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RAIPUR, FRIDAY JANUARY 15, 2021; PAGES 12 ₹3



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PREITY HINTS  
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## Vaccine makers liable for damages

No indemnity for manufactures in Govt's vaccine purchase deals

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government has refused to give in to the request of Indian companies, particularly the Serum Institute of India (SII) which had publicly sought protection against all lawsuits for vaccines in case of any report of health risk or complication following inoculation of jab against Covid-19.

The purchase order executed by the Government with the vaccine makers stipulates that the companies will have to inform the Government authorities immediately in case of reports of any health risks or complications arising from the vaccine. It reads "Company shall be liable for all adversities as per CDSCO/ Drugs and Cosmetics Act/DCGI policy/approval".

Last month, Adar Poonawalla, CEO of SII whose Covishield vaccine has been given emergency use authorisation (EUA), had said that manufacturers needed protection against all lawsuits for vaccines, especially during the pandemic. Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech also has been given EUA to supply Covaxin which initially the Government had said was being kept as a "backup plan".



Medics during the launch of a first-of-its-kind Splicehealth Genome Sequencing Laboratory for all positive samples from international travellers at the airport in New Delhi on Thursday

PTI

Vaccine makers need to be protected against liability for serious adverse reactions to their shots during a pandemic scenario, Poonawalla had said. The Pune-headquartered company head during a virtual panel discussion on the challenges to vaccine development last month had also shared that he planned to propose this to the Government.

This is because such issues could potentially increase fear of getting vaccinated and also works to "bankrupt" or "distract" the companies making them, according to him.

"We need to have the Government indemnify manufacturers, especially vaccine manufacturers, against all lawsuits. In fact, COVAX and other countries have already started talking about that," he said during Carnegie India's Global Technology Summit.

On Thursday too at an event, Poonawalla asserted that the lawsuit against the firms will hit the vaccine sup-

ply.

However, the Government seems to not be keen to take up their request. "Indian vaccine makers will be held liable for any complications or adverse effects that arise from the administration of their jabs. The Government has not accepted their demand that they be indemnified against mishaps," said sources in the Union Health Ministry.

"The Government can act: the US, for example, has in fact invoked a law, to say that during a pandemic — and this is especially important only during a pandemic — to indemnify vaccine manufacturers against lawsuits for severe adverse effects or any other frivolous claims which may come about. Because, that adds to the fear and also will bankrupt vaccine manufacturers or distract them if they have to just all day just fight lawsuits and explain to the media what is happening," Poonawalla had said.

## Exercise, enough sleep must for vaccine efficacy: Experts

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Depression, stress and loneliness can weaken the body's immune system, and lower the effectiveness of certain vaccines, like those against the Covid-19, scientists have said and suggested simple interventions, including exercise and getting a good night's sleep in the 24 hours before vaccination to maximise the jabs' initial effectiveness.

The researchers in their report accepted for publication in the journal Perspectives on Psychological Science noted that even though rigorous testing has shown that the Covid-19 vaccines approved for dis-

tribution in the US are highly effective at producing a robust immune response, not everyone will immediately gain their full benefit.

Environmental factors, as well as an individual's genetics and physical and mental health, can weaken the body's immune system, slowing the response to a vaccine, they said.

"In addition to the physical toll of Covid-19, the pandemic has an equally troubling mental health component, causing anxiety and depression, among many other related problems," said Annelise Madison, a researcher at the Ohio State University in the

United States.

"Emotional stressors like these can affect a person's immune system, impairing their ability to ward off infections," said Madison, lead author on the paper.

The report sheds light on vaccine efficacy and how health behaviours and emotional stressors can alter the body's ability to develop an immune response.

Vaccines work by challenging the immune system. Within hours of a vaccination, there is an innate, general immune response on the cellular level as the body begins to recognise a potential biological threat.

## BKU president recuses self from SC's farm panel



Farmers stage a protest against Centre's farm reform laws at Ghazipur border in New Delhi on Thursday

PTI

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After farmers' unions raised doubts over the composition of the committee by the Supreme Court, insisting that its members have been in favour of the three laws in the past, Bharatiya Kisan Union president and former MP Bhupinder Singh Mann recused himself from the SC-appointed committee saying he doesn't wish to "compromise farmers' interests".

According to sources, the SC-appointed committee members were scheduled to meet on Zoom on Thursday evening. The matter will now go back to the court for further orders.

"I am recusing myself from the committee and I will

always stand with my farmers and Punjab," Mann said in an unsigned statement tweeted by the BKU.

While staying the implementation of the three contentious farm laws until further orders, the Supreme Court appointed a four-member committee to resolve the deadlock.

The committee comprised Anil Ghanwat, president of Shetkari Sangathan, Pramod Kumar Joshi, director for South Asia, International Food Policy Research Institute, and agriculture economist Ashok Gulati, apart from Mann.

Mann was one of the few farm union leaders to have come out in support of the Centre's new farm laws.

## Trump makes history, 1st US Prez to be impeached twice

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Donald Trump became the first president in US history to be impeached twice when 10 of his fellow Republican Congressmen joined Democrats in the House of Representatives to charge him with inciting an unprecedented insurrection at the US Capitol last week.

In a bipartisan vote, the Democratic-controlled House on Wednesday impeached Trump by 232 to 197 votes, exactly one week after pro-Trump rioters forced lawmakers to flee from the very chamber in which they cast ballots during the fourth presidential impeachment in US history.

Ten Republicans, including the House's No. 3 Republican, Liz Cheney, joined all Democrats to impeach 74-year-old Trump for "incitement of insurrection" for his actions on January 6, when he delivered a speech inciting his supporters to storm the US Capitol.

The violence temporarily halted the counting of Electoral College votes and resulted in



House Speaker Nancy Pelosi displays the signed article of impeachment against President Donald Trump in an engrossment ceremony before transmission to the Senate for trial on Capitol Hill in Washington on Wednesday

AP

the deaths of five individuals, including a police officer.

Trump will now face a trial in the Senate, where if convicted he could face being barred from ever holding office again. The Senate is adjourned till January 19, a day before the inauguration of President-elect Joe Biden as the 46th President of the United States.

All four Indian-American Democratic House members — Ami Bera, Ro Khanna, Raja Krishnamoorthi and Pramila Jayapal — voted in favour of the impeachment.

The House went ahead with the move after Vice President Mike Pence on Tuesday refused to invoke the 25th Amendment to remove Trump from office.

## Ban on sale, storage of poultry lifted in Delhi as test for bird flu -ve

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday directed the authorities to open the Ghazipur poultry market after all 100 samples collected from there tested negative for bird flu.

"Samples taken from poultry markets have tested negative with respect to bird flu. Have directed to open the poultry market & withdraw the orders to restrict trade & import of chicken stocks," he tweeted.

Meanwhile, municipal corporations in Delhi also withdrew the ban imposed on meat shops, meat processing units and any other places of poultry products.

North Delhi Mayor Jai Prakash said the ban on sale, purchase, processing and packaging of poultry meat and products, including serving of cooked or half cooked poultry products, in restaurants and hotels has been withdrawn

with immediate effect.

"The decision was taken after a discussion with Union Minister of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries Giriraj Singh which was also attended by Deputy Chief Minister of Delhi Manish Sisodia," he said.

South Delhi Municipal Corporation too withdrew its order to prohibit keeping live poultry birds, sale and purchase of poultry meat at shops and in restaurants and running processing and packaging units anywhere in the jurisdiction of the civic body from immediate effect.

Mayor of East Delhi Nirmal Jain said an order has been issued to lift the ban on poultry products after samples tested negative for bird flu.

Earlier in the day, a senior official of the Delhi Animal Husbandry unit said there is no spread of bird flu among chickens in Delhi as all the 100 samples taken from Asia's largest poultry market in Ghazipur have tested negative.

## Centre favours industrialists, should withdraw farm laws: Baghel

STAFF REPORTER ■ WARDHA

Accusing the Central Government of favouring big industrialists, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Thursday asked it to withdraw the three agricultural laws which have forced farmers to camp on Delhi's borders in protest.

The Centre has been indulging in the sale of airports, ports, railway stations and more while others are eyeing the land of farmers, Baghel told the media during a visit to Mahatma Gandhi's ashram here in Maharashtra.

The Modi Government favours the major industrialists. Even the Supreme Court has intervened. Now the Centre should withdraw the three farm laws, he added.

The Chief Minister also underlined that there is no alternative to non-violence and that the path taken by Gandhiji is still relevant.

Due to continuous violence, people are weary of it and the Naxalites' appeal is shrinking, he said, adding that his Government is working



towards winning the confidence of the poor people.

He said the first step was to provide them forest land rights, providing ₹4,500 per standard sack for tendu leaves — the highest in the country, procurement of minor forest products as well as developmental works based on their needs.

"Gandhiji had visited Chhattisgarh two times, first during the Kandel Satyagraha," Baghel said, adding that his elder family members were

freedom fighters and played a key role in the Sardovada movement.

On Gandhiji's concept of a village, he said the Chhattisgarh government is implementing the Suraji Gaon scheme setting up 'Gauthans' while Women Self-Help Groups were involved in economic activities. The State is buying cow dung at ₹2 per kg and converting it into vermicompost to promote organic farming. All these help the villages to achieve self-reliance.

## In a first in over 50 yrs, R-Day to be celebrated without a chief guest

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

There will be no chief guest this year at the Republic Day parade at the Rajpath. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson was earlier supposed to be the main guest but had to withdraw later due to emergency situation created by the new strain of corona in his country.

Incidentally, it will be the first time since 1966 that the Republic Day parade will have no chief guest. As it is, the celebrations this year will be on a subdued note due to the pandemic. The parade route is shortened and will now end at the National Stadium instead of the Red Fort in previous years.

Moreover, there will be restrictions on number of spectators desirous to see the parade

at the Rajpath and not more than 25,000 people will be able to attend it. In previous years, more than one lakh people used to throng the venue besides scores of them lining on each side of the parade route.

Addressing a Press conference, the External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said due to the situation arising out of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Government has decided that this year there will not be any foreign head of State or Government as the chief guest for India's Republic Day event.

The last time the parade did not have a chief guest was in 1966 when Indira Gandhi was sworn in as the Prime Minister on January 24 after the demise of Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri on January 11.

## World's oldest known cave art is 45,500 yrs old

New Delhi: Archaeologists have discovered the world's oldest known cave art — a life-sized picture of a wild pig that was painted at least 45,500 years ago in Indonesia. The cave painting uncovered in South Sulawesi consists of a figurative depiction of a warty pig, a wild boar that is endemic to this Indonesian island.

The finding, published on Wednesday in the journal Science Advances, also represents some of the earliest archaeological evidence for modern humans in the region.

"The Sulawesi warty pig painting we found in the limestone cave of Leang Tedongge is now the earliest known representational work of art in the world, as far as we are aware. The cave is in a valley that is enclosed by steep limestone cliffs, and is only accessible by a narrow cave passage in the dry season, as the valley floor is completely flooded in the wet season," said Professor Adam Brumm from Griffith



University in Australia.

He noted that the isolated Bugis community living in this hidden valley claim it had never before been visited by Westerners.

The researchers noted that the Sulawesi warty pig painting, dated to at least 45,500 years ago, is part of a rock art panel located above a high ledge along the rear wall of Leang Tedongge.

"It shows a pig with a short crest of upright hairs and a pair of horn-like facial warts in

front of the eyes, a characteristic feature of adult male Sulawesi warty pigs," Brumm said.

"Painted using red ochre pigment, the pig appears to be observing a fight or social interaction between two other warty pigs," he added.

The previously oldest dated rock art 'scene' at least 43,900 years old, was a depiction of hybrid human-animal beings hunting Sulawesi warty pigs and dwarf bovids.

It was discovered by the

same research team at a nearby limestone cave site.

Basran Burhan, an Indonesian archaeologist and Griffith University PhD student, who led the survey, said that humans have hunted Sulawesi warty pigs for tens of thousands of years.

"These pigs were the most commonly portrayed animal in the ice age rock art of the island, suggesting they have long been valued both as food and a focus of creative thinking and artistic expression," Burhan added.

The team sampled the art for Uranium-series dating, a technique to determine the age of calcium carbonate materials.

"Rock art produced in limestone caves can sometimes be dated using Uranium-series analysis of calcium carbonate deposits ('cave popcorn') that form naturally on the cave wall surface used as a 'canvas' for the art," said Professor Maxime Aubert from Griffith

University.

It was this mineral deposit that, after careful removal by Aubert, yielded an age of 45,500 years, indicating that the rock art scene had been painted sometime prior to this. A second Sulawesi warty pig image, from Leang Balangajia, another cave in the region, was dated to 32,000 years ago.

The scientists have now dated multiple examples of early rock art in Sulawesi, including depictions of animals and narrative scenes that are outstanding both for the quality of their execution and rarity worldwide.

"We have found and documented many rock art images in Sulawesi that still await scientific dating," said study co-author Adhi Agus Oktaviana, a researcher from Indonesia's leading archaeological research centre ARKENAS.

"We expect the early rock art of this island to yield even more significant discoveries," Oktaviana added.

## CAPSULE

### DELHI'S AIR QUALITY TURNS 'SEVERE'

New Delhi: Delhi's air quality turned "severe" on Thursday due to the prevailing "extremely unfavourable" conditions for dispersion of pollutants, Government agencies said.

### 41 WB MLAS READY TO JOIN BJP: VIJAYWARGIYA

Indore: BJP general secretary Kailash Vijaywargiya claimed on Thursday that he has a list of 41 MLAs "who support" the Mamata Banerjee Government in West Bengal but are ready to join the BJP.

### DEVOTEES TAKE DIP IN GANGA ON SANKRANTI

Hardwar: Lakhs of devotees from different parts of the country took a holy dip in the Ganga at Har ki Pauri and other ghats here on Thursday on the occasion of Makar Sankranti.



PTI



# Nothing short of repeal of farm laws will resolve crisis: Pb Govt

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

The Punjab Government led by Capt Amarinder Singh on Thursday made it clear that nothing short of repeal of the Centre's black Farm Laws, which it described as anti-farmers, anti-nation and anti-food security, would resolve the present crisis.

The Central Government is out of touch with the ground realities, Capt Amarinder said at a meeting of the State Cabinet, whose members declared unequivocally that repeal of the Farm Laws was the only way out of the current imbroglio. The Council of



Ministers demanded that the Centre make MSP a statutory right of the farmers, who had been getting extremely low prices for their produce for the past several days despite being

responsible for feeding the nation. At the start of the meeting, the Council of Ministers observed a 2-minutes silence in memory of farmers who have

died during the agitation. An estimated 78 farmers have so far lost their lives. Stressing the need for an early resolution to the agitation to prevent further loss of life, the Cabinet point-

ed out that the matter has already been debated and discussed in eight rounds of negotiations held between the farmers and the Government of India. Pointing out that even the Supreme Court had acknowledged the concerns of the protesting farmers, and had recognised their pain and anguish, the Council of Ministers said the Government of India should not stand on prestige and ego in this matter, which, if unresolved, could lead to devastating repercussions for the country for decades to come. If the Centre can make sweeping amendments to the laws then this

adamancy about not revoking the legislations is inexplicable, said the ministers, joined by Punjab Congress president Sunil Jakhar.

In a formal resolution, the Cabinet categorically reiterated its commitment to the Resolutions passed by the Punjab Vidhan Sabha on August 28, 2020 and October 20, 2020, stressing that all the genuine demands of the farmers must be accepted. Urging the Government of India to "repeal the Farm Laws as Agriculture is a State Subject under the Constitution of India, and to make MSP a statutory right." It welcomed

the Supreme Court order staying the central legislations as acknowledgement of the concerns of the farmers of Punjab who are protesting against the Farm Laws, and recognition of their pain and anguish.

"There is need for broad-based dialogue and proper consultation with all stakeholders as these legislation's impact the future of millions of farmers across the country, and all genuine demands of the farmers must be accepted," said the resolution.

The Council of Ministers, after detailed discussion, took note of the Supreme Court order of 12th January 2021

staying the implementation of three farm laws namely, The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act and The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act. It also appreciated the peaceful protest by the farmers, which has also been taken note of by the Supreme Court of India, in keeping with the best of the democratic practices. The Cabinet meeting had been convened by the CM with the agenda of discussing the issue in the light of the SC orders.

## HARYANA PARIVAR PEHCHAN PATRA REGISTRATION

### Officers directed to ensure integration by Jan 26

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

All the nodal officers of Antyodaya Saral portal in Haryana have been asked to ensure integration of Parivar Pehchan Patra (PPP) by January 26, Project Director, Chief Minister's Good Governance Associates Programme, Rakesh Gupta said on Thursday.

Chairing a review meeting of the progress of all Departments in the Antyodaya Saral Project, Gupta said Antyodaya Saral platform has been developed with the vision to deliver all Government to Citizen (G2C) services and schemes on a single integrated

platform in a time bound and efficient manner.

Addressing the meeting, Gupta lauded the efforts of the team for working continuously so as to ensure seamless integration of all the government schemes and making it a one-stop digital platform for citizen services across the state.

He congratulated the nodal officers of all the Departments on receiving the Platinum Award under the category 'Excellence in Digital Governance - State/UT', Digital India Awards 2020, for Antyodaya Saral Portal recently where Haryana had emerged as a pioneer.

The award was presented

on December 30, 2020 by the President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind in the presence of Minister of Information Technology, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad. Antodaya Saral (<https://saralharyana.gov.in>) was envisioned by the Chief Minister, Shri. Manohar Lal in 2017 to build a citizen-centric service delivery system and to bring transparency by enabling citizens to monitor their application status.

While congratulating the officers he lauded the conjoint efforts of all Deputy Commissioners, nodal officers, NIC Haryana and the Chief Minister's Good Governance Associates

(CMGGAs) who ensured the on ground timely implementation of the project and have been striving for enhancing its efficiency since then.

Elaborating on it further he said that fulfilling the vision of the Chief Minister to ensure efficient and citizen centric governance multiple e-governance projects like 'e-Office', 'Parivar Pehchaan Patra' and 'Human Resource Management System' are on the verge of completion and the state government is heading towards 'paperless office'.

Gupta appreciated the Departments who have improved their Ticketing Score (Citizen Grievances Redressal

Portal of Antyodaya Saral) and the Right to Service Score (RTS) regarding timely processing of service or scheme applications received on the portal.

He also asked the Departments with lower scores to work on improving them.

The Departments which have excelled while sharing the steps taken to improve their performance appraised Gupta that regular monitoring of the portal by a dedicated team of experts have been instrumental in ensuring their good performance.

It was appraised in the meeting that more than 540 government schemes and services

have been integrated on the platform, there are more than 6 lakh applications received on the portal every month, around 20 lakh messages are sent for tracking of application every month and on an average 1 lakh calls are received on the Antyodaya Portal helpline every month.

Sharing details of the Departments receiving maximum tickets Dr. Gupta said that Health Services, Urban Local Bodies and Building and Other Construction Workers (BOCW) Board attract maximum tickets.

The meeting was attended by the Antyodaya Saral nodal officers of all Departments.

## Piercing cold sweeps parts of Punjab, Haryana

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

The severe cold wave sweeping most parts of Punjab and Haryana intensified on Thursday with Narnaul recording a low temperature of 1.8 degrees Celsius.

Narnaul in Haryana was the coldest in the region, with its minimum temperature settling three notches below normal. Others parts of Haryana also reeled under biting cold conditions with Ambala witnessing minimum temperature at 3.1 degree Celsius, three notches below normal and Hisar recording a low of 3.7 degree Celsius.

Karnal and Bhiwani recorded respective minimum temperatures of 4 degree Celsius and 4.3 degree Celsius. Rohtak and Sirsa braved the chill at 3.8, and 5.8 degrees Celsius respectively.

Chandigarh, the common capital of Punjab and Haryana recorded a minimum temperature of 3.8 degree Celsius, one degree below normal while the maximum temperature settled at 17.7 degree Celsius, down by three notches from normal limit. In Punjab also, people braved the cold weather with minimum temperatures of Pathankot settling at 2.5 degree Celsius.

Amritsar, Ludhiana and Patiala registered their minimum temperatures at 6.5, 4.8

and 5.1 degrees Celsius respectively. Among other places in Punjab, Adampur, Halwara, Bathinda, Faridkot and Gurdaspur recorded minimum temperatures at 2.1, 4.2, 3.6, 5 and 8 degrees Celsius respectively.

A Met official said that fog led to reduced visibility at several places in Punjab and Haryana on Thursday morning.

He said that cold wave conditions will prevail in the region during the next 24 hours. Shallow to moderate fog is likely at a few places during 48 hours in Punjab and Haryana, the Met official said.

The maximum temperatures also recorded were upto six notches below normal in parts of two states.

Karnal recorded maximum temperature of 14.5 degrees, down by four notches from normal, Hisar recorded 17 degrees, three notches below normal and Ambala recorded 13.2 degree Celsius, five degrees below normal.

In Punjab, Amritsar recorded below normal day temperature at 12.9 degrees, which was five notches down the normal limit. Ludhiana and Patiala recorded respective maximum temperatures of 12.4 degree Celsius and 12.6 degree Celsius, both six notches below normal. Meanwhile, the hill state of Himachal Pradesh also reeled under biting cold conditions.

## Khattar launches aviation service between Chandigarh & Hisar

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Thursday launched aviation services between Chandigarh and Hisar at Chandigarh International Airport and handed over a boarding pass to the first passenger to board the aircraft.

This service has been started by Air Taxi Aviation Company. The CM said that a new chapter has started in the direction of aviation services in Haryana and congratulated everyone on Makar Sankranti on the commencement of air taxi service from Chandigarh to Hisar. He said that the Air Taxi Company has ordered four-seater airplanes. Besides the pilot, three passengers will be able to travel in these air taxis.

The distance from Chandigarh to Hisar will be covered by this aircraft in 45 min-

utes. This service has been started under the 'Udaan' scheme of the Government of India. Khattar said that the company has fixed a very economical fare of Rs 1,755 from Hisar to Chandigarh. Bookings can be made online at <http://flyairtaxi.in>.

The company has also provided the facility of private booking, the fare for which will be different. There will be a daily flight between Hisar and Chandigarh at its scheduled time even if only one passenger has booked a ticket. After starting Chandigarh-Hisar air service, the company will start air service from Hisar to Dehradun from January 18 and from Hisar to Dharamshala on January 23.

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar launched aviation services between Chandigarh and Hisar at Chandigarh International Airport and handed over a boarding pass to the first passenger to board the aircraft



## Road safety workshops planned for taxi and food aggregators

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

With an aim to ensure road safety for all in the city, workshops for taxi aggregators like Ola, Uber and food aggregators like Swiggy, Zomato will be organized by

Chandigarh Traffic Police during the National Road Safety Month.

Traffic Police will observe the 32nd National Road Safety Month-2021 in Chandigarh from January 18 to February 17 under the theme of "Sadak

Suraksha-Jeevan Raksha", said an official spokesman.

He said that during the road safety month, various road safety awareness events will be organized by Chandigarh Traffic Police in association with educational



Traffic Police will observe the 32nd National Road Safety Month-2021 in Chandigarh from January 18 to February 17 under the theme of "Sadak Suraksha-Jeevan Raksha"

As per the official data, there were 48 fatal road accidents till December 29, 2020 and 51 deaths, less than half as compared to 2019, which recorded 104 deaths in 100 fatal accidents

institutions, social organizations and corporate organizations.

Workshops for drivers of CTU, Haryana and Punjab Roadways, Auto Rickshaw drivers, NMTs drivers, Ola, Uber, Taxi Associations, school bus drivers, food aggregators i.e. Swiggy, Zomato, dominos, etc will be organized during the month, he said.

Among other programmes, cycle rally, female two-wheeler rider rally, webinar on various road safety issues, interaction with media on road safety, road safety skits or nukkad natak will be organized, the spokesman said.

First aid training to traffic and PCR officials, free health checkup and eye checkup camp for commercial vehicle drivers, painting competition, blood donation camp, road safety awareness at various FM radios and PA Systems, joint awareness regarding parking for differently abled persons at various markets alongwith MCC officials and MWAs, observance of zero tolerance day, special campaign regarding unauthorized vendors, etc by team of Chandigarh Traffic Police and MCC officials will also be organised during the month long celebration, he added.

## Tirthan sanctuary, Great Himalayan National Park best performers

### RANKED AS BEST MANAGED PROTECTED AREAS

PNS ■ SHIMLA

The Great Himalayan National Park and Tirthan Wildlife Sanctuary in Himachal have been ranked as the best managed protected areas in the entire country.

