



## PC'S DESIRE

Actor Priyanka Chopra says she wants many children with her pop star husband Nick Jonas

LEISURE P2



## NEW LEASE OF LIFE

Kerala waives entertainment tax for cinema theatres from Jan to March 2021, earns praises

TWO STATES P7



## GUTERRES SEEKS SECOND TERM

UN Secy-General Antonio Guterres told five permanent members of Security Council that he would like to stay on for a second term

INTERNATIONAL P10

# SC ruling on farm laws today

SC PULLS UP CENTRE, SAYS EXTREMELY DISAPPOINTED WITH NEGOTIATION PROCESS BETWEEN GOVT & FARMERS

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Jan 11:** The Supreme Court Monday pulled up the Centre for its handling of the farmers protest against the new farm laws, saying it is "extremely disappointed" with the way negotiations between them were going and it will constitute a committee headed by a former Chief Justice of India to resolve the impasse. The court said, it will pronounce orders Tuesday on various issues related to the new farm laws.

Indicating amply that it may go to the extent of staying the implementation of the contentious farm laws, the apex court refused to grant extra time to

the Centre to explore the possibility of amicable solution saying it has already granted the government a "long rope". "We have given you long rope, Mr Attorney General, please don't lecture us on patience," a bench headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde said.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told the bench, also comprising Justices AS Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian, that the top court has made "harsh observations" regarding handling of the situation by the government.

"That was the most innocuous factual thing for us to say," the bench said. The apex court, which said it will pass orders on the issue concerning farm laws and farmers' protest in part



Farmers during their stir against farm laws at Ghazipur border in New Delhi, Monday

in the matter, asked the parties to suggest two-three names of former CJIs including former CJI RM Lodha who can head the apex court-appointed panel. At the outset, the bench said, "What is going on? States are rebelling against your laws". "We are extremely disappointed with the negotiation process," it said, adding, "We don't want to make any stray observations on your negotiations but we are extremely disappointed with the process." The apex court, which was hearing a clutch of pleas challenging the new farm laws as well as the ones raising

issues related to the ongoing agitation at Delhi borders, said it is not talking about the repeal of these farm laws at the moment. "This is a very delicate situation," the bench said, adding, "There is not a single petition before us which says that these farm laws are beneficial". "We are not experts on economy; you tell us whether the government is going to put on hold farm laws or we will do this," the bench said. "We are sorry to say that Centre has not been able to solve the problem and the farmers agitation." Attorney General K K Venugopal argued that a

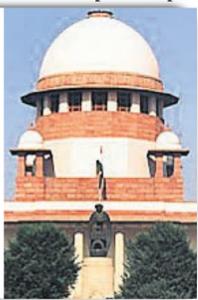
## Stay not a solution: Farmer leaders

**New Delhi:** Farmer leaders Monday said they would continue their agitation even if the government or the Supreme Court stays the implementation of the new agri laws. The farmer leaders were also of the view that a stay is "not a solution" as it is only for a fixed period of time. They were reacting after the SC indicated that it may stay the implementation of the farm laws and refused to grant more time to the Centre to explore the possibility of an amicable solution saying it has already granted the government a "long rope". "We welcome the SC observation, but ending the stir is not an option. Any stay is only for a fixed period of time... till the issue is taken up by the court again," farmer leader Gurnam Singh Chaduni said.

law cannot be stayed unless the court finds it violates fundamental rights or constitutional schemes. "Our intention is to see whether we can find an amicable solution to all this. That is why we had asked you (Centre) whether you are willing to keep these laws on hold for sometime. But you wanted to buy time," the bench said.

## PANEL LIKELY

**NEW DELHI:** The Supreme Court will pronounce orders on Tuesday on various issues related to the new farm laws and the farmers' ongoing protest at Delhi borders and may take a call on setting up of a committee headed by a former Chief Justice of India (CJI) to find ways to resolve the impasse. A bench, headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde, which indicated during the hearing that it may pass orders in parts on the issues concerning farm laws and farmers' protest, later uploaded the information on the website. "List these matters tomorrow i.e. 12.01.2021, for orders," said the bench which also comprised justices A S Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian.



## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Time to shift to some other messaging app. WhatsApp is not going to care for our privacy now.

# Bird flu outbreak in 10 states confirmed

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Jan 11:** The Centre Monday said bird flu has been confirmed in 10 states so far and stressed on increased surveillance around water bodies, live bird markets, zoos and poultry farms.

"Till January 11, 2021, Avian Influenza has been confirmed in 10 states of the country," the department of animal husbandry and dairying said in a statement.

The outbreak was confirmed in seven states - Kerala, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh - as on January 10. On Monday, bird flu has also been confirmed in Delhi, Uttarakhand and Maharashtra.

States have been asked to build awareness among the public and avoid the spread of misinformation. "States/ UTs have been requested to increase surveillance around water bodies, live bird markets, zoos, poultry farms, etc. Along with proper disposal of carcass, and strengthening of biosecurity in poultry farms," it said.

## Transmission to humans unlikely

**NEW DELHI:** The Centre Monday asked states not to close mandis or restrict sales of poultry products as there are no scientific reports of transmission of bird flu to human beings. The outbreak of bird flu or avian influenza (AI) has been confirmed in 10 states so far. Briefing reporters, Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Giriraj Singh said there have been no scientific reports on transmission of bird flu to humans and consumers should not be scared.

The Centre has also directed states to maintain adequate stock of PPE kits and accessories required for culling operations. It has asked state animal husbandry departments to ensure effective communication and coordination with health authorities for close vigilance of the disease status and avoid any chances of transmission of the disease into humans.

Meanwhile, the department said that ICAR-NIHSD has confirmed the death of crows and migratory/wild birds in Tonk, Karauli, Bhiwarra districts of Rajasthan as well as Valsad, Vadodara and Surat districts of Gujarat.

# UG, PG FINAL YR CLASSES RESUME

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 11:** Classes in colleges and universities in the state resumed from January 11 for the students of final year in undergraduate and post-graduate courses. The higher education department had issued guidelines for the colleges and universities January 3.

Apart from colleges and universities, technical universities, engineering/professional colleges, diploma/post diploma institutions of the state under the administrative control of the skill development and technical education (SDTE) department also commence their physical classroom teaching for the final year students of PG/UG/Diploma/Post diploma programmes from Monday.

The penultimate semester exams for the students of UG/PG courses will be held from March 16 to March 31 and the final semester examinations will take place between June 16 and June 30, a notification issued by the Higher Education department said. Higher education minister Arun Sahoo Monday visited several colleges in the city and talked with students and asked them to follow the Covid guidelines during the classes.

The government decided to reopen colleges and universities considering the improvement in Covid-19 situation in the state and the huge academic loss of students due to the pandemic situation. The students while entering the premises had



to carry Covid negative reports with them. "The state public universities and government as well as non-government degree colleges (coming under HE department) are hereby directed to commence physical classroom teaching for students of 2020-21 final year UG/PG courses from 11-01-2021 (Monday)," the notification said. For UG students, the government also issued norms for the conduct of classroom teaching which should be held in a regular manner to cover all chapters of the syllabus irrespective of coverage of some chapters by online mode. "Whenever possible, physical classroom teaching shall be recorded and shared with absentee students," the guideline said adding that Covid-19 prevention protocols need to be followed. It has been made mandatory for all the persons coming to colleges and universities to wear facemasks. Social distancing should be maintained in classrooms and, if needed, crowded classes can be divided into batches and teaching hours in a day can be extended.

## India returns captured PLA soldier to China

**NEW DELHI:** The Indian Army on Monday handed back to China a soldier of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA), three days after apprehending him at the southern bank of Pangong Tso in eastern Ladakh, official sources said. The soldier was returned to China at the Chushul-Moldo border point in eastern Ladakh at 10.10 am, they added. The Chinese soldier was captured at the southern bank of Pangong lake in the early hours of Friday after he transgressed across the Indian side of the Line of Actual Control (LAC). "The PLA soldier, who was apprehended on January 8, was handed back to China at Chushul-Moldo at 10.10 am on Monday," a source said. Indian and Chinese troops are locked in a tense border standoff in eastern Ladakh for over eight months. The faceoff began in May last year, following a clash between the two sides. PB

## MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	49269.32 ↑ 486.81
NIFTY	14484.80 ↑ 137.50
DOLLAR	73.75 ↑ ₹0.16
EURO	89.43 ↓ ₹0.41
GOLD	₹49,282 ↓ ₹315
SILVER	₹65,386 ↓ ₹1155

## WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	34.4°C	33.0°C
MIN	19.8°C	18.5°C
Humidity	84%	89%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

Forecast: Dense Fog likely to occur

# Covid breaks traditions: In a first, Budget to go paperless

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Jan 11:** The voluminous budget documents will not be printed this year following the Covid-19 protocol and will instead be distributed electronically to the Members of Parliament (MPs).

This will be the first time since the presentation of independent India's first budget November 26, 1947, that the documents containing income and expenditure statement of the Union government along with finance bill, detailing new tax and other measures for the new financial year, will not be physically printed. Due to COVID-19, it has been decided not to print documents related to the Union Budget for the fiscal beginning April (FY 2021-22), sources said.

All MPs will get soft copies of the budget and Economic Survey that contains an account of the state of the economy. The printing of documents requires staff to be locked up in the basement print-

ing press of the finance ministry couple of weeks ahead of the presentation of the Budget. The printing all these years began with a 'Halwa' ceremony that marked the staff going into the basement press only to emerge after the budget is presented.

This will be the first time since independence that physical copies of budget documents will not be shared with MPs to avoid the risk of COVID-19 infection, the sources said, adding all MPs will get soft copies of the Budget and Economic Survey. The familiar sight of trucks loaded with budget papers in Parliament on the budget day and scanning of these by security guard will also be given a miss.

The budget for FY22 will come on the backdrop of an economic contraction of 7.7 per cent, the first time in the history of independent India. So, all stakeholders have great expectation from the upcoming Budget, which could provide a healing touch to the pandemic-battered



economy and push growth. Even Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman last month promised a "never before" like Union Budget to the people of India. While invest-

ment in health, medical Research and Development (R&D) and developing greater skills to handle telemedicine is going to be critical, livelihood challenges will have

to be seen in a newer canvas with the latest perspective on vocational training and skill development. "Send me your inputs so that we can see a budget which is a budget like never before, in a way 100 years of India wouldn't have seen a Budget being made post-pandemic like this. "And that is not going to be possible unless I get your inputs and wish list, clear observation of what has put you through the challenge... Without that, it is impossible for me to draft something which is going to be that Budget like never before, a Budget which is being made after a pandemic," Sitharaman had said.

The Union Budget for 2021-22, the eighth Budget of Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government, is scheduled to be presented in Parliament on February 1, 2021. Sitharaman will be presenting her third full-time Budget.

The Modi-led government scrapped a colonial-era tradition of presenting the budget at the end

of February. Then Finance Minister Arun Jaitley had for the first time presented the annual accounts February 1, 2017.

With the budget date being advanced, the ministries are now allocated their budgeted funds from the start of the financial year beginning April. This gives government departments more leeway to spend as well as allow companies time to adapt to business and taxation plans.

Yashwant Sinha, as a finance minister of the BJP-led government in 1999, also made a departure from the tradition of presenting the budget at 11 am from the colonial set practice of 5 pm. Sinha, however, retained the budget date of February 28 or the last working day of February. The concept of the 5 pm Budget was followed by the British regime as the members of Britain's parliaments 'House of Commons' and 'House of Lords' used to listen to India's budget before independence.

Start Strong. Grow Stronger.

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# Vaccines to reach state in 2/3 days

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 11:** Clearing doubts in the minds of people, the state government Monday said the two vaccines against Covid-19 approved by the Centre are safe and effective.

Health director and state vaccine in-charge Bijay Panigrahi said the vaccines are likely to reach Odisha in two to three days. He said the vaccination drive will be conducted at 160 session sites covering all 30 districts and 100 health workers will be vaccinated at each session site on the first day.

Arrangements will be made for two-way communication at two places-Sundargarh District Headquarters Hospital (DHH) and Capital Hospital here, from where the ministry of health and family welfare can directly take feedback on the vaccination.

