsworthy. Despite the dwindling numbers (0.55 million), working equines serve as a major source of livelihood for many marginalised urban and rural communities. These animals are employed in a wide range of sectors such as brick kilns, construction, tourism, agriculture and transportation of goods and people. These equines enable their owners to earn money, educate their children, accrue savings and provide a critical support system to equity owning communities. Yet, the country's Animal husbandry policies are generally

formulated to favour production livestock.

It was also highlighted how BI has integrated animal welfare science with human development methodology and successfully achieved its purpose by developing participatory methods and tools specifically for this purpose. This programmatic approach has resulted in the identification and refinement of an animal-centred, group-based process in which the community itself identifies the signs of positive and negative animal welfare. Thus improving the overall animal welfare and building resilient communities.

This was followed by an interesting session which focussed on breaking the stereotypes regarding donkey and establishing them as intelligent creature.

To add a scientific perspective on the issue, Dr. Nidhish Bhardwaj, Head of Animal Welfare & Health, BI highlighted the importance of the five domains animal welfare framework and explained donkey behaviour pattern.

## Plea against extension of tenure of IHBAS director

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday posted the hearing on a plea against the extension of the tenure of the Director, Institute of Human Behaviour and Allied Sciences (IHBAS) for March 23 after hearing in the matter briefly on a PIL that has alleged that the incumbent Director continues even after he has attained the age of superannuation.

The petition before the Delhi High Court has been filed by Tej Bahadur Singh, a retired professor from IHBAS, challenging the extension of service tenure of Director, IHBAS Dr. Nimesh G. Desai beyond the age of 65.

The bench headed by the Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice Jyoti Singh had on January 6, 2021, sought the response of the government of NCT of Delhi, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (Delhi government), Satyendra

Jain (Health Minister), Dr. V.K.S. Gautam (Officiating Joint Director, IHBAS), N.G. Desai (IHBAS) and IHBAS. The Delhi High Court noted that this is contrary to the rules and requirements for the appointment of Director.

The incumbent has been submitted by all three respondents and a rejoinder has also been filed by the petitioner of this PIL. The case was listed for final hearing on February 17 and again scheduled for February 23 which now has been listed for next month. Meanwhile the Delhi government has already issued the advertisement on February 12, 2021 (IHBAS website) for the post of Director, IHBAS.

The Institute is an autonomous body registered under the Societies Act 1860, funded jointly by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, government of India and government of NCT of Delhi. It is submitted that IHBAS is a

prime Hospital and its affairs need to be organised and controlled by the government legally selected and appointed person. The affairs of the government Hospital under the garb of autonomous body, cannot be hood winked and the rules and regulations cannot be thrown to the wind," said the petitioner.

"As per DoPT rule, the extension to any Government employee can only be granted before the completion of tenure or age of superannuation, it cannot be given retrospectively after passing 18 days of superannuation. In case of superannuation, if any government wishes to give the extension, the government must follow certain DoPT rules before the superannuation of the government servant," explained a DoPT official.

"Dr. N.G. Desai Respondent no. 5 who was appointed as a Director in

The extension to any Govt employee can only be granted before the completion of tenure or age of superannuation, it cannot be given retrospectively after passing 18 days of superannuation. In case of superannuation, if any Govt wishes to give the extension, the Govt authority follow certain DoPT rules before superannuation of Govt servant

accordance with the recruitment rules, rather it can be said the existing rules, has attained the age of 65 years i.e. the age of superannuation on 18.10.2020, but he is being permitted to control the activities and affairs of the institution even after the said date and is being permitted to work as Director by Respondent no. 3 and 4, who has no authority to do so and their action is totally non-est. It is submitted that the existing recruitment rules not prescribe for such extension at all," the plea in the high court said.

## 'Slightly high fare of short distance trains to discourage unnecessary travel'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Indian Railways has refuted the claim that higher price being charged from those travelling in passenger trains over short distances.

The ministry further said that a little higher price is seen as proactive measure of Railways to prevent crowding in trains and stop Covid from spreading.

It may be recalled that Indian Railways had to stop running of regular trains due to Covid related nationwide lockdown on March 22nd, 2020 as a measure to contain the spread of Corona virus.

is still around and in fact worsening in some States. Visitors from many States are being subjected to screening in other areas and discouraged to travel," it said.

The ministry further said that a little higher price is seen as proactive measure of Railways to prevent crowding in trains and stop Covid from spreading.

It may be recalled that Indian Railways had to stop running of regular trains due to Covid related nationwide lockdown on March 22nd, 2020 as a measure to contain the spread of Corona virus.



Indian Railways is constantly increasing the number of passenger carrying trains in a graded manner. Full restoration of regular services of passenger trains, to provide times, is to be considered keeping in view a range of factors

and operational circumstances. During challenging times of Covid, Indian Railways has operationalized almost 65 per

cent of the Mail/Express trains and over 90 per cent of suburban services as compared to the pre lock down times.

Total 1250 Mail/Express, 5350 suburban services and more than 326 passenger trains are presently in operation average on a daily basis.

Short distance passenger trains running presently constitute less than three per cent of total trains. More such trains are in the pipeline in consultation with the State Governments. Such short distance trains require interstate discussions and concurrence of all concerned, it said.

Keeping in view the prevailing COVID situation, after introduction of Mail/Express trains, Railways is gradually operationalizing passenger trains taking all necessary precautions and making additional efforts.

It may be noted that passenger operations have always been subsidized by railways. Normally, Railways bears a loss on every journey by a passenger. Railways has been running trains in Covid times in most challenging circumstances. Many trains are being run in spite of low occupancy for the benefit of people.

only this, Railways has taken special care about those travelling by lowest fare in trains so that even in Covid times they bear the least burden.

With a view to regulate rush at stations and in trains, passenger trains are being charged slightly more than pre-Covid times and a close watch is being kept on its patronisation.

The situation is being constantly monitored to ensure restoration of services in keeping with the protocols necessary to be followed during Covid times, it added.



# Govt OK's ₹7,350 cr for making of desi gadgets

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved a ₹7,350-crore scheme to boost production of laptops, tablets, all-in-one PCs and servers in the country, as it sought to woo global and domestic players to take advantage of India's manufacturing prowess.

Production worth ₹3.26 lakh crore and exports of ₹2.45 lakh crore are estimated over the next four years under the new scheme, which is expected to create 1.80 lakh jobs, said Communications and IT Minister Ravishankar Prasad. Briefing reporters after a meeting of the Cabinet, he said the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme has been approved for IT hardware products that would cover laptops, tablets, all-in-one PCs and servers. The ₹7,350-crore scheme aims to promote India as a global hub for hardware manufacturing. The PLI push for hi-tech IT hardware gadgets comes close on the heels of the Cabinet last week clearing a ₹12,195 crore scheme for telecom equipment manufacturing, he said.

An incentive scheme for mobile phone manufacturing was announced last year and



has since garnered strong response from players despite the challenging times of the pandemic. The latest IT hardware scheme offers incentives between 4-1 per cent on net incremental sales (over base year 2019-20) of goods manufactured in India and covered under the target segment, to eligible companies, for a period of four years, an official statement said.

The PLI scheme is expected to enhance the development of electronics ecosystem in India, at a time when globally manufacturing is undergoing a shift and companies across the world are looking to diversify their manufacturing locations to mitigate the risk involved in depending on a single market, said Prasad detailing the PLI scheme.