Sainj Wildlife Sanctuary is also placed among the top five list of best managed protected areas, said Forest Minister Rakesh Pathania.

He said the report on Management Effectiveness Evaluation (MEE) of National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries in India was released by Prakasch Javedkar, Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, recently at New Delhi.

The Forest Minister said that it is a matter of great sat-

isfaction and pride that three of the top five best managed Protected Areas in the country are from Himachal Pradesh and this shows the commitment and sustained efforts of the State Government towards conservation of its valuable forests and wildlife.

Congratulating the wildlife wing, park managers and front-line staff for achieving this distinction, Pathania urged them to keep on working hard and maintain the high standards of management.

He also asked the authorities to adopt management strategies and actions as per the needs.

The Minister said that MEE is a globally accepted norm of evaluating the effectiveness of the management of

the protected areas. The effectiveness of management is evaluated on the basis of multiple parameters and generally defines how well the National Park or Wildlife sanctuary is being managed.

The evaluation process was done by the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun and nationwide 146 National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries, including 13 protected areas of Himachal Pradesh, were assessed through a team of independent evaluators. The score is given for various parameters including staff position, provision of financial resources, degree of protection, peoples' participation and awareness of the communities towards the conservation values, he said.

Against a national average of 62 percent, GHNP and Tirthan WLS scored a high of 84.17 percent while Sainj recorded 82.5 percent, he said.



The Minister further said that Himachal Pradesh has a network of 5 National Parks, 28 Wildlife Sanctuaries and 3 Conservation Reserves covering 8391.42 km2 which is 15 percent of the total geographical area of the state.

Notably, the Great Himalayan National Park (GHNP) is located in the Banjar sub-division of Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh in the far western Himalaya.

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[See proviso to rule 8(6)]

**Notice for sale of immovable assets**

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

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Sr. No.	Name of Borrower(s) /Co-Borrowers/ Guarantors/ Loan Account No.	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Amount Outstanding	Reserve Price Earnest Money Deposit	Date and Time of Property Inspection	Date & Time of Auction
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)
1.	Vinod Kumar Agrawal (Borrower), Sangeeta Devi Agrawal, Aarti Agrawal, Shivani Udyog (I) Limited LBRP00001857618	World One Residence No. West Wing 1- 3101, Admeasuring 1946 Sq. Ft Carpet and 217.02 Sq Mtrs. Built up, On 31st Floor of Building Known as World One with 2 car parking space. Situated at Lodha Place, Senapati Bapat Marg, Upper Worli, lying being and situated at Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel, Mumbai-400013 (Encumbrance- Builder/ Developer Dues)	Rs. 7,71,35, 816/- (As on January 05, 2021)	Rs. 7,25,00, 000/- Rs. 72,50, 000/-	January 25, 2021 From 02:00 PM To 05:00 PM	February 06, 2021 From 12:00 Noon onwards

The online auction will be conducted on website (URL Link- <https://disposalhub.com>) of our auction agency M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited. The Mortgagors/ noticee are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest till **February 05, 2021** before 05:00 PM else these secured assets will be sold as per schedule.

The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Demand Draft (DD) (Refer Column E) at ICICI Bank Limited, Ground Floor, Trans Trade Center, Near Floral Deck Plaza, Seepz, MIDC, Andheri - E, Mumbai - 400093 on or before **February 05, 2021** before 04:00 PM and thereafter they need to submit their offer through the above mentioned website only on or before **February 05, 2021** before 05:00 PM along with scan image of Bank acknowledged DD towards proof of payment of EMD. Kindly note, in case prospective bidder(s) are unable to submit their offer through the website then signed copy of tender documents may be submitted at ICICI Bank Limited, Ground Floor, Trans Trade Center, Near Floral Deck Plaza, Seepz, MIDC, Andheri - E, Mumbai - 400093 on or before **February 05, 2021** before 05:00 PM Earnest Money Deposit DD/PO should be from a Nationalised/Scheduled Bank in favour of "ICICI Bank Limited" payable at Mumbai.

For any further clarifications with regards to inspection, terms and conditions of the auction or submission of tenders, kindly contact ICICI Bank Limited on 82919 58765/ 99930 34988 or M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited on 9710029933/9810029926/01244233933.

Please note that Marketing agencies 1. M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited., 2. Augoe Assets Management Private Limited have also been engaged for facilitating the sale of this property. The Authorised Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please visit [www.icicibank.com/n4p4s](http://www.icicibank.com/n4p4s)

**Date:** January 15, 2021  
**Place:** Raipur

**Authorized Officer**  
ICICI Bank Limited

## Pong records decline in birds mortality due to bird flu

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Since the confirmation of Soutbreak of bird flu at Pong Dam Lake Wildlife Sanctuary in Himachal's Kangra district on January 4, the area is now witnessing substantial decrease in mortality of birds.

"The mortality in birds has reduced in the last two days. Carcasses of 94 migratory birds of different species were recovered till Thursday afternoon.

Till now, 4836 migratory birds have died due to avian influenza- H5N1 at Pong Dam Wildlife Sanctuary," said a senior official of the Wildlife wing of Forest Department, Himachal.

## Punjab reports ten deaths, 214 fresh Covid cases

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Ten more people succumbed to the Covid-19 in Punjab as 214 fresh positive cases surfaced on Thursday.

The death toll stood at 5473 while the state's infection count reached 169950, the state's health bulletin stated.

The mortality rate stood at 3.22 percent in the state. Of the total ten deaths, two were reported in SAS Nagar and one death each was reported in Barnala, Bathinda, Gurdaspur, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Sangrur, SBS Nagar and Tarn Taran.

Among the fresh cases, the highest 43 were reported from SAS Nagar (Mohali) followed by 34 in Jalandhar. 22 cases each were reported in Ludhiana and in Amritsar, as per the bul-

letin, In the last 24 hours, a total of 253 patients were discharged after recovering from infection, taking the number of cured persons to 161710 in the state.

The state still has 2767 active COVID-19 cases. Of them, 9 critical patients are on ventilator support, while 99 are on oxygen support, the bulletin added.

### 6 DEATHS, 187 CASES IN HARYANA

Haryana on Thursday witnessed six more coronavirus deaths, taking the toll to 2972 even as 187 fresh cases pushed the State's infection tally to 2,65,803, a health bulletin showed. According to the state health department's daily bulletin, the fatalities were one each from Faridabad, Karnal, Panipat, Kurukshetra,

Yamunanagar and Jhajjar districts. Among other districts to report new cases included Gurugram (34), Faridabad (34) and Karnal (19).

The number of active cases in the state were 2266 while as many as 2,60,562 people have so far been discharged after recovering from infection. The recovery rate was 98.03 percent.

### 1 DEATH, 23 CASES IN CHANDIGARH

The union territory of Chandigarh on Thursday reported one more COVID-19 related death as 23 fresh cases were detected.

"With this, the total case tally reached 20438 and the death toll stood at 330 in the city," as per the Chandigarh Health Department's evening bulletin.



# Bird flu reported in Balod, state-wide alert sounded



**STAFF REPORTER ■**  
RAIPUR

The poultry birds found dead in Chhattisgarh's Balod district reported bird flu positive, the Veterinary Department said on Thursday, triggering a

state-wide alert. "The samples of poultry birds found dead in Balod a few days back were sent to 'Animal Disease Laboratory' in Bhopal. The report on Thursday evening said the birds were H5N8 (bird flu) positive," said Matheshwaran V, Director of

Veterinary Services in the Chhattisgarh Livestock Development Department. The samples of crows were negative, he said, adding samples of birds sent from other districts also reported negative, he said. "We have shared the

report with district administration and now it will take action accordingly," Matheshwaran said.

Following the report of bird flu, the Chhattisgarh government has sounded a state-wide alert, a press statement by the government said.

Five samples of poultry birds from GS Poultry Farm, Gidhali, were sent to Bhopal for testing on January 11. The tracheal swab and cloacal swab report from birds were reported H5N8 positive.

After the report confirmed presence of avian influenza in the samples, the area within one km of the farm was marked as contaminated zone.

The Rapid Response Team (RRT) has initiated steps to contain the spread of the virus.

The movement of poultry birds in the contaminated zone has been banned and steps to curb human movement in the zone has been initiated. Also, a 10 km range in Gidhali zone has been notified as under observation, the press release said.

# First phase of Covid vaccination in Chhattisgarh from tomorrow



**STAFF REPORTER ■**  
RAIPUR

The first phase of Covid vaccination in Chhattisgarh will begin from January 16. Initially it will happen in 99 vaccination centres, a government press release said on Thursday.

In-charge Chief Secretary Subrat Sahoo chaired a meeting of the Steering Committee and reviewed the preparation

for vaccination on Thursday.

"On January 16, following the launch of Covid-19 vaccination programme, vaccination will begin in Chhattisgarh. As per the instructions of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, preparations for vaccination in the state have been completed. Health workers will be the first to receive vaccination," Sahoo was quoted as saying in a press release.

For two-way-interaction with the central government on launch day, the Medical college at Raipur and the Maharani Hospital at Jagdalpur have been identified.

Sahoo told officials to ensure proper and safe vaccination. He stressed the need to run an awareness campaign in coordination with different departments. Chhattisgarh has received 3.32 lakh doses of

Covidshield vaccine, he said.

The vaccine doses were shifted to 18 districts on January 13 and the remaining doses are being moved. The second dose of vaccine will be sent to districts 28 days later, he said, adding every identified person will receive two doses.

During the meeting, officials told Sahoo that names of 267,399 healthcare workers have been registered in the Covin portal.



The Lord Ayyappan Temple at Tatibandh (Raipur) was illuminated with earthen lamps on the occasion of Makara Sankranti on Thursday.  
*Pioneer Photo*

# Maoists kill village Sarpanch's husband, brand him 'informer'

**STAFF REPORTER ■**  
RAJNANDGAON

A group of Naxalites killed the husband of a village sarpanch on suspicion of being a police spy in Chhattisgarh's Rajnandgaon district, police said on Thursday.

The incident took place on Wednesday night in Pardonni village in the Manpur police station limits, a Naxalite-affected area located around 170 km from Raipur.

The 47-year-old victim, husband of the Pardonni village sarpanch (panchayat head), was beaten to death, Additional Superintendent of Police Jaiprakash Barhai said.

According to preliminary information, a group of Maoists barged into the victim's house when he was resting after dinner and dragged him out on the

street, he said.

They then took him to the village outskirts and thrashed him brutally in front of his family. The victim died on the spot, the official said.

After being alerted, a police team shifted the body to a hospital for post-mortem.

Maoist pamphlets were recovered from the site in which the deceased was accused of being a police informer. The official denied the victim's association with the police.

A search operation has been launched to trace the culprits, the officer said.

According to another police official, on May 8 last year, four Naxalites were killed in a gun battle with police in Pardonni village. The rebels suspected that the victim tipped off the police about the presence of their colleagues.

## OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE, DISTRICT-DHAMTARI (CHHATTISGARH)

TEL. 07722-238265, Fax 238390

//Notice invited Tender//

No.SP/DMT/AC/NIT-04 / 04-B / 2020-21 Dt 13.01.2021

Superintendent of Police District Dhamtari on Behalf of Honble Governor of Chhattisgarh, invites sealed tenders for the following work from approved and eligible contractors of CPWD, PWD, Res, Housing Board, MES, Railway, P&T who are registered as manufacturer for making concertina coil fencing as per Ministry of Defence specification N. IND/Engg/Pro/1245B or CQAE/5660/a its connected drawing with Ministry of Defence Contingent of Quality Assurance (Engineering Equipments) DGSD&NSIC and have executed work of concertina Coil Fencing for at least Rs 1.00 crore. The offer will be received in the office of the S.P. Dhamtari. Upto 16.00 PM on Date 27-1-2021 and will be open on dated 28-1-2021 at 16.00 PM Tender form will be issued till date 22-1-2021 upto 17.00 pm.

Concertina Coil fencing location	Police Line Residential Campus at Village Rudri
EM, Bank solvency	Rs. EM 11000/-B.S. 225000/-
Length of coil fencing and Ms fabricated gate	1000 m and ms gate 02 nos.
Time completion i.e rainy season and category of Registration	03 months / D & A

No.	Name of Work	cost in lakh
1	Specification of Concertina Coil 1050 mm dia for Fencing Providing and Fixing of Fencing with punched tape concertina coils (PTCC) conforming to defence specification no. IND/Engg/Pro/1245B or CQAE/5660/1602/a or CQAE/5660/a & its connected drawing and 1050 mm dia in close condition after stressing 10 mtr dia should be 915 mm re enforced barbed tape RBT in pyramid shape i.e. 3 tiers tow at bottom and one at top the five rows of RPT to be fixed between angle 50x50x6 mm at a distance of 3.0 mtr centre to centre height 2mt above ground level at different places i/c transportation and cost of all materials and labour etc complete. Providing and Fixing of MS Fabricated gate in Various Places as per approved design.	17.58 lakh

Term and conditions

1. Name address and status of the firm 2. Valid registration certificate in of CPWD, PWD, Res, Housing Board, MES, Railway, P&T 3. Valid registration certificate as a proof for forms Registration as manufacturer (for making concertina coil fencing as per ministry of defence specification No. IND/ENG/PRO B-1245B Or CQAE/5660, 1602/1 & its connected drawing) with ministry of defence contingent of Quality Assurance (Engineering Equipments) DGSD&NSIC 4. Experience in the execution of concertina coil fencing work in maxilite area (minimum value of works Rs. 1.00 crore in last five years) credentials from clients about satisfactory completion of work. 5. Details of works in hand (copy of order) & present positions of work. 6. Turn over of Rs 1.00 crore per annum attested by CA 7. Copy of latest sale tax/commercial tax paid certificate. 8. No relationship certificate.

- Note:-
- A. Cost of tender Form is 750/- in Challan of the "0055 Police, 800 other".
  - B. The contractor interested can bid for single or more groups.
  - C. Successful bidders agree in form B applicable for item rate tenders.
  - D. Conditional tender is not acceptable.
  - E. Earnest Money in the shape of TDR/FDR/ in favour of S.P. Dhamtari, Chhattisgarh.
  - F. Location site can be changed due to additional immediate requirement or security reasons.
  - G. Tender will be accepted in the office of the Superintendent of Police, Rudri, Dhamtari, Chhattisgarh.

G- 863352 Ryp/Dtd 14.1.21 Superintendent of Police District Dhamtari

**AXIS BANK**

Axis Bank Ltd.  
A.C.Market, 4th Floor, 1, Shikshapure Sarani,  
Kolkata- 700017

Public Notice for Auction  
AXIS Bank Ltd  
Public Notice for - Auction of pledged assets being Gold Ornaments

The Borrowers, in specific and the public in general are here by notified that public auction of the gold ornaments pledge in the below accounts is proposed to be conducted by the Axis Bank at the below mentioned Branch. That the below mentioned Borrowers has availed the credit facility from the Axis Bank Limited against the pledge of gold ornaments ("Gold Loan Facility") in favour of the Bank towards the security. The Demand notices were issued to the Borrowers/Guarantors calling up the Borrowers/Guarantors to pay their outstanding amount towards the Gold loan facility availed. As the Borrowers/Guarantors have failed to repay the outstanding loan amount, the bank is constrained to invoke the pledge and proposed to conduct an auction sale of pledged gold ornaments more particularly described in schedule of property hereunder on.....25-01-2021.....(dated) at.....11.a.m.-2.p.m.....(time of e-auction) on "As Is Where Is", "As Is What Is", "Whatever There Is" and "No Recourse Basis". Auction will be held at Details of Borrowers and outstanding amount

Branch Name	Customer Name	Loan A/c No.	Amount Outstanding	Date of Demand Notice	Gross weight
JAGDALPUR [CT]	KAILASHCHAND UMAR/VAISHYA	918060066556950	61,078.12	25/11/19	26.2
JHILMILA [CT]	NISHANT KUMAR CHANDRAKAR	917060071454761	71,051.00	10/12/18	45.38
NEHRU NAGAR SQUARE, BHILAI [CT]	BENJAMIN MARK	918060047152957	2,60,018.25	17/11/20	126.6
RAIPUR [CT]	CHANDRABHAN SINGH	920060020286557	1,97,895.00	17/11/20	80.2
RAIPUR [CT]	PRAMOD KUMAR GUPTA	920060006435276	1,19,874.45	Recall Linked NPA-14 Dec 20	65.5
RAIPUR [CT]	AJIT KUMAR JHA	919060094764425	1,13,602.00	22/09/20	64.5
RAIPUR [CT]	HARSHITA MISHRA	919060056347459	94,094.50	17/11/20	38.5
RAJNANDGAON [CT]	DHIREN KUMAR PANDA	918060058393912	2,32,966.21	25/11/19	97.2
VYAPAR VIHAR, BILASPUR [CT]	KARAN BHOI	919060065002864	9,27,686.00	22/09/20	316.8
VYAPAR VIHAR, BILASPUR [CT]	PRIYANKA VISHWAKARMA	918060091773434	1,31,672.21	27/11/20	122.3
VYAPAR VIHAR, BILASPUR [CT]	KRISHNA KUMAR KAIWART	919060091478466	74557.00	17/11/20	33.1

TERMS & CONDITIONS OF TENDER

The Base/Reserve price will be given on the auction day/date to the tenderers on which the auction bid will be considered.

The bid/offers in the prescribed tender form provided by the bank shall only be considered for bidding. Incomplete bid form/tender are treated invalid and shall liable to be rejected.

The tender documents along with the terms and conditions shall be collected from the \_\_\_\_\_ branch.

The tender document duly completed to be handed to the concerned branch official during working hours on DD-MM-YYYY. Tenders received after the due date will not be considered.

The said properties is / are offered for sale on "As Is Where Is", "As Is What Is", "Whatever There Is" and "No Recourse" Basis. The Bank does not undertake any responsibility to standard, purity and/or any other dues, taxes, if any, in respect of the said property.

Tenders will be opened by the Bank on the auction date in the presence of the tenderers who may choose to remain present on the day and time as said below, inter alia, for raising / revising their respective offers.

1. Branch (Branch Name), Auction date (DD-MM-YYYY)
2. Branch (Branch Name), Auction date (DD-MM-YYYY)

Offer/tender once submitted cannot be withdrawn and bidder will liable to deposit the bid amount if there is single bid/offer for particular article/asset/ornament.

If there are more than one bid for particular article/asset/ornament, inter-se bidding shall take place amongst the bidder and highest bidder shall be declare as successful bidder. Bidder should submit all KYC documents i.e. PAN Number, PAN Card, Adhar Card & Address proof etc.

Bidder should submit valid E-mail ID & Contact Number The Bank reserves its right to accept or reject the offer at its sole discretion.

Any disputes / differences arising out of sale of the said property/ offered for sale shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of Courts / Tribunals at Mumbai only.

Place: KOLKATA, Date: 15-01-2021

Authorized Officer, Axis Bank Ltd.

**Canara Bank**

E-auction Sale Notice For Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with provision to Rules 5(6) of The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

**E-Auction**  
**Date: 29.01.2021**

**SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES**

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) & Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged / charged to the secured creditor, the constructive possession of which has been taken by the authorised officer the Canara Bank (secured creditor) will be sold on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS, AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" & "WHAT EVER THERE IS" on 29.01.2021 from 11.30 Noon to 2.30 pm for recovery of bank dues to the Canara Bank (secured creditor).

Name and address of the Borrower & Guarantors	Description of Properties & Name of Property Owner	Demand Notice Dt.	Reserve Price	Branch Name
		Possession Dt.	EMD Amt.	Account No. & IFSC Code
		Out Standing Amt.	Bid Increment Amt.	
Deepak Tiwari S/O Vidyannand Tiwari, Hno 221 Tulip 2, Parthivi Pacific Ge Road, Raipur	Open Land At Part of Khasara No. 192/1, P.H. No. 90, Situated At Collector Road Ganga Vihar, Mouza Village- Macheva, Tahsil & Distt.- Mahasamund C.G. AREA 3500 sq.ft. <b>BOUNDARIES:- NORTH: Seller's Plot, SOUTH: Plot of Maya Mosle, EAST: Road, WEST: NA</b>	11.01.2018	14,17,500/-	(Ph. 0771-2535307) Tatibandh Raipur Branch, A/c No 530729600001 IFSC Code CNRB0005307 E-mail: cs5307@canarabank.com
		19.05.2018	1,41,750/-	
		₹ 42,05,703.00	10,000/-	

**Terms and Conditions:** a. The sale shall be subject to the conditions prescribed in the security interest (enforcement) rules 2002 and to the following conditions: a. The property will be sold in "as is where is and as is what is" basis including encumbrances, if any. There is no encumbrance to the knowledge of the bank. b. Auction / bidding shall be only through "Online Electronic Bidding" through the website www.bankauc.on.com. Bidders are advised to go through the website for detailed terms before taking part in the e-auction sale proceedings. c. The property can be inspected, with Prior Appointment with Authorised Officer. d. The property will not be sold below the Reserve Price and the participating bidders may improve their offer further during auction process. e. EMD amount of 10% of the Reserve Price is to be deposited by way of Demand draft in favour of Authorized Officer of above mentioned branches respectively OR shall be deposited through RTGS/NEFT/Fund Transfer to credit of account of above mentioned branches respectively on or before 27.01.2021, 4.30 pm. f. Intending bidders shall hold a valid digital signature certificate and e-mail address. For details with regard to digital signature please contact the service provider M/s C1 INDIA Pvt.Ltd., Help Line No. 0120-4888888, Mr. Danish - 08305675610, 9630014580. Help Line Mail ID : Danish.khan@c1india.com, support@bankauc.on.com immediately on the same date of payment of the EMD amount the bidders shall approach the said service provider for obtaining digital signature.(If not holding a valid digital signature) g. After payment of the EMD amount, the intending bidders should submit a copy of the following documents/details on or before 28.01.2021, 4.30 PM, to above mentioned branches respectively by hand or by email. (1) Demand Draft/Pay order towards EMD amount. If paid through RTGS/NEFT, acknowledgement receipt thereof with UTR No. (2) Photocopies of PAN Card, ID Proof and Address proof. However, successful bidder would have to produce these documents in original to the Bank at the time of making payment of balance amount of 25% of bid amount. (3) Bidders Name. Contact No. Address, E Mail Id. (4) Bidder's A/c details for online refund of EMD. h. The intending bidders should register their names at portal www.bankauc.on.com (mention the website address of service provider) and get their User ID and password free of cost. Prospective bidder may avail online training on E-auction from the service M/s C1 INDIA Pvt.Ltd., Help Line No. 0120-4888888, Mr. Danish - 08305675610, 9630014580. Help Line Mail ID : Danish.khan@c1india.com, support@bankauc.on.com. i. EMD deposited by the unsuccessful bidder shall be refunded to them within 2 days of finalization of sale. The EMD shall not carry any interest. j. Auction would commence at Reserve Price, as mentioned above. Bidders shall improve their offers in multiples of Rs. 10,000. The bidder who submits the highest bid (not below the Reserve price) on closure of "Online" auction shall be declared as successful bidder. Sale shall be confirmed in favour of the successful bidder, subject to confirmation of the same by the secured creditor. k. The successful bidder shall deposit 25% of the sale price (inclusive of EMD already paid), immediately on declaring him/her as the successful bidder and the balance within 15 days from the date of confirmation of sale by the secured creditor. If the successful bidder fails to pay the sale price within the period stated above, the deposit made by him shall be forfeited by the Authorised Officer without any notice and property shall forthwith be put up for sale again. l. All charges for conveyance, stamp duty and registration charges etc., as applicable shall be borne by the successful bidder only. m. Authorised Officer reserves the right to postpone/cancel or vary the terms and conditions of the e-auc. on without assigning any reason thereof. n. In case there are bidders who do not have access to the internet but interested in participating in the e-auc. on, they can approach concerned Circle office or above mentioned branches respectively who as a facilitating centre shall make necessary arrangements. o. For further details contact Branch Manager of respective branches Manager- Mr. Alok Kumar, Mo.: 9798536496 or Canara Bank Authorised Officer: Shri Thakurdas Kori, Mo. 9424632580, E-mail id :- dmrotp@canarabank.com OR the service provider M/s C1 INDIA Pvt. Ltd., Help Line No :- 0120-4888888, Help Line E-mail ID :- support@bankauc.on.com. p. For further details you may contact Canara Bank above mentioned Branch or M/s C1 INDIA Pvt.Ltd., Help Line No. 0120-4888888, Mr. Danish - 08305675610, 9630014580. Help Line Mail ID : Danish.khan@c1india.com, support@bankauc.on.com.