Besides, the state monitoring teams will be formed for smooth execution of the vaccination drive. The teams will monitor the programme at the district-level, he added. The Pulse Polio immunisation drive in the state scheduled to be held January 17, 18 and 19 has been put on hold in view of the vaccination programme.

Addressing a presser here Monday, the state government's technical adviser (Covid-19) Jayant Panda said, "The vaccines are completely safe and effective because it has been tested by the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) and other regulatory authorities."

Over last 10 months, experts have been conducting tests on the vaccines, he said. The DCGI has approved two vaccines - Bharat Biotech's Covaxin and Oxford-AstraZeneca's Covishield - for emergency use.

"Though the vaccination is not mandatory, we recommend the vaccines for betterment of people. The vaccines are also helpful against



State gov't technical adviser (Covid-19) Jayant Panda

the UK strain of the virus. It will take two months to complete the first phase of vaccination which will be done free of cost," Panda said.

Stating that everyone has to take two doses of the vaccine, he said, "We must ensure that 28 days after taking the first dose, we take the second dose of the same vaccine and not another one."

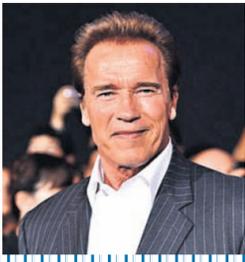
Panda said a pregnant woman can take the vaccine after consulting her doctor. Similarly, he advised people who recovered from the disease to undergo vaccination.

## Centre to bear first round cost



**NEW DELHI:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced Monday that the Centre will bear the expenses of vaccinating nearly three crore healthcare and frontline workers in the first round and suggested that public representatives, a reference to politicians, should not be part of this initial exercise.

Interacting with state Chief Ministers, Modi underscored the enormity of what he described as the world's biggest vaccination exercise, which begins from January 16, saying over 30 crore citizens will get the jobs in the next few months in India against only 2.5 crore people who have received them in over 50 countries in around a month so far.



**TRUMP IS THE WORST PRESIDENT EVER: ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER**

Hollywood star Arnold Schwarzenegger has condemned the attack on the Capitol in the US, and described Donald Trump as the worst president ever. The former Governor of California also compared the mob that attacked the US Capitol to the Nazis.

**SEX AND THE CITY TO BE BACK BUT WITHOUT KIM CATTRALL**

The popular show *Sex And The City* is set to return, but without Kim Cattrall in her avatar of Samantha. The other stars of the original series -- Sarah Jessica Parker, Cynthia Nixon and Kirstin Davis -- will be back in the new chapter, titled *And Just Like That*.



**FORTUNE FORECAST**

GaneshSpeaks.com accuracy • reliability • trust FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

**ARIES**  
You will achieve things today, not by the sleight of your hand but by your communication skills, says Ganesh. Your eloquence shall win many hearts. The stars suggest monetary benefits, but you need to guard against injury and minor ailments.

**TAURUS**  
You are likely to confront a turning point in relationships today, foresees Ganesh. Because you are in need of some compassion and support, you will feel the need to spend time with friends and relatives. Your beloved or better half may bring a change in mood by helping you shed your negative frame of mind, says Ganesh.

**GEMINI**  
You will be faced with a slew of demands from various people today, and you will find it difficult to meet all of them. However, you will be able to meet the requirements that need to be met to salvage the day. People will praise your intelligence and creativity, says Ganesh.

**CANCER**  
Today is a crucial and fascinating day for you, predicts Ganesh. You will learn and gain from your bosses and elders. Peers and siblings may extend their full support to you. Your chances of winning legal battles are remote, so an out-of-court settlement may be your best bet.

**LEO**  
If it's a fresh start that you have been looking for, then this day promises to give you just that, predicts Ganesh. If you have already chalked out any plans for your future, today is the day to initiate the implementation. Remember Lions, though, that rushing blindly into anything is not the solution. The slow and steady approach always works. Hence, consider executing your ideas in phases, advises Ganesh.

**VIRGO**  
Today finds you ambitious and meticulous. Actions may not speak - they'll roar! Your planning and scruples will set the pace at work. Expect pats on the back from your bosses and a round of cheers from your peers.

**LIBRA**  
Of late, you have been very concerned about the health of one of your close friends. Take this day to lay your fears to rest by spending time with that friend. Work can wait, as today you must prove to yourself, if not to others, that a friend in need is a friend indeed. Ganesh wishes you the very best.

**SCORPIO**  
Your mind shall take over the proceedings today. And it shall, in all likelihood, draw you to the work bench and keep your nose to the grindstone. But your heart will flutter like a butterfly, and if you manage to strike the right balance, you may win over your special one and your boss too, says Ganesh.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Time to open up that can of confetti at the workplace today. Success never smelled sweeter. But you may bleed on the purchase front, says Ganesh, as in your revelry, you may just unknowingly end up shelling an extra buck or two on ordinary items.

**CAPRICORN**  
The day will be a maze of complex problems and situations, but you will find your way out in no time, says Ganesh. At work, you may love to play the leader, but that makes you accountable, for both the good as well as the poor performance of your subordinates. In all likelihood, you may be held responsible for the poor performance of your team members. But all said and done, you will set high standards for yourself, and a perfect example for others to follow.

**AQUARIUS**  
Today is an auspicious day, particularly for astrologers, healers, spiritual guides and gurus, says Ganesh. One will think twice before challenging you today. Greed is not a word in your dictionary, and today, you are even more inspired to work for humanity.

**PISCES**  
Just as melting ice caps on faraway mountains can swell the oceans, concerted efforts you make now will have far-reaching beneficial consequences, says Ganesh. Do not be disheartened in the face of obstacles and keep soldiering on.

**Integrating theatre with technology**

Theatre producer Vivek Madan has performed in more than 30 plays, produced and toured with a dozen, and curated two national theatre festivals in last 20 years



A scene from the digital play *The Hound Of The Baskervilles*

Bangalore-based actor and theatre producer Vivek Madan, who has acted in Aadyam's latest digital play *The Hound Of The Baskervilles* based on the story by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, says he had a really challenging and fun time, especially "since we were engaging with a play after this long period of uncertainty about when we could be on stage again".

In his theatre journey of over 20 years, Madan has performed in more than 30 plays, produced and toured with a dozen, and curated two national theatre festivals.

His current play, directed by Aakash Khurana, will be screened via insider.in's online streaming service making it the second play of Aadyam's Digital Edition. Adapted by Steven Canny and John Nicholson, this is a comic take on the Sherlock Holmes story that turns a tale of terror into an engaging burlesque.

Asked about his personal experiences with the stories of Sir Arthur Canon Doyle, he said: "I've always been a huge fan of the Sherlock Holmes books. I've read most of his stories though they're now sort of blurring into one in my memory."

On his take on digital theatre and how different it is for him as an actor, he says:

"It isn't different for a recorded performance, unless the director is changing the blocking to favour camera angles and such, which wasn't the case with this production. If the play is being streamed live, however, there are several new skills and aspects of craft which require consideration and rehearsal in their own right. I think asking and answering these questions is important, but so is doing work and seeing what comes of it. Some amazing strides have been made this year, globally, in integrating theatre with the internet (not just technology) and I hope we continue to innovate with integrity."

The cast of the play includes Vivek Madan as Sherlock Holmes, Arghya Lahiri as Dr. Watson and Nadir Khan as Sir Charles Baskerville. Celebrating a cult novel from over a century ago, the artistes along with the entire production team have created a piece that is thoroughly entertaining while delivering remarkable performances. The gloriously funny parody of this famous story becomes special with greater reason - the three seasoned actors - Madan, Lahiri and Khan - play not 3 but a total of 15 characters.



Vivek Madan



**KAJOL ENJOYS WORKING ON WOMEN-DOMINATED SET**

MUMBAI: Actress Kajol said she enjoys working on a women-dominated set. Referring to upcoming digital film *Tribhanga: Tedhi Medhi Crazy*, she recalled how there was a time when men were not willing to participate in gender conversations. "There was this one point where Renuka and I had this huge conversation about men and all of a sudden you

could see there was utter silence on the set. We realized that all the men around me had kept quiet and no one was willing to look up and participate in this conversation," she added.

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

**Sonu's new mission for school kids**

MUMBAI: Actor Sonu Sood has started a new mission to ensure that students who are unable to attend online classes due to inaccessibility to smartphones, get education without roadblocks.

Sonu had earlier shared a post on Instagram about his 'new mission'.

The *Dabangg* actor said, "I have realised dur-

ing lockdown that a lot of people missed their online classes because they didn't have smartphones or unable to join those classes. I am introducing a platform where those who don't have phones will have options. No one should miss education. We will bring together these people and give them smartphones."

Sonu had earlier too distributed almost 100 smartphones to students for educational purposes.

The actor was hailed as the national hero during the lockdown for arranging transportation for migrants to go back to their hometowns.



**PRIYANKA WANTS 'a cricket team' with Nick**

LOS ANGELES: Actress Priyanka Chopra says she wants many children with her pop star husband Nick Jonas.

"A cricket team!" the actress replied when asked about how many children she would like.

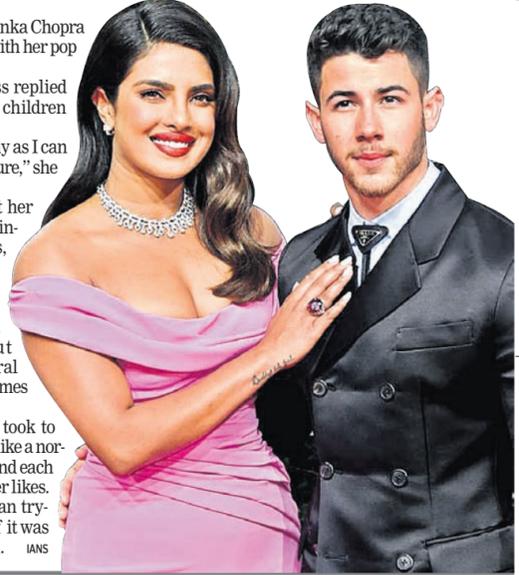
"I do want children, as many as I can have. A cricket team? I'm not so sure," she added.

The actress opened up about her hope for her future family in an interview with *The Sunday Times*, reports usmagazine.com.

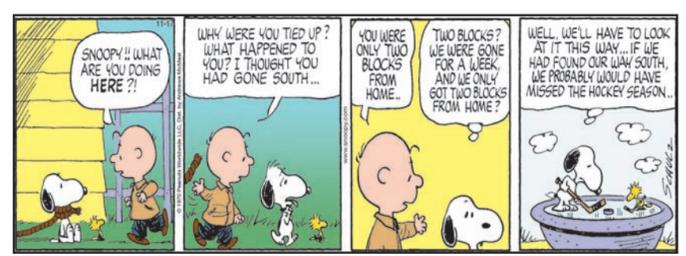
Priyanka got married to Nick in India in December 2018, just five months after getting engaged.

She also opened up about whether their different cultural backgrounds or age difference comes in between their relationship.

"Neither was a hurdle. Nick took to India like a fish to water. But just like a normal couple, you have to understand each other's habits and what each other likes. So it's more of an adventure than trying to figure out hurdles. None of it was really that hard," she explained.