Similar tweets were made by BJP president. "A few days back I saw what happened in western part of India. Today in the South he is spewing venom against the North. Divide and rule politics won't work, Rahul Gandhi ji! People have rejected his politics. See what happened in Gujarat today!" said Nadda.

After Congress justified Rahul's remarks, Irani said that he completely agrees with Environment Minister Jagan Reddy's statement that "insulting India and its citizens is the favourite pastime of Rahul Gandhi."

Speaking to television channels, Irani said that this is not the first time that the Congress leader has said something against the country and its people.

The Union Minister said, "A netaji's job is to keep the whole country united and think for the interest of the country and its people, despite his/her own political inclinations."

Taking a dig at the Wayanad (Kerala) MP whom she had defeated in the 2019 Amethi Lok Sabha election, Smriti Irani alleged, "Rahul Gandhi is the same person who on Republic Day had voiced his opinion in favour of country's division during tractor rally violence."

She also claimed that earlier, Rahul had also questioned the presence of Fisheries Ministry had earlier in the week made him a subject of criticism from the BJP leaders.

She alleged that the Congress leader was creating "divisions" while a leader should be uniting the country.

Union Minister and Lok Sabha MP from Bihar's Arrah constituency RK Singh said "Rahul Gandhi is talking about North and South, but if you do not work in any Constituency then you will be defeated. This is what happened to you in Amethi (Uttar Pradesh). You did not work, that's why the public voted out. Even if you do not work in Kerala the public will vote out."

"You think that if you keep winning from one constituency to another constituency, then it is not going to last long, you have to work, having been MP three times in a Constituency you lost the election because you did not do any developmental work. Do not divide people into North and South. People (of Kerala) are from India and if you do not work, then you will be voted out from here also," he said.

Rahul's ignorance about the presence of Fisheries Ministry had earlier in the week made him a subject of criticism from the BJP leaders.

He said that if you keep winning from one constituency to another constituency, then it is not going to last long, you have to work, having been MP three times in a Constituency you lost the election because you did not do any developmental work. Do not divide people into North and South. People (of Kerala) are from India and if you do not work, then you will be voted out from here also," he said.

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# Insulting Indians' favourite pastime of Rahul: BJP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



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# North-South divide a toolkit by BJP: Cong

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With its former chief Rahul Gandhi coming under attack of the BJP over his comments in Kerala, the Congress on Wednesday sought to defend him saying the Wayanad MP had given a clear call to the people to question the Government on real issues and the North-South divide was a "toolkit" being sold by the BJP to the public.

However, while former Union Minister Kapil Sibal said he was not bothered by the comment on what Rahul Gandhi has but still maintained "we must respect electors in the country and not denigrate their wisdom", another former Minister Anand Sharma said that people are not stupid, there's no conjecture or misunderstanding.

The Congress alleged that the BJP was raising "superficial" issues on a daily basis to divert the country's attention from the government's issues. Several BJP leaders and union ministers accused Rahul Gandhi of being an 'opportunist' and alleged that he

belittled North Indians during the speech delivered in Kerala.

Addressing a public gathering in Thiruvananthapuram, Rahul had said, "For the first 15 years, I was an MP in the north. I had got used to a different type of politics. For me, coming to Kerala was very refreshing as suddenly I found that people are interested in issues and not just superficially but going into detail in issues."

Referring to Rahul Gandhi's remarks, AICC chief spokesman Randeep Surjewala clarified that the former Congress president has given a clear call to the people to question the government of the day, whether in the states or at the Centre, on issues paramount to people and to "ignore the superficial toolkit that people are sold by the BJP day in and day out."

"The North-South divide is a toolkit being adopted and sold by the BJP to the news channels and the public. Let us all rise and ensure that the government's issues are not ignored and not on superficial issues that they want to divert our attention to," Surjewala said at AICC Press conference.

# ED holds raids in ₹605 crore bank fraud case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday said it has conducted searches in a money laundering case at various premises of accused Amar Chand Gupta, Ram Lal Gupta, Raj Kumar Gupta and other family members allegedly involved in siphoning and diversion of loan funds amounting to ₹605 crore by Shree Bankey Bihari Exports Limited (SBSEL).

The ED had initiated investigation under Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) on the basis of an FIR registered by CBI against SBSEL, its Directors Amar Chand Gupta and others and other unknown public servants/persons for a fraud of ₹605 crore.

"During investigation, it was gathered that SBSEL had diverted the loan funds through its sister units and also by employing the modus operandi of showing bogus and fictitious sale/purchase transactions. The primary security had also been disposed without depositing the sale proceeds in the loan account," the ED said in a statement.

It was also gathered that the books of accounts had been secreted in various premises wherein business was being carried out by these accused persons Amar Chand Gupta, Ram Lal Gupta and Raj Kumar Gupta in the name of other family members. In order to uncover the trail of proceeds of crime and to recover documentary and electronic evidence, searches at residential and business premises of the directors and the entities being run by them along with residence of one key employee were conducted, it said.

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# Congress attacks BJP for renaming Motera stadium

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Soon after President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated the world's largest cricket stadium in Ahmedabad, which will now be known as 'Narendra Modi stadium', the Congress hit out at BJP with its former chief Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday again invoking his 'Hum do humare do' jibe, claiming that truth was out with the stadium having the Prime Minister's name, two ends being named after corporate houses and Home Minister Amit Shah's son being involved in cricket administration. But the Government said the name change involves only the Motera stadium and the rest of the complex continues to be named after Sardar Patel.

"Beautiful how the truth reveals itself. Narendra Modi stadium — Adani end — Reliance end. With Jay Shah (the PM), the stadium has faced in preparations during the pandemic."

The Centre informed the top court on February 9 that it is against granting one-time relaxation on age limit to UPSC civil service aspirants including those who had exhausted their last attempt in the 2020 exam amid the Covid-19 pandemic, as it would be discriminatory to other candidates.

The candidates from general category are allowed six attempts for the UPSC civil services exam till the age of 32; the

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

OBC, nine attempts till 35 years and the SC/ST candidates unlimited attempts till they turn 37.

The Centre was initially not willing to give an extra chance to the candidates but it had later agreed to do so at the suggestion of the bench.

It had on February 5 told the apex court that it was agreeable to giving an extra chance as a one-time relaxation to those who had exhausted their last attempt in the 2020 exam and are not age-barred.

However, the bench on Wednesday dismissed the petition of Rachna and others.

Referring to the disengagement from the Pangong, he said it saw a good result and termed it as a win-win situation. However, there is still a long way to go, Naravane said in the past short-term habit of making small incremental moves like in South China Sea which were not

challenged. However, the Ladakh face-offs have shown that this strategy will not work with India and "every move will be met resolutely."

"China has been in the habit of creeping forward and making very small incremental moves which change by itself was not very big or worthy of a very strong reaction. Because of these small incremental moves which were never contested he has been able to achieve his aims without firing a shot or without any loss of life. What has happened in South China Sea is a very glaring example of that," he said at the webinar by Vivekananda Institute.

Airing these views, Naravane said nobody wants an unsettled border adding "as two neighbours who would like to have peace and tranquility on their borders and who would like that all the other engagements which have been going on in the past should continue also in the future."