**SPECIAL INSTRUCTION/CAUTION**

Bidding in the last minutes/seconds should be avoided by the bidders in their own interest. Neither Canara Bank nor the Service Provider will be responsible for any lapses/failure (Internet failure, Power failure, etc.) on the part of the bidder or vendor in such cases. In order to ward off such contingent situation, bidders are requested to make all the necessary arrangements/alternatives such as back-up, power supply and whatever else required so that they are able to circumvent such situation and are able to participate in the auction successfully.

**Date : 14.01.2021** **Authorized Officer, Canara Bank**



## Investigation trade-off

# CBI raids 14 locations, 4 of its own officials



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI on Thursday conducted searches at 14 locations including Delhi, Ghaziabad, Noida, Gurgaon, Meerut and Kanpur on the premises of four of its own officials, including two Deputy Superintendents of Police, an Inspector and a Steno besides private persons, including advocates, on allegations of compromising the investigation of certain cases on "extraneous pecuniary considerations".

In Ghaziabad, the searches were conducted at the CBI's premier training academy.

The four CBI personnel, including two DSPs were booked for allegedly receiving bribes to compromise investigation against companies accused of bank fraud.

While the agency did not give out much details about the case in which its own personnel are under probe, sources said the accused personnel are being investigated for allegedly taking huge amounts of

bribe from the accused companies in bank fraud cases being probed by the CBI.

The CBI officials booked by the agency are DSPs R K Rishi and R K Sangwan, Inspector Kapil Dhankad and Steno Samir Kumar Singh, they said.

The searches led to an embarrassing situation for the agency as it had to even search the premises of Rishi, who is posted in the CBI Academy, Ghaziabad where the Central anti-corruption agency trains and prepares its officers for future roles in the organisation.

In addition to CBI officers, cadets from foreign countries are also trained at the state-of-the-art academy in Ghaziabad.

Meanwhile, in a separate development the CBI conducted searches in an ongoing investigation of two separate cases which led to recovery of incriminating documents including alleged fake/forged ST certificates.

It was alleged in the first case that the accused Ramesh

Chand Meena, son of Chiranjil Lal obtained job for the post of Lower Division Clerk in Employees Provident Fund Organisation on July 24, 1985 at the strength of alleged fake/forged ST certificate purportedly issued by Sub Divisional Magistrate, Hindaun, Sawai Madhopur. However, the accused was allegedly hailing from Mathura (UP). It was further alleged that he was promoted to the post of Account Officer/Enforcement Officer after his joining by using benefits of the said ST certificate, the agency said.

In the second case, it was alleged that the accused Ramesh Chand Meena, son of Govind Ram got a job with MTNL under ST quota on the basis of an alleged forged/fake certificate purportedly issued by Sub Divisional Magistrate, Deeg (Rajasthan). However, he was allegedly a native of Hathras (UP).

It was further alleged that the accused joined MTNL and was appointed as Junior Telecom Officer (JTO) through departmental examination under ST Category. He retired as Senior Manager (Telephone) on July 31, 2018 from MTNL, New Delhi. It was also alleged that the accused had managed to get allotment of a DDA Flat under the benefits of ST quota in the year 1987.

Investigation in both the cases is continuing, it added.

# Owaisi helped BJP in 2020 Bihar Assembly poll, claims Maharaj

## Will do the same in upcoming UP, Bengal polls

DEEPAK UPRETI ■ NEW DELHI

Notwithstanding the denial of Union Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, BJP MP from Unnao, Sakshi Maharaj, has created a political controversy by claiming that All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) leader Asaduddin Owaisi had helped the BJP in the 2020 Bihar Assembly elections and that he would do the same in the coming elections in West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh.

Owaisi had contested the Bihar elections winning five assembly seats in the Muslim majority areas, denying advantage to the RJD-led opposition against BJP-JDU-VIP combination that won the assembly poll.

The outspoken Unnao MP said as in Bihar, AIMIM's decision to contest the Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal elections will help the BJP register victory in both the States.

Opposition parties, including the Congress, had long alleged that AIMIM has been playing the role of 'BJP's B team'. The BJP MP's comments have apparently confirmed the suspicion and the charges leveled by the opposition against the Owaisi and the BJP.

"Khuda unko taakat de" (May God give him strength),



said Sakshi Maharaj adding "he helped us in Bihar and will help us (BJP) in Uttar Pradesh panchayat and Assembly polls and also in West Bengal," he said at Kannaauj while on way to the National Capital.

Owaisi had earlier denied the charges of collusion with the BJP and made his intent of contesting Assembly poll in Bengal and UP quite clear. He had said that the opposition should "look within" to find reasons for its electoral defeats instead of blaming his party for it.

The AIMIM is presently all set to contest the upcoming panchayat polls in UP in alliance with the Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party.

Asked about the BJP MP's admission of AIMIM tactically helping BJP, Union Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi denied saying "tired and fatigued people are not helping BJP win as the party is scoring victories on its own strength".

Owaisi's party had recently contested Hyderabad Municipal elections and emerged as the third largest party winning 44 seats with TRS leading with 55, BJP second with 48 and Congress winning only two seats.

## Polio drops plan delayed due to mega Covid jab drive

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As the country gears up to launch the mega anti-Covid-jab drive for health workers on January 16, children in the age group of 0-5 years will have to wait to get their share of polio drops with the Government rescheduling the polio immunisation programme from earlier January 17 to January 31 across India.

"The massive country-wide COVID-19 vaccination drive will be rolled out by the Prime Minister from January 16. This would be the world's largest immunisation exercise. Therefore, it has been decided by the Health Ministry in consultation with the office of the President of India to reschedule the Polio vaccination day, also known as the National Immunisation Day (NID) or 'Polio Ravivar' to 31st January," the Ministry said in the statement.

The decision is in keeping with the stated policy of the Union Health Ministry to ensure that COVID management and vaccination services as well as non-Covid essential health services proceed in tandem without adversely impacting each other, said the Union Health Ministry in a statement here on Thursday.

The President will launch the Polio National Immunisation Day on 30th January by administering Polio drops to some children at the Rashtrapati Bhawan at 11:45 am, the statement said.

# SC Bar body president Dushyant Dave resigns with immediate effect



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) president Dushyant Dave resigned from his post with immediate effect on Thursday saying he has forfeited his right to continue.

Acting SCBA Secretary Rohit Pandey confirmed the development that the senior advocate has resigned with immediate effect.

Dave in his brief letter stated that the tenure of the Executive Committee of SCBA has already ended and it may not be possible to hold virtual elections as per schedule "due to reservations held by some lawyers".

"Following recent events, I feel that I have forfeited my right to continue as your Leader and so I hereby tender my Resignation from the post of the President of the SCBA with immediate effect. Our term has already come to an end."

"We sincerely decided to hold virtual election to elect a



new body. Now I find it may not be possible to hold them as per the schedule declared by the Election Committee due to reservations held by some of you. I understand their position and have no quarrel with it but to me any further continuation as the President in these circumstances will be morally wrong," the letter said.

Dave also expressed his gratitude to all the members of the SCBA.

"I must place on record my deep gratitude to each of you for being part of this EC and contributing immensely during Covid 19, perhaps the greatest challenge to mankind we will ever see in our lifetime. You have done proud to this Institution, the SCBA. It was a privilege to be with you. I wish you all lots of good luck for a better future," Dave said in his letter.

# Priyanka appointed board member of Youth Innovation



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Rajya Sabha member Priyanka Chaturvedi was on Thursday appointed as Board Member of the Stakeholder Panel, Commonwealth Youth Innovation Hub, for a two-year term.

The Commonwealth Youth Innovation Hub is a platform to develop human capital to drive economic and societal innovation, foster unity and transform societies through sustainable impact. The Commonwealth Youth Innovation Hub was launched by the Prince of Wales during the 2017 Commonwealth Youth Summit in Malaysia. The hub also seeks to ensure that policy and government institutions are more effective contributors to development through the influence of youth voices.

The Commonwealth Youth Innovation Stakeholders Panel consists of Heads of Government, High Commissioners, Heads of International and Intergovernmental agencies. The stakeholder panel consists of Board Members, including the Chairperson of the Stakeholder Panel and Secretary of the Stakeholder

**Chaturvedi's appointment was done at the Board Meeting of the Commonwealth Youth Innovation Hub held virtually on January 6, 2021 from Kuala Lumpur**

Panel.

As a Board Member of the Stakeholder Panel, Priyanka Chaturvedi will participate in meetings of the Commonwealth Youth Innovation Hub, represent the hub at meetings and events, and serve as an ambassador for the Commonwealth Youth Innovation Hub to promote the hub's vision and values.

Chaturvedi's appointment was done at the Board Meeting of the Commonwealth Youth Innovation Hub held virtually on January 6, 2021 from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and was attended by Dr. Kishva Ambigapathy, Esq - Global Chair - Commonwealth Youth Innovation Hub & Sumedh Gaikwad - Country Head, Commonwealth Youth Innovation Hub - India.

Chaturvedi is national spokesperson of Shiv Sena and was earlier in the Congress party.

# Review policy of ban on supply of poultry from other States, Centre asks States



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has asked States to review policy of banning supply of poultry and poultry products from other States as there is no scientific report available that infection of Avian Influenza or bird flu viruses spread through processed products as this would add to the negative impact on the poultry industry.

"Further, there is no scientific report available. Consumption of well-cooked chicken and eggs does not pose any risk to humans," the ministry of animal husbandry and dairying said in its latest advisory to state governments urging state to review policy of banning supply of poultry products from other states amid scare of bird flu or avian influenza in 12 states across the country.

"Additional cases of avian influenza among crows have been confirmed in Dangs district of Gujarat. After successfully finishing the culling operations, Maharashtra and

Madhya Pradesh have completed sanitization activities. In Haryana, samples from four poultry farms have been confirmed to be positive for avian influenza (H5N8). The farms are: Maharaja poultry farm in Khatauli; Tara poultry farm, Batour and Singla poultry farm in Mauli village of Panchkula district of Haryana," the ministry said.

The ministry of animal husbandry and dairying has also requested Ministry of Civil Aviation to allow uninterrupted transportation of samples for expeditious testing of Avian Influenza in designated laboratories.

Meanwhile, Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Giriraj Singh on Thursday said the Delhi government's decision to open Ghazipur poultry market will send a positive message throughout the country, even as it asked states to ensure that all precautions are taken to curb the spread of bird flu. Bird flu outbreak has been confirmed in Delhi, Maharashtra,

Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Gujarat so far. Singh said: "Hope the decision to lift the ban on Ghazipur mandi will send a positive message throughout the country. I urged them to take precautions and not to panic."

He said the Centre had issued an advisory in October 2020 on bird flu and also set up control room."Had the advisory been followed, there would not have been panic in Delhi or other states," the minister said. Singh said he had a meeting with Delhi Deputy Chief Minister earlier in the day.

"There was positive discussion. Three mayors were also there in the video conference. The Delhi government has taken decision to open the Ghazipur mandi," Singh said, adding that it was decided that the MCDs will also take back their direction issued on banning sale of chicken and eggs in hotels and restaurants.

# Annual adaptation cost to climate change for developing countries at \$70 billion

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Annual adaptation costs in developing countries, including India, to the climate change are estimated at USD70 billion, but the figure could reach up to USD 300 billion in 2030, and whopping USD 500 billion in 2050.

However, while almost three-quarters of nations have some adaptation plans in place, most of them face financial and implementation fall "far short" of what is needed, said a UN report here, even as it called for stepping up public and private finance for adaptation on an urgent basis.

Though cumulative investment for climate change mitigation and adaptation projects under the four funds—the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Adaptation Fund, and the International Climate Initiative (IKI)—stands at USD 94 billion, only USD 12 billion was spent on nature-based solutions, a tiny fraction of total adaptation and conservation finance, it added.

"Though countries have made progress in planning for climate change adaptation, significant gaps remain in financing such initiatives and bringing them the stage where they bring real protection against climate change impacts such as droughts, floods and sea-level rise," said the United Nations environment report.

Released on Thursday by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the 2020 Adaptation Gap Report, pointed out that as temperatures rise and climate change impacts intensify, nations must urgent-



ly step up action to adapt to the new climate reality or face serious costs, damages and losses.

"The hard truth is that climate change is upon us," Inger Andersen, UNEP Executive Director, said in a news release announcing the findings.

"Its impacts will intensify and hit vulnerable countries and communities the hardest, even if we meet the Paris Agreement goals of holding global warming this century to well below 2 degrees Celsius and pursuing 1.5 degree Celsius."

Annual adaptation costs in developing countries are estimated at USD70 billion, but the figure could reach up to USD300 billion in 2030, and USD 500 billion in 2050. Almost three-quarters of nations have some adaptation plans in place, but financing and implementation fall "far short" of what is needed, said the report.

Adaptation is a key pillar of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. It aims to reduce countries' and com-

munities' vulnerability to climate change by increasing their ability to absorb impacts.

The UNEP report also underscored the importance of nature-based solutions as low-cost options that reduce climate risks, restore and protect biodiversity, and bring benefits for communities and economies.

The UNEP has now urged all nations to pursue the efforts outlined in its December 2020 Emissions Gap Report, which called for a green pandemic recovery and updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) that include new net-zero commitments.

"However, the world must also plan for, finance and implement climate change adaptation to support those nations least responsible for climate change but most at risk," the UN agency said adding that "while the COVID-19 pandemic is expected to hit the ability of countries to adapt to climate change, investing in adaptation is a sound economic decision."

# Modi to address Startup India Int'l Summit tomorrow

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will on Saturday interact with startups and address a global summit being organised by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, according to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

The Prarambh: Startup India International Summit is being organised by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry on January 15-16.

Prime Minister Modi will interact with startups and address the summit on January 16 at 5 PM via video conferencing, the PMO said in a

statement.

The two-day summit is being organised as a follow-up of the announcement made by the prime minister at the fourth BIMSTEC Summit held in Kathmandu in August 2018 wherein India committed to host the BIMSTEC Startup Conclave.

The summit marks the fifth anniversary of the Startup India initiative, launched by the prime minister on January 16, 2016.

With participation from over 25 countries and more than 200 global speakers, the summit will be the largest startup confluence organised by the Government of India since the launch of the Startup India initiative, the PMO said.

# UK new Covid strain cases in India reach 109

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The number of people infected with the new UK variant of SARS-CoV-2 in India has reached 109 at present, the Ministry of health and family welfare said on Thursday. On Wednesday, the number was 102 while till January 11, 96 people were found infected with the new strain which is said to be more lethal.

"The total number of persons found infected with the new UK variant genome stands at 109 on Thursday," the ministry said in a statement here.

All these people have been kept in single room isolation in designated healthcare facilities by respective state governments, it said.

"Their close contacts have also been put under quaran-

tine. Comprehensive contact tracing has been initiated for co-travellers, family contacts and others. Genome sequencing on other specimens is going on," the ministry said.

Meanwhile, the ongoing trend of contraction of India's daily new Covid cases continues with India recording less than 20,000 daily new cases since the last seven days.

In the last 24 hours, only 16,946 persons were found to be infected with COVID in India. In the same period, India also registered 17,652 new recoveries ensuring a net decline of 904 cases in the Active Caseload.

Daily deaths in India are on a sustained decline. Less than 300 daily deaths have been registered for the last 20 days.

India's Case Fatality Rate stands at 1.44 per cent with 22

# Portable testing laboratory for genome sequencing at IGIA

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

To ensure early detection of new mutant variants of Covid-19, SpiceHealth in collaboration with CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (CSIR-IGIB) has set up a portable testing laboratory for genome sequencing at Delhi's Indira

Gandhi International airport for all positive samples from international travellers. The lab was inaugurated by Dr VK Paul, Member (Health)/NITI Aayog in the presence of Dr Anurag Agrawal, Director, CSIR-IGIB, Ajay Singh, CMD, SpiceJet and Avani Singh, CEO, SpiceHealth.

States/UTs have cases fatality rate less than the national average.

The active caseload of the country stands at 2,13,603. The share of active cases in the total positive cases has further shrunk to 2.03 per cent.

India's Total Recoveries

stand at 10,14,673 on Thursday. Kerala has reported the maximum number of single day recoveries with 5,158 newly recovered cases. 3,009 people recovered in Maharashtra in the past 24 hours followed by 930 in Chhattisgarh.

# India airs concern over violence in Afghanistan

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India on Thursday described the targeted killing of journalists and civil society members in Afghanistan as an attempt to suppress freedom of expression and pitched for an "immediate and comprehensive" ceasefire to lay the ground for a meaningful peace process in the country.

Expressing deep concern over the killings, External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said India stands with the people of Afghanistan in their journey towards peace and these attacks are contrary to the spirit of the peace process and should immediately stop. Asked about National

Security Adviser Ajit Doval's two-day visit to Afghanistan, Srivastava said at a media briefing that his discussions with Afghan leaders focused on bilateral relations and the Afghan peace process.

Doval called on President Ashraf Ghani, and held talks with Afghan peace negotiator Abdullah Abdullah, Afghan National Security Adviser Hamdullah Mohib, Foreign Minister Mohammad Haneef Atmar and former president Hamid Karzai.

"In the past few weeks, we have received inputs of several attacks on journalists and civil society activists in Afghanistan. The targeted

## TMC MP Shatabdi joins rebel ranks

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Banners of rebellion continue to unfurl and flutter in Mamata Banerjee's Bengal with actor-turned TMC parliamentarian Shatabdi Roy becoming the latest in the line of rebels to sing in rebellious note.

The three-time MP from Birbhum has written on her Facebook handle that she might take the final decision in a couple of day's time citing reasons of being ignored in her own party.

If she quits the TMC she will be the fourth heavyweight leader to leave the party in a month's time. Roy's declaration comes within a month of Bengal Ministers Suwendu Adhikari and Laxmi Ratan Shukla and TMC MP Sunil Mandal quitting the party.

Expressing displeasure at being constantly ignored by a section of the leadership Roy has said that she would "take a decision about my future in a couple of day's time."

## Rahul hails Tamil tradition of Jallikattu in Madurai

**CHENNAI:** An unprecedented crowd gathered at Avaniyapuram near Madurai to greet former Congress president Rahul Gandhi who paid a day's visit to the State on Thursday to witness the traditional bull taming sport of Jallikattu.

Addressing the thousands who had turned up to welcome him, Rahul Gandhi said that watching the taming of bulls was like 'experiencing' Tamil culture and history in action.'

The Congress in its election manifestos in 2009 and 2014 had assured the people that if voted back to power, the party would ban once and for ever the jallikattu sports.

While on his way back to the airport, Rahul Gandhi told media persons that he would continue to stand by the farmers of the country who are agitating against the Farm Bills. He lambasted Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his indifference to the woes of the farmers. **PNS**

## Bengal polls may be declared in Feb

**Kolkata:** The dates of Bengal Assembly elections may be declared as early as in the month of February, Election Commission sources said adding the election process might be wrapped up by the end of April.

A full bench of the Commission will visit Bengal anytime after January 18 during which it will take stock of situations before taking a final decision, sources said. Deputy Election Commissioner Sudip Jain on Thursday held meeting with Bengal Health Secretary and senior officials of the Education Department sources added. **PNS**

## Mohan Bhagwat attends Pongal fest

**CHENNAI:** It was a Pongal with a difference for residents of Ponniyammanmedu village, far away from Chennai city. An ordinary RSS worker in the village had a special guest for breakfast and it turned out to be none other than the Sarsangchalak Dr Mohan Bhagwat who turned up dressed like a Tamilian in veshti, shirt and angavastram (shawl). Dr Bhagwat exchanged Pongal greetings with the family and had an interaction with the three-year old daughter of the RSS worker who was surprised by the fluency with which the Sarsangchalak spoke in Tamil. **PNS**

## NCP Min refuses to defend son-in-law held in drug case

**Mumbai:** A day after his son-in-law Sameer Khan was arrested by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), Maharashtra's Minority Affairs Minister and NCP chief spokesperson Nawab Malik said that "no one is above law"

"Nobody is above the law and it should be applied without any discrimination. Law will take its due course and justice will prevail. I respect and have immense faith in our judiciary, Malik tweeted.

Malik's daughter Nilofar is married to Bandra resident Sameer Khan, who was arrested by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) on Wednesday

night after day-long grilling. Khan was produced before a Magistrate's court, which remanded him in NCB's custody till January 18.

Coming to Malik's defence, NCP chief Sharad Pawar said: "There are no personal allegations against Nawab Malik. The person converted (Malik's son-in-law) must cooperate with the concerned agency".

Sasmeer's arrest came a day after it arrested Ramkumar Tiwari, one of the brothers who own "Muchhad Paanwala" shop at Kemps corner in south Mumbai, in connection of cannabis-related drugs. **PNS**

## Jammu school education directorate to set up digital studio for teachers to deliver online lectures

**Jammu:** The Directorate of School Education (DSE) will set up a digital studio in Jammu division for teachers to deliver online lectures, a senior official said on Thursday.

The Union Ministry of Education has sanctioned establishment of the digital studio under the Samagra Shiksha scheme, Director of School Education in Jammu Anuradha Gupta said.

"While the directorate will set up the studio very soon, various measures to improve quality of education through digital interventions need to be put in place for making learning more efficient and effective," she said.

"Delivering best online lectures through a control room at the studio shall soon be made possible. Besides, keeping in view the National Education Policy 2020 for art-integrated learning and holistic

development of school children, they need to be exposed to art, culture, sports and other activities which are now perceived to be part of curriculum," she said.

The directorate will also launch an official YouTube channel -- 'shiksha darpan' - - to broadcast video content and e-magazine 'shiksha patrika' for written content contributed by students, teachers and other stakeholders.

As information technology-enabled platforms are increasingly becoming an important medium of information dissemination and will continue to be so in the post-COVID-19 scenario, the Directorate of School Education intends to use various social media platforms to reach out to students, their parents, staff members and other stakeholders in an effective manner and provide them a platform to showcase their talent, she said. **PTI**

## Scanning laptop, hard disk of expelled BJP leader held for sexual abuse of children: Police

**Jalaun (UP):** Police are looking into the laptop, DVD and hard disc recovered from an expelled BJP office-bearer who was arrested on charges of sexually exploiting two children, an official said on Thursday.

Police said they have recovered several video clips in which Ram Bihari Rathore, who was removed from the post of the Konch BJP vice-president after his arrest on Wednesday, is allegedly seen sexually exploiting children. Some 15 to 20 videos have so far been found from the seized laptop, DVD and hard disc, in which the accused is seen exploiting young children, Konch SHO Imran Khan said on Thursday.

The SHO said Rathore used to lure young children by giving them money and made their obscene videos to blackmail them. He used to threaten and exploit them sexually, the SHO

said, adding that teams of the cyber-crime cell are looking into the matter in detail.

To a question, Khan said it would be premature to link this case with the Irrigation Department junior engineer, who was arrested in November last year for alleged sexual exploitation of children and selling their videos and photographs of nefarious acts on dark net to paedophiles across the globe.

The arrested junior engineer, a resident of Chitrakoot district, is alleged to have victimised about 50 children in the age group of 5-16 years in the districts of Chitrakoot, Banda and Hamirpur.

According to police, they had seized a laptop, hard disk, sex toys, eight mobile phones, Rs 8 lakh in cash and other digital evidence carrying huge amount of child sexual abuse material from the engineer. **PTI**

## Ganga conservation to be part of UP syllabus

**Lucknow:** Students of the Uttar Pradesh Secondary Education Board (UPSEB) will now study the Ganga conservation subject at the high school and intermediate level.

This has been included as a subject at the initiative of the Namami Gange Department and Uttar Pradesh will be the first state to do so.

According to the government spokesman, a proposal to include Ganga conservation and prevention of water pollution in the curriculum has been prepared and the UPSEB has sent it to a committee of

Hindi experts for consideration.

Once the committee approves the proposal, the subject will be included in the syllabus. Students will learn ways to save the holy water of the Ganga from getting polluted and the journey of the Ganga from the Himalayas to the Bay of Bengal.

The idea is to link the Ganga cleanliness campaign with the youth and spread Prime Minister Narendra Modi's concept of 'Nirmal and Aviral Ganga' among children. **IANS**

## UP woman goes missing, cops lodge case against man under anti-conversion law

**Gorakhpur (UP):** Police have lodged a case against a Karnataka man for allegedly kidnapping a 19-year-old woman after befriending her, hiding his religious identity, police said on Thursday.

A missing report was lodged by the woman's father on January 5 after she did not return home from college, Station House Officer, Chiluatal police station, Neeraj Kumar Rai said.