**PEANUTS**



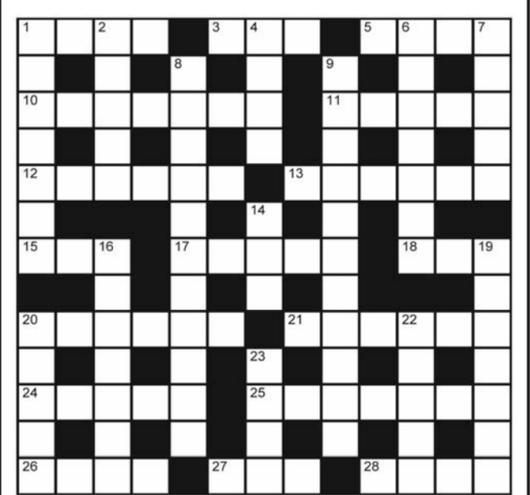
**CALVIN AND HOBBS**



**BREVITY**



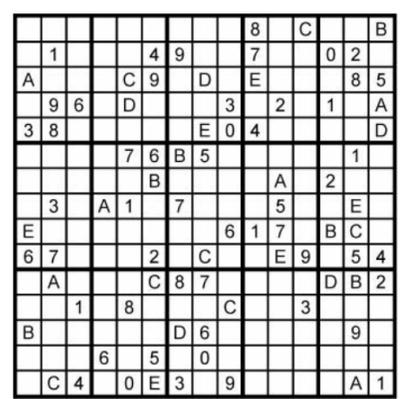
**FUN post CROSSWORD**



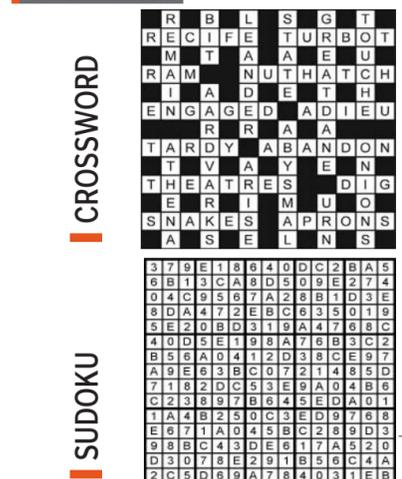
- Across**
- 1 Stephen King's canine horror story
  - 3 Cause of wrinkles
  - 5 Cookbook direction
  - 10 "Arabian Nights" hero (3,4)
  - 11 Bay window
  - 12 Acquire
  - 13 Passion
  - 15 Game official, briefly
  - 17 Big name on the "net"
  - 18 Room offerer
  - 20 Skimpy
  - 21 Monsoons
  - 24 British biscuit
  - 25 Yegg
  - 26 Hibernia
  - 27 Moray, e.g.
  - 28 Figure skating jump
  - 6 Capital of Libya
  - 7 Sovereign
  - 8 Genealogies (6,5)
  - 9 Some beds (4-7)
  - 14 Chinese brew
  - 16 Taste sensation
  - 19 Breathing apparatus
  - 20 Billiards shot
  - 22 Chill, so to speak
  - 23 Bassoon kin

**SUDOKU**

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, each row, column and box must contain the numbers 0 to 9 and the letters A to E.



**SOLUTIONS**



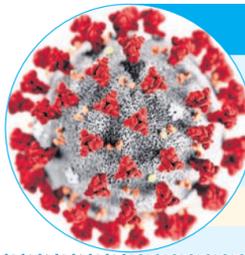
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

# downtown



## TAKING STOCK

Puri Collector Samarth Verma and other senior officials take stock of the Srimandir heritage corridor, Monday



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	9,08,09,049	6,49,26,874	19,45,363
India	1,04,67,431	1,00,92,130	1,51,198
Odisha	3,32,106	3,28,271	1,892

## Fire Services dept to procure modern equipment

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 11: The state Fire Services directorate is all set to procure a huge number of advanced equipment to further enhance its capabilities in disaster response. The fire services personnel of the state have received laurels for their performance during the natural disasters in the past.

According to sources at the Fire Services Directorate, the department has floated tender to purchase plasma cutters, generators, tractors, JCB cranes, quick deploy antennas (QDAs) and advanced fire resistant suites among other equipment. The directorate has sanctioned ₹32 crore to procure the equipment. As many as five quick deploy antennas will be acquired by the directorate.

The directorate felt the need of the quick deploy antennas during the severe cyclonic storm when the normal communication services came to a standstill. The fire services personnel with the antennas in disaster-hit areas will be able to keep normal communication with the control room at the headquarters. The directorate is planning to procure more number of fire resistant suites too.

## 72% attendance in schools on day-4

Bhubaneswar: The attendance of Class X and XII students in schools has increased to 72 per cent in the state, Monday. The attendance was 50 per cent on the reopening day (January 8), which rose to 53 per cent and 56 per cent on subsequent two days—January 9 & 10, respectively, as per a statement issued by the School & Mass Education department.

# Indonesian Embassy dedicates room to Biju babu's memory



The room dedicated to former CM Biju Patnaik (L). Resident Commissioner Ravi Kant, CM Naveen Patnaik's nephew Arun Patnaik, his brother Prem Patnaik and Indonesian Ambassador Sidharto R Suryodipuro during the inauguration

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Jan 11: The Indonesia Embassy at New Delhi Monday dedicated a room to former Odisha Chief Minister Biju Patnaik to commemorate his contributions to the freedom struggle of Indonesia.

Prem Patnaik, son of Biju Patnaik and brother of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, and Arun Patnaik, the nephew of the Chief Minister, took part in the opening ceremony along with Resident Commissioner Ravi Kant.

Prem Patnaik said that Indonesia was the second home of Biju Patnaik.

"We are very very honoured that this room has been named after him," said Prem Patnaik.

According to the embassy officials, the Biju Patnaik room will serve as a meeting room and lounge for the embassy's staff. The room exhibits several pictures of Biju Patnaik from the time of his contribution to Indonesia's freedom struggle.

## Biju Patnaik and his wife Gyan Patnaik had flown to Java and brought Sultan Sjahrir on a Douglas C-47 (Dakota) military aircraft July 24, 1947

"It's going to be a meeting room. We will receive here guests. We will exhibit here pictures and other things related to Biju Patnaik. This room has many meanings. We will not turn this room into museum. This will be an active part of the embassy," said Sidharto R Suryodipuro, the Ambassador of Indonesia.

While speaking about any future investment by Indonesia in Odisha, the Ambassador said, "Once the pandemic is over, we hope that we can participate in many other ways like in Bali Yatra. We hope that can serve as a bridge between Odisha and Indonesia". It is to be mentioned here that when the Dutch attempted to quell Indonesian Independence July 21, 1947, President Sukarno ordered Sjahrir, the former prime minister of Indonesia, to leave the country to attend the first Inter-Asia Conference, organised by Jawaharlal Nehru in July 1947 and to foment international public opinion against the Dutch. Sjahrir was unable to leave as the Dutch controlled the Indonesian sea and air routes. Then, Jawaharlal Nehru asked Biju babu, who was an expert pilot, to rescue Sjahrir. Biju Patnaik and his wife Gyan Patnaik flew to Java and brought Sultan Sjahrir on a Douglas C-47 (Dakota) military aircraft reaching India via Singapore July 24, 1947.

## ₹92.37Cr bonus, aid for kendu leaf workers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 11: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Monday announced ₹92.37 crore bonus and other incentives for kendu leaf pluckers, binders and other labourers.

Naveen made this announcement while chairing the Kendu Leaf Development Board meeting held through videoconferencing. Of the total announced assistance, ₹59.78 crore will be paid directly as bonus and the remaining amount as welfare expenses.

The Board has also decided to double the one-time compensation given to the kendu leaf workers in case of death or complete physical disability. The amount has been hiked to ₹2 lakh.

In 2014, the state government had decided to provide the dividend earned from the kendu leaf business to workers.

During the Covid-19, the government was able to create more than 60 lakh man-days, benefiting 7,54,631 kendu leaf pluckers, 18,223 binders and 16,533 others workers. In the 2020, ₹250 crore has been paid to the beneficiaries.

# WODC will be made more vibrant: Tripathy

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 11: Retired IAS officer and former chief secretary of Odisha, Asit Tripathy, Monday, took charge as the chairman of Western Odisha Development Council (WODC) and principal advisor to the Chief Minister.

After assuming office, Tripathy reviewed the activities of the WODC and said, "The main objective of the council is to achieve balanced regional development in the state. For the purpose, WODC will be made more vibrant and effective in formulation of need-based projects, their timely completion and quick delivery of services to the people."

He directed the officers of the council to prepare a baseline data platform of the critical developmental indicators on the basis of micro-level survey reports. The officials were further directed to adopt 5T principles in quick movement of files and transparent decision making.

Further, Tripathy directed the council officials to scale up their performance level and achieve definite output in terms of socio-economic development.

Emphasising on the disposal of the files, he said, "If required the officers and the staffers will be imparted capacity enhancement training in their respective fields of work and operation." CEO of WODC Saroj Kumar Patel was asked to computerise the files and get connected with Odisha Secretariat Workflow Automation System (OSWAS). He also directed the CEO to prepare resolutions of the meetings on the same day.

The review showed that around 3,000 micro and small projects are at various stages of implementation in 10 districts under WODC. The chairman further directed the officials to design the sustainable projects with of substantial impact on life and livelihood of the people.

# Hero Xtracks Urban comes to City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 11: World's largest two-wheeler manufacturer Hero MotoCorp continues to strengthen its premium product portfolio through products - Xtreme 160R, Xtreme 200 S and Xpulse 200.

With a view to giving a unique experience to riders of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, Hero MotoCorp, world's largest two-wheeler manufacturer, organised Hero Xtracks Urban at Omfed Ground, Phulnakhara, Gohal.

Hero Xtracks Urban was extremely successful as more than 100 premium bike enthusiasts attended the event to experience Hero MotoCorp's premium bike - Xtreme 160R in a specially cu-



rated location. The event was open for all bike enthusiasts. Hero team provided its test ride vehicles to participants who wanted to experience it for one lap of around 2-km long track.

The riders were briefed on the indispensable skills needed to navigate the specially designed terrain. Moreover, participants were first given the product and safety briefings, enabling them

to understand the capabilities of the bike and inculcate in them safe riding habits.

The riders were led by expert riders from Hero team on the track. The track engulfed barriers that assisted riders to enjoy the capabilities Xtreme 160R.

Hero MotoCorp is offering ₹4,000 loyalty and exchange offer for all premium vehicles till January 31, 2021.

## ରକ୍ତଦାନ କରନ୍ତୁ

ଅନ୍ୟର ଜୀବନ ବଞ୍ଚାଇବାରେ ସହାୟକ ହୁଅନ୍ତୁ

# ବୁଦ୍ଧାଏ ରକ୍ତ ପାଇଁ

ହୁଏତ କିଏ ନା କିଏ କେଉଁଠି ଆପଣଙ୍କୁ ଅପେକ୍ଷା କରିଛି...

## ରକ୍ତଦାନ କରନ୍ତୁ ଶୁଖିଲା ମୁହଁରେ ହସ ଭରନ୍ତୁ

ଅଧିକ ସୂଚନା ପାଇଁ ଜିଲ୍ଲା / ଉପଖଣ୍ଡସ୍ତରୀୟ ରକ୍ତ ଭଣ୍ଡାର କିମ୍ବା ରାଜ୍ୟ ରକ୍ତ ସଞ୍ଚାରଣ ପରିଷଦ, ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱରଙ୍କ ସହ ପରାମର୍ଶ କରନ୍ତୁ

<http://www.health.odisha.gov.in/>  
[facebook.com/HFWOodisha](https://www.facebook.com/HFWOodisha)  
[@HFWOodisha](https://twitter.com/HFWOodisha)

## ରାଜ୍ୟ ରକ୍ତ ସଞ୍ଚାରଣ ପରିଷଦ

ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ଓ ପରିବାର କଲ୍ୟାଣ ବିଭାଗ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା

## CHILL MAY MAKE A COMEBACK

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 11: Cold-wave is likely to return to interior Odisha as night temperature would fall by 3 to 5 degrees Celsius from Tuesday night, Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre said here Monday.

"The minimum temperature (night temperature) is very likely to fall by 3-5 degrees Celsius in the districts of interior Odisha after 24 hours and it is likely to fall by 2-3 degrees in coastal Odisha after two days," it said. Besides, dry weather will prevail in the state till January 16, the Centre said.

The Met centre also predicts shallow to moderate fog over the districts of Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Balasore, Cuttack, Khurda, Nayagarh, Kandhamal and Koraput during Tuesday night and early Wednesday.

Similarly, shallow to moderate fog is very likely to occur at one or two places in Angul, Boudh, Dhenkanal, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Khurda, Nayagarh and Kandhamal districts Wednesday night and early Thursday, it said.