As regards disengagement from other friction points at the

LAC, the Army Chief said there are pending issues in Eastern Ladakh and other parts along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) including Depsang Plains.

"End of the day we have achieved a lot," he said, stating, "We still have a long way to go. We now have to move on to the stage of de-escalation. After that de-induction of troops which went to the higher reaches."

Admitting there is trust deficit with China, Naravane said they will be wary and cautious and closely watching whatever moves that happen on either side of the LAC.

To a question if India has more tactical leversages like the domination of peaks on Kailash range which have now been vacated, Naravane said they do, without elaborating.

"Every agreement is premised that they are observed in letter and spirit. We will trust the we will verify," he said adding they have put in systems to verify that these heights are not re-occupied.

# SSB'S 2-DAY NATIONAL SEMINAR BEGINS

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Sashastha Seema Bal (SSB) is organising a two-day 2nd National Police K9 Seminar on sniffer dogs beginning on Thursday.

The K-9 seminar will provide a platform to all the participants to interact with spe-



cialists on K-9 training in the country and discuss topics related to the latest approach on K-9 training. The seminar shall go a long way in developing effective strategies for utilization of sniffer dogs in national security," the SSB said in a statement.

# Foodgrain output to touch new record of 303.34 million tonnes in 2020-21

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Riding high on bumper rice and wheat output due to good monsoon rains and using good quality seeds, India's food grain production for 2020-21 crop year is estimated at 303.34 million tonnes — an all-time record. It is estimated to be 5.84 million tonnes higher than the output in 2019-20 which stood at 296.50 million tonnes. This will be the fifth consecutive year of record production, propelled by record production of rice, wheat, pulses and cereals.

As per the second advance

estimate released by the Ministry of agriculture, production of both paddy and wheat is estimated to touch a new high of 120.32 million tonnes (118.87 million tons during the fourth advance estimate 2019-20) and 109.24 million tonnes (107.86 million tons), respectively, in 2020-21 a record high.

The projection of record production is significant amid the Covid-19 pandemic and farmers' agitation, Punjab, which has been the nerve centre of farmers' protest, has seen record procurement of rice at 13.58 million tonnes, which is 24 per cent

more than last year.

Pulses production, too, is slated to get a slight boost to 24.42 million tonnes nearly 1.4 million tons more than the previous year, mainly because of a record grain production which is expected to be around 11.62 million tonnes.

Total oilseed production during 2020-21 is estimated at 37.31 million tonnes which is 4.09 million tons more than the previous production of 33.22 million tonnes during 2019-20. The higher oilseed output is on account of higher yields expected in all three major oilseeds crops —

groundnut, mustard and soyabean. The production of maize is also expected to be a record one at 30.16 million tonnes. Aided by a record maize production, total output of coarse cereals in 2020-21 is expected to go up to 49.36 million tonnes, which is nearly 1.6 million tons more than that in the previous year. Cotton production is estimated at 36.54 million bales (of 70 kg each), which is nearly half a million bales more than last year.

Similarly, sugarcane output is expected to be around 397.66 million tons which is substantially higher than the previous

year's 370.5 million tons.

"After achieving self-sufficiency in pulses, our focus is on raising oilseeds output to reduce dependency on edible oil imports. This year, we are likely to cross 34 million tonnes as against last year's fourth advance estimate of 33.4 million tonnes. The production of oilseeds will go up in subsequent years," the official said.

"There has been no impact of pandemic and farmers' agitation in farm activities so far in the country. Farmers in Punjab actively participated and planted

wheat across areas at last year's level," the official said.

The year-on-year record production has resulted in a surge in farm exports, which rose 25% to ₹1.02 lakh crore in the first three quarters of fiscal 2020-21.

The Union Government bought a record 658.61 lakh tons of kharif (monsoon crops) paddy in its ongoing procurement operations, 16.56 per cent more than it did last year, Nearly 95.23 lakh farmers have been paid minimum support prices worth ₹1.24 lakh crore for these purchases, the data show.

# ₹1.15L cr transferred to 10.75 cr farmers under PM-Kisan scheme

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Modi Government on Wednesday said it has transferred over ₹1.15 lakh crore directly to bank accounts of more than 10.75 crore farmers under the PM-KISAN scheme and asked states to ensure that all eligible beneficiaries are covered in this flagship programme.

Addressing a function on the occasion of the second anniversary of the PM-KISAN,

Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar said the Government has enhanced the income of farmers by providing ₹6,000 annually to farmers under this scheme in three equal instalments.

**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR**

**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER MECHANICAL**

**HOSPITAL AND CENTRAL HEATING DIVISION SRINAGAR**

**Telefax :- 0194-2496089, Email Id:- xennmhchdk@yahoo.in**

**(Short-term)**

**e-NIT NO: MHCHD/TS /2020-21/299/e-tendering Dated:-23.02.2021**

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K UT e-tenders are invited from Authorized dealers of approved makes of Split ACs or Registered/ Reputed and experienced firms for the below mentioned work:-

**Name of Work:- Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of Air Conditioning Units for CT Scan Room at Govt. SMHS Hospital, Srinagar.**

**Est. Cost (Rs. in Lacs):- 2.32**

**Cost of T/Doc. (In rupees):- 200**

**Time of completion (in days):- 05**

**AAA/Position on of Funds :- MC/Pln/Mech/Auth/5091-95, Dated: 18-01-2021**

**TS. NO. :- 107 of 02/2021**

1. The Tender document Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website [www.etenders.gov.in](http://www.etenders.gov.in) from 23.02.2021(18.00 hrs).

2. The bidders shall deposit their bids in electronic format on the above web site from 24.02.2021 (10.00hrs) to 03.03.2021 (14.00 hrs) in two (02) cover.

3. The bids uploaded on the website up to due date and time will be opened on 04.03.2021 (14.00 hrs) or any date convenient to the department in the office of Executive Engineer, MHCHD, Srinagar.

**Sd/- Executive Engineer, MHCHD, Srinagar**

No. DIPK-13810/20 Dated:- 24.02.2021

**GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA CORRIGENDUM**

Sr. No.	NAME OF DEPARTMENT	OLD REFERENCE/NET NO.	NATURE OF CORRIGENDUM	WEBSITE OF DEPARTMENT	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	IRRIGATION & W.R. DEPARTMENT HARYANA PANCHSULA	NO 288/A DATED 03.02.2021 & NO 403/A DATED 12.02.2021	DATE OF TENDERS INVITED WERE THIS OFFICE NET NO. 288/A DATED 03.02.2021 AND NO. 403/A DATED 12.02.2021 ARE HEREBY POSTPONED. NOW THE LAST DATE OF SUBMISSION OF ONLINE BIDS IS FIXED UP TO 03.03.2021 UPTO 15.00 HRS. LAST DATE OF SUBMISSION OF PHYSICAL BIDS IS FIXED UP TO 04.03.2021 UPTO 14.00 HRS AND DATE OF OPENING OF TENDERS IS FIXED UP TO 05.03.2021 (15.00 HRS) DUE TO ADMINISTRATIVE REASON. FOR ANY QUERY CONTACT IN THE OFFICE OF UNDERSEEN.	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	0172255466 www.etenders.hry.nic.in
2	IRRIGATION & W.R. DEPARTMENT HARYANA PANCHSULA	288/A DATED 03.02.2021	TENDERS INVITED FOR 3 NO. WORKS I.E. SR. NO. 1 TO 35 WERE THIS OFFICE NET NO. 288/A DATED 03.02.2021. NAME OF WORK SR. NO. 1 & 2 WERE 1 NO. 130 CS PUMP (P-20) WILD MAKE AT PUMP HOUSE IN "C" ROSTER OF "PREPARING OF 1 NO. 130 CS PUMP (P-20) WILD MAKE AT PUMP HOUSE IN "C" ALL OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS SHALL REMAIN UNCHANGED. FOR ANY QUERY CONTACT IN THE OFFICE OF UNDERSEEN.	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	0172255466 www.etenders.hry.nic.in