"During an investigation and with the help of call records of the woman's mobile phone, it was found that she used to frequently talk to the man

whose name in the Truecaller app was mentioned as Mehboob and the location as Karnataka," he said.

A case was lodged against the man on January 11, following which a three-member police team was sent to Karnataka to trace the man and the kidnapped woman, Rai said.

On the basis of these inputs, the woman's father lodged an FIR against the man and accused him of allegedly kidnapping his daughter and hiding his Muslim identity, he said.

The woman's father, who is

a retired Army man, has mentioned in the FIR that last year the man had befriended his daughter through social media and wooed her on the pretext of providing a job.

Police said that everything would be clear once the accused and the kidnapped woman are traced.

The case was lodged under sections 366 (kidnapping, abduction or inducing woman to compel her into marriage ) and 363 (kidnapping) of the Indian Penal Code, besides the new anti-conversion law of the Uttar Pradesh government, the SHO said. **PTI**

## Is Bihar entering a phase of Jungle Raj 2.0?

**Patna:** While the police in Patna are facing criticism over the sensational murder of an Indigo state head, a section of people in Bihar are apprehensive that they might be entering into a phase of 'Jungle Raj 2.0'.

Indigo airlines station manager, Rupesh Kumar Singh (40), was allegedly shot dead by criminals near the Shastri Nagar police station area in Patna on Tuesday.

The murder of the Indigo state head brings back the fearful memories of Airtel GM's murder at Bahadurpur Gumti in Patna in 2005, the kidnapping of Bharat Singh and a series of criminal acts which took place during the Lalu Prasad-Rabri Devi regime between 1990 and 2005. The high crime rate during that period even led to the downfall of the RJD in 2005.

Now, the Nitish Kumar government is facing similar criticism over the growing crime graph in the state ever since he returned as Bihar Chief Minister for a seventh time in November 2020.

In a bid to bring down the crime graph, the Nitish Kumar government had started operation 'Ganga Snaan' during 2005-2007 when several notorious criminals were silently eliminated by the police or were put behind bars. On may recall the famous encounter of dreaded gangster Amresh Singh in Khagaria, or the killing of gangster Guddu Sharma in an encounter in Delhi. Many of Bihar's most notorious gangsters, such as Surajbhan Singh, Anant Singh and Mohamad Sahabuddin, were put behind bars during that period.

It was a secret operation

carried out by the Bihar police and the STF to eliminate the criminals, when the government had given a free hand to the police. Hence, there are no official records of the encounters that took place during that period.

Sources say that due to the impact of the operation, Nitish Kumar managed to attain the image of 'Sushashan Babu' in Bihar. Now the question is whether the Nitish Kumar government would again adopt a similar modus operandi to check the rising crime graph in the state.

The Chief Minister, who also holds the home portfolio, is under immense pressure following the murder of Rupesh Singh. The leaders of his alliance partner BJP in particular are making aggressive statements to corner the CM.

Janardan Sigrwal, BJP MP

from Maharajganj, said: "Killers of Rupesh Singh should be hanged at the busy chowks of the city in broad daylight. If any amendment is required to do this, the government should proceed with it. Criminals cannot allowed to be let off. In the case of Rupesh Singh, Patna police have to expose the planner."

Earlier, Nitin Naveen, BJP MLA from Bankipur, had asked the Bihar government to endorse the Uttar Pradesh model of encounter.

Union Minister R.K. Singh said that the Bihar government should suspend callous police officers who have failed to control law and order in Patna.

RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav has already said that Nitish Kumar has failed to control the law and order situation in Bihar and should resign from his post or give the home port-

## Kerala reports 5,490 new Covid cases, 4,337 recoveries

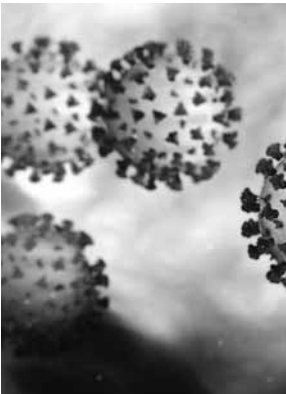
**Thiruvananthapuram:** Kerala on Thursday reported 5,490 new Covid-19 cases with a test positivity rate of 8.11 per cent, a press statement issued by the office of state health minister K.K. Shailaja said. On a positive note, 4,337 people recovered from the disease on Thursday.

Malappuram reported the maximum number of cases on Thursday at 712, while Kasargod reported the least number of cases at 72. As many as 67,712 samples were tested on Thursday.

Meanwhile, 19 deaths in the last 24 hours took the state's Covid death toll to 3,392.

Among those who tested positive on Thursday, 92 people had come from outside the state, 4,911 got the disease through contact while the source of contact of 435 people is unclear.

Fifty-two health workers tested positive on Thursday, 14 in Kozhikode, followed by Pathanamthitta (9), Kannur (7), Thrissur (5), Ernakulam and Wayanad (4 each), Idukki and Palakkad (2 each), and



Thiruvananthapuram, Malappuram and Kasargod (1 each).

At present, there are 2,01,293 people under observation in the state, including 10,904 at various hospitals.

Meanwhile, 6 new hotspots on Thursday increased the state's tally to 420. **IANS**

## Wild buffalo kills man in Assam, angry mob sets forest office on fire

**Guwahati:** An irate mob on Thursday set a forest department office on fire after a wild buffalo killed a young man in Biswanath district in northern Assam bordering Arunachal Pradesh, officials said.

According to the police, hundreds of locals, including women, turned violent after Jayanta Das, a villager, was killed by a wild buffalo at Muttackgaon in Biswanath district. Accusing the forest officials of not taking adequate steps to prevent wild animals from entering into the human habitations and villages from the nearby forests, the angry villagers set on fire the office of the Central Range of the Biswanath Wildlife Division.

"A wild buffalo came to the Biswanath Ghat early on Thursday morning and tried to attack the villagers. We immediately informed the forest officials, but they reached the spot after the buffalo had attacked and killed Das," Prashanta Sharma, an eyewitness, told the media.

The villagers have demanded a compensation of Rs 50 lakh for the victim's family. The police and forest officials had a tough time in pacifying the angry mob. **IANS**



Devotees perform rituals on the bank of Ganga river during 'Makar Sankranti' festival celebration, in Varanasi on Thursday

PTI



## Go, India!

As the last Test of the Australia tour gets underway today, here's hoping that Team India will vanquish its demons



Courage and heroism are not restricted to the battlefield; there are times when these prized characteristics spill onto the cricket field too, among other unlikely arenas. Just as the valiant Indian cricket team showed with a great win in the face of adversity in Melbourne, especially coming as it did after the humiliation at Adelaide when India's vaunted batting line-up was bowled out for a truly embarrassing 36. And though we didn't register a win in the Sydney Test, India fought tooth and nail, battled pain and a hostile Australian bowling attack to prevent the hosts from moving up in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy series that's currently tied 1-1. "...This one is a tough one to swallow. Our bowlers were superb but..." Australian skipper Tim Paine said after the match. By the time you read this, the Brisbane Test — the last Test of the series, an ultimate decider that will test the resilience, composure and physical fitness of the players — would have got underway. Australia need a win to regain the trophy but a draw will suffice for India to retain it for another couple of years. So what's in store for the Indian cricket fan? Of course, time alone will deliver the result but one thing we can be confident of: That the Indian players will leave nothing to chance to win this one and, will not only perform the best their bodies and spirit allow but hopefully go beyond, into the realm of the surreal. The Indian team's hotel may have turned into a mini hospital but the players, as well as members of the Indian diaspora, are walking with a lot of pride at their team's showing, especially since the time the atmosphere was soured by racist chants and abuses from a section of the spectators.

The injuries to key players are a clear and present threat. The list of prominent players who are nursing their wounds comprises pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, Ravichandran Ashwin, Mohammed Shami, Ravindra Jadeja and Hanuma Vihari. Till late on Thursday, Team India had delayed naming the playing XI and there was word that the names would be announced only in the morning, just ahead of the beginning of the Test, thus giving the injured players the maximum time to recuperate and allowing them to take the field after assessing their condition. Notably, Ajinkya Rahane has been performing consistently in his new role after skipper Virat Kohli returned to India on paternity leave to be at the side of his wife Anushka Sharma for the delivery of their first child. Rahane was pushed into a leadership position he did not necessarily want but one where he has since been conducting himself brilliantly. Most importantly, all of India's players have dealt with the emotional deprivation of the 'bubble' well, steering clear of breaking it no matter what the temptations. They have battled it all in the ongoing Test series, within themselves and with the world outside: Issues with facilities, racial slurs, losing key players at crucial junctures, injury after injury, issues with bubble life for multiple months et al. Irrespective of the result, therefore, Team India can return with their heads held high. Meanwhile, Australian skipper Tim Paine urged the home fans to refrain from causing "any trouble". Gabba has been a fortress for the Aussies where they haven't lost a game since 1987-88.

## Virushka set the bar

The star couple has politely asked the paparazzi not to take pictures of their newborn daughter



One of the most photographed couples in the country, cricketer Virat Kohli and actor Anushka Sharma have laid down the rules for the paparazzi and asked the pesky photographers, who often cross the line between the demands of "profession" and intrusion of privacy, to stay away from their newborn child. On Wednesday, in a sweetly-worded note, they urged the paparazzi to refrain from taking pictures of their baby girl. Anushka and Virat sent a note to the paparazzi fraternity in Mumbai, which read: "Hi, thank you for all the love that you have given us all these years. We are happy to celebrate this momentous occasion with you. As parents, we have a simple request to make to you. We

want to protect the privacy of our child and we need your help and support." The couple clearly established that they will ensure that the paparazzi get the content featuring both the stars but requested them to steer clear of their child. "While we will always ensure that you get all the content you need featuring us, we would request you to kindly not take or carry any content that has our child. We know that you will understand where we are coming from and we thank you for the same." To their credit, the paps agreed to leave the child alone, in turn winning the appreciation of veteran actor Raveena Tandon who took the opportunity to thank them for respecting her wishes too when she was trying to protect her children, who were minors at the time. By reaching out to the paparazzi, Virushka, as the couple is popularly known, have shown the celebrity world how it is done because the relationship between famous people and the paparazzi has been tumultuous, to say the least. While most of the time the celebrities are fine with photographers clicking them as it increases their visibility, like every other human they, too, cherish their private moments and don't want them splashed on the front pages of tabloids and on websites.

Fame, they say, has a price but most A-listers don't want their children to pay the price for their parents' celebrity status. But there are always exceptions to the rule. Like Saif Ali Khan and Shah Rukh Khan don't have any issues with pictures of Taimur and AbRam being splashed all over the media and the internet. Even though the older children of both the actors were almost never photographed when they were growing up, both the fathers seem to have no reservation where these latest additions to the family are concerned, thanks to the changing times, one can suppose. As a result, Taimur and AbRam have become social media influencers at such a tender age, as have Aaradhya Bachchan, Misha Kapoor and Inaaya Naomi Kemmu. How these star kids will deal with the pressure of the paparazzi always following them, or maybe the lack of attention once they grow up, only time will tell. At the moment, they are obviously too young to be aware of the repeated violation of their privacy and the danger it entails to their well-being. After all, we live in a country where the five-year-old daughter of a cricketer got a rape threat just because her father was not performing well on the field. It is well that Virushka have decided to keep their private life private for the safety of their child. In fact, many celebrities around the world guard their children zealously from photographers and there have been instances where the paparazzi have been sued for crossing the line. A case in point is Hollywood actor George Clooney, who sued a pap and his publication for climbing over the walls of his villa and clicking photos of his child. Traditionally, the paparazzi are looked down upon as being a thorn in the side of celebrities. However, they alone cannot be blamed for what they do because the public has created a demand for such pictures. If people did not get voyeuristic pleasure out of the candid photos of celebrities and their families, the demand for such pics would not exist and publications would stop paying hefty sums to intrusive photographers.

# Green star over Bengal

As Mamata Banerjee's domain West Bengal is Asaduddin Owaisi's next election stop, the State can expect explosive electioneering



PRAFULL GORADIA

Asaduddin Owaisi is a politician with blue blood, which has turned crimson by barristery, a surname imported from Arabia and the leadership of a century-old party founded by Nawab Mahmood Nawaz Khan. In 1944, Razakar leader Qasim Rizvi was selected as the party's leader, to also become the extra military force of the Nizam of Hyderabad.

In 1957, Rizvi was exiled to Pakistan but, before departing, he handed over the Majlis-e-Itehadul-Muslimeen (MIM) to his right-hand man, Janab Abdul Wahid Owaisi. His son Sultan Salahuddin took over the party in 1975, and it was inherited by his illustrious son Asaduddin. The party headquarters are based in an impressive building, called Dar-us-Salam, near the famed Charminar.

Asaduddin inherited a single Lok Sabha seat, the Hyderabad city constituency. It is to his credit that the MIM is today an all-India name. It now threatens to bite off some Assembly seats in Bengal. Owais means "little wolf" in Arabic and, therefore, he is likely to hunt voraciously. By a stroke of coincidence, he was fielded against me in a television channel's programme. Our debate was on a communal controversy. The anchor asked for his comments first, to which I reacted that Owaisi's views might be coloured by those prevailing in a neighbouring country. His counter-reaction was explosive.

Thus, West Bengal can expect explosive electioneering. Mamata Didi too will not let Owaisi go quietly. She must know that for Muslim voters, there are no insiders or outsiders. Languages, other than Urdu, are unimportant. The sacred thread of Islam binds them all. Muslims are *mominis*; the others, however neighbourly, are "different". Hindu arguments do not cut ice with Muslims. The main fight between Didi and Janab will be in the eastern districts of West Bengal.

I imagine that the Hyderabad appeal will be: "Come and vote for me, because I shall do everything for you. I have no loyalty other than towards the *bandas* of Allah the Merciful, whereas my opposition has other communities too to cater to. My party will be exclusively for you while the opposing kitchen will have to cook vegetarian as well as non-vegetarian; '*niraaamish*' as well as '*saamish*'."

The result of their secular duality has been the Tareekh-e-Intekhab, or the history of elections in India: Flatter the Muslim, occasionally



frighten him with a riot and then protect him, going back to flattery. In the eyes of Allah the Merciful, he may be a *momin* but in the view of the vote harvester, he is a tiger in a circus cage; the only grouse being that he is too sparingly fed to attack. Jawaharlal Nehru once said that he was a Hindu only by accident; he was a Muslim by culture and an Englishman by upbringing. He, therefore, knew how to make a Muslim tick. And tick he had to, for the Congress was dominated by the Patelites. Nehru had to build his own support base. Muslims, traumatised by Partition, were his first choice. Reputedly, they voted nearly 90 per cent whereas, in the early elections, the rest of the voters polled not more than 45 per cent. The net result was that one Muslim voter was worth two Hindus.

With the passage of time, things have changed; more Hindus go to the polling booth now. Late Syed Shahabuddin once wrote in a national daily that for his community, if there were a choice between development and identity, it would go for identity. In Nehru's days, by electing him, the Muslim love for identity won. Although they were poor, India was a wonderful country. Lately, Hindu candidates are winning more because their community votes more. India has, therefore, become an "insecure" country.

For all these reasons, the Muslim clusters, wherever they be, are in search of new heroes; the parties of old ones appear to be folding up. One such superhero is Asaduddin, literally the

**MAMATA MUST KNOW THAT FOR MUSLIM VOTERS, THERE ARE NO INSIDERS OR OUTSIDERS. THE MAIN FIGHT BETWEEN DIDI AND JANAB WILL BE IN THE EASTERN DISTRICTS OF WEST BENGAL.**

lion of religion. Didi's straight reply would be that Muslims alone cannot form a Government; they are too few. They have to combine with others and only then can they win a majority. Go back to the days and years of Babu Jagjivan Ram, who ended up as the Deputy Prime Minister. Never in his political career did he publicly discuss his caste. Had he done so, he might have got a maximum of

18 per cent votes. Wherefrom would he have gathered a minimum of another 33 per cent? The same will be the problem with Owaisi. Can he form a Government in West Bengal? Therefore, why waste your vote on such a party? As soon as the election is over, he would pack his *achkan* in a suitcase and take a flight to Hyderabad, bidding goodbye to the Bengalis and promising to see them in the next election. By all means, give him a *bhand/kulhad* of tea, but don't waste your vote. I have neither an *achkan* nor suitcase, nor any flight to catch. Therefore, vote for me. It is undeniable that the *umma* has given some votes in Bihar to Owaisi and elected five MLAs. It remains to be seen what these MIM MLAs do in Bengal.

After, say, one or two elections, in the event of an ascending path, whether Owaisi and his party could pose a threat to the integrity of the country, has to be seen. After all, we should not forget Partition. Soon after August 1947, HS Suhrawardy, former Premier of undivided Bengal, wrote to Chaudhry Khaliqzaman in UP that the strategy for the Muslims staying behind in India should be to gather in clusters or mega ghettos. Incidentally, Khaliqzaman became the president of the Muslim League in Pakistan after MA Jinnah passed away. This advice might imply that if several clusters gathered together, in due course, more partitions could be engineered. The Government of India should discourage cluster formations from now on.

There is one consolation that Owaisi hails from a land of

dreamers, like Nizam Mir Osman Ali. He had Ali Yavar Jung, then Secretary (Constitutional Affairs), give the view that the Portuguese considered Marmagao to be a dead-weight and would be willing to sell it at a reasonable price. The idea of buying Goa was too attractive to be dissipated by realism. When the World War ended, the prospects of success brightened. On Hyderabad's side, the prime mover was Sir Mirza Ismail with Sir Walter Monckton as a close second.

The parleys in Lisbon had become known in India. Once India gained Independence, it was unlikely to acquiesce for long to Portugal's rule over Goa, just as it rejected Hyderabad's claim to independence. Still less would it permit Hyderabad's transit rights over land or air space. If only Hyderabad had a port like Marmagao, it would add enormously to its political and economic importance.

The meeting between the Portuguese and Hyderabad negotiators, on November 1, 1947, was attended by Portuguese Prime Minister Salazar, Sir Alexander Roger and Antonio Bastroff Silva. In bitter retrospect, the devoted Hyderabad writer Zubeida Yazdani made two points. One was about Mir Osman Ali Khan's "megalomaniac notions" which caused him "to lose the balance of his mind". Her other grievance was that "the Nizam depended too strongly on the Muslim League for the achievement of his goal", an independent Muslim State in the south of India.

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

## SOUNDBITE

Many congratulations to the countrymen on Makar Sankranti. I wish Uttaraayan Suryadev to bring new energy in everyone's life.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi

With the new state of emergency starting on Friday, the rule is to stay in a home-based retreat. However, schools will remain open as usual.



Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa

I wasn't loving myself in the way that I should from 20 to 40 — that's 20 years. I feel so sad that I did that to myself, just not loving yourself the right way.



Actor Rebel Wilson

I think Lyon has bowled okay. I thought in the first Test match at Adelaide, he created heaps of chances and didn't get a hand.



Australian cricketer Tim Paine

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Make affordable EVs

Sir — It refers to the editorial 'Welcome, Tesla' (January 14). Indeed, it is a positive move for the automobile industry in the country not only from the Electric Vehicle (EV) and environment perspective but also from the point of view of auto ancillary and suppliers chain.

Though it would be too early to predict Tesla's future in India, if it remains confined to its research and development unit in Bengaluru, it may not serve the purpose we want it to for the country.

Needless to mention that cost is one of the most critical parameters for Indian buyers and before launching an India-specific product, Tesla had better conduct a thorough market research to arrive at an acceptable price point; otherwise this entire exercise will be futile. India's commitment to environment is second to none and Indian buyers will happily accept green cars. But even after factoring in the Government's tax incentives to set up an industry here, products have to be economically viable for Indian buyers.

Bal Govind Noida

### Resume normal services of Mumbai local trains

The Maharashtra Government should allow resumption of the Mumbai local train services for all categories of commuters without further delay. The local train services are the city's lifeline and Mumbaiers rely on these for their daily commute.

It seems that Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray is least bothered about the difficulties facing the citizens while they go to their workplaces, offices, schools and so on. Even the famous *dabbawalas* who deliver lunch-boxes to people, use local train services. We all have suffered a lot due to the Coronavirus pandemic and subsequent lockdown but citizens have rendered their full cooperation to the Government in the fight against the pandemic. It is the responsibility of the State Government to take care of citizens now and take a decision in the larger public interest.

However, after its initial shutdown in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the suburban train services have been partially resumed. As of now, the suburban railway system is open only for certain categories of commuters, including those providing essential services, lawyers and women. Railway officials



claim that they have not received any directives from the State Government regarding the opening of services for general public. Any further delay in allowing the full-scale operation of suburban trains will prove counterproductive to the image of the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi Government and a setback to the popularity of Thackeray.

Jubel D' Cruz Mumbai

### COVID threat persists

Sir — It was indeed a welcome sight to see the excitement and joy of movie buffs returning to cinema halls in Kerala after many months since the theatres stopped screening movies due to the pandemic. The crowd really welcomed, celebrated and enjoyed Tamil actor Vijay's

movie 'Master' which is the first to hit the silver screen after several months.

But what gives the real jitters is the way the crowd behaved at the theatres. They completely forgot COVID-related precautions and, at many places, social distancing went for a toss as fans arrived in huge numbers and had all sorts of celebration inside

and outside the cinema halls. Many persons were not even wearing masks. We must not forget that we are still fighting the contagion and there is no way to keep it at bay other than taking precautions and wearing masks. The vaccination drive has not yet started.

M Pradyu Nagarjuna Kannur

### Improve bank services

Sir — The Union Government and Reserve Bank of India (RBI) should take note of the malpractices by banks with respect to credit card payments.

Banks are levying extraordinary interest rates on credit card payments. Many banks also don't send credit card statements and any shortfall in payment attracts heavy penalty. The penalty imposed for over-the-limit use of credit cards should not be allowed. Instead, banks can refuse payment on reaching the limit. It is ridiculous that an over-payment of just ₹100 may attract a heavy penalty of ₹500 plus the GST.

The Centre and the RBI should bring necessary amendments to make uniform rules with respect to credit cards, including interest rate and penalties. These malpractices by the banks will eventually spoil the image of the Government and also have an adverse effect on customers' faith in the banking system.

Subhash Chandra Agrawal Delhi

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



FIRST COLUMN

## There has to be some equity

The UN has failed to acknowledge the rise of atrocities against Hindus, Buddhists and Sikhs. Till this selectivity exists, the world can never truly foster a culture of peace, says **KOUL JALALI**

In yet another incident of human rights violations 11 Hazara coal miners in Baluchistan province of Pakistan were abducted by terrorists and killed recently. The Islamic State claimed responsibility for this heinous act and the relatives of the miners have refused to bury them till their demands for justice are met. The Hazaras are a Persian-speaking ethnic group whose homeland is Hazarajat in Central Afghanistan. In Pakistan they live mostly in Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces. They are Shia Muslims and in Pakistan they are suspected of loyalty towards Iran.

These latest atrocities have again drawn the attention of the global community towards the persistent killings of Hazaras and have been condemned widely. There have been protests at many places in Pakistan. Because of their somewhat Mongolian features the Hazaras are easily identifiable and in recent years thousands of them have been murdered in Pakistan. However nobody has been ever punished for these persistent ruthless crimes.

Atrocities against the minorities in Pakistan began soon after the country came into existence in 1947 but got intensified once Islamisation started there under General Zia-ul-Haq. Initially, persecution was mostly confined to the Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains and Christians. But later these rights violations got extended to the Shias, Ahmadiyyas, Sufis, Hazaras, Seraikis and other similar sects and groups living in different parts of Pakistan.

These persecutions assume the form of abductions, murders, mass murders, bombings, suicide bombings, forceful conversions to Islam, extrajudicial killings, threats of violence and killings on allegations of blasphemy that are mostly based on personal vendettas and religious bias. The motivating force behind atrocities against these minorities almost in all cases is faith. Whereas the Ahmadiyyas have been declared heretics long back, there is a deep religious divide between the majority Sunni population and the Shia minority.

The worst is that attacks on and desecration of places of worship of minorities have turned into recurring incidents. For instance, on December 31, 2020 a Hindu temple including the Samadhi of a religious leader in Karak District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province were set on fire by a mob led by some clerics and supporters of radical Islamist Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam party (Fazal ur Rehman group). According to the police, 100 people including seven leading clerics were arrested. India lodged a strong protest against this act and sought strict action against the perpetrators of the crime.