Lowest temperature of 13.5 degrees Celsius was recorded at Daringbadi while it was 13.6 degrees at Koraput. All other places of the state witnessed a temperature of 15 degrees or above temperature during past 24 hours.

## NZP's walkthrough aviary shut for visitors

Bhubaneswar: The Nandankanan Zoological Park (NZP) has decided to close the walkthrough aviary at the zoo for the visitors as a precautionary measure to prevent possible spread of avian influenza. In a notice appearing on the website and social media, the NZP authorities also said that the Safari and the battery-operated vehicle facility at the zoo is closed for the visitors until further order. In the wake of death of over 100 poultry birds in Khurda district, the Odisha government has asked people not to panic over the incident as the avian influenza virus test came negative for all the selected samples. The Fisheries and Animal Resource Development (F&ARD) department in a statement said that people can consume chicken meat, eggs and other poultry products after cooking them thoroughly.

## ବାର୍ତ୍ତା

ପ୍ରତିବର୍ଷ ସାରା ଦେଶରେ ସ୍ୱାମୀ ବିବେକାନନ୍ଦଙ୍କ ଜନ୍ମ ଦିବସ ଚାନ୍ଦୁଆରୀ ୧୨ ତାରିଖକୁ 'ଚାନ୍ଦୁଆରୀ ସ୍ୱାମୀ ଦିବସ' ରୂପେ ପାଳନ କରାଯାଇଛି । ଏହି ଅବସରରେ ସ୍ୱାମୀଜୀଙ୍କ ପ୍ରତି ଗୋର ଉଚ୍ଚ ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧାଜ୍ଞାନ ଅର୍ପଣ କରୁଛି ।

ସ୍ୱାମୀ ବିବେକାନନ୍ଦଙ୍କ ମତରେ ସ୍ୱାମୀ ଶକ୍ତି ହେଉଛି ବିକାଶର କର୍ଣ୍ଣଧାର ।

ରକ୍ତଦାନ ମହାପୁଣ୍ୟ । କରୋନା ମହାମାରୀ ସଙ୍କଟ ସମୟରେ ସ୍ୱେଚ୍ଛାକୃତ ରକ୍ତଦାନ କରି ରକ୍ତ ଆବଶ୍ୟକ କରୁଥିବା ରୋଗୀମାନଙ୍କର ଦୁର୍ଲ୍ଲଭ ଜୀବନ ବଞ୍ଚାଇବାରେ ସହଯୋଗ କରିଥିବା ସମସ୍ତ ସ୍ୱେଚ୍ଛାକୃତ ସ୍ୱାମୀ ରକ୍ତଦାନୀମାନଙ୍କୁ ଏହି ଅବସରରେ ଗୋର ଆଚରଣ ଅଭିନନ୍ଦନ ।

ଆସନ୍ତୁ, ଆଜିର ଏହି ଦିବସରେ ସମସ୍ତେ ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା ଦେବା, ସ୍ୱେଚ୍ଛାକୃତ ଭାବରେ ରକ୍ତଦାନ କରି ବହୁମୂଲ୍ୟ ଜୀବନ ବଞ୍ଚାଇବା ସହିତ ସ୍ୱସ୍ଥ ଓ ନିରାମୟ ସମାଜ ଗଠନରେ ସହଯୋଗର ହାତ ବଢ଼ାଇବା ।

**ନନ୍ଦିନୀ ପ୍ରଧାନ**  
(ନବୀନ ପଢ଼କାଶିକା)  
ମାନ୍ୟବର ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା

OIPR-10080/13/0002/2021

## ବାର୍ତ୍ତା

ଚାନ୍ଦୁଆରୀ ୧୨ ତାରିଖ, ସ୍ୱାମୀ ବିବେକାନନ୍ଦଙ୍କ ଜନ୍ମ ଦିବସକୁ 'ଚାନ୍ଦୁଆରୀ ସ୍ୱାମୀ ଦିବସ' ରୂପେ ପାଳନ କରାଯାଇଛି । ଆଜିର ଏହି ଦିବସରେ ସ୍ୱାମୀଜୀଙ୍କ ସମସ୍ତ ସ୍ୱେଚ୍ଛାକୃତ ସ୍ୱାମୀ ରକ୍ତଦାନୀମାନଙ୍କୁ ଆଚରଣ ଶୁଭେଚ୍ଛା କରାଯାଇଛି ।

ସ୍ୱସ୍ଥ ସମାଜ ଗଠନ, ଦେଶର ସୁରକ୍ଷା ଓ ବିକାଶ, ସ୍ୱସ୍ଥ ସମୂହି ଏପରିକି ଦେଶର ସର୍ବାଙ୍ଗୀନ ଉନ୍ନତିରେ ସ୍ୱାମୀ ଶକ୍ତିର ଅବଦାନ ଅତୁଳନୀୟ ।

ରକ୍ତଦାନ ଶ୍ରେଣୀରେ ସ୍ୱାମୀ ଶକ୍ତିର ସ୍ୱାମୀ ଅତ୍ୟନ୍ତ ମହତ୍ତ୍ୱପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ । ରକ୍ତଦାନ ଜୀବନ ବୀର । ବିକାଶ ଶ୍ରେଣୀରେ ରକ୍ତ ଆବଶ୍ୟକତା ଅତ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଉଚ୍ଚରୁଚ୍ଚରୁ ଓ କରୁଣା ଅଟେ । ୧୮ ବର୍ଷରୁ ଅଧିକ ସ୍ୱାମୀ ଓ ସ୍ୱାମୀମାନେ ସ୍ୱାଗତ୍ୟୁର ଭାବେ ରକ୍ତଦାନ କରି ନିଜେ ସ୍ୱସ୍ଥ ରହିବା ସହ ଅନ୍ୟମାନଙ୍କୁ ଉପକାର କରିବାରେ ସହଯୋଗ କରି ସ୍ୱସ୍ଥ ସମାଜ ଗଠନରେ ସହାୟକ ହେବ । କରୋନା ମହାମାରୀ ସଙ୍କଟ ସମୟରେ ସ୍ୱେଚ୍ଛାକୃତ ରକ୍ତଦାନ କରି ବହୁମୂଲ୍ୟ ଜୀବନ ବଞ୍ଚାଇବାରେ ସହାୟକ ହେଉଥିବା ସମସ୍ତ ସ୍ୱେଚ୍ଛାକୃତ ସ୍ୱାମୀ ରକ୍ତଦାନୀମାନଙ୍କୁ ଗୋର ହାତ୍ତ୍ୱ ଅଭିନନ୍ଦନ ।

ଆସନ୍ତୁ, ଆଜିର ଏହି ଦିବସରେ ସମସ୍ତେ ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧା ଦେବା, ସ୍ୱେଚ୍ଛାକୃତ ଭାବରେ ରକ୍ତଦାନ କରି ରାଜ୍ୟରେ ଆବଶ୍ୟକ ପଡ଼ୁଥିବା ରକ୍ତର ପରିମାଣକୁ ଭରଣା କରି ଏକ ସ୍ୱସ୍ଥ ସମାଜ ଗଠନରେ ସହଯୋଗର ହାତ ବଢ଼ାଇବା । ଏପରି ପୁଣ୍ୟ କାମ କରୁଥିବା ସମସ୍ତ ସ୍ୱାମୀ ରକ୍ତଦାନୀମାନଙ୍କୁ ଗୋର ଅନେକ ଅନେକ ଶୁଭେଚ୍ଛା ।

**ନନ୍ଦିନୀ ପ୍ରଧାନ**  
(ନବୀନ ପଢ଼କାଶିକା)  
ମାନ୍ୟବର ମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ  
ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ଓ ପରିବାର କଲ୍ୟାଣ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା

OIPR-10080/13/0002/2021

# State's Covid-19 toll at 1,892

# Eligibility criteria for SIs relaxed

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 11:** State's Covid-19 caseload Monday surged to 3,32,106 as 244 more people tested positive for the virus, while one more fatality pushed the coronavirus death toll to 1,892, a senior Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department official said.

The 244 new cases were detected in 24 of the state's 30 districts with 142 reported from different quarantine centres and 102 are local contact cases.

Sambalpur district recorded the highest of 37 new cases followed by Bargarh (23) and Sundargarh (22).

Meanwhile, the Jharsuguda district administration declared a part of Brundaban Colony in this industrial town as a containment zone after 11 girl students of a train-



FILE PHOTO

**IN NUGGETS**

Sambalpur recorded the highest of 37 new cases followed by Bargarh (23) and Sundargarh (22)

Of the total 1,892 fatalities reported so far, Khurda alone accounted for 329 deaths followed by Ganjam (247), Sundargarh (167), Cuttack (140) and Puri (117)

The coastal state has so far conducted over 72.01 lakh sample tests for Covid-19, including 29,646 Sunday

Odisha's positivity rate now stands at 4.61 per cent

itive patient of Khurda district." With the fresh fatality, the death toll in the highly infectious disease has mounted to 1,892. This apart, 53 other Covid-19 positive patients have also died in the state due to comorbidities, said the official.

Of the total 1,892 fatalities reported so far, Khurda district of which the state capital Bhubaneswar is a part, alone accounted for 329 deaths followed by Ganjam (247), Sundargarh (167), Cuttack (140) and Puri (117).

Currently, Odisha has 2,118 active Covid-19 cases, while as many as 3,28,043 patients have recovered from the infection.

The state has so far conducted over 72.01 lakh sample tests for Covid-19, including 29,646 Sunday. Odisha's positivity rate now stands at 4.61 per cent, the data released by the H&FW department said.

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 11:** The state government Monday relaxed the service period required for the promotion of Sub inspectors to the rank of Inspectors of Police from ten years to eight years. The state home department Monday issued an order in this regard.

Earlier, the state Police had sent a proposal requesting the government to make changes the Police Manual Rules prescribing details regarding the eligibility required for the promotion of SI to Inspectors of Police.

The state police in its proposal has stated that only 51 SIs would be able to get promotion with the 10-year service rule prescribed in PMR. It has requested the state

government to reduce it to eight years keeping in view the huge vacancies in Inspector rank officers in the force. With the relaxation, the state police gets a pool of 234 eligible SIs out of which the SIs having good track record will get promoted as Inspectors.

"After careful consideration of the proposal of State Police Headquarters, Odisha, Cuttack, the government is pleased to relax the eligibility criteria prescribed under Rule-650 (ii) of Police Manual Rule from 10 years to 08 years on one time for the S.I.s of Police, who have completed and passed the S.I.s course of training, eligible for consideration of promotion to the rank of Inspector of Police for the year 2021," reads the home department Order.

## OSBCL pays dividend of ₹7.58 crore

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 11:** Odisha State Beverages Corporation (OSBCL), a state owned PSU, paid its dividend of Rs 7.58 crore to the state government Monday.

Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mohapatra received the cheque from the Excise secretary and corporation chairman SK Lohani in the presence of Development Commissioner Pradeep Kumar Jena and Finance secretary Ashok Meena.

"As per the decisions of the annual general meeting of the corporation, we have paid this amount to government towards dividend for the year 2019-20," Lohani said.

Apart from this amount, the OSBCL has also donated Rs 15 crore to the Chief Ministers' Relief Fund (CMRF) and Rs 1.43 crore to the Health & Family Welfare Department for purchase of the ambulances with advanced life support system and technology during this year, he said.

## Implement HC order on school fee waiver: OPF

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 11:** The Odisha Parents' Federation (OPF) Monday welcomed the Orissa High Court's decision on school fee waiver in the wake of Covid-19 pandemic.

Briefing the media here Monday, OPF chairman Basudev Bhatt urged the government to implement the Orissa High Court order wherein it has asked the Odisha government to take a decision on waiver of school fees on basis of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed with the private schools.

Meanwhile, on the HC's decision of reduction in school fees, School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash said, "We are yet to receive the High Court order. We will take a decision once we get the order."