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : [www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in](http://www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in) or [www.etenders.hry.nic.in](http://www.etenders.hry.nic.in)**

**GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA CORRIGENDUM**

Sr. No.	NAME OF BOARD CORP./AUTH.	OLD REFERENCE/NET NO.	NATURE OF CORRIGENDUM	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH.	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	SHRI HATA NAGDA DEV. SHEDDING BOARD, PANCHSULA	NO 594/SHS/EST/2021 /184 DATED 08.02.2021	E-TENDER HAS BEEN INVITED AND UPLOADED FOR ABOVE MENTIONED SUBJECT ON OUR WEBSITE <a href="http://www.panchsula.org.in">WWW.PANCHSULA</a>		

## 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.

## 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, Venkatesh Reddy, and Madhusudan Reddy, who are partners of Sri Bharamaravasi 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 Bharamaravasi 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. Chandrashekar to form three special teams to nab the culprits. Accordingly, the IGP had formed the teams under the supervision of Chikkaballapur SP Mithun Kumar.

## DADRA NAGAR HAVELI MP'S SUICIDE

# Cong alleges UT Administrator was among officials who harassed Delkar

TR 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 Pratul 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 Waghmare alluded to a video clip released by late Delkar in mid-2020 and the suicide note left by the latter and rooted for thorough investigation into the circumstances leading to the suicide by the sitting MP.

"The tragic end of Mr. Delkar 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 Pratul Patel, who is currently working as the Administrator of Dadra, Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu since 2016," Sawant and Dr. Waghmare 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 a 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 he was not sure to get justice in the Union Territory," Sawant and Dr. Waghmare 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

continuously.

"Delkar was clearly seen targeting the BJP in the video. The words used by him shed light on how he was targeted by the Modi government," the Congress leaders said in their representation to Deshmukh.

It may be recalled that Delkar was found hanging in a hotel in the Marine Drive in south Mumbai on Monday. Fifty-eight-year-old Delkar is suspected to have committed suicide by hanging himself.

The preliminary investigations had suggested Delkar had committed by hanging himself in the hotel room. His body was found in the hotel on Monday. Delkar's body was subsequently taken to JJ Hospital where after a post-mortem, his viscera has been preserved for histopathological examination to ascertain the exact cause of his death. Later, his mortal remains were handed over to his family members on Tuesday for taking to Silvassa, where his last rites were performed later in the evening.

It was further stated that Delkar's body had been handed over to his family, Mumbai's Deputy Commissioner of Police (operations) and police spokesperson S Chaitanya had declined to comment on the investigations. "We cannot say anything at this stage. Investigations are in progress," Chaitanya had said.

## 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.

She 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 Chinnayana, 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 back door, which is 20 metres away 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

## 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 rescued from the scene of crime 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 PCO Act.

IANS

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

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

The 73rd birthday anniversary of former Chief Minister and AIADMK supremo J Jayalalitha 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 assets case, garlanded a picture of Jayalalitha at the former's T Nagar bungalow and briefly spoke to her loyalists, mainly Amma Makal Munnetra Kazhagam (AMMK), a political outfit floated by her nephew TV Dinakaran.

"The true cadre of Amma should come together and with the support from 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 Tamil Nadu Jayalalitha 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 her 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 chauvinist organisation) and P R Pandian a CPI-led-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 his health, his spouse Premalatha who is the treasurer of the DMKD had declared her support for Sasikala.

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

## 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 "dangab" (rioter), a "daitrya" 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 Rupina Narula Banerjee the wife of her nephew and TMC MP Abhishek Banerjee regarding her bank transactions in Thailand. The CBI is poring the multi-crore 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 you is a thief who is called by the media and constructed by coal mafia at Durgapur, their leaders stay in the house of the

Ruiss who have ruined the Duplop 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 "Khele 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 plot 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 Kimbhat Kimakar (weird looking guy) who were peddling all kinds of lies against us to win elections."

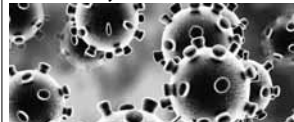
"Let me tell you that they are bigger Tolabai in fact they are Dangabai (rioters) who ignite riots to win elections," Banerjee thundered from the same Duplop Maidan where Modi addressed his rally on Monday and used the Tolabai to back the TMC.

"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 Dakshinshwari Metro Railway, who made Joka Metro, who made Dankuni Metro, who made the 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 morning the situation 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 Vijayanagara (15), Anantapur (11), Srikulakund (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 positive rate fell to 6.44 in the last 24 hours, 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 last 24 hours.

With 32,494 more tests, total Covid tests in Andhra Pradesh crossed 1.38 crore. 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, Kolkapudi Srinivasa Rao, an activist working against the trifurcation of Amaravati, 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.

Those opposing Amaravati's trifurcation are termed as "paid artists" by 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



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 opposes 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 Rajasekharan 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 Rajasekharan.

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

## 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 in the encounter.

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 Murganji 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 Palait 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

## Union MoS Defence Shripad Naik discharged a month after road accident

IANS ■ PANAJI

More than a month after he was hospitalised with serious injuries following a road accident in Karnataka, Union Minister of State for Defence Shripad Naik on Wednesday was discharged from a top Government hospital.

Speaking to reporters, Dr. Shivanand Bhandodkar, dean of the Goa Medical College, the state's apex health facility, said that Naik's wounds had healed well and he may be in a position to attend the budget session of Parliament, which is scheduled to reconvene after the ongoing break, in March.

He has healed well. His thigh bone fracture is also healing. He needs rest, which he can take at home," Bhandodkar told reporters at the time of the Union Minister's discharge.

"We will conduct an x-ray sitting again and after examining his condition, we will consider permitting him (to attend

Parliament). Considering his health, he may be able to attend it, but we will be able to say only after examination of his x-ray then," the top medical official said.

Naik was travelling by car along with his aide in the north Kannada district as part of a private visit when his car overturned near Yallapura on January 12. His wife and an aide died from injuries received during the accident.

Speaking to reporters while escorting Naik out of the hospital, the Union Minister's son Siddesh thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant for their assistance.

"Everyone has helped us a lot. I want to thank the Prime Minister and Defence Minister, other Union Ministers and party officials, Chief Minister and Health Minister and all party workers, because of whose support and blessings we were able to overcome this phase," Siddesh Naik said.

## 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 Dhol 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.

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 much younger girls, was seen 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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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 healthcare 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-1 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 any 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 strengthened 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 inevitable.

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

Delhi to convey the message of peace and democracy more actively. India's COVID-19 vaccine gift to Myanmar is proof of its commitment to peaceful humanitarian causes.