This heinous incident draws attention to the Nehru-Liaquat Agreement arrived at between the then Prime Minister of India Jawaharlal Nehru and the then Prime Minister of Pakistan Liaquat Ali Khan in New Delhi in April, 1950. The Partition had resulted in exchange of populations between the two countries. Under the agreement, among other matters, minority rights in both the nations were confirmed and both the States set up their minority commissions. But seeing the plight of the minorities in Pakistan, it is obvious that the minority commissions have not worked.

Rejecting the Opposition's criticism of the Citizenship Amendment Bill in the Indian Parliament in December 2019, Union Home Minister Amit Shah clearly stated that the pact has failed. He said that had the spirit of the agreement been followed by Pakistan there would have been no need to bring the Bill.

In any case, the obvious fact cannot be contended that after the Partition the population of Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains and Christians who lived in areas which later became a part of Pakistan has dwindled drastically whereas the population of Muslims who lived in areas which later became a part of the Indian Union has grown exponentially. The reasons for this are not far to seek. While in India rights and security of the minorities have been continuously and effectively safeguarded, Pakistan has persistently contravened the provisions of the Nehru-Liaquat Agreement through consistent neglect and persecution of members of minority communities. This is despite the fact that the Nehru-Liaquat Agreement required each country to ensure that its minorities enjoyed complete equality of citizenship with others and received treatment identical to that available to other nationals of their country.

In another such incident trampling on the rights of the minorities, ignoring the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolution, the Pakistani Government decided to transfer the management of the Kartarpur Sahib Gurudwara to a non-Sikh body. India strongly protested and the incident has been resented all over the world. In a speech at the UN session on 'Culture of Peace' in December 2020, the First Secretary to India's Permanent Mission to the UN agreed with the fact that anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and anti-Christian acts need to be condemned but stated that UN resolutions on such important issues speak only of three Abrahamic religions Judaism, Christianity and Islam. He said that the august body has failed to acknowledge the rise of hatred and violence against Hindus, Buddhists and Sikhs and referred to the shattering of the iconic Bamyan Buddhas by the Taliban in 2001 and the killing of 25 Sikh worshippers in a terrorist bomb attack on a Gurudwara in Kabul in March 2020. He said that in such resolutions these religions also need to be added to the list because till this selectivity exists, the world can never truly foster a culture of peace.

*(The writer is a journalist, producer and director. The views expressed are personal.)*

WE WANT TO KNOW WHETHER THE GOLD SMUGGLING CASE ACCUSED, SWAPNA, HAD ATTENDED YOUR DAUGHTER'S MARRIAGE.  
—CONGRESS LEADER PT THOMAS

POINTCOUNTERPOINT



THE MARRIAGE WAS CONDUCTED IN A BIG HALL IN CLIFF HOUSE AND ONLY CLOSE FRIENDS AND RELATIVES PARTICIPATED. SWAPNA WAS NOT THERE.  
—KERALA CHIEF MINISTER PINARAYI VIJAYAN

# Make cyberspace safe for kids

Online harassment can take a serious toll on their mental health. The words, pictures, video clips or any form of data stored on the internet stay forever, haunting the victim



ROBIN RATNAKAR DAVID

The nationwide lockdown necessitated by the pandemic forced people to work from home. Schools and colleges, too, shifted to remote and online functioning. While this protected children/teenagers from exposure to the Coronavirus, migration of classrooms to remote learning environments increased the time they spend online, both for education and entertainment purposes. Prolonged online presence during the lockdown exposed minors to unsupervised interaction with strangers and third parties. Consequently, within a few months of the lockdown in India, the Bois Locker Room scandal broke out on social media where a group of teenagers accessed photos of women and girls from social media pages. The group posted lewd comments on the photographs on an Instagram group and issued rape threats to women/girls who demanded action against them. Fortunately, Delhi Police and its Cyber Cell took action against the group under the Penal Code and Cyber laws.

Cyberbullying, cyberstalking, online impersonation, catfishing, doxing, trolling, revenge porn, sexting, grooming and sexual exploitation are some common forms of online harassment. According to a study published by Child Rights and You, 9.2 per cent of 630 adolescents surveyed in Delhi-NCR experienced cyberbullying and half of them did not report this to either their teachers, parents or guardians. Further, it found that children aged 13-18 years, who use the internet for more than three hours in a day, are more prone to risks. Online harassment can take a serious toll on their mental health. The words, pictures, video clips or any form of data stored on the internet stay forever, haunting the victim. This spreads fast and cannot be erased or forgotten.

In October 2020, the Delhi High Court (HC) while directing Google, YouTube and Facebook to remove objectionable material posted by a woman's former schoolmate without her consent, also ordered the police to use the protocols and resources available with the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) and other agencies to identify people sharing/viewing the offensive content in India and take action against them. The victim said that in 2012, as a 16-year-old, she was emotionally blackmailed by the accused into sending him intimate photographs. He threatened to commit suicide if she did not comply with his demands. The harassment continued until 2017 in the UK where the Magistrate Court held him guilty of stalking and physically assaulting her. The court passed orders restraining the accused from contacting the victim by any means and banned him from entering the city of Bath for two years. In late 2019, the victim found that the accused had posted her intimate pictures on various social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and so on and reported the matter to the Cyber Crime Cell in Delhi. The cyber police registered cases against the accused under Sections 67 and 67A of the Information Technology Act. The victim also sent notices to Google and social media networks, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and Instagram urging them to remove her photographs. However, the URLs/webpages were not removed. The court acknowledged that the offending images had been widely distributed and that they were being uploaded by several people other than the accused. The court ordered the police to identify the people sharing the images.

According to the UNICEF, a child goes online for the first time in his/her life every half a second. The digital world provides easier access to child sex offenders in search of prey/potential victims and also

“YOUNGER CHILDREN ARE LESS LIKELY TO UNDERSTAND THAT THEY HAVE BEEN SUBJECTED TO ONLINE HARASSMENT AND KNOW THAT THEY MUST SEEK HELP. THE LACK OF SUPPORT NETWORKS IN SCHOOLS AND THE INCREASE IN THE TIME SPENT ONLINE, TOO, ARE REASONS FOR THE SPIKE IN CYBER CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN DURING THE PANDEMIC”



enable them to share information about victims with perpetrators of sexual crimes. Recent surveys reveal that at least one in four adolescents have seen a morphed image or video of themselves and, a half of them have not reported it to the police.

In 2019, Facebook published that it had removed 11.6 million posts related to child nudity and sexual exploitation from its webpages and 7,54,000 from Instagram. For the first time, Facebook published figures related to self-harm and suicide revealing that it had removed 2.5 million posts related to suicide and self-harm and 8,45,000 from Instagram. Among the users of the internet, children are highly likely to be exposed to violence since they have fewer opportunities than adults to leave the house and access help, according to a report published by the WHO on June 17, 2020. Smaller children are less likely to understand that they have been subjected to online harassment and know that they must seek help. The lack of support networks in schools and the increase in the time spent online, too, are reasons for the spike in cyber crimes against children during the pandemic.

**Laws:** The substantive equality approach adopted by India and expressed in Article 15(3) of the Constitution empowers the State to make special provisions for children. Article 39 provides that the State shall direct its policy towards securing children and ensure that they are not abused and their childhood and youth are protected against exploitation. It further emphasises the need to provide facilities for them to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity.

The international instrument, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) prescribes a set of standards to be followed by all parties to secure the best interests of children. States are required to undertake all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral

measures to prevent inducement or coercion of a minor to engage in any unlawful sexual activity, the exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual conduct and the exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and material. The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, is a gender-neutral law that came into force exclusively to protect children from sexual assault, harassment and pornography. The POCSO Act recognises the fact that minors are vulnerable to repeated abuse and at risk of secondary victimisation during the justice delivery process and hence, emphasised on the need for the establishment of special courts for them. Sections 13, 14 and 15 of the Act, particularly address the crime of using a minor for pornographic purposes and punishes any person who stores or possesses pornographic material in any form involving a child.

Human rights begin at birth, as envisaged in Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.' Human and child rights are inalienable ones, which means that no State-run entity or the State itself cannot deprive children of their rights. The 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child and the legislations that were promulgated in the member States have often been misconstrued as rights of children based on their needs. But these rights are independent in a true sense and recognise children as independent citizens with a voice.

**Keeping children safe:** Child rights are congruent with the obligations imposed on the State and caregivers and their accountability. Schools, parents and guardians must ensure that the online safety of children is not compromised and they don't befriend strangers online. The police, who are responsible for law enforcement must keep a watch out for offenders in cyberspaces and must strive to keep it safe for children. Schools and

caregivers must ensure that safety and security of children are of paramount importance. They must train children to report suspicious accounts. Electronic devices must be used under the supervision of a trusted adult, and the privacy settings of the devices must be checked regularly to keep minors away from online predators.

Children must be encouraged to take screenshots of any content that makes them feel uneasy and report it to the parents/authorities to take it down from the internet. They must be made aware by their parents/guardians that sharing of personal information such as location, phone numbers, date of birth and addresses must not be done. Children must be encouraged to seek help in times of distress. Parents and caregivers must assure minors that they are not alone and that the adults in their life are always available to address their worries and concerns.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development has launched a toll-free 24-hour telephonic helpline service 1098, which operates in regional languages to reach out to children in distress across India. A trained contact officer answers the calls on the helpline and forwards the message to a field partner on the ground. The field partner sends a member to the rescue of the child within an hour or two from the time they receive the call and ensures the safety of the child.

Overexposure to the internet during the pandemic had resulted in the extension of child helpline services to children using the internet to ensure their online safety and psychological well-being. Schools and caregivers must take the responsibility to make children aware about the toll-free child helpline service. Counselling facilities, too, must be made available for children who have been subjected to online harassment and bullying.

*(The writer is Advocate, Supreme Court of India and Partner, Dua Associates. The views expressed are personal.)*

# The Govt must clean up the mess

The demonstrating farmers have inadvertently pushed the ecosystem to its limits and the condition is only deteriorating day by day



KOTA SRIRAJ

In a healthy and vibrant democracy, people participate politically not only during but between elections by means of protests and sit-ins. These demonstrations usually play a vital role in influencing public opinion and altering the Government's viewpoint, which eventually has a bearing on policymaking and its implementation.

India being the largest democracy is home to a variety of protests that take place across the nation every now and then for one reason or the other. The ongoing farmers' protest against the three contentious farm-laws is one such instance, where lakhs of cultivators have laid siege at Delhi's borders for

the last 50 days. Their determination to make their voice heard forced the Government to come to the negotiation table.

Besides, the Supreme Court, too, has stayed the new legislation and has constituted an expert committee to comprehensively examine the three laws. However, the farmers are not satisfied and are adamant on their demand for the repeal of the laws and a legal guarantee on the Minimum Support Price (MSP).

However, amid all the attempts to reach a viable solution, the environment and the health of the protesters are suffering collateral damage. Inadequate sanitation facilities to cater to the needs of the sea of protesters, are not only causing a health crisis but also compromising the well-being of the ecosystem. It is having a cascading impact on the ambient environment of the region that suddenly finds itself subjected to mounting piles of garbage and unplanned disposal of sewage.

This rapid deterioration of the local ecosystem is evident from the fact that a large number of scavenging

birds can be seen hovering and circling in the sky in search of food. The flora and fauna of the region are under extreme pressure due to the sudden rise in human population and an increase in the waste and sewage generated. The demonstrating farmers have inadvertently pushed the ecosystem to its limits and the condition is only deteriorating day-by-day.

Spurred by the worsening situation on ground zero, the Jan Swasthya Abhiyaan (JSA) conducted a study that revealed that three out of five protesters or nearly 57.7 per cent have no option except to defecate in the open. This may eventually result in an outbreak of an epidemic if the authorities don't rectify the situation soon.

In the backdrop of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the situation at the protest site is alarming as social distancing and other protocols are not being followed. Even the apex court enquired from the Government regarding the steps that are being taken to prevent the area from becoming a COVID-19 hotspot. Now, the pathetic sanitary conditions in the area are adding to the

woes of the farmers and the worries of the authorities.

The protest sites at Singhu, Tikri, Shahjahanpur, Palwal and Gazipur are facing an enormous human and vehicular influx. The air quality is fast deteriorating in these areas due to the cumulative effect of vehicular exhaust, smoke from open kitchens and bonfires lit by the farmers to protect themselves from the biting cold. As the deadlock between the growers and the Government continues, respite for the environment is nowhere in sight. The survey also noted that more than 50 per cent of the respondents said that sewage water stagnation is becoming a major problem.

The plight of the farmers who have travelled long distances to participate in the protests is deplorable, to say the least. According to the farmers, over 60 of them have died during the protests including those who have committed suicide. A few others succumbed to the cold.

The condition of women at the protest site is worse. They are actually forgoing food and water for long stretches in order to avoid going to the

toilets that are poorly provisioned. Ironically, such a situation exists in a democracy where the right to protest is as sacrosanct as the freedom of speech.

At a time when our economy is facing a serious crisis due to the contagion, the ongoing protest is adding to the country's problems. According to the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) the economies of Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir are bearing a daily loss of ₹3,500 crore due to the demonstrations.

Given that the stakes are so high, the Government must provide better facilities to the cultivators and create a conducive environment on the ground so that neither the protesters nor the ecosystem remain at the receiving end. It should focus not only on resolving the deadlock but must give equal weightage to finding solutions to some of the pressing sanitation and environment-related issues at the protest sites.

First and foremost, effective, clean and adequate toilet facilities must be provided to the farmers at these locations. However, the Government should

bear in mind that the toilets provided or installed for the farmers should not have a poster or picture of any political party or a particular leader. For instance, the toilets supplied by the a particular party were left unused by the farmers as they bore its advertisement. This annoyed the already miffed farmers further as they have been trying to keep all politicians out of their protest. The objective of the Government should be to keep the environment clean and not to promote a party or a leader.

Similarly, garbage collection must be stepped up and the huge amounts of stagnant sewage water must be cleared with immediate effect before it starts polluting the groundwater.

The protesters themselves can take the lead and help the Government in cleaning up the protest sites and curtailing the damage to the environment. At the end of the day, the farmers are a simple and hardworking community that is close to nature. Their dedication to the environment is second to none.

*(The writer is an environmental journalist. The views expressed are personal.)*



## A TRAVESTY OF JUSTICE

Globally, only six countries executed more people than the US last year: China, Iran, Egypt, Iraq, Somalia and North Korea. In Europe, Belarus is the only State to retain the death penalty. Russia imposed a moratorium in the 1990s. The federal execution of a woman who was mentally ill was the act of a morally bankrupt administration.

*(The Guardian editorial)*

# Biden hopes Senate will conduct Trump's impeachment among critical issues

**Washington:** Terming last week's violence at the US Capitol a planned criminal act, President-elect Joe Biden has expressed hope that the Senate will be able to conduct the impeachment trial of Donald Trump while working on other critical issues after a House of Representatives vote made him the first American president ever to be impeached twice.

The House voted 232 to 197 on Wednesday to impeach Trump.

Ten Republican lawmakers joined the Democrats to impeach Trump for "incitement of insurrection" exactly one week after rioters stormed the US Capitol as the House certified Biden's election victory, making him the first American president to be impeached twice.

Trump was impeached the first time in December 2019 for abuse of power and obstruction of Congress for his attempt to pressure Ukraine to investigate Biden's family.

Biden, a Democrat, alleged

on Wednesday that the violence was carried out by political extremists and domestic terrorists, who were incited by Trump.

"This criminal attack was planned and coordinated. It was carried out by political extremists and domestic terrorists, who were incited to this violence by President Trump. It was an armed insurrection against the United States of America. And those responsible must be held accountable," Biden said in a statement after the House of Representatives impeached Trump, a Republican.

The violence on January 6 temporarily halted the counting of Electoral College votes to certify Biden's win in the November 3 election and resulted in the deaths of five individuals, including a police officer.

"Last week, we saw an unprecedented assault on our democracy. It was unlike anything we have witnessed in the 244-year history of our nation," he said.

Windows and doors were destroyed. Offices ransacked. A Capitol Hill police officer was murdered. Another lost his life a few days later. Four other people died in the senseless mayhem of that day, said the next American president.

Biden said that the members of the House of Representatives exercised the power granted to them under the US Constitution and voted to impeach and hold the president accountable.

"It was a bipartisan vote cast by members who followed the Constitution and their conscience. The process continues to the Senate," he said.

"This nation also remains in the grip of a deadly virus and a reeling economy. I hope that the Senate leadership will find a way to deal with their Constitutional responsibilities on impeachment while also working on the other urgent business of this nation," Biden said.

"From confirmations to key posts such as Secretaries for

Homeland Security, State, Defense, Treasury, and Director of National Intelligence, to getting our vaccine program on track, and to getting our economy going again. Too many of our fellow Americans have suffered for too long over the past year to delay this urgent work," he said.

"I have often said that there is nothing we can't do, if we do it together. And it has never been more critical for us to stand together as a nation than right now. So we must remember who we are as Americans and what we stand for and believe. It's time for us to be what at our best we have always been," Biden said.

Vice President-elect Kamala Harris said the storming of the Capitol Hill by supporters Trump last week marked an inflection point for America.

"Last week, of course, marked an inflection point for our country. I was horrified. As I know you all were by the attack on our Capitol, on our

nation's Capital," Harris said at a virtual finance event for the Presidential Inaugural Committee. Harris said the President-elect Biden called it an attack on democracy.

"It was an attack on the rule of law itself. And one of the lessons I hope that all of us take away from it is that our democracy is only as strong as our willingness to fight for it, our ideals are only as strong as our willingness to make them real," she said hours after Trump's impeachment.

"At that time, that meant certifying the results of this election, and to send a message, strong and clear that we will not be deterred, that our democracy will not be derailed. My hope is that the bipartisan spirit, the patriotic spirit that prevailed that night, will mark the beginning of a new era for our country," Harris said.

She said that the American people had been through difficult moments like wars, depressions and great upheavals before.

## Capitol investigators try to sort real tips from noise

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Potential threats and leads are pouring in to law enforcement agencies nationwide after the insurrection at the US Capitol. The challenge is now figuring out what's real and what's just noise.

Investigators are combing through a mountain of online posts, street surveillance and other intelligence, including information that suggests mobs could try to storm the Capitol again and threats to kill some members of Congress.

Security is being tightened from coast to coast. Thousands of National Guard troops are guarding the Capitol ahead of President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration.

Governors and lawmakers are stepping up protections at statehouses after an FBI bulletin this week warned of

threats to legislative sessions and other inaugural ceremonies.

A primary concern is the safety of members of Congress, particularly when they are travelling through airports, according to two U.S. Officials briefed on the matter.

The FBI and other federal authorities use their substantial resources to prepare. But smaller local police departments lack the staff to hunt down every tip.

They must rely heavily on state and federal assessments to inform their work, and that information sometimes slips through the cracks — which apparently happened last week.

A day before the deadly attack on the Capitol, the FBI sent an intelligence bulletin warning of potential violence to other agencies, including the Capitol Police.

But officials either did not receive it or ignored it — and instead prepared for a free-speech protest, not a riot. It took nearly two hours for reinforcements to arrive to help disperse the mob. Five people died, including a Capitol officer.

"There are some grammar schools that are better protected than the Capitol," said Brian Higgins, a professor at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York and the former chief of a northern New Jersey police force.

Since last week, the FBI has opened 170 case files and received more than 100,000 pieces of digital media. The threats have ranged in specificity and complexity, according to officials briefed on them, making it difficult for authorities to determine which could be credible.

## UN watchdog confirms another Iranian breach of nuclear deal

**Berlin:** The United Nations' atomic watchdog agency confirmed on Thursday that Iran has informed it that the country has begun installing equipment for the production of uranium metal, which would be another violation of the landmark nuclear deal with world powers.

Iran maintains its plans to conduct research and development on uranium metal production are part of its "declared aim to design an improved type of fuel," the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency said.

Uranium metal can also be used for a nuclear bomb, however, and research on its production is specifically prohibited in the so-called Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action signed with world powers in 2015.

The ultimate goal of the deal is to prevent Iran from developing a nuclear bomb, something Iran insists it does not want to do. Iran now has enough enriched uranium to make a bomb, but nowhere near the amount it had before the nuclear deal was signed.

IAEA inspectors visited the Isfahan plant where Iran has said it plans to conduct the research on Jan. 10, and officials were informed by Tehran on Jan. 13 that "modification and installation of the relevant equipment for the mentioned R&D activities have been already started," the agency said.

Iran's ambassador to the IAEA, Kazem Gharibabadi, repeated that in a tweet on Wednesday, adding that "natural uranium will be used to produce uranium metal in the first stage."

He told Iran's official news agency IRNA that the move will elevate Iran to the level of "progressive nations in production of new fuels." It was the latest in a string of violations of the JCPOA that Iran has undertaken since President Donald Trump pulled the United States unilaterally out of the deal in 2018, saying it needed to be re-negotiated.

Tehran has been using the violations to put pressure on the other signatories — Britain, France, Germany, China and Russia — to provide more incentives to Iran to offset crippling American sanctions reimposed after the U.S. Exited the deal.

President-elect Joe Biden, who was vice president when the JCPOA was negotiated, has said he hopes to return the U.S. to the deal. Britain, France and Germany said last week, however, that Iran "risks compromising" chances of diplomacy with Washington after Tehran announced another violation — that it was starting to enrich uranium to 20 per cent purity, a technical step away from weapons-grade levels of 90 per cent.

## 13 WHO scientists arrive in Wuhan to probe Covid origins; 2 barred after testing positive

**Beijing/Wuhan:** Thirteen international experts of the WHO arrived in Wuhan on Thursday for the long-awaited probe into the origins of the deadly coronavirus pandemic, while two others did not board the flight from Singapore to the central Chinese city after they tested positive for COVID-19 antibodies.

"The international team of 13 scientists examining the origins of the virus that causes #COVID19 arrived in Wuhan, #China, today. The experts will begin their work immediately during the 2 weeks quarantine protocol for international travellers," the World Health Organisation said in a tweet.

"Two scientists are still in #Singapore completing tests for #COVID19. All team members had multiple negative PCR and antibody tests for COVID-19 in their home countries prior to travelling," it said.

"They were tested again in #Singapore and were all negative

for PCR. But two members tested positive for IgM antibodies. They are being retested for both IgM and IgG antibodies," the WHO said.

The two experts failed to clear the screening procedures and were blocked from travelling to China, the Wall Street Journal reported. "Chinese officials involved in the screening process blocked the two delegation members from boarding their plane to the central Chinese city of Wuhan after both tested positive for COVID-19 antibodies in blood-based serology tests during transit in Singapore," the report said.

In Beijing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman, Zhao Lijian defended the denial of permission to the two scientists saying that "relevant epidemic and control requirements and regulations will be strictly enforced."

"We will also support and offer convenience to WHO experts' travel to China," he told

a media briefing replying to a question about the denial of permission to the two scientists and referred the media to competent authorities for details.

China requires passengers flying from Singapore to take a nucleic acid test and an IgM antibody test up to two days before boarding China-bound flights.

The 13 WHO experts would go through a 14-day quarantine. They are set to interview people from research institutes, hospitals and the seafood market linked to the initial outbreak.

The WHO team includes virus and other experts from the US, Australia, Germany, Japan, Britain, Russia, the Netherlands, Qatar and Vietnam. The United States and Australia have led the charge in criticising China's handling of the initial stages of the pandemic, accusing Beijing of downplaying its severity and preventing an effective response until too late.

## 12 police officials dismissed for negligence in protecting Hindu temple from vandalism in Pak

**Peshawar:** The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provincial government in Pakistan has dismissed 12 police officials following an enquiry report that found them guilty of "negligence" in protecting a Hindu temple in the province, which was torched by a mob led by members of a radical Islamist party.

The government also forfeited one-year service of 33 police officials in connection with the incident.

The temple in Terri village in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Karak district was attacked on December 30 by the mob after members of the Hindu community received permission from local authorities to renovate its decades-old building. The mob demolished the newly constructed work alongside the old structure. Deputy Inspector General of Police, Kohat Region, Tayyab Hafeez Cheema had appointed Superintendent of Police (Investigation Wing) Zahir Shah as enquiry officer to probe the incident and submit its report within a week's time.

Shah conducted the probe against 73 police officials and recommended to dismiss 12 of them from service on charges of negligence and irresponsibility in the discharge of their official duties.

"Keeping in view of the available record and facts on file, perusal of enquiry papers and the recommendations of the Enquiry Officers, they are found guilty of the charges. They show cowardice, negligence, and irresponsibility in the discharge of their official obligations.

They failed to protect the Hindu Temple which caused disrepute for the Police department in the eyes of the general public," the report said.