Bhatt said, "The HC has confirmed that all unaided private schools are under the control of the state government as per

Odisha Education Act, 1969. As per the rule, the fee and charges should commensurate with the facilities provided by the institutions. Fee should normally be charged under the heads prescribed by the Dept of School and Mass Education. No capitation fee for voluntary donations for graining admission in the school, or any other purpose should be charged/collected in the name of the school. In case of such malpractices, the government may take drastic action leading to withdrawal of NOC."

Earlier, the state government had informed the HC that the MoU was inked by all stakeholders regarding waiver of fees at private schools suitable for the parents whose income has been adversely affected during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The parents have agreed to the provisions under the MoU regarding the waiver of school fee.

## POURING SUPPORT



Activists of CPI (ML) take out a rally from the party office to PMG Square in Bhubaneswar, Monday, supporting the ongoing farmers' agitation in Delhi

## Gop locals in constant fear of dynamite blasts

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Gop, Jan 11:** Hundreds of labourers are seen to be on a digging spree in search of oil reserves in Gop block of Puri district these days.

According to sources, they are searching for oil deposits in the area and are reportedly using dynamites. Frequent explosions have resulted in cracks on the houses situated in the area.

The residents of Aambili village under Mahalapada panchayat have alleged that three dynamites exploded in quick succession on a farmland. Under the impact of the explosion, their houses and the asbestos roof of the village temple de-

veloped cracks.

The affected villagers are Dillip Panda, Loknath Behera, Manorama Panda and Radhshaym Mallik. They demanded immediate compensation from the district administration.

While Konark police station IIC Ranjan Mallik said that they have not received any complaints from the affected residents, Gop tehsildar Premanshu Chand said that the labourers are searching for oil deposits in the locality at Oil India Limited's behest.

If the dynamite explosions have caused any damage, the affected persons will be suitably compensated but only after receiving their complaints and investigations.

## Utkal varsity unveils exam hall

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 11:** Sabita Acharya, Vice-Chancellor of Utkal University, laid the foundation stone of an examination hall cum multipurpose building here Monday.

The facility was built at an estimated cost of Rs 4 crore 52 lakhs and is funded by World Bank. Built on 26,000-sqft area, the double storey building will accommodate more than 300 students in the examination hall.

The Odisha State Police Housing Welfare Corporation Ltd is the construction agency engaged in the project.

Interacting with Orissa POST, Acharya said, "The building will be a state-of-the-art facility and will be an asset to the university. We are sure the timelines and quali-



Utkal University VC Sabita Acharya and others at the event

Registrar of Utkal University, Avaya Kumar Nayak said, "The university routinely hosts various examinations. This exclusive building for examinations will be immensely helpful for the students. The building will also be used for other functions/activities when there are no examinations. In this way, the university will save unnecessary expenditure on making temporary arrangements for many functions and ceremonies."

The ceremony was held in the presence of Chairman, PG Council, Basant Kumar Mallik along with other university officials. Er. Abesh Kumar Mohanty, Joint Manager Sunil Kumar Ray, Deputy Manager Ashish Samantray, Asst. Manager from Odisha State Police Housing and Welfare Corporation Ltd were also present.

## KEREJANGA-ANGUL DOUBLING LINE COMMISSIONED

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 11:** The 13.51 km doubling line between Kerejanga-Angul has been commissioned. Chief Commissioner of Railway Safety (CCRS) has authorised to run the trains at a maximum speed of 100kmph for the new double line.

By this completion, doubling between Raikhol to Angul is now completed for Sambalpur-Talcher doubling project. This is 85.3km out of 168.2 km of doubling.

The doubling line was commissioned yesterday. CCRS inspection was conducted December 28 last in this section. Pre-non interlocked work started January 5 and ended January 7 and Non-interlocked working started January 8.



Based on the speed trials and inspections, the broad gauge line has been sanctioned for passenger and goods upto a maximum speed of 100 kmph, ECoR sources here said.

## RAISING VOICE



People under the banner of AIUTUC demonstrate in front of the Labour Commissioner's office in Bhubaneswar demanding Covid assistance for construction workers

## Faruqui's arrest 'violates' freedom of expression

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 11:** Based on a complaint lodged by the son of a BJP M.L.A. Gujarat stand-up comedian Munawar Faruqui and four others were recently arrested by the Indore police for allegedly insulting Hindu deities. They were also beaten up by a Hindutva mob before being taken into custody, it was alleged.

While the incident has sparked a row across the country, this is what a few city humourists have to say over the issue.

Comedian Satyabrata Mohapatra said, "What comedians perform are just enactments of their observations from life. It may be on politics, religion or any other issues. But people in power often don't take it too kindly. This is what happened in Faruqui's case which is unfortunate. It is certainly an assault on freedom of speech."



Comedian Roshan Bisoi says, "Ours is a nation having many ethnic groups following different cultures and religions. Therefore, anything you speak on a public platform will hurt one group or the other. So, there is a need to take these things in the right spirit instead of putting artistes behind the bars."

Another artiste Akash Baghar is of the opinion that the government

has a number of issues to deal with but it sadly has picked something as imaginary and frivolous as religion to feel upset about. Faruqui's arrest is definitely an attempt to gag the voice of a free citizen, adds Baghar.

Theatre actor Dipanwit Dashmohapatra was also found agitated over the arrests of artistes for cracking 'offensive' jokes having reference to political parties and

religions. "Your judgmental capabilities play a great role in understanding certain jokes. In my view, if you can't laugh at the stereotypes of your own faith, maybe you ought to do a little soul-searching," he said.

Before Faruqui, other standup comedians like Kunal Kamra and Agrima Joshua too had to bear the brunt. Even Alokesh Sinha, a local artiste, also received threats for uploading videos on YouTube which had a religious reference. Though he was forced to take it down, he had a different take in this regard.

Alokesh said, "If you are performing in a live show, you know your audience and vice-versa. Here, you can get away with a few edgy humours. But when you upload them on social media, they can hurt the sentiments of a section. Artists need to be really careful about what they present on bigger platforms."

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Never seek support elsewhere than in the Divine. Never seek satisfaction elsewhere than in the Divine. Never seek the satisfaction of your needs in anyone else than the Divine - never, for anything at all.



THE MOTHER

# Trump Card Taiwan

President Donald Trump has done it again and with vengeance. After failing to deny victory to President-elect Joe Biden through legal challenges and then instigating vandals, who went berserk at the Capitol on January 6, Trump has now chosen to make life difficult for Biden's presidency even before he is sworn in. One of the easiest ways to achieve this end is to provoke and antagonise China and damage US-China relations. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced late on January 9 that restrictions on contacts between US officials and their Taiwanese counterparts are being lifted. Taiwan is overjoyed and immediately welcomed the move, while China has charged that the USA is playing with fire during the last few days of the Trump regime.

In a statement Pompeo said the US State Department had imposed the complex internal restrictions on itself in an attempt to appease the Communist regime in Beijing, and he was now lifting them all. The guidelines included restrictions on where representatives could meet and limited the ranks allowed to attend Taiwan's national day celebrations.

The Communist Party of China (CPC) has never ruled Taiwan, but it considers the island nation a wayward province that must be returned to the fold. According to it, Taiwan government, which treats the island as a sovereign state, is run by separatists.

In Beijing's eye, the status of Taiwan is the most sensitive issue in the China-US relationship. The US has no formal diplomatic ties with Taiwan, but has, for decades, operated under legislation mandating the US provide Taiwan with support in its resistance to Chinese pressure.

Taiwan's unofficial embassy in Washington immediately reacted to Pompeo's announcement by stating that the US move showed the strength and depth of the US relationship with Taiwan. But, the shift in US policy towards Taiwan seems to have less to do with Taiwan and more to antagonise China to make things difficult for Biden. Even if there are some merits in the new policy, the fact that Pompeo did it a mere 11 days before a transition of power and apparently without consulting with his successor makes the whole move suspect.

The inescapable conclusion is that this announcement is purely political and vindictive so as to push Biden into a stand-off with China in his first weeks. Trump has, in the process, used a double edged sword since reversal of the policy will give him the opportunity on the platter to portray the new President as soft on China.

The seeming lack of coordination with the incoming administration and the suddenness of the announcement made in the backdrop of domestic political turmoil have the potential to create a dangerous situation of making Taiwan a partisan issue in the US foreign policy. The US policy towards Taiwan has endured and benefited from consistent support from both sides of the political divide.

That things are going to be messy is clear from the statement of a spokesperson for the Biden transition team that the new President is committed to the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act which defined relations between the two governments.

The US has maintained close ties with Taiwan since the latter split from China after a bloody civil war. But, Washington has avoided major displays of friendship so as not to antagonise China. Chinese President Xi Jinping has articulated his ambition to reunify the island with the mainland, if necessary, through use of force. Under the 'One China' policy, the US has unofficial relations with Taiwan and posts unofficial representatives to Taipei. It also provides arms to the island under the terms of the 40-year-old Taiwan Relations Act.

Pompeo's last minute diplomatic decisions seem like the Trump administration, unable to stomach defeat, has sought to queer the pitch for Biden by putting a spanner in the US' relatively successful Taiwan policy.

## FOCUS INDIAN AMERICANS

# INDIANS IN TRUMP'S WAR



Vappala Balachandran

**THE INDIAN LOBBYING POWER IN THE US HAS SUFFERED TO PAKISTAN'S ADVANTAGE BECAUSE OF THE EXCLUSION OF NON-HINDUS FROM THE MAINSTREAM OF INDIAN AMERICAN ACTIVITIES**

Vincent Xavier Palathingal, a businessman from Kerala, now living in the United States, has attracted a lot of attention in our media. He was noticed waving an Indian flag at the Trump rally in Washington DC January 6 which turned violent as it attacked the Capitol building, resulting in deaths.

He told our media that he had migrated to the US in 1992 after his education in the Government Engineering College, Thrissur. He claims to be a member of the State Central Committee of the Republican Party in Virginia and had gone to attend the Trump rally to protest against a 'stolen election'. He added that he was formerly a Democrat and had voted for Barack Obama twice.

Vincent claimed that a few delinquents had infiltrated the otherwise peaceful rally and committed acts of violence. He told a Malayalam news channel that the lawbreakers appeared to him to be from the left-wing ANTIFA (Anti-Fascist and Anti-Racist Front) or BLM (Black Lives Matter). This was the fifth time he had attended Trump's rallies and the first one which ended in violence. Trump had always blamed ANTIFA for violence during the "Black Lives Matter" demonstrations.

In any case, the US Justice Department is probing the incident in cooperation with the Capitol Police who would no doubt investigate the claims made by Vincent too. Latest reports from the US indicate that the man with a painted face with "Viking" horns, whose face was beamed all over the world, was identified as Jake Angeli from Arizona, a regular Trump supporter belonging to the Far Right wing "QAnon".

However, the purpose of this piece is not to look into the incident at Capitol Hill but to offer a retrospective of the political activities of Indian Americans based on my personal experience in the US and how it transformed from the original bipartisan movement into a community deeply divided on religious lines.

The Indian diaspora in the US was politically active during the 1920s-30s under the leadership of



**The Indian diaspora in the US was politically active during the 1920s-30s under the leadership of Taraknath Das, Har Dayal, Mubarak Ali Khan, JJ Singh and many others. Their efforts paved the way for the election of Dalip Singh Saund, the only Indian to be a part of the US Congress till the 1990s. However, it was an epic struggle as all immigration was stopped during the World War II**

Taraknath Das, Har Dayal, Mubarak Ali Khan, JJ Singh and many others. Their canvassing efforts paved the way for the election of Dalip Singh Saund, the only Indian to be a part of the US Congress (1957-63) till the 1990s. However, it was an epic struggle as all immigration was stopped during the World War II.

In 1946 the Luce-Cellar Act 1946 allowed Indians to be considered as a special category for immigration. This was due to the bipartisan campaigning with Congressmen by JJ Singh, president of the India League. Others who supported this legislation were famous scientist Albert Einstein, noted writer Pearl S Buck, and former California Governor Upton Sinclair.