Meanwhile, as an important country in India's East policy, New Delhi needs to look at the Myanmar border with utmost caution. India's challenge will not be limited to tackling an increasing bonhomie between China and the Myanmar Army; the looming political crisis in Bangladesh will double India's Eastern challenge.

The recent exposé — 'All the Prime Ministers Men' by Al Jazeera, revealing an alleged criminal nexus between the Bangladesh Army chief, his brothers and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina-led Bangladesh Nationalist Party — has caused an uproar. While the Bangladesh Government has backed the Army, the alleged claims in the exposé are of grave concerns. Therefore, the Act East policy needs to include emergency strategies of diplomatic, intelligence, security and political nature.

(The author is an ICSSR Doctoral Fellow at the JNU, New Delhi, and Senior Fellow at the AIDIA, Kathmandu. The views expressed are personal.)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### 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 trickled 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 failing for the core competency of the BJP and it is bound to boomering. 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.

Baghwan 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

## 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 home-towns creek. I miss listening to my old-time playlist.

Actor — Ayushman 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

Send your feedback to: [letterstopioneer@gmail.com](mailto:letterstopioneer@gmail.com)



## 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 vicious, there is 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 the 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 extortion (hacking webcams, installing malware 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/tag 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 POC SO 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 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 counterspeech 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.

## POINTCOUNTERPOINT

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

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 reiterated enough confidence to dish out 21 fuel hikes in the



KOTA SRIRAJ

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 initiative 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 leaders 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 subsidies, tax holidays for four-wheeled 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.

# Oil 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 Oil government's "unconstitutional" decision to dissolve the 275-member lower house of Parliament. The court 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 Adviser 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 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 renege 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 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.

# 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.



Prisoners, or AAPP, a Myanmar prisoner of political prisoners. 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 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 P. 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. PTI

# Ghana is first nation 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 6,00,000 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 the United Nations-backed COVAX, an international cooperative programme formed to make sure low- and middle-income countries have fair access to COVID-19 vaccines. AP

# 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." AP

# 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.

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 within the UN system tasked with upholding human rights. PTI

# 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.

# SUSPECTED JEHADI REBELS KILL 10 IN NIGERIA

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

## SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is hereby informed that a female (depicted in the photo), Name: Anupa, Age: 32, Height: 5'3", Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Round, Build: Strong, Wearing: White colour gown and blue colour jacket & green colour sleeping in feet.

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

Phone: 011-24368638, 24368641  
Fax No: 011-24368639  
DP/65/NW/2021

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

## SEARCH FOR MISSING

General Public is hereby informed that a girl named Shahn Parveen D/o Mr. 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 P.S. Subhash Place, Delhi.

The description of missing girl is as under:

Name: Shahn Parveen, Father's Name: Mr. Sharif, Age: 16 years, Height: 4'9", Face: Round, Complexion: Wheatish, Build: Medium, Wearing: Orange Colour Suit, Orange Colour Chunnari, Sandals in feet.

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

Website: <http://cbl.nic.in>  
E-mail: [cic@cbl.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbl.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), Name: Bhagwati, D/o: Bindeshwar Roy, R/o: Village Beharapur, Distt Begusaraj, Bihar, Age: 14 years, has been reported missing/kidnapped from WZ-59, Village Posaingpur, Janakpur, Delhi since 12.02.2021 at 10.00 AM. In this regard a case FIR No. 44/21 vs 363 IPC, dated 12.02.2021, has been registered at P.S. Janak Pur, Delhi.

Her physical description is as under:

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

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

S.H.O  
P.S. Janak Pur, Delhi  
Ph. 011-25551410, 25553166  
DP/344/W/2021.

## SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General public is hereby informed that a lady named Aarti Devi, W/o Ajeet Kumar R/o Gali No. 4, Bhitari Colony, Parnala, Line Par, Bahadur Garh, Haryana has been missing/kidnapped since 02.01.2021 from the area of P.S. Nangoli, Delhi. In this regard, DD No. 83A dated 03.01.2021 has been registered at P.S. Nangoli, 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 sal-salwar and slippers on her feet.

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

E-mail: [cic@cbl.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbl.gov.in)  
Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641  
Fax No: 011-24368639  
DP/65A/OD/2021

P.S. Nangoli, SHO  
VX, H.O. 2006  
Ph. No. 011-25949470, 25947225

## SEARCH FOR MISSING BOYS

General public is hereby informed that two boys 1. Name: Keshav, R/o: Shyam Sunder Rai, R/o: H. No. 49, Gali No. 10, Tiki Kallan Extn., Near Shamshah Ghat, Delhi, Age: 17 years 6 Months, Height: 5', Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Round, Wearing: Black Short-sleeved Blue and Black Shoes in feet. 2. Name: Shivam, R/o: 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.

If any person having any information or clue about this boys kindly inform to the following:

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

P.S. Mundka, Delhi  
Ph: 8586932309  
DP/658/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 contract in the following cases:

CASE DETAILS

ICICI Bank Ltd vs INDEUTEL KOHLI Case No-CS (COMM) No. 669/2019	Vehicle No-DL8CAN5892, Make and Model-HYUNDAI I 20 ELITE MAGNA, Manu Yr-2016
ICICI Bank Ltd vs RAM SEWAK, Case No-CS No.68/2020 (1934719)	Vehicle No-UP14FT77944, Make and Model-CHEVROLET BEAT SP PETROL, Manu Yr-2016
ICICI Bank Ltd vs PUNIT, Case No-CS No.69/2020 (1934719)	Vehicle No-HR55AA8780, 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-DL1238833, Make and Model-CHEVROLET SAIL, 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.47/17 (D No.3180 OF 17)	Vehicle No-UP14FT77944, Make and Model-MARUTI EGS
ICICI Bank Ltd vs SAKSHAM KATHURIA, Case No-CS No. 1791/2018	Vehicle No-UP16DT09933, 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-DL1V2002, Make and Model-TATAACE, Manu Yr-2014, Reserve price of this vehicle is Rs.30,000 and EMD amount is Rs.9000, DD/PO to be made in favour of ICICI Bank Limited payable at Delhi.
ICICI Bank Ltd vs CHAND MOHAMMAD, Case No-CS No. 3587/2017	Vehicle No-DL1V5880, Make and Model-AL DOST, Manu Yr-2015
ICICI Bank Ltd vs AJAY SINGH, Case No-Suit No.912/2017	Vehicle No-DL1VW931, Make and Model-AL DOST, Manu Yr-2015
ICICI Bank Ltd vs NIRAJ KUMAR, Case No-CS (COMM) 1340/2019	Vehicle No-DL8CAGM737, Make and Model: HONDA CITY 1.5 VX MT PETROL, Manu Yr-2016
ICICI Bank Ltd vs NIDHI SHARMA, Case No-CS (Comm) No. 1387/2019	Vehicle No-UP14K49650, Make and Model-DUSTER RXE DCI, 1.65 MT SHARAW, Manu Yr-2018

Auction Date & Time: 05-March-2021, From 11:00 AM To 02:00 PM  
Venue: Godara Yard, Khatwa No:16611, Near Atul Kataria Check, 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 Shivram Automobile

CASE DETAILS

ICICI Bank Ltd vs KRISHAN, PAL, Case No-CS (COMM) 68/20	Vehicle No-UP14H2910, Make and Model-TATA ULTRA 1518, Manu Yr-2019
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Auction Date & Time: 05-March-2021, From 11:00 AM To 02:00 PM  
Venue: Shivram Automobile, Vill-Mamand, Po Maniyar Road Narela, New Delhi, Narela, Delhi, 110040.  
Contact Person - Rajeev Ranjan (8584874809)/Jitendra Kumar (7304914763)

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 participants 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/GS/NFT.