## Vaccines and masks: Biden plan aims to break pandemic cycle

**Wilmington (US):** A coronavirus action plan being unveiled by President-elect Joe Biden centers on a mass vaccination campaign and closer coordination among all levels of government.

The Biden plan comes as a divided nation remains caught in the grip of the pandemic's most dangerous wave yet. So far, more than 380,000 Americans have died.

Biden hopes his multidimensional strategy, expected to be detailed in a Thursday evening speech, will put the country on the path to recovery by the end of his first 100 days. "It's going to be hard," Biden said Monday after he got his second vaccine shot.

"It's not going to be easy. But we can get it done." A more disciplined focus on vaccination is the new and widely anticipated game-changing element, but that's far from the whole story.

Biden is asking Americans to override their sense of pandemic fatigue and recommit to wearing masks, practicing social distancing, and avoiding indoor gatherings, particularly ones.

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## Europe's rights court accepts Ukraine case against Russia

**Moscow:** Europe's top human rights court agreed on Thursday to look into Ukraine's complaint against alleged human rights violations in the Russia-annexed Crimean Peninsula.

The Strasbourg-based European Court of Human Rights, or ECHR, concluded that Ukraine's case against Russia is backed by sufficient evidence and decided to start looking into the case. It wasn't clear when the court would deliver a verdict. Ukraine has argued in its complaint that Russia was responsible for a variety of human rights violations in the Black Sea peninsula. Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea hasn't been

recognized by a vast majority of nations and drew U.S. And EU sanctions against Moscow. International human rights groups have pointed at numerous rights abuses in Crimea, including restrictions of freedom of expression and peaceful assembly and harassment of pro-Ukraine activists and members of the Crimean Tatar community.

Moscow has charged that it rightfully took over Crimea after an overwhelming majority of local residents voted to secede from Ukraine and join Russia in a referendum. It has continuously rejected accusations of human rights violations in the region.

## Lawyer, others arrested by Hong Kong national security unit

**Hong Kong:** Hong Kong police on Thursday said they arrested 11 people on suspicion of assisting offenders who are believed to be the 12 Hong Kong activists detained at sea by mainland Chinese authorities while attempting to flee the city last year.

District counselor and lawyer Daniel Wong Kwok-tung posted on his Facebook page early Thursday that national security officers had arrived at his home. He was later taken to his office, where police conducted a search.

Wong, a member of the Democratic Party, is known for providing legal assistance to hundreds of activists arrested during antigovernment protests in 2019.

The fresh wave of arrests comes a week after 55 activists were apprehended in the largest move against Hong Kongs democracy movement since Beijing imposed a new national security law last June to quell dissent in the semi-autonomous Chinese territory.

The clampdown has intensified concerns that Beijing is asserting more control over the city and breaking its promise of Hong Kong maintaining separate civil rights and political systems for 50 years from the handover from Britain control in 1997.

Police said in an emailed statement that those arrested Thursday were eight men and three women aged 18 to 72. The identities of those

arrested were not revealed.

Local media reports said those arrested are suspected of helping the 12 Hong Kong activists who were detained at sea by mainland Chinese authorities while attempting to sail to Taiwan last August.

Some of the fugitives were wanted in Hong Kong for offenses related to the 2019 protests.

Last month, 10 of the activists detained at sea were sentenced to prison in Shenzhen for illegally crossing the border, with sentences ranging between seven months to three years. The two other detainees, who are minors, were handed over to Hong Kong and could face further charges in the city for absconding, authorities said.



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R.O. No.: 39 Dt: 13.01.2021

**e-Tender Notice**

Office of the Executive Engineer (E&M-II), BBGPP, UJVN Ltd., Kashipur, invites online tenders from interested parties. Brief summary of tender is given below:

NIT No: 02/NDH/2020-21

**Name of work :** Project Management Consultancy for 16 MW Co-Generation Power Project along with concurrent modernization of Sugar Mill at Nadehi. **Estimated cost :** ₹ 134 Lac (GST extra)

**Date of availability of bid document on website :** 14-01-2021 from 18:00 hrs., **Last date for submission of bid on website :** 05-02-2021 up to 18:00 hrs.

For downloading tender documents and other details, kindly visit e-procurement portal "https://uktenders.gov.in"

(Executive Engineer E&M-II, Kashipur)

"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"



**UNIDENTIFIED DEAD BODY**

General Public is hereby informed that one person **Namely: Unknown, S/o: Unknown, Address: Unknown** was found dead near Shop No. 51, Bagichi Madho Dass, Red Fort, Delhi on **10.01.2021**. The body has been preserved in Sabzi Mandi Mortuary, Delhi for 72 hours. In this regard a case has been lodged vide **DD No. 37A, dated 10.01.2021** at P.S. Kotwali, Delhi. The description of the dead person is as under:- **Age:** About 30-35 years, **Sex:** Male, **Height:** 5'6", **Complexion:** Shallow, **Face:** Oval, **Hair:** Black, **Built:** Normal, **Wearing:** White-blue colour T-shirt, grey colour coat & pant and bare feet. If any one having any information about this dead person please inform undersigned.

**SHO**  
**P.S. Kotwali, Delhi**  
**DP/881/N/2021**  
**Ph.: 011-23977100, 8750870121**



**Branch Office:** ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol bagh Delhi- 110005

**PUBLIC NOTICE - TENDER CUM AUCTION FOR SALE OF SECURED ASSET**

[See proviso to rule 8(6)]

**Notice for sale of immovable assets**

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the Physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ICICI Bank Ltd. will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is", as per the brief particulars given hereunder;

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower(s) / Co-Borrowers/ Guarantors/	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Amount Outstanding	Reserve Price Earnest Money Deposit	Date and Time of Property Inspection	Date & Time of Auction
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)
1.	Sharad Mahawar (Borrower) Neha Mahawar (Co-Borrower) LBDEL00003103265	Flat No.8-E, 4th Floor, Pocket- C, Sector-3, Phase-I, Dwarka, New Delhi-110075. Area- 307Sq.Ft.	Rs. 16,29,835/- (as on January 5, 2021)	Rs. 12,45,000/- Rs. 1,24,500/-	February 02, 2021, From 12:00 Noon To 02:00 PM	February 15, 2021, From 12:00 Noon Onwards
2.	Bijender Kumar (Borrower) Sunita (Co-Borrower) Lan LBSNP00002385175	LIG Flat No. 16, 3rd Floor, Sec-G-2, Pocket- 2, Block A-5, Narela Delhi. Area is 344 Sq.Ft.	Rs. 17,75,343/- (as on January 5, 2021)	Rs. 11,16,000/- Rs. 1,11,600/-	February 03, 2021, From 11:00 AM To 01:00 PM	February 15, 2021, From 12:00 Noon Onwards

The online auction will be conducted on website (URL Link-https://disposalhub.com) of our auction agency M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited. The Mortgagors/noticee are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest till **February 12, 2021 before 05:00 P.M** else these secured assets will be sold as per above schedule.

The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Demand Draft (DD) (Refer Column E) at ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol bagh Delhi- 110005 and there after they need to submit their offer through the above mentioned website only on or before **February 12, 2021 before 05:00 P.M** along with scan image of Bank acknowledged DD towards proof of payment of EMD. Kindly note, incase prospective bidder(s) are unable to submit their offer through the website then signed copy of tender documents may be submitted at ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol bagh Delhi- 110005 on or before **February 12, 2021 before 05:00 P.M**. Earnest Money Deposit DD/PO should be from a Nationalised/Scheduled Bank in favour of "ICICI Bank Limited" payable at Delhi.

For any further clarifications with regards to inspection, terms and conditions of the auction or submission of tenders, kindly contact ICICI Bank Limited on 8584874809/ 8657476284 or M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited on 9710029933/ 9810029926/ 01244233933

Please note that Marketing agencies1. NexXen Solution Private Limited 2. Augeo Asset Management Pvt Ltd 3. Props AMC have been engaged for facilitating the sale of this property.

The Authorised Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons.

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please visit [www.icicibank.com/n4p4s](http://www.icicibank.com/n4p4s)

**Date: January 15, 2021**  
**Place: Delhi/ NCR**

**Authorized Officer**  
**ICICI Bank Limited**

## Search expands for victims of Indonesian plane crash

**Jakarta:** An aerial search for victims and wreckage from a crashed Indonesian plane expanded on Thursday as divers continued combing the debris-littered seabed looking for the cockpit voice recorder from the lost Sriwijaya Air jet.

The Boeing 737-500 disappeared Saturday minutes after taking off from Jakarta with 62 people aboard. The other black box containing flight data was recovered Tuesday, and search personnel have also recovered plane parts and human remains from the Java Sea.

The aerial search is being expanded to coastal areas of the Thousand Island chain "because plane debris and victims may be carried away by sea currents," said Rasman, search and rescue mission coordinator for the National Search and Rescue Agency, who uses one name.

Navy officials have said the two black boxes were buried in seabed mud under tons of wreckage between Lancang and Laki islands in the Thousand Island chain north of Jakarta. At least 268 divers were deployed on Thursday, almost double the previous figure.

Rescuers increased to 4,100 personnel, supported by 13 helicopters, 55 ships and 18 raft boats.

So far, searchers have sent 141 body bags containing human remains to police identification experts. Families have been providing DNA samples to the disaster victim identification unit, which on Wednesday said it has identified six victims, including a flight attendant and an off-duty pilot.

The 29-year-old flight attendant, Okky Bisma, was buried on Thursday. Relatives and friends carried his coffin to the cemetery in eastern Jakarta, followed by dozens of people, most wearing masks and maintaining social distancing because of the pandemic.

The airline said both pilots flying the plane were experienced and had good safety records.

Capt. Afwan, who uses one name, began his career as an air force Hercules pilot and had several decades of flying experience. He was known as a devout Muslim and preacher. The co-pilot, Diego Mamahit, was equally qualified.

Nurcahyo Utomo, an investigator with Indonesian National Transportation Safety Committee, said the crew did not declare an emergency or report any technical problems before the plane nosedived into the sea.

**Bangladesh:** Fire destroys hundreds of homes in Rohingya refugee camp

**Dhaka:** A fire raged through a sprawling Rohingya refugee camp in southern Bangladesh on Thursday, destroying hundreds of homes, officials said. No casualties were reported.

The UNHCR said more than 550 homes sheltering about 3,500 people as well as 150 shops were either totally or partially destroyed in the fire.

The fire broke out early Thursday in Nayapara Camp in Cox's Bazar district, where more than 1 million Rohingya refugees from Myanmar are staying. Nayapara is an old camp that was started decades ago.

Mohammed Shamsud Douza, a senior refugee official, said firefighters took two hours to bring the blaze under control. No serious injuries were reported, and the cause of the fire was not immediately known.

A video showed many refugees searching through charred corrugated iron sheets for valuables. "This is another devastating blow for the Rohingya people who have endured unpeppable hardship for years," Save the Children's country director in Bangladesh, Onno van Manen, said in a statement.



# Wholesale inflation moderates to 1.22%

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The wholesale price-based inflation moderated to 1.22 per cent in December as prices of kitchen staples onion and potato eased, as per a government data released on Thursday.

The Wholesale Price Index (WPI) inflation was 1.55 per cent in November 2020, and 2.76 per cent in December 2019.

"The rate of inflation based on WPI Food Index decreased from 4.27 per cent in November 2020, to 0.92 per cent in December 2020," as per the data released by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade.

The rate of price rise on wholesale basis in the vegetables basket declined to (-) 13.2 per cent in December, as against 12.24 per cent inflation in the preceding month.

The data showed onion prices contracted by 54.69 per

cent in December, as against a decline of 7.58 per cent in November. The inflation in potato eased to 37.75 per cent in December from 115.12 per cent in November. According to the data, rate of inflation in cereals, paddy, wheat and pulses, also eased in December over the previous month. The wholesale prices of fruits were however higher in December compared to November. While inflation in food prices eased, the rate of price rise in manufactured goods rose to 4.24 per cent in December. It was 2.97 per cent in November. Manufactured products, include food products, beverages, textiles, chemicals, pharmaceuticals and cement.

The WPI-based inflation in fuel and power segment too increased marginally during the month under review.

It is to be noted that retail inflation too had dropped sharply to 4.59 per cent in December, mainly due to

declining food prices.

Commenting on the data, Aditi Nayar, Principal Economist, ICRA Limited said WPI inflation recorded a pull-back in December 2020, driven by a disinflation in primary food items and lower inflation for primary non-food articles, even as core inflation spiked to a 24-month high of 4.2 per cent, injecting concern regarding the trajectory of the WPI going forward. "The sharp 1.5 per cent rise in the core-index in month-on-month terms, partly reflects higher commodity and metal prices, as well as a rise in pricing power, in line with the revival in global demand with the COVID-19 vaccines roll out," she said.

The surge in the core-WPI inflation has completely doused any lingering hope that the dip in the December 2020, CPI inflation would be adequate for rate easing to recommence in the upcoming policy review, she added.

## Sensex, Nifty dart up to record highs; TCS stands tall amid IT selloff

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark Sensex resumed its record-setting streak on Thursday after a day's pause as gains in index major TCS offset profit-bookings in the IT pack following strong results by Infosys and Wipro. A broad upmove in global equities and a recovering rupee further propped up the bourses, traders said.

Recovering from a shaky start, the 30-share BSE Sensex gained momentum during the day to end at its new lifetime high of 49,584.16, up 91.84 points or 0.19 per cent.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty rose 30.75 points or 0.21 per cent to finish at a record 14,595.60.

TCS topped the Sensex gainer's chart, spurring 2.89 per cent, followed by IndusInd Bank, L&T, ITC, Reliance Industries, HUL and Sun Pharma.

On the other hand, HCL Tech, Axis Bank, Asian Paints, UltraTech Cement, Infosys and Tech Mahindra were among the laggards, declining up to

2.63 per cent. Infosys on Wednesday posted a 16.6 per cent rise in consolidated net profit at Rs 5,197 crore for the December 2020 quarter, and increased its revenue growth guidance for FY21 to 4.5-5 per cent on the back of large project wins and strong deal pipeline. Wipro posted an about 21 per cent jump in consolidated net profit at Rs 2,968 crore for the December 2020 quarter, and said the demand environment is improving steadily. Domestic equities witnessed a brisk recovery from the day's low mainly led by a rebound in FMCG and pharma stocks, said Binod Modi, Head-Strategy at Reliance Securities. IT index has been the most surprising as profit-bookings was visible in many IT stocks despite strong Q3 numbers and upbeat guidance shared by the managements, he added. "We believe underlying strength of the market remains intact and any correction in the market is likely to be bought out. Sustained recovery in key economic data for Dec'20, better-than-expected Q3

## Rupee logs 3rd straight gains, up 11 paise against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee gained for the third straight day and closed 11 paise higher at 73.04 against the US dollar on Thursday.

Thursdays, supported by sustained foreign fund inflows and weak American currency. At the interbank forex market, the rupee opened at 73.18 and hit an intra-day high of 72.97 and a low of 73.18. It finally finished at 73.04, higher by 11 paise over its last close.

Over the last three days, the rupee has added 36 paise in its valuation against the American currency. Rupee caught another bid by logging its third green finish in last four days moving closer to monthly highs.

## Modi to address Startup India International Summit on Saturday

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will on Saturday interact with startups and address a global summit being organised by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, according to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

The Prarambh: Startup India International Summit is being organised by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry on January 15-16.

Prime Minister Modi will interact with startups and address the summit on January 16 at 5 PM via video conferencing, the PMO said in a statement.

The two-day summit is being organised as a follow-up of the announcement made by the prime minister at the fourth BIMSTEC Summit held in Kathmandu in August 2018 wherein India committed to host the BIMSTEC Startup Conclave.



The summit marks the fifth anniversary of the Startup India initiative, launched by the prime minister on January 16, 2016.

With participation from over 25 countries and more than 200 global speakers, the summit will be the largest startup confluence organised by the Government of India since the launch of the Startup India initiative, the PMO said.

It will witness 24 sessions with focus on enhancing multilateral cooperation and engagement with countries from around the globe to collectively develop and strengthen the startup ecosystems, it said.

## Unsold housing in Noida, Greater Noida down 12% in 2020, reports Anarock

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid restricted new supply in 2020, unsold housing inventory in Noida and Greater Noida in Uttar Pradesh reduced by 12 per cent in the year, a report by Anarock Property Consultants said.

The unsold inventory declined from 64,010 units at 2019-end to nearly 56,620 units at 2020-end.

In contrast, Gurugram saw its unsold stock increase by 7 per cent in the same period to around 61,880 units at 2020-end.

From a new launch perspective, the whole of National Capital Region saw launch of around 18,540 units in 2020, of which Noida and Greater Noida accounted for a mere 15 per cent share, or around 2,800 units.

While Gurugram saw supply of nearly 11,180 new units during the year, denoting a significant 60 per cent overall share.

Faridabad saw launch of more new housing units in the year -- around 3,050 units -- compared with both Noida and Greater Noida.

## Trump admin announces final rule that will raise prevailing wage rates for H-1B workers

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The Trump administration has announced a final rule that will significantly raise the minimum wages the employers in the US must pay to foreign workers on visa programmes like the H-1B as part of the efforts to protect American workers from being undercut by cheaper labour from abroad.

Days before the exit of the administration of President Donald Trump, the US Department of Labor said that the final rule would help protect the wages and job opportunities of American workers by reforming the wage method-

ology it uses to set prevailing wage rates to prevent potential abuses of its Permanent Employment Certification, H-1B, H-1B1 and E-3 Visa foreign worker programmes. The H-1B visa is a non-immigrant visa that allows US companies to employ foreign workers in speciality occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise. The technology companies depend on it to hire tens of thousands of employees each year from countries like India and China. The final rule will improve the accuracy of prevailing wages paid to foreign workers by bringing them in line.

## Coal India's supply to power sector drops 5% to 318 MT in Apr-Dec

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Coal supply by state-run CIL to the power sector declined by 5.3 per cent to 318.04 million tonnes (MT) in the April-December period of the ongoing fiscal.

The state-owned company had supplied 335.92 MT of coal to the power sector in the corresponding period of the previous fiscal, according to official data. In December 2020, the fuel supply by Coal India (CIL) dropped to 40.25 MT against 43.04 MT in the same month last fiscal year.

## INBRIEF

### FIRST MILLET PROCESSING UNIT IN KEONJHAR

First millet processing unit in Keonjhar inaugurated by Collector and District Magistrate in Keonjhar town. "The unit is being managed by Krushna SHG supported by Mission Shakti. The unit has a capacity of cleaning about 2 qtls per hour and can clean over 500 qtls in a month, thus providing a consistent source of livelihood to the SHG. The unit has been established to ensure supply of clean Ragi for the flagship ICDS Ragi Laddu programme of the District Administration. The unit has been provided under the Odisha Millets Mission, supported by the District Mineral Foundation. Technical support is being provided by the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Empowerment and WASSAN.

### NFL PROVIDES COLD STORAGE EQUIPMENTS FOR COVID VACCINE

Noida: Under its CSR initiative, National Fertilizers Limited (NFL) provided 8 Nos. Cold Chain Equipments to State Health Department, Chandigarh to strengthen the Government's efforts to develop cold storage facilities for anti-Corona Vaccine. The equipments include 4 Ice Lined Refrigerators and 4 Deep Freezers, which are designed to store the COVID-19 vaccine. Under this project, one more Deep Freezer shall also be delivered by the Company shortly. On behalf of NFL, Sh. Dilbag Singh, DGM (Marketing), Chandigarh handed over these COVID Vaccine storage equipments to Dr. V K Nagpal, Medical Superintendent, Government Multi Speciality Hospital, Chandigarh. The company acted promptly to cater to the urgent need for cold storage devices for Government's vaccination programme and delivered the equipment well within the timelines.

### FARIDABAD CIVIL HOSPITAL GETS ANTI-COVID FACILITIES AS CSR INITIATIVE

Faridabad: As part of its corporate social responsibility initiative during the Covid-19 pandemic, Goodyear India Limited, in association with AmeriCare India Foundation, is donating Faridabad Civil Hospital with PPE and quarantine equipment. The equipment includes bedside ventilators, multipara monitors, pulse oximeters, PPE kits, N95 mask. "Our objective is to help enable a safer and healthier country. These are indeed challenging times and therefore, a collaborative and participatory approach is needed to address the challenges that this pandemic has unleashed upon us," Goodyear India MD Sandeep Mahajan.

## Tesla CEO Elon Musk confirms India entry

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Tesla CEO Elon Musk has confirmed the company's plans to enter the Indian market, within days of the electric vehicle maker registering its arm in the country.

"As promised," Musk tweeted in response to a thread linked to a blog that analysed how India could still be a market to be developed for Tesla cars despite its high prices.

Earlier this week, it emerged that US electric car maker Tesla has registered its Indian arm amid indications that the company is set to enter the country's automobile market.

According to a regulatory filing, the firm has registered Tesla India Motors and Energy Pvt Ltd with Registrar of Companies (RoC) Bangalore.

The company has been registered as an unlisted private entity with a paid-up capital of Rs 1 lakh.

## Public Issue of Debentures amounting to ₹5,000 crores by Power Finance Corporation Limited opens on Jan 15

Mumbai: Power Finance Corporation Limited, is one of the leading financial institutions in India, focused on the power sector will open its Rs 5,000 crores public issue of secured, redeemable Non-Convertible Debentures on January 15, 2021. The base issue size is Rs. 500 crores with an option to retain oversubscription of up to Rs. 4,500 crores aggregating up to 5,000 crores which is within the shelf limit of Rs 10,000 crores. The NCDs are of face value of Rs 1,000 each. The Tranche I Issue

is scheduled to close on January 29, 2021 with an option of early closure or extension as decided by PFC's Board of Directors or a duly constituted committee thereof.

The Tranche I Issue offers options for tenures of 3, 5, 10 and 15 years. The 3-year tenure NCD in Series I will offer a fixed coupon rate of 4.65% p.a. to 4.80% p.a., while the 5 year tenure NCD in Series II will offer fixed coupon rate of 5.65% p.a. to 5.80% p.a. depending on the category of investors.

### SEARCH FOR MISSING GIRL

General public is hereby informed that one girl namely Khushboo, D/o Shri Sonu, R/o House No. B-7, Gopal Vihar, Vijay Vihar, Phase-2, Delhi. Age 18 yrs., Height 4'2", Shallow complexion, Medium built, Long face, wearing black colour suit salwar and black colour chappal in feet has been missing since 24.12.2020 from the area of PS Vijay Vihar, Delhi.

**Khushboo**

In this regard a DD No. 32-A, Dt. 25.12.2020 has been lodged at PS Vijay Vihar, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing girl but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this missing girl may kindly inform to the following.