The real benefits occurred under the presidency of Lyndon Johnson when the 1965 Immigration & Naturalization Act (Hart-Cellar Act) gave preference to reuniting immigrant families after abolishing the quota system based on national origin. However, the arrival of a large number of South Asian families led to a peculiar cloistered style of living, confining their activities around temples or mosques and celebrating South Asian festivals. This was the period of the ABCD (American Born Confused Desi) syndrome. The growing Indian community remained only a fringe group in national politics since they made no attempts to integrate into the American mainstream by taking part in the political process.

It was Dr Joy Cheria, a former Youth Congress activist and his colleagues like Krishna Srinivasa, Gopal Bashist, Dinesh Patel, Dr Suresh Prabhu, Swadesh Chatterjee and many others belonging to the Republican and Democratic parties who exhorted Indian Americans to join American political activities in the 1980s. They replicated the tactics of the Jewish bipartisan lobby group American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) founded by Tom Dine in 1963 to build con-

stituency pressure on American Congressmen to look after the interests of Israel. In a similar way the bipartisan Indian American leadership established the Indian-American Forum for Political Education (IAFPE) in 1983 to further the interests of India.

Other Indian American activists like Dr Thomas Abraham and Inder Singh widened the ambit of Indian Americans to several countries like Fiji, Guyana, Surinam etc which were the destinations of old Indian indentured labour. They did so by establishing a global Indian diaspora platform named Global Organization of Indian Origin (GOPIO) in 1989. The visibility of the Indian diaspora improved. All of them were secular; bipartisan groups belonging to all religions and communities.

Unfortunately, the first blow to the bipartisan movement of the Indian American Community was given by, of all persons, senior Congress leader the late Siddhartha Shankar Ray as Indian Ambassador to America. In 1993 he excluded the "Overseas Friends of BJP" from the "1883 Vivekananda Chicago Speech Centenary Celebrations" in America, with the bureaucratic reasoning that it was strictly an official programme of the Indian government. Since then, the BJP segment of Indian Americans, seen taking an active part in all the bipartisan programmes of the Indian American organisations earlier, started staying away.

This schismatic trend was reinforced after Prime Minister Narendra Modi assumed power in 2014. Only pro-BJP or pro-RSS Indian Americans were involved in prime ministerial and high-level visits. Others were not invited. Just prior to the 2016 American elections, a new organisation named "Hindus for Trump" came on the scene. The old bipartisan group felt left out. In the process, the Indian lobbying power in the US has suffered to Pakistan's advantage because of the exclusion of non-Hindus from the mainstream of Indian American activities.

*The writer is a former Special Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat.*  
THE BILLION PRESS

## WISDOM CORNER

- If you hear a voice within you say 'you cannot paint,' then by all means paint and that voice will be silenced. - VINCENT VAN GOGH
- How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world. - ANNE FRANK
- Some people want it to happen, some wish it would happen, others make it happen. - MICHAEL JORDAN

## WORDSWORTH

**Bribery**  
It was reported recently that Dutch archaeologists had found an administrative centre of the ancient Assyrian empire, 3400 years old, in which an archive listed the names of "employees accepting bribes". After a wry thought about how nothing changes, it seemed appropriate to look up the history of bribery. And what a convoluted story it turns out to be. It starts in medieval French, where bribe meant "a piece of bread". A linguistic game of consequences led the sense from this to "a piece of bread given to a beggar", then more generally to "alms" and "living upon alms", to "begging" and so to associations with mendacity and vagabondage. By a further very short step the meaning arrived at "theft; stealing". It was with the last of these senses that the word first appeared in English in the fourteenth century, in the works of Chaucer and his contemporaries. It soon evolved further to take in the idea of extortion, or demanding money with menaces. Only in this usage did bribe finally come to mean a sum of money, though at this time briber meant the person doing the menacing and so getting the money.

**Bridegroom**  
Groom is common as a short form of bridegroom. How the word that we now use for a man who looks after horses came to be linked to one half of a marrying couple is one of the classic stories of popular misunderstandings - folk etymology - that cause language to evolve in unpredictable ways. In Old English, a bridegroom was a brydguma, a compound of bryd, a bride or marriage, and guma, a man. Guma, which is related to Latin homo, was a poetic term for a man, which turns up in the epic poem Beowulf, as does another version of the same word, gome. By the sixteenth century brydguma had become brydegome (though the spelling was variable). This was starting to look puzzling, because gome had become obsolete, and people didn't connect it with that old word for a man. On the other hand, they did have groom. In the twelfth century, this had been a term for a boy or lad, with something of the colloquial informality about it that kid still possesses, though it could only refer to a male child. Where it comes from is a mystery. Two centuries later it had grown up to mean an adult man, but it had also taken on the idea of a menial male, a serving-man or manservant. In the 1500s and 1600s it could also mean a shepherd, sometimes in the extended herd-groom.

**LOL**  
**LOST IN A DESERT**  
A blonde, a redhead, and a brunette were all lost in the desert. They found a lamp and rubbed it. A genie popped out and granted them each one wish. The redhead wished to be back home. Poof! She was back home. The blonde wished to be back home with her family. Poof! She was back home with her family. The brunette wished to be at home with her family. Poof! She was back home with her family. The blonde said, "Awwww, I wish my friends were here."

## SPECTRUM GENDER ISSUES

# Update the leadership script



Helen Clark

**AS GOVERNMENTS AROUND THE WORLD SEEK TO "BUILD BACK BETTER" FROM THE PANDEMIC, ADDRESSING WOMEN'S UNDER-REPRESENTATION IN POLITICAL AND CORPORATE LEADERSHIP MUST BE AT THE TOP OF THE AGENDA**

As governments around the world seek to "build back better" from the pandemic, addressing women's under-representation in political and corporate leadership must be at the top of the agenda. We simply cannot achieve the resilient, inclusive, and sustainable societies that we need if the current gap between women and men persists.

Closing the gap would yield massive economic benefits. The World Bank estimates that bringing women's lifetime earnings up to the same level as those of men would translate into a "gender dividend" of \$172 trillion in global human-capital wealth. We already know that companies with higher levels of both gender and ethnic diversity tend to deliver better economic performance.

Nonetheless, new research from the Reykjavik Index for Leadership shows a lack of progress in public perceptions of women's suitability for leadership roles in comparison to the way that men in such roles are perceived. An Index score of 100 indicates that there is complete agreement that men and women are equally suitable for leadership. That score has remained stagnant across all countries sur-

veyed for the last three years, averaging 73. Conducted in 67 countries as well as Kenya, Nigeria, and India, the Index finds that harmful gender stereotypes remain deep-rooted, as does the equality gap in every country surveyed. There is still an effective "birthright" of equality for men, set against the everyday reality of inequality for women around the world.

In France, only 45% of respondents would feel very comfortable having a woman as head of government. In Germany, where a woman has served as chancellor for 15 years, the figure is 41%, up from 31% in 2019. In Italy, 46% of people would be very comfortable having a woman as the CEO of a major company, compared to just 39% in Japan. Entering the Index for the first time this year, Nigeria and Kenya register similar numbers: only 44% of Nigerians and 40% of Kenyans would be very comfortable with a woman as head of government.

One remarkable conclusion from the survey is that women are more likely than men in all countries to perceive men and women as equally suitable for leadership. Another sobering finding, however, is that younger people overall tend to be less progressive on this issue. The most prejudiced group is young men be-

tween 18 and 34 years old; and the tensions concerning work and equality within this group are further reflected in data showing that women continue to perform the majority of household chores.

Regardless of how one feels politically about figures like Indira Gandhi, Margaret Thatcher, and Angela Merkel, these names stand out for belonging to a small cohort of women leaders who have steered their respective countries with a steady hand through especially challenging times. The year 2020 was a watershed moment, with global challenges like COVID-19 further underscoring the need for women's leadership. According to an analysis of 194 countries by the Centre for Economic Policy Research and the World Economic Forum, those led by women have had "systematically and significantly better" outcomes, suffering half as many deaths on average as those led by men.

Last year marked not only the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, but also the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action - a global blueprint for securing women's rights. Now, in 2021, we enter the last decade for achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals, many of which

touch on issues of diversity and equality. Despite the urgency, we have yet to grapple with the scale of the hurdles still standing between us and true parity between women and men. Among other things, we must invest far more in education and health services for women and girls, so that they will have the same opportunities as their male counterparts. Governments and businesses should help pave the way, by committing and then following through with measures to close the gap between women and men.

When women are equally represented in politics, they have a clear and measurable impact on public health, the economy, and security, and their presence leads to more inclusive, sustainable, and democratic policies that benefit everyone. When women are underrepresented in senior positions, everyone loses. You cannot be what you cannot see. Reorienting public perceptions of what leadership looks like should be one of our top priorities.

*The writer, a former Prime Minister of New Zealand (1999-2008), is Chair of the Board of Women Political Leaders.*  
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## Assets declaration

Sir, The much-hyped property declarations by our public servants which is making rounds in media are treated as one's status symbol. But there is no mention about the 'means by which they acquired such assets during their tenure'. This is lamentable. The public servants' property returns put on public domain have one purpose 'greater transparency and accountability amongst all cadres of public servants' but this has relegated into blowing ones trumpet in media. The minister who showed ownership of fleets of vehicles during tenure must be served notices by Vigilance and Lokayukta to reveal their source of incomes. Unless it is done it would be a sheer 'drama' by our public servants. One can acquire assets, wealth by inheritance, by earning from business and salary, perks, allowances. So our public servants should tell us what type of business helped them to earn property worth crores. Moreover, if one is doing business while in public service then what is the need for remaining in government/public service? These needs to be clarified and those who fail to comply must be assessed under the tune of transparency laws.  
Janaki Ballav Dash, BHUBANESWAR

## Infant deaths

Sir, Recent hospital fire tragedy in Maharashtra's Bhandara district government hospital is another instance of neglect and apathy. Ten infants perished in a blaze that gutted the newly constructed special care unit specifically built for the newborns. The gory incident shows how safety norms are thrown out of the window when it comes to saving poor lives. Safety measures even in the best of government hospitals are nothing more than a work in progress. The casual approach to standardising protective aspects in state-run hospitals is numbing. It is doubtful whether permission from the relevant safety clearing authorities was procured by the district hospital. Were the safety rules flouted and the lives of tiny tots compromised? Whether fire audits were consistently done? The working condition of fire fighting equipment like the fire extinguishers should be periodically checked, and it is unknown whether their efficiency examination was constantly conducted. Poor people rely on government hospitals to ensure their as well as their relatives' health. Therefore, it is high time precautionary steps are taken on war footing to render government health centres reliable. The state government should do more than suspension and compensation.  
Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

## Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: [edit@orissapost.com](mailto:edit@orissapost.com)

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B-15, Rasulpur Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010



# Karna cabinet expansion tomorrow

IN THE 34-MEMBER MINISTRY, SEVEN VACANT POSTS ARE TO BE FILLED IN THE THIRD CABINET EXPANSION

AGENCIES

**Bangalore, Jan 11:** The Karnataka Cabinet would be expanded January 13 to induct seven legislators as ministers, said state Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa Sunday night.

"The BJP high command has permitted to induct seven legislators in the cabinet. They will be sworn-in on January 13 afternoon, as there is 'habba' (Sankranti festival) on January 14," Yediyurappa told news channels in Kannada on return from New Delhi.

He, however, did not disclose names of the legislators to be inducted in the cabinet expansion, as they have to be "finalised and confirmed."

"The list of would-be ministers will be finalised tomorrow (Monday) after taking oath in the afternoon of January 13," added the Chief Minister.

In the 34-member ministry, seven posts are vacant to be filled in the third cabinet expansion.

During his day-long visit to the national capital Sunday Yediyurappa met the ruling BJP's national leadership, including Union Home Minister Amit Shah, party's national president JP Nadda and party's Karnataka unit in-charge



Arun Singh.

The cabinet was expanded for the second time February 6, 2020 when 10 legislators, who defected from Congress and JD-S were inducted after they won in the December 5, 2019 by-elections, caused by their resignations in July 2019, which led to the fall of the 14-month JD-S-Congress coalition government on July 23, 2019 and return of the BJP government on July 26, 2019.

The first cabinet expansion, in which 17 ministers were inducted, took place August 20, 2019.