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

## NOTICE TO DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL

It is to inform to the public at large that the absolute owner of Flat no CG-1754, Ground Floor, Vastu Flat, New Delhi is being acquired by the Rehabilitation of Laid Off Employees (RLE) Scheme, Ministry of Labour, Government of India. The said flat is situated at the Residential House of Manoj Kumar Jain, Vrs. Bhansari Ranjan Bhandari, Mrs. Anita Bhandari and Mr. Sanjay Bhandari of Late Lakshmi Lal Jain. (All persons having any claim against me or in respect of the said property or any part thereof, by way of sale, mortgage, hypothecation, charge, etc.) are hereby notified to bring the same in writing to us with supporting document or otherwise having been made known to me by the date of the date named, 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. 5/1, P.O. C-1, Near World Bank Building  
011-43052822, 08810603351

## PUBLIC NOTICE

It is to inform to the public at large that Mr. Bharu Pratap Singh S/o Sh. Jai Kishore who is absolute owner of the Residential House of Land area measuring 25 Sq. Yds., i.e. 26.59 Sq. Mtrs., out of Kh. No. 26, 1st & 2nd floor, Vardana Vihar Kheda Colony, Pargana No. 148, Distt. Sonbhadra, Bihar, is hereby notified to bring the same in writing to us with supporting document or otherwise having been made known to me by the date of the date named, failing which the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned.

Lucern Legal LLP  
269, Rama House, Park Road, South East  
New Delhi-29, Contact #11-24045319

## PUBLIC NOTICE

It is to inform to the public at large that Mr. Bharu Pratap Singh S/o Sh. Jai Kishore who is absolute owner of the Residential House of Land area measuring 25 Sq. Yds., i.e. 26.59 Sq. Mtrs., out of Kh. No. 26, 1st & 2nd floor, Vardana Vihar Kheda Colony, Pargana No. 148, Distt. Sonbhadra, Bihar, is hereby notified to bring the same in writing to us with supporting document or otherwise having been made known to me by the date of the date named, failing which the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned.

Lucern Legal LLP  
269, Rama House, Park Road, South East  
New Delhi-29, Contact #11-24045319

## 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.owsjw.in](http://www.owsjw.in) and may also be available on Stock Exchange website at [www.nse.co.in](http://www.nse.co.in)

By order of the Board,  
For Ojswi Trades Investment and Finance Limited  
Sd/-  
Place: New Delhi  
Date: February 24, 2021  
Sandeep Garg  
Director

## SEARCH OF MISSING

General public is hereby informed that one male (depicted in the photo), Name: Sanjeev Sikarwar, S/o: Sachan Singh Sikarwar, R/o: H.No. 401-A, Police Housing Complex, Sector 11, Rohini, Delhi, Age: 44 years, has been missing since 17.02.2021 from the area of P.S. Model Town, Delhi. In this regard a case DD No. 04-A, Dated 19.02.2021, has been lodged at P.S. Model Town, Delhi. His physical description is as under:

Height: 5'8", Feet: Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Round, Build: Normal, Clothing: Light Pink Colour Jacket, Light Green Colour Trousers and Formal Leather Shoes in his feet.

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

S.H.O  
P.S. Model Town, Delhi  
Ph. 011-27456072  
DP/680/NW/2021.

## BEFORE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL - II, DELHI.

IT IS FOR DEBTS TAKING BUILDING PARLIAMENT STREET NEW DELHI - 110001  
OA No. 408/19 DATE: 20.02.2021  
BANK OF INDIA APPLICANT

SIKANDARANSARI VERSUS RESPONDENT  
SIKANDARANSARI 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-42 PARTAP PARGAZIABAD UP  
Whereas the above named applicant (s) has/have instituted a case for recovery of Rs. 26,81,551/- (RUPEES TWENTY SIX LAKH FIFTY ONE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED AND FIFTY ONE ONLY) against you and whereas 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 DR/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 also 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.

## 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 0.07 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, ICICI Bank, Bajaj Finance and SBI.

On the other hand, Powergrid, Dr Reddy's, JS 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 1:40 hrs due to connectivity issues.

## 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, 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.

"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.

## 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 to 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, Sanjya 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, Sanjya India has reaffirmed its commitment to the 'vocal for local' initiative," said Sanjya Saxena, vice president & business head, heavy equipment, Sanjya Heavy Industry India Pvt Ltd.

### SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General Public is hereby informed that one girl **Name: Anjali, D/o: Satyender, R/o: A-371, Street No. 8, Indira Enclave-II, Kirti, 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 is as under: Age: 17 years, Sex: Female, Height: 5'3", Face: Round, Hair: Black, Complexion: Wheatish, Built: Strong, Wearing: Pink colour kurta, 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 the following.

Website: <http://cbl.nic.in>  
E-mail id: [cic@cbl.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbl.gov.in)  
S/O: P.S. Prem Nagar, Delhi  
Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641  
Fax No: 011-24368639  
DP/690/RD/2021

### SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General public is hereby informed that one female named **Bhagwati Devi** with son **Asm (age 11 months) W/o Mangal Singh R/o 203, Gali No. 2, Near Shri Mandir, Ranoahla, Delhi** has been missing/ kidnapped from the area of P.S. Ranoahla, Delhi since 23.01.2021. In this regard, a case **DD No. 76-A Dated 27.01.2021** has been registered at P.S. Ranoahla, Delhi. The description of the missing female is as under.

Age: 23 Years, Complexion: Fair, Height: 5', Face: Round, Wearing: Pink colour saree 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. Ranoahla, New Delhi at following Tel No./e-mail: [cic@cbl.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbl.gov.in) and Website: <http://cbl.nic.in>, providing clue about the missing girl.

Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641  
Fax No: 011-24368639  
S/O: P.S. Ranoahla, 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, Maru Yr- 2015	1,00,000/-	10,000/-
ICICI Bank Ltd Vs Lalit Kumar, Case No- CM (M)- 536/2020 & CM Appt. 2743/2020	Vehicle No- UP14C04738, Make and Model- MARUTI ALTO 200 LXI CNG, Maru Yr- 2014	50,000/-	5,000/-
ICICI Bank Ltd Vs Anshu Raj, Case No- CM (M)- 573/2020 & CM Appt. 2527/2020	Vehicle No- UP14E7203, Make and Model- CHEVROLET ENJOY LT, Maru Yr- 2015	60,000/-	6,000/-
ICICI Bank Ltd Vs Mohd Adil, Case No- CM (M)- 589/2020 & CM Appt. 3034/2020	Vehicle No- UP14C5840, Make and Model- MARUTI SWIFT DZIRE, Maru Yr- 2015	1,80,000/-	18,000/-
ICICI Bank Ltd Vs Menkar Singh, Case No- CM (M)- 549/2020 & CM Appt. 2785/2020	Vehicle No- UP16D74118, Make and Model- CHEVROLET ENJOY, Maru Yr- 2015	1,60,000/-	16,000/-
ICICI Bank Ltd Vs Subodh Kumar, Case No- CM (M)- 602/2020 & CM Appt. 3065/2020	Vehicle No- UP14E7208, Make and Model- RENAULT LOGGY RXE, Maru Yr- 2016	1,80,000/-	18,000/-