E-mail: [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)  
 Fax: 011-23011334  
 Ph.: 011-23014046  
 011-23015218

**S.H.O.,**  
**PS Vijay Vihar, Delhi**  
**Ph.: 011-27061294, 27061295**

DP/601/RD/2021

**कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय,  
जल निस्सरण प्रमंडल, बेतिया।**

Mail I.D - [ee.drainagedivision.bettiah@gmail.com](mailto:ee.drainagedivision.bettiah@gmail.com)  
 Mob - 7463889644

**शुद्धि पत्र-02**

सूचित किया जाता है कि इस प्रमंडल के पत्रांक 1445 दिनांक 30.12.2020 द्वारा निर्गत निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना सं-2/SBD/2020-2021 जिसका पीओ नं-010489(WRD)2020-2021 है, में निम्नप्रकार आंशिक संशोधन किया जाता है-

क्र.सं.	कड़िका सं.	पूर्व की तिथि	संशोधित तिथि
03	निविदा कागजात डाउनलोड करने की तिथि एवं समय।	दिनांक 08.01.2021 से 11.01.2021 के 15:00 बजे तक।	दिनांक 08.01.2021 से 15.01.2021 के 15:00 बजे तक।
05	निविदा कागजात अपलोड करने की तिथि एवं समय।	दिनांक 12.01.2021 के 15:00 बजे तक।	दिनांक 16.01.2021 के 15:00 बजे तक।
06	तकनीकी बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय।	दिनांक 14.01.2021 के 15:30 बजे तक।	दिनांक 19.01.2021 के 15:30 बजे तक।
15	अग्रघन की राशि की मूल प्रति जमा करने की तिथि एवं समय।	दिनांक 13.01.2021 के 15:00 बजे तक।	दिनांक 18.01.2021 के 15:00 बजे तक।

**इसे इस हद तक संशोधित समझा जाय। निविदा की अन्य शर्तें पूर्ववत् लागू रहेगी।  
(लाल बहादुर गुप्ता)**

कार्यपालक अभियंता,  
जल निस्सरण प्रमंडल, बेतिया

PR No. 11178(W.R.D) 2020-21

किसी भी तरह आपदा की जानकारी अथवा सूचना हेतु आपदा प्रबंधन के हेल्पलाइन नं. 1070 पर सम्पर्क किया जा सकता है।

**कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय,  
बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमण्डल, बगहा**

(eefcdbagaha@gmail.com)

**शुद्धि-पत्र - 2**

सूचित किया जाता है कि इस प्रमण्डल के पत्रांक-696 दिनांक-30.12.2020 द्वारा निर्गत निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या-01/2020-21 जिसका पीओ नं-010421(WRD) 2020-21 है, में निम्न प्रकार आंशिक संशोधन किया जाता है-

क्र.सं.	कड़िका सं.	पूर्व की तिथि	संशोधित तिथि
03	निविदा कागजात डाउनलोड करने की अवधि	दिनांक: 07.01.2021 के 10:30 पूर्वान्ह से दिनांक-12.01.2021 के 3:00 बजे अपराह्न तक	दिनांक: 07.01.2021 के 10:30 पूर्वान्ह से दिनांक-18.01.2021 के 3:00 बजे अपराह्न तक
05	निविदा अपलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय	दिनांक: 13.01.2021 समय 3:00 बजे अपराह्न तक।	दिनांक: 19.01.2021 समय 3:00 बजे अपराह्न तक।
06	तकनीकी बिड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय	दिनांक: 15.01.2021 समय 3:30 बजे अपराह्न।	दिनांक: 22.01.2021 समय 3:30 बजे अपराह्न।
15	अग्रघन की राशि की मूल प्रति जमा करने की तिथि एवं समय	दिनांक 14.01.2021 के 3.00 बजे अपराह्न तक	दिनांक 21.01.2021 के 3.00 बजे अपराह्न तक

**कार्यपालक अभियंता  
बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमण्डल, बगहा**

PR No. 11179(W.R.D) 2020-21

किसी भी तरह आपदा की जानकारी अथवा सूचना हेतु आपदा प्रबंधन के हेल्पलाइन नं. 1070 पर सम्पर्क किया जा सकता है।

**The Executive Engineer, Udaipur Division, PWD(R&B), Udaipur, Gomati District, Tripura** invites e-tender against press NIT No.16/EE/UDP-DIVN/UDP/2020-21 DATED 11.01.2021.

**For Package No:7**

- Improvement of road from Udaipur Killa Road to Maharani Barrage via Badarmokam Bridge, Pitra & Photamati under Scheme for Special Assistance to States for Capital Expenditure in 2020-21.
- Brick soled Roads to be converted to all weather road by paver blocks/U-J road to Thanda cherra under scheme for special Assistance to states for capital expenditure in 2020-21.
- Brick soled Roads to be converted to all weather road by paver blocks/Nitya bazar to Bampai Bari road under scheme for special Assistance to states for capital expenditure in 2020-21.

**With Estimated cost: ₹ 276698084.00, Earnest Money : ₹ 27,66,981.00**

**Time of Completion - 18(Eighteen) months.**

**Last Date of bidding for bids - 11.02.2021, upto 15.00Hrs.**

For more details kindly visit: <https://tripuratenders.gov.in>

**Note:-**  
**\*NO NEGOTIATION WILL BE CONDUCTED WITH THE LOWEST BIDDER\***

**Sd/-**  
**Executive Engineer**  
**Udaipur Division, PWD (R&B)**  
**Udaipur, Gomati District, Tripura**

**ICA/C-2793/2020-21**

**UJVN LIMITED**

H.O. : 'UJJWAL', Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun - 248006  
 Tel.: 0135-2763508, 2763808 Fax: 0135-2763507  
 CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866 Website: [www.ujvnl.com](http://www.ujvnl.com)

**Ref. No.: 47** **e-Tender Notice** **Dated : 14.01.2021**

For and on behalf of UJVN Limited, office of the Executive Engineer, PCM(GV), Mayapur, Haridwar invites online bids from interested bidders. Brief summary of tender is given below:-

**NIT No.- 15/2020-21/EE/ PCM(GV)/Mayapur :- Construction of 6 Nos. 2BHK (Type-II) Residences at Mohammadpur Power House Colony.**

**Estimated Value of Tender:- Rs. 1,74,60,008.82 only.**

**Date of availability of bid document on website :- 14.01.2021 from 17:00 Hrs.**

**Last date for submission of bids on website :- 04.02.2021 upto 17:00 Hrs.**

For fuller & further details, kindly visit e-procurement portal "<http://ujktenders.gov.in>"

**Executive Engineer, PCM (GV)**

**"Avoid Wasteful Use of Electricity"**

**Himalaya Food International Ltd**

(Formerly, Himalaya International Limited)

**CIN: L70102DL1992PLC047399**

**Regd. Office:** 118, 1st Floor, 12 Gagandeep Building, Rajendra Place, New Delhi-110008

**Tel.** +91 11 45108609, **Fax:** +91 1704 225178

**E-mail** id: [cs@himalayainternational.com](mailto:cs@himalayainternational.com) | **website:** [www.himalayafoodcompany.com](http://www.himalayafoodcompany.com)

**NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Regulation 29 read with Regulation 47 of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 that the Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company is scheduled to be held on Thursday, January 21, 2021 at 4.00 p.m. at Company Head Office at Shubhkhera, Paonta Sahib, H.P. - 173025, arrangement is made for participation of Board members electronically through video - conferencing facility, inter-alia, to take on record the Unaudited Standalone Financial Results of the Company for the Quarter ended 31st December, 2020.

In terms of the Code of Conduct for Prevention of Insider Trading in Securities of Himalaya Food International Limited, the Trading window is closed from 1st January, 2021 to 23rd January, 2021.

The said notice may be accessed on the stock exchanges websites at [www.bseindia.com](http://www.bseindia.com).

**For Himalaya Food International Ltd.**  
**Sd/-**  
**Surabhi Maheshwari**  
**Company Secretary**

**Date:** January 14, 2021  
**Place:** Delhi

**PARADIP PORT TRUST**

**e-Tender Call Notice**

No.TD/TM/GEN-235(Vol-IV)/2053 dtd.11.01.2021

Name for the work "Allotment of 10 (Ten) nos. of Mechanical Iron Ore / Iron Ore Pellet plots at IOHP". License fee : Rs.2,76,66,870/-, Wharfage Charge : Rs.15,20,430/-, Last Date & time of Bid submission : Dt.01.02.2021, 1700 Hrs., Bid Opening Date and time : 02.02.2021, 1600 Hrs. Refer our Website for details : <https://eprocure.gov.in>

Sr. Asst. Traffic Manager  
**PPT/PR/368/20-21, Dt.14.01.2021**

**DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL - I, DELHI**

**4TH FLOOR, JEEVAN TARA BUILDING, PARLIAMENT STREET, NEW DELHI-110001.**

OA No. 715/2016

ICICI Bank Limited vs. Sh. Arun Kumar & Ors.

..Applicant  
 ..Defendants

To,  
 Sh. Arun Kumar  
 S/o. Sh. Brahm Deo Singh  
 R/o: House No. C- 44, Krishna Park, Devil Road, New Delhi-110062.

And also at:  
 Flat No. 502, 5th Floor, Tower- 01, KSB Royal Height, Group Housing Colony, Sector- 126, Greater Mohali (Kharar), Mohali- 160055 (Punjab)

2. Smt. Madhuri Singh, W/o. Sh. Arun Kumar  
 R/o: House No. C- 44, Krishna Park, Devil Road, New Delhi-110062.

And also at:  
 Flat No. 502, 5th Floor, Tower- 01, KSB Royal Height, Group Housing Colony, Sector- 126, Greater Mohali (Kharar), Mohali- 160055 (Punjab)

3. M/s K. Soni Builders & Promoters (P) Ltd.  
 Having its Zonal Office at: KSB Royal Homes, SCF- 13- 14, Chajji Majra Road, Sector- 126, Greater Mohali (Kharar), Mohali- 160055 (Punjab)

Whereas the above named applicant has instituted a case for recovery of Rs. 32,72,255/- (Rupees Thirty Two Lacs Seventy Two Thousand Two Hundred And Fifty Five Only) against you and whereas it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in ordinary way. Therefore, this notice is Given by advertisement directing you to make appearance before Hon'ble on 24.02.2021 at 10:30 A.M. (for further details kindly visit DRT website [www.drtbunl.gov.in](http://www.drtbunl.gov.in) Phone Number: 011-23748473).

Take notice that in case of your failure to appear on the above mentioned day before this Tribunal, the case will be heard and decided in your absence.

**Due to ongoing pandemic Situation, all the matters will be taken up through Video Conferencing and for that purpose:-**

(i) All the Advocates/ Litigants shall download the "Cisco Webex" application/ Software;

(ii) "Meeting ID" and "Password" for the next date of hearing qua cases to be taken by Registrar/ recovery Officer- I/ and Recovery Officer- II shall be available one day prior to the next date at DRT Official Portal i.e. "drt.gov.in" under the Public Notice Head.

(iii) In any exigency qua that, the Advocates/ Litigants can contact the concerned official at Ph. No. 011-23748473.

Given under my hand and seal of the Tribunal on this 07th day of January 2021

By Order of this Tribunal  
 For Registrar



## Trend Slazer

### Aahana to make her podcast debut

Actor **AAHANA KUMRA** is all set to make her podcast debut. She will narrate a story on the audio web series titled *MnM Talkies*.

"I have recently started working on this podcast, which is produced and directed by Mantra," said Aahana, about the audio story called *I Hear You*, which tells the story of a detective named Priyamvada Parmar.

"I am entering the voicing industry and I think Mantra is the best person to hold my hand through this. Am excited to enter the new phase of my life. This is a new chapter and I am happy to begin 2021 with this," she added.



**'I have had a lot of second seasons this year. It's been interesting to revisit them and experience**

**how they might have changed as people. Reprising a character for a new season is like meeting an old friend — you basically know them and understand how they are wired, but they are not exactly who they were when you met them last.'**

—**Rasika Dugal**

Bollywood actor **PREITY ZINTA** teased fans saying lots of exciting news was coming up in the year ahead. She asked fans to take a guess.



The Los Angeles-based actor shared a throwback photo where she poses with a cricket bat.

"This is definitely the year of new beginnings. Lots of exciting and interesting news coming up. Any guess folks? Watch this space for more.... till then keep guessing aur *bolo kya?*," she captioned the image.

Reacting to her post, netizens started speculating about what new beginning the actor was referring to.

### Shakira sells rights of her songs

Singer **SHAKIRA** has become the latest artiste to sell publishing rights of all her songs. The Grammy winner's catalogue includes 145 songs.

Shakira's catalogue includes hits like *Hips don't lie*, *Whenever, wherever*, *She wolf* and *Waka waka (This time for Africa)*, and the Board of Hipgnosis Songs Fund Limited, a UK-based investment company, has acquired 100 per cent of her music publishing rights.

In the year 2020, the world has seen people shifting from offline to online for many life requirements. The year somewhat became the watershed moment for various digital platforms like Video OTT, Edutech, Pharma, Fintech etc., which saw an unexpected surge in numbers. As a country, we are brilliant at adapting to change, look at how we embraced fintech & edu-tech both so important for our survival. The adaptation which was slowly happening in 2019 got expedited due to the spread of pandemic and the followed lockdown.

The most significant need for the bottom of our social pyramid has always been 'roti, kapda aur makaan' or succinctly put, education (read knowledge) and financial stability, even more so when pandemic was reaping havoc.

Today, learning is the fastest-changing landscape with a virtual race among various organisations to deliver knowledge and up-skilling content through latest and complex technologies. However, this approach may only work well for the metros of India with upwardly mobile TG. If we consider the TG living in tier two, three and four towns and villages, the requirement might be very different. Bharat makes up the most significant part of Indian digital users accessing the internet on mobile devices. The real issue is not the availability of high-quality content and implementation of complex/fancy tech to deliver it to TG but the ease with which the TG can consume the content on devices. To summarise, the key challenges would be:

- Increased screen time on low-end devices with battery challenges.
- Patchy internet to be able to watch videos seamlessly.
- Not truly vernacular.
- Cost of content and hence the high subscription.

#### NEED OF THE HOUR

What is more relevant and need to be made available to young India is a platform/medium which will make it spontaneous for people to access decent quality content (even if it is non-exclusive) effortlessly with minimal tech and underlying infrastructural requirements. It is only then, we will be able to see the next billion users using digital learning platforms to learn and get empowered to achieve their learning goals.

#### AUDIO IS THE ANSWER

Audio is the only way to provide all of the above without compromising the quality of learning except for a few specific subjects requiring live/visual session for better understanding. Audio will democratise the learning ecosystem from every aspect. It will allow the masses to acquire knowledge and learn the subjects of their interest without paying beyond their financial capacities

## FUTURE OF KNOWLEDGE

In the fast-changing landscape of education, we shall soon see audio taking over traditional and video learning to educate young India

or compulsive buying of high-end devices/data packs.

#### NOT SHOOTING IN THE DARK

Looking at the global trend from the biggest audio markets — US and China, audio will take over as most preferred media by masses across India.

For instance, in the US, Spotify has spent \$400mn to acquire Gimlet, Anchor and Parcast to acquire podcasting capabilities. Apple acquired Scout FM in Sep 2020. Simultaneously, in China audio platforms like Ximalaya FM, Lizhi FM (US IPO), DeDao is serving more than 500mn users. De Dao, another Chinese audio content platform, contracts high-profile experts to record podcasts teaching topics in their field. Listeners navigate a marketplace of audio courses and subscribe to the ones they believe will get them (or their children) an "edge" There are various courses like workplace communication, investing, accent reduction, Chinese history and many more.



Last year the company had served seven million customers, and none of the content was free. Audio courses drive more than 50

per cent revenue for Ximalaya FM and QingTingFM. Screen-based learning competes with distractions like

Facebook and Netflix for users' attention. By making audio their primary learning consumption mode, people can fit courses into busy lives and easily allow for a habit.

#### FUTURE TRENDS IN KNOWLEDGE AND AUDIO

India is the youngest country with 850mn people below the age of 35 years. For this young population, the most significant need is education and financial security. To get better economic opportunities, people need to up-skill, but being engaged in the daily job they have limited time to learn and up-skill themselves.

For example, Uber driver or Swiggy delivery person work eight to 10 hours a day and have no time to learn and upgrade themselves. While their hands and eyes are engaged, they can leverage their ears to boost their skills by converting their non-learning time into learning time.

Audio has its merit over other mediums without imbibing the negatives of respective mediums like video and print. It provides various benefits to the user, some important ones are as follows:

- Reduces screen time without reducing learning.
- Passive listening provides for more extended content consumption throughout the day.
- Creation and consumption of content are both much easier in audio format.
- Minimal hardware and connectivity required.

#### YEAR 2021 WILL BE A YEAR OF AUDIO PROVIDING FOR:

**Reduction in screen time:** Students would not sit in front of screen for long hours to gain knowledge. Parents & teachers both have been concerned with excess screen time for their kids.

**Easy access to knowledge in local languages:** Users across India will be able to get easy access to the best of educators, that too in their local language.

**Offline to online classes:** Local and small-time educators will reach millions and teach them in their local language. Thanks to the ease of content creation with audio.

**Up-skill with one click:** Small courses targeted to unlocking better financial opportunity will become a trend.

**User convenience and ease:** People will not migrate to larger cities to gain or share knowledge, creation of content and consumption as both are much easier in audio format.

We shall soon see audio taking over traditional and video learning and will have a much larger mass appeal and usage to educate young India users this year.

(The writer Pulkat Sharma is CEO & Co-founder of Khabri.)



## A great drive

At the conclusion of *The Pioneer's* leg of Hyundai's 'Great India Drive,' a word of thanks to the all new Hyundai i20

This is not about our adventures in and around Bhopal visiting some tremendous historical sites at the heart of India and then discovering that Madhya Pradesh's capital has some of India's finest museums and collections of artifacts. But this is about the car we took there, the third-generation Hyundai i20 and a sort-of re-evaluation of the car. I owned a first-generation i20 and it was a superb drive but it was never asked to do what we made this little car do, driving close to 2,000 kilometres over six days, a total of nearly 36 hours of drive time.

Usually, a little hatchback like the i20 is not the ideal car for a long road trip, with luggage and for those like us trying to document the journey. Not only did the car surprise me with its spaciousness, it was more impressive in the way it tackled the roads. Now, the roads, both, those run by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and the state government

in Madhya Pradesh are excellent but during one of our days exploring historical sites near Bhopal, a local friend advised us to see Gayaspur and Satdhari, the former an ancient temple carved into a hill and the latter a collection of ancient Buddhist Stupas. The problem is that the sun was setting and to get from point A to B in short order didn't mean just driving quickly, (we also visited Heliodorus' Pillar inside the town to Vidisha) but also depending on Google Maps.



Now, I love Google Maps and I sometimes wonder how on earth we managed before Brin and Page did their thing. That said, on this particular day and possibly for one of the first times, it was asked to plot a route between these three sites. And it did so not with any aplomb. It plotted a route through the narrowest alleys of Vidisha, which despite being the Chief Minister's constituency, has some really narrow passages inside town and like else-

where in small towns of India nobody follows any rules. And to make matters worse after Vidisha, for a long time we were on a love road constructed under the *Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana*, which suddenly ended. One minute tarmac, next minute a path which wasn't really a road but where tractors went. It was barely in between the fields, in fact, the mustard and rice crops on either side of this path often had the odd group of plants growing between the ruts. And it was rutted and wet. It was not a path that you would want to take a small SUV-shaped vehicle let alone a hatchback. But somehow, this i20 with its dual-clutch gearbox, an automatic gearbox isn't the ideal way to go through such paths, but it made it, and not once did I hear the heartbreaking 'clank' of the

car bottoming out. Again, there was never a struggle for grip in muddy and rutted roads, other than maybe once or twice but within a second or two, the traction control kicked in and the car effortlessly lifted itself out.

I believe that 99.9 per cent of the i20s in this generation that will be sold in India over the next four-five years will never be able to do what this particular car has seen and done in the past week. And it did these in the crowded roads of Vidisha, the narrow lanes of the old city in Bhopal, the broad boulevards of the new city, the state highways with some crazy drivers and the most entitled people in India, wrong-side motorcyclists and tractor drivers, as well as in some brilliant highways. A big shout-out to NHAI for the brilliant

## Strongly opinionated about my choices: Mithila



Actor Mithila Palkar says she is aware that she has the freedom to make her own choices, adding that she is strongly opinionated about the choices she makes.

These are traits that helped her relate to her character of Masha in the forthcoming film *Tribhanga: Tedhi Medhi Crazy*, says Mithila, although she doesn't think she is similar to Masha at all.

"The choices that Masha made were the ones that I would never make, but having said that I won't judge her for that because I know where she came from and why she made those choices," Mithila said.

The actor continued: "I think the one thing that binds us together is that whatever decisions we take, we are going to be judged for some of them. I feel we both are aware that we have the freedom to make a choice and are

very strongly opinionated about the choices that we make — whether or not they fit in anybody else's build or is in sync with anyone else's ideas, principles or values."

"We know that it's a choice that is going to make us happy and we've taken this call being very self-aware of what may or may not happen. I think that is the one thing that binds us together but otherwise I don't think there is anything similar. She is quite peaceful actually and a quiet person to herself. I am quite the opposite of that — (I am) loud," she added.

The film, written and directed by Renuka Shahane, also features Tanvi Azmi and Kajol. It is a family drama about three distinct women, and their unconventional life choices.

(The film releases on Netflix on January 15.)

—IANS





There is no need to be a master in the kitchen or an expert pastry chef to create a tasty and appetizing dish. Most of the time, the best cakes are also the simplest to prepare. Kick start a brand new year with some delectable breakfast options that are light and nutritious. Lavazza India shares new recipes:

**Treccia with ginseng coffee**  
Aromatic, fragrant and very tasty. The braid with ginseng coffee is a sweet bread with a single large 5-ply braid. For this special recipe, use Lavazza ginseng coffee, the perfect soluble preparation for a healthy and energizing breakfast.

- Ingredients:**
- ◆Flour: 700 gm
  - ◆Water: 300 gm
  - ◆Brewer's yeast: 1 stick
  - ◆Honey: 50 gm
  - ◆Ginseng coffee: 30 gm
  - ◆Coarse ground coffee: 4 gm
  - ◆Butter: 80 gm
  - ◆Salt: 11 gm
  - ◆Yolk: 1
  - ◆Milk to taste

**Preparation:**  
Dissolve the coffee and sugar in 100 gm of hot water. Proceed with the dough by adding to the flour, water with coffee, brewer's yeast, honey and salt. Mix all the ingredients until the liquid is absorbed, then add some butter. Work the dough with your hands until it is uniform and smooth. Let it rise for about one hour.

**How to make a bread braid**  
Once risen, separate the dough into five equal parts to get a large braid. Now we need to weave! Those who manage to braid their hair can also follow the same procedure with bread dough. Take the outermost

# BAKE IT EASY

Most of the time, the best cakes are also the simplest to prepare. Here are some delectable options that are light as well as nutritious



yolk and milk.  
Another half an hour of leavening, a final brush and you are ready for the final touch: sprinkle the coffee powder along the entire length of the braid.  
Bake at 180 degrees for about 40 minutes.

**Coffee pancakes**  
Do you want to surprise your family or friends with a tasty and original breakfast? The pancakes at the cafe are the perfect sweet, as light and nutritious. Of Anglo-Saxon origin, the golden pancakes have also entered Italian homes for some years. In the classic American breakfast, pancakes are prepared with maple syrup or fresh fruit.

- Ingredients:**
- ◆Lavazza coffee: 150 ml
  - ◆Eggs: 2
  - ◆Milk: 150 ml
  - ◆Flour: 150 gm
  - ◆Sugar: 50 gm
  - ◆Salt: 1 pinch
  - ◆Butter to taste

**Preparation:**  
First of all: prepare the coffee with the mocha and, once ready, pour it into a container and let it cool. At this point, take the eggs, separate the yolks and egg whites in two different containers. In the one that contains the egg yolks pour the sugar and with a whisk try to mix well until you

get a uniform cream. Then add the flour, milk, and coffee, salt and continue mixing.

Beat the egg whites until stiff and pour them into the mixture you just made. Combine everything thoroughly, taking care to mix from the bottom up to prevent the egg whites from falling apart. Cover the container with a cloth or cling film and let it rest for at least 30 minutes in the refrigerator.

To cook the pancakes, take a medium-small non-stick pan: melt a knob of butter and pour the mixture a little at a time with the help of a ladle. Bake these yummy pancakes on both sides until they turn a golden colour. Place three or four stacked pancakes on the plate and add icing sugar, dark chocolate flakes, whipped cream, jams or honey to taste.

**Plumcake without eggs**  
Most of the time, the best cakes are also the simplest to prepare, such as egg-free coffee plumcakes. Greedy, healthy and genuine. Ideal for a light and nutritious breakfast or snack.

- Ingredients**
- ◆Flour: 250 gm
  - ◆Potato starch: 50 gm
  - ◆Sugar: 120 gm
  - ◆Milk: 300 ml
  - ◆300 ml Milk
  - ◆Crema-e-Gusto Espresso coffee: 1 cup
  - ◆Dark chocolate: 60 gm
  - ◆Baking powder for cakes: 1 sachet

**Preparation**  
Prepare the coffee and pour it into a cup. Turn on the oven bringing the temperature to 180 static.

In a bowl, combine the flour, yeast, starch and sugar and mix with the help of a spoon. Now heat the milk and add the coffee. At this point, combine the liquid and solid ingredients. Mix everything with the electric mixer until the dough is smooth and homogeneous. Then add the chocolate flakes to the mixture, incorporating it with a spatula.

Grease the loaf pan. In order not to get your fingers dirty, take a card and grab the butter. Spread the fat all over the inner surface of the pan, being careful not to miss any areas. Continue like this until you have greased the entire pan. Now sprinkle the pan with a little flour and shake off the excess. If you are unfamiliar with flour and butter, you can always use parchment paper. Then, pour the dough into it.

It's time to bake! You have already preheated the oven to 180 static, right? Perfect. Now let the coffee plumcake cook for about 30 minutes. Remember to do the toothpick test to check its cooking. It is a simple and fool proof method to understand if a cake is cooked to the right point or not. After the necessary cooking time, before enjoying your delicious masterpiece, let it cool. The egg-free coffee plumcake is ready!