Yediyurappa was sworn-in as BJP Chief Minister for the third time July 26, 2019.

**Our high command has permitted to induct seven legislators in the cabinet. They will be sworn-in on January 13 afternoon as there is 'habba' (Sankranti festival) on January 14**

BS YEDIYURAPPA | CHIEF MINISTER, KARNATAKA



Basnagouda Patil Yatnal

### Placating rebel MLA

Meanwhile, Karnataka BJP 'rebel' MLA, Basnagouda Patil Yatnal, who waged a lone battle against Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa's style of functioning, is tipped for a Cabinet post in the long-awaited Cabinet expansion.

Party sources told IANS that Yatnal is likely to be inducted into the Cabinet only to keep a check on the growing interference of Yediyurappa's youngest son, BY Vijayendra, who has often been accused by the party leaders of taking undue advantage due to his father's position.

Other than Yatnal, Aravind

Limbavali, apparently being rewarded for Madhya Pradesh government toppling operation, Rupali Naik, MLA Karwar under women's quota, Umesh Katti, MLA, Lingayat quota, Munirathna Naidu who crossed over to BJP from Congress, MP Renukacharya and SR Vishwanath - both staunch loyalists of Yediyurappa, are also expected to be inducted into the Cabinet.

"This list is approved by none other than Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP national president JP Nadda during Yediyurappa's meeting with them," a leader said.

It is worth noting here, that Yatnal had been lashing out at Yediyurappa

and his son, Vijayendra, openly and even set the date that after Makar Sankranti festival, Yediyurappa would be replaced by a leader from north Karnataka region.

Among those in the ministerial race in the state are three MLCs - CP Yogeshwar, MTB. Nagaraj and R Shankar. While another MLC, Adaguru H Vishwanath, was also in the race but his hopes were dashed when the Karnataka High Court November 30 barred him from becoming a minister until at least May this year.

At present, apart from these leaders, nearly dozen legislators are lobbying hard to secure Cabinet berths for themselves.

# Vax for 16L frontline workers in Karna in first phase, says Yedi

AGENCIES

**Bangalore, Jan 11:** About 16 lakh frontline workers in Karnataka will be administered Covid-19 vaccine in the first phase starting from January 16, Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa said Monday.

A second dose will be given 28 days after the first jab, he told reporters here after attending Prime Minister Narendra Modi's virtual meet with Chief Ministers of various states on the Covid-19 situation and the vaccination roll-out.

"During the first phase, three crore people in the country will be given vaccination. In Karnataka, the

tracts," he said, adding that people with comorbidities will be vaccinated on priority in the second stage, after the frontline workers.

### 792 NEW INFECTIONS, 593 RECOVERIES

Bangalore: Karnataka registered 792 new Covid cases in a day, while 593 recovered from the infection across the state, said the health bulletin.

"With 792 new cases on Saturday, the state's Covid tally increased to 9,27,559, including 9,649 active cases, while 9,05,751 recovered, with 593 discharged Sunday," said the health bulletin released on



first phase of administering vaccination to about 16 lakh frontline workers—of health, revenue and police department - will begin from January 16," Yediyurappa said. Vaccination will be undertaken at 235 sites in the state, the Chief Minister said, adding both Covaxin and Covishield would be used.

Cold chain arrangements have been made and the state and district level task forces will oversee the activities, he said.

The second dry run, an exercise for end-to-end testing of COVID-19 vaccination process, was conducted "successfully" in 281 facilities of 31 districts in the state January 8, after the first round in five districts December 2.

State Health Minister K Sudhakar said there was no need to worry and the vaccines were "completely safe", adding several rounds of clinical trials have been conducted.

All the necessary arrangements have been made in the state for the vaccination and the Centre has also assured the state additional walk-in freezers, he said.

"We have made all the necessary arrangements, once it comes, vaccines will be sent to all the dis-

Sunday. With only two patients, including one each in Mysuru and Tumakuru districts succumbing to the infection in the last 24 hours, the state's death toll rose to 12,140 till date.

"For the first time since the pandemic broke in the state on March 8, no death due to Covid was reported in Bangalore and 27 other districts during the day," said the bulletin.

Bangalore registered 453 fresh cases on Saturday, taking the city's Covid tally to 3,92,581, including 6,068 active cases, while 3,82,166 recovered so far, with 261 discharged in the last 24 hours.

Of the 202 Covid patients in the intensive care units (ICUs) across the southern state, 85 are in Bangalore hospitals, 15 in Kalaburagi, 12 in Tumakuru and 10 in Hassan districts.

Out of 1,13,206 tests conducted in the day, 4,680 were through rapid antigen detection and 1,08,526 through RT-PCR method.

Four returnees from UK Sunday also tested positive through the RT-PCR method. "Positivity rate for the day was 0.69 per cent and case fatality rate was 0.25 per cent across the state," added the bulletin.

# Keralite sets eyes on Trump's Rolls-Royce

AGENCIES

**Thiruvananthapuram, Jan 11:** Kerala-based jeweller Bobby Chemmaur, who had brought football legend late Diego Maradona to Kerala for inaugurating his jewellery showroom, is again in the news for participating in a bid to buy a Rolls-Royce Phantom car produced by Rolls Royce is one among the 537 cars manufactured

by the company during that period.

Chemmaur, who is an avid blood donor and actively participates in several philanthropic activities, is confident that he will win the bid.

When asked what the price of the car could be, Chemmaur said, "We are expecting a base price of Rs 3 crore, but I don't know how the bid will go. There can be more crazy people across the globe and I don't know what the outcome will be. But I am on it."

world, has put the car for auction.

The Rolls-Royce Phantom is a luxury variety which has theater package, star light headliner and electronic curtains. Trump's car has already traversed 91,249 km.

The 2010 model Phantom car produced by Rolls Royce is one among the 537 cars manufactured

by the company during that period.

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## MASKS ON, COVID SHUNNED



Students wearing face masks attend a class after the authorities reopened schools, amid the coronavirus pandemic, at a government school in Bangalore

# Kerala's move to resuscitate movie theatres

THE STATE WAIVES ENTERTAINMENT TAX FOR CINEMA THEATRES FROM JAN TO MARCH 2021 ALONG WITH 50 PC REDUCTION IN FIXED CHARGES ON ELECTRICITY DURING THE LOCKDOWN PERIOD SINCE MARCH LAST YEAR



AGENCIES

**Thiruvananthapuram, Jan 11:** In a move to help the film industry in the state, the Kerala government Monday decided to waive entertainment tax for cinemas from January to March 2021 along with 50 per cent reduction in the fixed charges on electricity during the lockdown period since March last year.

The decision was taken after Kerala Film Chamber of Commerce officials met Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan here.

"The state government has decided to exempt cinema theatres from entertainment tax from January to March 2021. The government has also decided to reduce the fixed charges by 50 per cent," the chief minister's office said in a release.

In the meeting, it was also decided that the property tax, which

should have been paid to local bodies before March 31, 2020, can be paid in monthly instalments. The government also informed that it cannot take any decision on the professional tax.

"The validity of various licenses for the cinemas from the local bodies, electrical inspectorate films division, building fitness, health, fire force have been extended till March 31," the state government said.

The meeting was chaired by the chief minister and attended by Power minister MM Mani, Minister for local self-government, AC Moideen, Kerala State Electricity Board Chairman NS Pillai, among others.

"The chief minister understood the difficulties faced by the film fraternity and assured us of all the help."

"With such an assurance in



hand, our organisations will meet at Ernakulam today itself and decide on the opening of the cinemas," Antony Perumbavur, a producer and officer bearer of one of the film associations, told reporters after the meet-

THE PROPERTY TAX, WHICH SHOULD HAVE BEEN PAID TO LOCAL BODIES BEFORE MARCH 31, 2020, CAN BE PAID IN MONTHLY INSTALMENTS

THE GOVT ALSO INFORMS THAT IT CAN'T TAKE ANY DECISION ON THE PROFESSIONAL TAX

ing. Earlier, the state government had lifted restrictions on theatres and said it could be opened from January 5 with only 50 per cent occupancy and adhering to strict COVID-19 guidelines.

Top actors Mammootty and Mohanlal besides popular stars including Manju Warrier, Prithviraj Sukumaran, Asif Ali, Kunchacko Boban, Dulquer Salmaan, Nivin Pauly, Tovino Thomas, and Dileep took to social media and thanked the chief minister for announcing concessions for the film industry.

Mohanlal expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the CM for announcing "concessions to energise Malayalam cinema."

Mammootty said the move could revive the Malayalam film industry which was in crisis.

"Lots of respect going out to our Honorable Chief Minister Shri Pinarayi Vijayan for his efforts to breathe life back into the struggling Malayalam film industry," Dulquer Salmaan posted on Facebook.

# POCSO case gets murkier

A 35-YR-OLD WOMAN GETS ARRESTED AFTER A COMPLAINT BY HER HUSBAND THAT SAID THEIR 14-YR-OLD SON WAS SEXUALLY ASSAULTED BY HER

AGENCIES

**Thiruvananthapuram, Jan 11:** Harshitha Attaloori, Inspector General of Police, South Zone, will investigate the child abuse case under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act in which a 35-year-old woman was arrested. She was jailed following a complaint by her husband that said their 14-year-old son was allegedly sexually assaulted by her.

The woman is in Attakulangara women's jail.

However, proceedings took a curious turn with the relatives and friends of the woman came together and formed an action council which demanded a proper investigation by the police.

The action council leader Vakkom Pradeep, while speaking to IANS, said: "The local police at Kadakkavoor police station was over-enthusiastic to register an FIR and did not take into consideration all aspects of the case. This woman and her husband are estranged and he has remarried without divorcing her and the child had lodged the complaint following immense pressure from this person."

In a related development, the woman's 11-year-old younger son told the media that their father used to beat them up cruelly and his brother was forced to make such a statement by their father.

The couple has three sons and a six-year-old daughter.

The mother of the accused also said her daughter was innocent. "My daughter is innocent and every-



THE WOMAN'S 11-YR-OLD YOUNGER SON TOLD THE MEDIA THAT THEIR FATHER USED TO BEAT THEM UP CRUELLY AND HIS BROTHER WAS FORCED TO MAKE SUCH A STATEMENT BY THEIR FATHER

THE WOMAN'S FAMILY ALLEGED THAT HER (ESTRANGED) HUSBAND HAD FORCIBLY TAKEN THEIR CHILDREN AND WAS LIVING IN THE MIDDLE EAST WITH ANOTHER WOMAN WITHOUT FORMALLY DIVORCING THEIR DAUGHTER

one who knows the family does not have an iota of doubt on the same. The case was forced upon her by her estranged husband who had forcibly taken their children and was living in the Middle East with another woman without formally divorcing my daughter."

The state Child welfare committee has refuted the police claim that the committee had sent a report asking for the police to arrest the woman.

Child welfare committee president N Sunanda told IANS: "The committee had not sent any report indicting the woman and we had only provided counseling to the

boy."

The Kerala Women's Commission has also intervened in the matter. Commission member Shahida Kamal told journalists, "If the allegations raised by the woman's family are true it's a major issue. If, as alleged by the woman's family and friends, the man had prompted the child to give a false statement, he is liable to be prosecuted under Section 22 of the POCSO Act."

Kamal said that children are becoming mere pawns in fights between parents and in this would lead to mental agony for the child in the long run.



After getting bail from NIA Court due to lack of evidence, @parawahid has now been booked under UAPA by CIK on fabricated charges in a terror case yet again

MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PDP PRESIDENT

## ONLINE QUIZ

The Defence Ministry is conducting an online quiz competition from January 11 to January 22 on the 1971 Indo-Pak war as a part of the forthcoming Republic Day celebrations, said an official statement Monday



## of the day quote

For building such a great structure like Atal Tunnel not just bricks and mortar but the spirit of the national pride is of paramount importance



RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is packing her bags and will not be able to retain power



SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN | BJP NATIONAL SPOKESPERSON

The truth has come to fore post the District Development Council polls...the PAGD leaders have been finding ways to get rid of each other. They had created a smoky screen before the public to mislead them but they have exposed themselves



SYED MOHAMMED ALTAF BUKHARI | JAMMU AND KASHMIR APNI PARTY CHIEF

# PM should apologise to farmers: Cong

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 11: The Congress Monday demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi apologise to the farmers of the country and repeal the three farm laws which are being opposed by them, after the Supreme Court rapped the Centre over the handling of the agitation.