Auction Date: 06-March-2021  
Venue: Godara Yard, Kheawat No. 166/1, Near Atal Katania Chock, Behind Gyan Devi School, Sec-17, Sakinaka, Gurugram-120022.  
Contact Person - Rajeev Ranjan (8564874809)/Jiendra Kumar (7304914763)  
EMD: DD/PO of EMD amount to be favour of ICICI Bank Limited, payable at Delhi.  
Contact Person - Rajeev Ranjan (8564874809)/Jiendra 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 parties/ bidders 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 to 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 date of the auction.  
In case of failure to pay the sale amount within 5 days from the date of the auction, the 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**  
संरक्षण कौशल एवं आजीविका विकास निगम  
A Government of Rajasthan Enterprise  
EMI Campus, J.A.A. Jhansi Institutional Area, Jaipur 302004 (Rajasthan)  
Ph: 0141-2756171, 258248, Fax: 0141-258248, www.rajasthanlivelihoods.org

**Notice Inviting Request for Proposals**  
Managing Director, Rajasthan Skill & 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 Skill & Livelihoods Development Corporation (RSLDC) for effective Implementation and Monitoring of RSLDC-SKT Scheme in Rajasthan through employment of Human Resources at State as well as District & Block Levels.  
The Proposal has to be submitted through online mode on <https://procure.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. SL0221RFP0001  
(Bids Submitted 02/03/2021)

**DELHI JAL BOARD**  
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT 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 (20/20/21)

S. No.	Description	Amount put to tender	Tender Fee	Estimate Money	Date of release of tender to start procurement solution	Last date for tender to start procurement solution
1	Improvement of water supply system by Replacement of old damaged water line from Meter Panel no 750 to 760 on Nangloi Road in Uttam Nagar AC-32 under EE (West II)	Rs. 29,42,641/-	Rs.500/-	NIL (Declaring to be Bids)	23.02.2021 12.03.2021 I.D. No 2021/01	3:00 PM

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

ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER)  
ADVT. No. A.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 named **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 child kept in CHG-III, Quarantine Center, Nari Niketan Building, Unkl, Nirmal Chhabra, 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://cbl.nic.in>  
E-mail: [cic@cbl.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbl.gov.in)  
S/O: P.S. Pahar Ganj, Delhi  
Ph: 011-24368639  
Fax No: 011-24368638, 24368641  
DP/663/CD/2021

**SEARCH FOR MISSING**

General public is hereby informed that this person (depicted in the photo) named: **Vikash S/o Moti Lal Maharaj R/o-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 P.S. 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:-

Website: <http://cbl.nic.in>  
E-mail: [cic@cbl.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbl.gov.in)  
S/O: P.S. Mahendra Park, Delhi  
Ph: 011-27832501  
Tel. No: 011-24368638/24368641  
Fax No: 011-24368639  
DP/677/NW/2021

**SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED**

General Public is hereby informed that one child/ boy named **Raj, S/o Sh. Muram, 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 Lindear 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. 18217 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.

Website: <http://cbl.nic.in>  
E-mail: [cic@cbl.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbl.gov.in)  
S/O: P.S. Barakhamba Road, New Delhi  
Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641  
Fax: 011-24368639  
DP/228/ND/2021

**SEARCH FOR MISSING WOMAN**

General public is hereby informed that this woman named **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.

Website: <http://cbl.nic.in>  
E-mail: [cic@cbl.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbl.gov.in)  
S/O: P.S. Begumpur, Delhi  
Ph: 011-24368639  
Fax: 24368639  
Tel.: 24368638/24368641  
25951432

**APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION**

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified person **Name: Khem Chand S/o Unknown R/o Old Delhi Railway Station, Delhi Age : about 50 years, Height : 5'8", 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 LUNP 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:-

Website: <http://cbl.nic.in>  
E-mail: [cic@cbl.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbl.gov.in)  
S/O: P.S. Old Delhi Railway Station, Delhi  
Ph: 011-23014046  
Tel. No: 011-23015218  
DP/68/RD/2021

**SEARCH FOR MISSING FEMALE**

General public is hereby informed that one female named **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 Build, Round face, wearing red colour suit-saree 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.

Website: <http://cbl.nic.in>  
E-mail: [cic@cbl.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbl.gov.in)  
S/O: P.S. Aman Vihar, Delhi  
Ph: 011-27581612, 27581223  
DP/688/RD/2021

**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 UDB 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.

Website: <http://cbl.nic.in>  
E-mail: [cic@cbl.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbl.gov.in)  
S/O: P.S. Prem Nagar, Delhi  
Ph: 011-24368639  
Fax: 011-24368639  
DP/696/RD/2021

**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 Qureshi Meat Shop, Sudarshan Park, Basai Dara Pura, Delhi** has 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/WO/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 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 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 aids

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 your 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 wasn't 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 'accredibly 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 as 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 Ritesh 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 skin 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 precaution.

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 travelling 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.

## TREND BLAZER



## AMITABH HINTS AT NEW BEGINNINGS

Hollywood 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 *Chhre*, *Junnd* and *Brahmastra*, and wrote about following up these projects with something new. He tweeted in Hindi: "Chhre Junnd Brahmastra hai kuch aane wale pal, jald shuru honghe 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 GDP.
- 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 increasing 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 Jaipur.

### Road Safety:

- New Jeevan Rakshak Yojana.
- Integrated Traffic



## ON TRACK

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

**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, 782 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.

■ 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 Lal, Kailash Trivedi, Kiran Maheshwari and Gajendra Singh Shaktawat.  
■ Rajiv Gandhi Centre of Advanced 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 Sirahi.  
■ 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 Durgapur and Handball academy at Jaisalmer.

### Agriculture and Animal Husbandry:

- Agriculture Budget from next year.
- Mini food 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 Udyog Mandis.
- Kisan Complex at Jodhpur, ₹20 cr.
- Three new agriculture colleges at Durgapur, Hindaoli, Hanumanagarh.

### 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 ekalaya 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.

### 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 JMM, ₹4,700 cr.
- Starting of six new projects worth ₹2285 cr under JMM.
- Drinking water connections to 20 lac households under JMM.
- DPR for 22 projects under JMM.
- 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 Bird Habitat Conservation Centre.
- Wildlife Management Training Centre at Talchappar Sanctuary, Churu.
- Kailash Sankhla Smriti Van at Jodhpur.

### Tourism, Art and Culture:

- Provision of ₹500 cr in Tourism Development Fund.
- Shekhawati Tourist Circuit.
- Godawari Tourist Circuit.
- Renovation of seven RTDC midways, ₹100 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 Sukesh 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 IFT, 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 aluminium but surrenders competitiveness of its downstream sector by paying higher for primary aluminium (imported or domestically bought) due to premium induced by high tariffs on import to fulfill its requirements, states ASMA.

Located at the Malangoli Hills in Joda Block, Pichaphokri 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 Thakur. Under the project, water sourced from a natural spring is led 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) programme which is running 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 Jaiswal informed that a team of lighting department headed by Additional Municipal Commissioner Shiv Pujan Yadav has been formed in this regard. It is also been given to manage proper lighting in the parks and decorate the electrical poles. The city commissioner informed that Yogesh Shrivastava, 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 councillors of various colonies is also being taken.