—IANS



## With a pinch of fruity element

Don't settle for your usual soft drink when you can prep up something fancy in little to no time! Here are a few lip-smacking healthy mocktails



seeds to garnish and add sweetness to your mocktails. The best part is that you don't need any added sugar as the natural flavour of pomegranate makes it a wonderful delight!

**Tangy orange**  
In this citrusy mocktail, you can mix up multiple citrus fruits to flavour up the taste. Oranges are abundant during winter, so make full use of this tangy winter fruit! The fresh orange pulp is a healthier escape from your regular soft drinks or alcohol. A thin slice of orange on the brim will surely make it an insta-worthy click!

**Blissful blueberry**  
Go all blue with your winter theme! The delicious blueberries have always been a sweet delight. Crush and blend them into a smooth mixture. This is something new that you can easily try for your next family get-together. Pair it up with blueberry cheesecake and get into the celebration mode!

**W**inters call for some warm exotic dishes, but what about the drinks? Don't settle for your usual soft drinks when you can prep-up for something fancy in little to no time! As we enter the new year, why not add some lip-smacking healthy mocktails to the list?

Yes, with a pinch of the fruity element, your mocktails can be safe and healthy! The key is to use high-quality ingredients and fresh fruit pulp. Most of these mocktails require similar ingredients like lime juice, mint leaves, ice cubes, soda or sparkling water. And trust us; it's as easy as you could think of! So, make a toast, with these easy-peasy mocktails, shared by Kimaye Health, INI Farms.

**Here's how to go about it in four simple steps:**

- Muddle the fruit and lime juice with a few mint leaves.
- Pour the mixture in a glass with two to three ice cubes, and honey if needed.
- Add soda or sparkling water to the brim and mix.
- Garnish them with a fruit slice and mint leaves to make them festive ready!

Some of the fruits that go well are:

**Peppy pomegranate**

Goes perfectly with the winter vibe as the blend of maroon with soda looks splendid for a celebration drink. Along with pomegranate juice, you can also throw in a few

**Cucumber lemonade**  
While cucumbers are most adored in summers for their cooling effect and they also make a refreshing drink during the winters. The freshness of cucumbers with lime soda is surely something you wouldn't want to miss. Don't just slide them into your salads, instead turn them into a sweet fresh mocktail!

**Striking strawberry pineapple**  
Blend in two fruits for some incredible flavour. Pineapple and strawberry go well together because of their sweet and soft nature. With these two fruits, there's barely any need for added sugar. You can play with the quantity of each fruit to get the desired shade of the drink.

These are some of the best and easy combinations to try for that random get together. Always go for fresh and good quality fruits for better results. Additionally, you can also freeze some small fresh-fruit chunks in ice cubes and drop them in to give your mocktails a flattering look. With these ingredients and tricks in mind, you can add a unique charm to simple parties!

—IANS

## R E C I P E S



**ALMOND & SESAME PINNI**  
**WHAT YOU NEED**

- Wheat flour: 2 cup
- Semolina: 2½ tbsp
- Roasted almond slivers: ¼ cup
- Roasted white sesame powder: ¼ cup
- Pure ghee: ¾ cup
- Gram flour (*besan*): 1½ tbsp
- Sugar: 1 cup
- Water: ½ cup
- Green cardamom powder: ½ tsp
- Roasted white sesame: 1 tbsp
- Roasted whole almonds: 3 tbsp

**METHOD**

- Heat ghee in a pan, add semolina

and wheat flour to it. Roast the mixture till a golden colour is achieved.

- Mix the sugar and water in a pan, and put it over low heat. Cook till single string sugar syrup is formed.
- Mix the sugar syrup with the wheat flour mixture. Add the green cardamom powder.
- Cook the mixture till it becomes a little dry. Add the roasted almond flakes and ground white sesames to the mixture and mix well.
- Allow the mixture to cool. Divide the mixture into equal parts and shape it into rounds.
- Cut the roasted almond into halves and place it over the pinnis and roll the pinnis gently in roasted white sesame.

Courtesy: Chef Manish Mehrotra.

**VEG BIRYANI**

**WHAT YOU NEED**

- Basmati rice: 3 cups
- Whole green cardamom (divided): 18
- Cloves (divided): 12
- Salt: 3 tsp
- Ghee: 4.5 tbsp + 1 tsp
- Red onion (thinly sliced): 6
- Broken cashews: 6 tbsp
- Potato (cubed): 3
- Cauliflower florets: 150 gm
- Carrot (diagonally cut): 3
- Green beans (diagonally cut): 20
- Mil: 30 ml
- Saffron strands
- Ginger and garlic paste: 2 tbsp
- Green chillies: 6
- Oil: 30 ml
- Cumin seeds: 2 tsp
- Cinnamon stick
- Bay leaf: 3
- Whole black peppercorns: 13
- Curd: 1 cup
- Biryani masala: 4.5 tsp
- Red chilli powder: 1.5 tsp
- Water: 1 cup
- Cilantro (chopped): 8 tsp
- Mint (chopped): 7 tsp
- Rose water or kewra water: 3 tsp
- Garam masala: 1 tsp



**METHOD**

- Soak the rice in three cups of water for 35 to 40 minutes. Drain the water later.
- Heat a pot full of water. Add one black cardamom, three green cardamom, four cloves and 3/4 teaspoon salt to it. Let it come to a boil.
- Put rice and stir with a spoon.
- Let it cook uncovered (don't lower the heat) until it's almost cooked. This takes around six to seven minutes.
- Remove the pan from heat

- and drain the rice in a colander. Add a teaspoon of ghee to the rice. Set aside.
- Heat 1.5 tablespoon of ghee in a pan on medium heat. Once hot, add one sliced onion and cook until they turn golden brown and caramelise. Remove on a plate.
- To the same pan, now add cashews and cook until golden brown. Remove and set aside.
- To the same pan, add potato and cook for two minutes until light brown. Remove on a plate.

- To the same pan, now add cauliflower, beans and carrots. Sauté for two to three minutes until veggies appear light brown. Remove them on a plate.
- Heat two tablespoons of milk in a pan. Once warm, add saffron strands (crush it before adding). Set it aside.
- Crush ginger, garlic and chilli using a mortar and pestle. Set aside.
- Heat 1.5 tablespoons of oil in a pan on medium heat. Add cumin seeds, cinnamon stick, bay leaf, peppercorns, remaining three cardamom and remaining two cloves.
- Stir and let the spices sizzle for a few seconds. Add the sliced onions and also add 1/4 teaspoon of salt.
- Cook for three to four minutes until onions turn light brown. Then add the crushed ginger, garlic and green chillies paste. Cook for two minutes until the raw smell goes away.
- Remove the pan from heat and whisk in the yogurt, whisking continuously until it's all absorbed.
- Put the pan back on heat. Add all the veggies and toss to combine.
- Add the biryani masala and red chilli powder.
- Add 1/4 cup of water. Let it cook for around six to seven minutes until veggies are

- almost cooked but not overcooked. They should be firm to bite. Remove from heat.
- Now take a heavy bottom pan. First grease it with ghee.
- Then add a layer of rice (half of the rice). Top with half of fried onion, half of fried cashews and half of cilantro and mint. Add 1/2 teaspoon of rose water. Now place the veggies on top (all of it).
- Then add another layer of rice on top of the veggies. Then top it with remaining with fried onion, cashews, cilantro and mint.
- Add the prepared saffron milk and the remaining one teaspoon of rose water on top.
- Finally drizzle one teaspoon ghee on top. Sprinkle some biryani masala.
- Cover the pan tightly with aluminum foil. Then cover with a fitted lid.
- Heat a flat pan on medium heat. Once hot, reduce the flame to lowest. Place your biryani pot on top of the pan and let it cook for 25 to 30 minutes on lowest heat.
- Scoop out the biryani from the bottom of the pan so that each serving has both the veggies and the rice.
- Serve hot vegetable biryani with raita.

Courtesy: The Biryani House.



# Bruised India face temperament test

PTI ■ BRISBANE

After denting the ego of mighty Australians with their bruised and battered bodies in a Sydney epic, Ajinkya Rahane's wounded India will take no prisoners in a 'winners take all' fourth Test, starting Friday on the liveliest of tracks in the series.

Australia need a win to regain Border-Gavaskar Trophy but a draw will be enough for India to retain it for another couple of years.

There are times when the human body responds differently to the adrenaline rush and the likes of Ravichandran Ashwin, Rishabh Pant and Hanuma Vihari have given their million fans a reason to believe in their gumption that was on display in Sydney.

Jasprit Bumrah played with an abdominal strain and didn't want to come out even though the experience was painful and Ravindra Jadeja with a broken thumb was ready to do what Malcolm Marshall did with a fractured wrist three decades back.

They battled against everybody — the racist ones in the galleries, the abusive one behind the stumps and those lethal ones with the shiny red nut that broke a few bones but could not shake the steely resolve of the Indians.

The new India that Virat Kohli so raved about is now ready to battle a whole new set of adversities at a venue where Australia hasn't lost a Test since 1988.

There won't be a Jadeja and Bumrah and on one of the most difficult tracks, it couldn't have gotten more worse for India. And insult to injury is Mayank Agarwal being hit on the forearm in the nets and Ashwin battling back spasms.

"We will take a call tomorrow. The medical team is working with all the injured players. If Bumrah is fit, he plays, if he is not fit, he doesn't play," batting coach Vikram Rathour



Indian players chat during warm-up session on the eve of fourth Test against Australia at the Gabba

BCCI/Twitter

said at the pre-match conference.

For Tim Paine, the series-decider couldn't have been played at the better venue than the bouncy Woolloongabba or Gabba for fans around the world.

"From a distance it looks like it always does," you could gauge the confidence in Paine's voice even as he gave the news of young Will Pucovski's shoulder injury ruling him out of playing eleven.

"We love playing here, and one of the main reasons is because that wicket. This is a good place to come and play, because I don't have to go and look at it, I know what is going

to be like," he said and it was like warning to Indian team that looks more like a second string A team save three senior batsmen.

But Ajinkya Rahane will still smile, Cheteshwar Pujara will be uncomplaining and trust Rohit Sharma to still go for the pull shot if Pat Cummins digs one short.

There will be no Vihari in Sydney but he has set a different bench-mark for the 'walking wounded' and expect Rishabh Pant to play another blinder in the only way he can.

The combination has all gone for a toss and Rahane would only understand that discretion is the better part of val-

our. India might just want to use the option of playing only four bowlers instead of a regular five in order to take the game deep with their batting.

If Agarwal is available, expect him to go in at number three after Rohit and Shubman Gill with Pujara and Rahane coming a notch down.

There is an option of playing Prithvi Shaw or Wriddhiman Saha in place of Ravindra Jadeja but off-spin all-rounder Washington Sundar's name is also doing the rounds.

It's the bowling attack that India will be worried about. Navdeep Saini and Mohammed Siraj with just three Tests in

their kitty and Shardul Thakur, who bowled all of 10 balls in his debut Test two years back, do not exactly inspire confidence.

While Rathour kept cards close to his chest, it's more about trying to deny opposition psychological advantage by playing the guessing game on Bumrah when world knows that his participation is highly unlikely.

That too against a batting line-up where three of the top four batsmen respond to the name of David Warner, Marnus Labuschagne and Steve Smith.

The second and third batters have shown what they can do with Indian attack and Warner is not known to fail in too many innings.

TEST MATCHES AT GABBA						
Team	P	W	L	T	D	Success%
Australia	62	40	8	1	13	75.80
India	6	-	5	-	1	08.33

HIGHEST INNINGS TOTALS		
India	409 in 120.1 overs vs Australia	2003-04
Australia	645 in 158.6x8 overs vs England	1946-47

TOP INDIVIDUAL SCORES		
India	144 Sourav Ganguly vs Australia	2003-04
	144 Murali Vijay vs Australia	2014-15
Australia	259* Michael Clarke vs South Africa	2012-13

BEST BOWLING (INNINGS)		
India	6-104 Erapalli Prasanna vs Australia	1968-69
Australia	8-71 Shane Warne vs England	1994-95

Faisal Features

4th Test, Day 1  
Live from 5:00am IST  
SONY TEN 1, 3 & SIX

It's a very difficult task at hand and whatever the result, this Indian team under Rahane

has covered itself in glory with bare minimum resources.

"The toughness that you see has come after years of preparations. From coaching staff perspective, we keep telling them that, you can't let doubts

creeping after one bad innings (36 all out in Adelaide)," Rathour said.

In end, "No Guts, No Glory, No Stress, No Story".

There is a story to be told and Indians are scripting it.

## TEAMS

**Australia XI:** Tim Paine (captain), David Warner, Marcus Harris, Marnus Labuschagne, Steve Smith, Matthew Wade, Cameron Green, Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc, Nathan Lyon and Josh Hazlewood.

**India (from):** Ajinkya Rahane (captain), Rohit Sharma (vc), Shubman Gill, Cheteshwar Pujara, Mayank Agarwal, Prithvi Shaw, Wriddhiman Saha (wk), Rishabh Pant (wk), Ravichandran Ashwin, Navdeep Saini, Mohammed Siraj, Shardul Thakur, Jasprit Bumrah, T Natarajan, Washington Sundar.

## 'Overworked' Bumrah should be given a breather during Eng series: Gambhir

New Delhi: Former opener Gautam Gambhir believes the Indian team management needs to take good care of its pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah and if required, the right-arm pacer should be given a break during the upcoming home series against England.

On the road for nearly five months since this year's IPL, Bumrah has finally succumbed to the rigours of non-stop international cricket as he has been ruled out of the series-deciding fourth and final Test against Australia after suffering an abdominal strain during the preceding match in Sydney.

And Gambhir feels it would be unfair to force Bumrah to play in all the matches against England, starting February 5.

"... You got to look after him (Bumrah) as well, because he is going to be the leader of the attack for a very long time, so him being fit is very important,"



the World Cup-winning left-handed batsman told *Star Sports*.

"So when India plays England in the 4-Test match series... I know, yes, Mohd Shami is unfit, Ishant Sharma is unfit, Umesh Yadav is unfit but you can't afford to play Jasprit Bumrah in all the 4 Test match-

es, it will be very unfair on him," he added.

Gambhir, however, feels Bumrah will be more menacing in Indian conditions. "See again, he (Bumrah) hasn't played a Test match in India till now, Has he? He hasn't. So, I'm sure the Indian team management has looked after Jasprit Bumrah reasonably well. They have actually used him in places like England, South Africa and Australia, where he has got to be even more threatening.

"I'm not saying he is not going to be threatening in India. He is going to be even more threatening in India, where wickets can get low and slow and he can reverse the ball really well," he said.

The former cricketer-turned-politician said Bumrah is a quality and dangerous bowler, who is threat for any batsmen at any given time of a match.

## Bess' fifer puts Eng in control

AFF ■ GALLE

Off-spinner Dom Bess claimed five wickets to help bowl out Sri Lanka for 135 and give England the advantage on day one of a Test that took 10 months to start on Thursday.

Bess, who returned figures of 5-30, combined with paceman Stuart Broad, who took three wickets, as Sri Lanka were all out in two sessions as the two-Test series resumed in Galle after the original tour was aborted over the coronavirus in March.

England lost their openers early but skipper Joe Root, on 66, and Jonny Bairstow, on 47, steered the tourists to 127 for two at close of play. They still trail Sri Lanka by eight runs.

The batting duo put on an unbeaten partnership of 110 after Dom Sibley, for four, and Zak Crawley, for nine, fell to Lasith Embuldeniya's left-arm spin.

Root, who successfully reviewed an lbw call in his favour after being given out by the on-field umpire on 20, reached his 50th fifty in 98 Tests. He has 17 centuries.

Bess though remained the hero of the day with his second five-wicket haul in his 11th Test as the venue witnessed its lowest first-innings score, well



below Sri Lanka's 181 against Pakistan in 2000.

Sri Lanka suffered a pre-match jolt when skipper Dimuth Karunaratne was ruled out of the first of the two Tests with a fractured thumb.

Stand-in-captain Dinesh Chandimal scored 28 and put up some resistance in a 56-run stand with Angelo Mathews, who made 27 on his return from a hamstring injury.

Broad struck twice in an

over to send back opener Lahiru Thirimanne, who had scored four, and Kusal Mendis for nought — his fourth straight duck — to spell early trouble for the hosts.

Spin was introduced in the 11th over and Bess, with his second ball, got Kusal Perera for 20 when the batsman top-edged a reverse sweep to England captain Joe Root at first slip.

Sri Lanka had slumped to 25 for three but Mathews and Chandimal stood firm till lunch.

Broad came back in the second session to break the stand as he got Mathews caught at slip and Chandimal, who survived a dropped catch by debutant Dan Lawrence before lunch on 22, departed two balls later off Jack Leach.

Mathews, whose hamstring injury kept him out of the 2-0 Test series defeat in South Africa, went past 6,000 Test runs during his knock before Bess soon ran through the middle and lower order.

In reply, the tourists slipped to 17 for two after Sibley was caught at first slip and Crawley also back in the pavilion inside nine overs.

Root and Bairstow then batted cautiously to bring up England's best partnership for all wickets at the venue.

AFF ■ LONDON

Jose Mourinho slammed Tottenham's "avoidable" mistakes and lack of killer instinct after Fulham's Ivan Cavaleiro rescued a 1-1 draw on Wednesday.

Harry Kane had put the hosts ahead in the first half at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium, but Cavaleiro struck in the closing stages to leave Mourinho frustrated.

Tottenham have won just two of their last eight league matches and sit in sixth place.

A win against third bottom Fulham would have taken them into third place above Manchester City, who made it four successive league victories

## Spurs held at home by Fulham

when Phil Foden earned a 1-0 win over Brighton earlier on Wednesday.

Whether Spurs — six points behind leaders Manchester United — will be regarded as title contenders for much longer must be in doubt after this sloppy display.

"Once more we concede a goal that is completely avoidable. You have to keep a clean-sheet, not make mistakes. The markers are there. There wasn't even an advantage in terms of numbers," Mourinho said.

"We have lots of opportunities to kill off matches. In other

cases especially away we are winning but then don't have that ambition to get the goal and kill the game.

"There are things that are individual mistakes. We have bad results and we should avoid these results."

Cavaleiro's leveller was a suitably dramatic end to the feud between Mourinho and Fulham manager Scott Parker, triggered when Aston Villa's coronavirus outbreak meant Spurs' scheduled trip to Villa Park on Wednesday was postponed.

Instead, Tottenham's game against Fulham — originally

called off in December because of Covid cases in the Cottagers squad — was moved on Monday to help ease a potential fixture pile-up for Mourinho's team.

Parker said it was "scandalous" for his team to be forced to play at such short notice.

Mourinho hit back, saying he would only feel sorry for Fulham if they played a weakened team.

So he would have noted with interest that Fulham named a strong team with nine of the 11 that played their last Premier League game on Boxing

Day.

But it was Parker who had the last laugh and he said: "I'm very proud of this team for what we've been through. There's a lot of talk around, everyone assumes about what happened. I know what we've been through the last two weeks.

"This game was supposed to be scheduled 16 days ago — for 10 days some of these boys were locked up in their houses (self isolating). "We had players out there who had one day's training. What pleased me most was a desire and a real quality at times."

## Bayern suffer shock German Cup exit

AFF ■ KIEL

Bayern Munich were knocked out of the German Cup on Wednesday as second division Holstein Kiel won a nail-biting penalty shoot-out 6-5 after the second round tie finished 2-2 after extra-time.

This is the first time holders Bayern have been knocked out of the cup by a non-Bundesliga club since losing to then fourth-tier Magdeburg in 2000/01.

After Bayern midfielder Marc Roca was the first player to miss with his team's sixth penalty, Kiel's former



Bremen forward Fin Bartels converted the winning spot-kick to spark

wild celebrations.

The upset means this is the first time European champions Bayern have been eliminated from a cup competition since head coach Hansi Flick took charge in November 2019.

Bayern were 2-1 up thanks to goals by Serge Gnabry and Leroy Sane, either side of a superb Bartels strike, before a last-gasp header by Kiel captain Hauke Wahl on 95 minutes took the game to extra time, then penalties.

Bayern fielded a near-full strength side with only top-scoring striker Robert Lewandowski and centre-back Jerome Boateng rested.

## Ter Stegen saves Barca in shootout



AFF ■ CORDOBA

Marc-Andre ter Stegen's heroics measured Barcelona edged past Real Sociedad on penalties on Wednesday to reach the Spanish Super Cup final, without the injured Lionel Messi.

Messi was watching on as Ter Stegen did his best to fill the void in Cordoba, the goalkeeper immense both in the shoot-out and during normal time, which had finished 1-1.

Frenkie de Jong's header was cancelled out by a penalty from Mikel Oyarzabal, who then missed in the shoot-out, one of two crucial saves made by Ter Stegen before 21-year-old Riqui Puig hit the winning shot.

"I wasn't down to take one but we needed one more taker and I stepped forward," said Puig.

Barca advance to meet either Real Madrid or Athletic Bilbao in the final on Sunday, when Messi is expected to be available again, although coach Ronald Koeman was cautious at full-time.

"We have to wait," he said. Koeman's team have a mountain to climb in La Liga's title race but they are improving, now nine games unbeaten and with a trophy in their grasp.

This is the second year of the Spanish Super Cup's new format, which has four teams playing each other in a semi-final and final.

## India's campaign ends in Thailand

PTI ■ BANGKOK

Star India shuttler Saina Nehwal was knocked out of the Yonex Thailand Open Super 1000 event after losing the women's singles second round to Thailand's Busanan Ongbamrungphan here on Thursday.

In a battle of attrition, Saina managed to grab the opening game but ran out of steam in the end, losing 23-21, 14-21, 16-21 in a match that clocked 68 minutes. It was Saina's fourth straight loss to the world number 12 Busanan.

In the men's singles, former world number one Kidambi Srikanth was forced to give a walkover to his eighth seeded Malaysian opponent Lee Zii Jia after pulling up his right calf muscle.

Indian men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty also bowed out of the competition after suffering a 19-21, 17-21 defeat against second seeded Indonesian com-



bination of Mohammad Ahsan and Hendra Setiawan.

Later, Satwik and his mixed doubles partner Ashwini Ponnappa went down 12-21, 17-21 to Hong Kong pairing of Chang Tak Ching and Ng Wing Yung to draw curtains on India's campaign.

## Pochettino wins 1st trophy as manager

AFF ■ LENS

Neymar scored on his return to action for Paris Saint-Germain as they beat arch rivals Marseille 2-1 to win this season's Champions Trophy.

The Brazilian rolled home an 85th minute penalty to put PSG two goals ahead following Mauro Icardi's first-half opener to give new coach Mauricio Pochettino the first trophy of his reign in the French capital, and managerial career.

The Champions Trophy is the French equivalent of a Super Cup, usually contested at the start of the season by the league champions and French Cup winners.

With PSG winning both last season, Marseille had been selected as their opponents as the Ligue 1 runners-up.

Hopes were high for a feisty tussle in Lens after Marseille's

league win at PSG in September ended with five red cards and Neymar accusing Marseille centre back Alvaro Gonzalez of racism in the aftermath.

However it was a largely tame encounter in northern France, with the most noteworthy incident being substitute Neymar's goalscoring return after a month away.

The 28-year-old hadn't featured for the French champions since being stretchered off with an ankle injury during a 1-0 defeat to current league leaders Lyon on December 13.

Icardi thought he had given PSG the

lead with a 22nd minute tap-in, only to have the goal ruled out for offside after Kylian Mbappe strayed past Marseille's back line to collect Leandro Paredes' defence-splitting pass.

Seven minutes later it was Mbappe's turn to have a goal chalked off when he started his run too early to connect with a long pass from his captain Marquinhos.

Icardi finally put dominant PSG ahead six minutes before the break with a goal typical of his poacher's style, first meeting Angel Di Maria's raking long ball with a close-range header that Steven Mandanda pushed onto the post.

The Argentine was quickest to follow up as

the ball dribbled back out from the goal, and he tapped in his second goal as many games since returning from injury.

He almost doubled his side's lead in first half stoppage time when he hit a left-footed strike back off the crossbar.

Neymar returned to action in the 65th minute and was immediately targeted by Gonzalez, the Argentine fouling the superstar attacker several times in what looked like a continuation of the pair's spat.

However it was Neymar who had the last laugh when he stepped up to score the decisive second goal for PSG from the penalty spot after Icardi was brought down by Marseille's substitute keeper Yohann Pele.

Dimitri Payet pulled one back for Marseille with a minute remaining but it was too little too late for Andre Villas-Boas' side.