— PNS (Ashok Nirwan)

## 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 benefitting 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 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 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, 2021. 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 ESIC 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 ESIC 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 ESIC 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 ESIC 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, Gol & Director General, ESIC, members of ESIC Corporation, Sandhya Shukla, Financial Commissioner, ESIC, Garima Bhagat, CVO, ESIC and many others.

## Create a greener world



Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited (Tata Power-DDL), a utility supplying electricity in North Delhi, organised its annual flagship event — *Urja Mela* to sensitise school children on the importance of environment conservation, climate change, air pollution and promotion of renewable energy.

The broader aim of the event is to raise environmental awareness and inculcate a sense of responsibility amongst the youngsters.

The event witnessed participation from more than 75 Delhi schools, both government and private. It was conducted under strict COVID-19 safety guidelines.

The students shared information about the benefits of environment conservation, safety, air pollution and climate change through posters and insightful science models, slogans, drawings etc. Over 50 prizes were also given.

The participating schools are a part of Tata Power-DDL's Club Energi program that sen-

sitises school children for bringing societal and behavioural change in energy consumption and conservation of natural resources. The club educates and creates awareness on related topics in a unique way, through its company's Brand Mascot - *Roshni*.

Students present at the event instantly connected with *Roshni* and participated in the pledge of becoming an environment champion. The kids also sported the its badge and had a photo-on with it.

Addressing the students and teachers, Ganesh Srinivasan, CEO, Tata Power-DDL said, "It is gratifying to witness bright young minds showing their talent, enthusiasm, unique ideas and knowledge towards creating a better environment. They are the torch-bearers of the future. With the world now dynamically changing, it has become imperative to shift our focus extensively towards clean energy spectrum and renewable resources. That is the need of the hour."

Dr. Jyoti 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 Zakshira flyover. On the occasion Standing Committee Chairman, Chhail Bihari Goswami, Leader of the House, Yogesh Verma, former Chairman Standing Committee, Veena Virmani, Councillors, Vipin Malhotra, Sunita Mishra, Former MLA, Subhash Sachdeva, Former Councillor, Bharat

Bhusan Madan and other dignitaries were present.

On the occasion, Gupta said that in the advent of the 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.



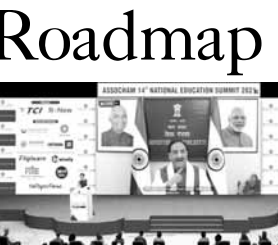
Prakash said that this is first of its kind semi-automated waste management system in Delhi. He said that this centre would be operated by Chintan (NGO). Material Recovery Facility center has state of the art machineries which can process upto eight tons of waste per day. This socio-technological model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

## ENVIRONMENT WARRIORS

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 pandemic on 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.

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



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 Sahasrabudhe, 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, educationalists, principals, owners, private institutions, everyone has to contribute only then can we build a nation which we can call *Aatma Nirbhar Bharat*, and the developed India as a *viksit and shikshit bharat*.

# Patel dominates at 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 hauled 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 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 in the last over of the day.

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 the 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 the hosts.



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 Gettishwar 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 detectable 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 capped 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 Tendent 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 Shekhar Gopal ranking the duo in the top two of the batting order.

In another Group E match, Kerala defeated Railways by seven runs in a high-scoring thriller at the Just K. Lakshmi 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 107; 6x4s, 4x6s) before Sanju Samson took charge with an explosive 61 to power Kerala to a massive 351 for 6.



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

Samson, who was appointed Rajasthan Royals skipper after they parted ways with Steve Smith, dlobbered six fours and four sixes in his 29-ball knock, while Vathsall 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 Lalbahai 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 Babushah 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. Kul picked up four wickets while left-arm medium-pace Barinder Sran took three as Andhra were bowled out for 175 in 39 overs.

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**

# 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 Rijji 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 performed 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.

Shah said that a complex spread over an area of 17 acres of area with world-class facilities



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

# Ahmedabad will emerge as India's sports city: Amit Shah

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday said that Ahmedabad in Gujarat would emerge as the country's 'sports city' as world-class facilities for all kinds of games are being put in place here.

Shah made the statement after President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated the Narendra Modi stadium.

The President also performed the ground-breaking ceremony of 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.

Shah said that a complex spread over an area of 17 acres of area with world-class facilities



for different sports will also come up in Nanarupa area of Ahmedabad.

"The Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Sports Enclave, the Narendra Modi stadium and the sports complex at Nanarupa will offer complete facilities within the same city at the same place for any sports played internationally. With all these facilities, Ahmedabad will

be in a position to get ready within six months to host any international sports event," Shah said.

The stadium said that the sports enclave will be available to play all the games that are played in Olympics, and it will have stadiums for football and hockey as well as an indoor stadium.

"Such sports facilities are not available in any other city in India at present. Ahmedabad, which Modi transformed into India's heritage city, is now ready to become the country's sports city...Ahmedabad will be considered as India's sports city."

With such sports infrastructure, Ahmedabad will be known as India's sports city, which is the dream that Prime Minister Narendra Modi saw when he was the chief minister of Gujarat," Shah said.



India's veteran test bowler Ishant Sharma on Wednesday was awarded 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

# Woods seriously injured in roll-over car crash



Workers move a vehicle after a rollover accident involving golfer Tiger Woods on Tuesday in Rancho Palos Verdes, a suburb of Los Angeles

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.

There was "no evidence of impairment at this time," including any influence of narcotics, medication or alcohol, said Villanueva, adding that the crash remained "subject to investigation."

He added that no blood was drawn at the scene of the crash because the sheriff's office does not have that capability.

Woods, one of the most successful golfers of all time, has won 15 major golf championships.

He recently underwent his fifth back surgery, and said he was uncertain if he will be able to play at the upcoming Masters, which he last won in 2019.

Woods, 45, was in the area because the sheriff's office was invited to the tournament at the Riviera Country Club, and was driving a courtesy car on the morning of the crash.

# 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 final 16.

Giroud's acrobatic strike was initially ruled out for offside 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



Olivier Giroud scores for Chelsea against Atletico Madrid in CL game. UEFA/Twitter

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 sides 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.

# Bayern rout Lazio

AFP ■ ROME

Holders Bayern Munich brushed off their recent poor domestic form by throwing down a Champions League marker with an emphatic 4-1 win at Lazio in Tuesday's last-16 first leg to take a "huge step" towards the quarter-finals.

Robert Lewandowski gave Bayern an early lead before 17-year-old Jamal Musiala scored his first Champions League goal on only his fourth appearance in Europe.

Lewandowski's strike was his 72nd Champions League goal, taking him solo third on the all-time list ahead of Real Madrid great Raul.

While Stuttgart-born Musiala, who

turns 18 on Friday, is now the youngest player in Champions League history.

A Leroy Sane strike gave Bayern a three-goal half-time cushion at the Stadio Olimpico before Francesco Acerbi scored an own goal just after the break.

"We are a huge step closer to the quarter-finals," Bayern coach Hansi Flick told Sky.

Joaquin Correa pulled a goal back early in the second half to give the scoreline some respectability for Lazio.

Simone Inzaghi's Lazio need a near-miracle in the return game in Munich on March 17 to reach the last eight.

Bayern coach Hansi Flick told Sky.