Chief Congress spokesperson Randeep Surjewala also urged the apex court to register cases against Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and Chief Ministers Manohar Lal Khattar and Yogi Adityanath after taking note of their actions that caused damage to public property. He said the central and state governments have dug up roads and caused blockades on the national highways around the national capital. "Prime Minister Narendra Modi should apologise not only to the families of 65 farmers who have sacrificed themselves, but also to the 62 crore farmers of the country. The Prime Minister should thereafter talk to the agitating farmers



and we all have faith in it. If someone opposes the laws in a Gandhian manner, then the court will also support such an opposition, as protesting peacefully is a basic right enshrined in the Constitution. "The Prime Minister and Home Minister are responsible for the current situation. We are confident that the Supreme Court will take note of the anti-national action of the prime minister and the home minister as well as the chief ministers of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh and register cases against them," he added. He said the Supreme Court should take note of the actions of the Prime Minister, Shah, Manohar Lal Khattar, Dushyant Chautala and Adityanath whose governments dug up roads and blocked roads by putting up barriers, and register cases against them for causing losses to the state exchequer and damage to public property. Surjewala said never in the 73-year history of this country had a government been exposed in this fashion for its

himself and nothing short of it is acceptable to register cases against Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and Chief Ministers Manohar Lal Khattar and Yogi Adityanath after taking note of their actions that caused damage to public property. He said the central and state governments have dug up roads and caused blockades on the national highways around the national capital. "Prime Minister Narendra Modi should apologise not only to the families of 65 farmers who have sacrificed themselves, but also to the 62 crore farmers of the country. The Prime Minister should thereafter talk to the agitating farmers

## 800 farmers booked

A day after farmers indulged in vandalism at a public function's venue in Karnal district of Haryana, in which Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar was to participate, police Monday booked over 800 farmers for the incident. The 'Kisan Mahapanchayat' programme slated to be attended by Khattar in a Karnal village was cancelled after protesting farmers opposed to the Centre's three new agricultural laws created a ruckus at the venue.

arrogance, its intemperate behaviour and insensitivity towards 62 crore farmers. The Supreme Court Monday questioned the Centre's vehement opposition to its suggestion that the implementation of three new farm laws be held back for the time being so as to help find an amicable solution to the ongoing farmers' protest against them at Delhi borders.

## SEA VIGIL

# Navy to conduct two-day mega drill from today



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 11: The Indian Navy will kick-start Tuesday a two-day multi-agency military exercise covering India's 7,516 km-long coastline, involving 13 coastal states and Union Territories, to further bolster maritime security and surveillance, officials said.

Billed as India's largest coastal defence drill, the second edition of exercise 'Sea Vigil' is being organised to check the efficacy of the measures initiated to plug gaps in coastal security following the Mumbai terror attack in 2008, they said. "The scale and conceptual expanse of the exercise is unprecedented in terms of the geographical extent, the number of stakeholders involved, the number of units participating and in terms of the objectives to be met," the Indian Navy said. "The exercise will provide a realistic assessment of our strengths and weaknesses and thus will help in further strengthening maritime and national security," it added.

Officials said Indian Navy will deploy a sizeable number of its ships and other key assets in the Sea Vigil exercise. The Indian Navy and the Coast Guard have taken a series of measures to bolster India's coastal security after the Mumbai terror attack in which over 166

people including 28 foreigners from 10 nations were killed by a group of Pakistani terrorists.

On November 26, 2008, a group of 10 Pakistani terrorists carried out the coordinated attack on a railway station, two luxury hotels and a Jewish centre, after they sneaked into India's financial capital using the sea route in the Arabian sea. The inaugural edition of the Sea Vigil exercise took place in January 2019. The exercise is taking place at a time when India and China are locked in a bitter border standoff in eastern Ladakh. In sync with the national security doctrine, the Indian Navy significantly increased its deployment of warships, submarines and other assets in the Indian Ocean Region, in an attempt to send across a message to China that Indian armed forces are fully prepared to deal with any challenge. The two-day drill is a build-up towards Theatre-level Readiness Operational Exercise (TROPEX) which the Indian Navy conducts every two years, officials said.

"Sea Vigil and TROPEX together will cover the entire spectrum of maritime security challenges, including transition from peace to conflict. Assets of the Indian Navy, Coast Guard, Customs and other maritime agencies will participate in Sea Vigil," the Navy said.

## AAP MLA Somnath held in UP, youth hurls ink at him

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Amethi/Rae Bareilly, Jan 11: Aam Aadmi Party MLA Somnath Bharti Monday had ink hurled at him in Rae Bareilly and was arrested later for allegedly making objectionable remarks last week.

He was arrested for criminal intimidation and promoting enmity between groups, police said, following remarks two days ago allegedly referring to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and the state's hospitals.

He was remanded to 14 days in judicial custody at Amhat jail in Sultanpur district. His bail plea will be heard Wednesday, a government counsel said.



Minutes before his arrest, a youth hurled ink at the Delhi MLA when he was emerging from a guest house. According to a purported video clip of his remarks Saturday on the state's medical facilities, the AAP MLA had said in Hindi, "Children are being born in hospitals, but they are of dogs." Shortly after ink was flung at him, Bharti is heard arguing with the policemen around him, telling them that he will strip them of their uniforms. He also tells the policemen to let Yogi Adityanath know that "all this" will not make a difference. "Yogi's death is imminent," he said.

People around him are also heard asking police to ensure the arrest of the man who hurled ink at him. Police said the man involved in the incident is absconding. Amethi police had come to arrest the MLA, a former Delhi minister, in neighbouring Rae Bareilly after BJP worker Somnath Sahu registered a complaint with them Sunday over his alleged remarks a day earlier.

Police said the man involved in the incident is absconding. Amethi police had come to arrest the MLA, a former Delhi minister, in neighbouring Rae Bareilly after BJP worker Somnath Sahu registered a complaint with them Sunday over his alleged remarks a day earlier.

## GEARING UP



A contingent of National Security Guards (NSG) during the Republic Day parade rehearsals at Gandhi Maidan in Patna

## Chinese cyber threats

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 11: In fresh trouble for WhatsApp, which is facing backlash over its upcoming user data policy in India, New Delhi-based think-tank Cyberpeace Foundation said Monday that China-based hackers are targeting WhatsApp users in the country with the promise of 'part-time' jobs.

Such proliferating messages on WhatsApp, which come with attached links, claim that one can earn Rs 200 to Rs 3,000 in a day in 10 to 30 minutes.

"There are multiple links that redirect to a common URL and each link uses different numbers to send a message," the foundation said in a statement.

"It can be observed that the same outgoing link is used for all the links with variation in the numbers. The parameter in the links indicates that they can be redirected to WhatsApp in all regions and in languages other than English," said the report.

The CyberPeace Foundation

along with experts from Autobot Infosec Private Ltd has launched an independent investigation into the matter.

"In all the links, the same redirection and outgoing sources were generated. However, in one link, a different URL was found and one new IP address that belongs to one of China's hosting company Alibaba Cloud," the report said.

When the URL is manipulated, an error code is displayed in Chinese language, the report said, adding that the domain names found during the investigation seem to have been registered in China.

"The IP address of the link is 47.75.111.165 and it can be traced to Alibaba Cloud, the city Hong Kong and the country China," it further claimed.

The news comes at a time when WhatsApp is asking users to either give their consent to sharing data with Facebook or lose their accounts after February 8, triggering a heated debate globally, including in India.

# INDIA RETURNS CAPTURED PLA SOLDIER TO CHINA

The Chinese soldier was captured at the southern bank of Pangong lake in the early hours of Friday after he transgressed across the Indian side of the Line of Actual Control (LAC)



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 11: The Indian Army Monday handed back to China a soldier of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA), three days after apprehending him at the southern bank of Pangong Tso in eastern Ladakh, official sources said.

The soldier was returned to China at the Chushul-Moldo border point in eastern Ladakh at 10.10 am, they added. The Chinese

soldier was captured at the southern bank of Pangong lake in the early hours of Friday after he transgressed across the Indian side of the Line of Actual Control (LAC). "The PLA soldier, who was apprehended on January 8, was handed back to China at Chushul-Moldo at 10.10 am on Monday," a source said.

Indian and Chinese troops are locked in a tense border standoff in eastern Ladakh for over eight months. The faceoff began in May

last year, following a clash between the two sides in the Pangong lake area. "The PLA soldier had transgressed across the LAC and was taken into custody by Indian troops deployed in this area. Troops from either side are deployed along the LAC since friction erupted last year due to unprecedented mobilisation and forward concentration by Chinese troops," the Army said in a statement Saturday.

Following the capture of the soldier by the Indian Army, China had sought his immediate return Saturday. It was the second such incident of India capturing and subsequently returning a Chinese soldier in the last three months. Indian troops had captured Corporal Wang Ya Long of the PLA October 19 last year after he 'strayed' across the LAC in Ladakh's Demchok sector. The corporal was handed back to China at the Chushul-Moldo border point following the laid-down protocols.

# 'Submit report on your plans to control stubble burning'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 11: The Supreme Court Monday asked the Centre to file an affidavit detailing "concrete steps" to deal in future with the situation of stubble burning, which is a major cause of air pollution in the Delhi-national capital region (NCR) during the winters.

The order by a bench comprising Chief Justice S A Bobde and Justices A S Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian, came after it was submitted that the pollution caused due to stubble burning will again come to fore in future.

"Mr Tushar Mehta (Solicitor General), you come back with some concrete steps on stubble burning," the bench said. The top court was hearing a petition which has

raised the issue of pollution caused due to stubble burning in neighbouring states of Delhi.

Senior advocate Vikas Singh, appearing for the petitioner, told the bench, "The issue will arise again. For this year, the issue of stubble burning is over and it will start again next time. The Centre has said nothing on this". The bench asked solicitor general to file an affidavit on the issue.

The apex court had last month said it was "not satisfied" with the work done by the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) in the National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas, which has been constituted by the Centre to tackle air pollution. "We don't know what your commission is doing. People in Delhi are not satisfied with your



work. We are also not satisfied," the bench had said.

Mehta had earlier told the bench that the commission is working on

"war footing" and several steps have been taken to deal with pollution. On November 6, the apex court had asked the Centre to en-

The apex court had last month said it was "not satisfied" with the work done by the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) in the National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas, which has been constituted by the Centre to tackle air pollution

sure there is no smog in Delhi as it was informed that the Commission has started functioning from that day. It had said that pollution prob-

lem has to be dealt with by the executive as it has the power, money and resources for this. The Centre, which has appointed former Chief Secretary of Delhi M M Kutty as the chairperson of the Commission, had apprised the court that there were experts from the field besides members from NGOs in the newly created Commission.

On October 29, the top court was informed by the Centre that it has come out with an ordinance on curbing pollution and it has been promulgated already.

The top court is also hearing a separate plea on air pollution and had last year even taken a suo motu note of alarming rise in air pollution in Delhi-NCR where several directions have been passed with regard to stubble burning.



**The Shiv Sena opposes Ahmedabad-Mumbai bullet train, but is trying to woo the Gujarati community**  
DEVENDRA FADNAVIS | SENIOR BJP LEADER

## TOTAL 96 UK STRAIN nCoV CASES IN INDIA

The central government Monday said that a total of 96 persons have been detected with the new 'more transmissible' UK coronavirus mutant strain. They are kept in physical isolation in health facilities



## of the day quote

The country is staring at a food crisis. There will be famine and food shortage if the BJP continues to remain adamant on the farm laws. The Centre is trying to create famine through these farm bills

**MAMATA BANERJEE** | WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

The BJP has been working peacefully for the development of Assam, taking into consideration the interests of all communities. It has fulfilled their demands without harming others

**J P NADDA** | BJP NATIONAL PRESIDENT

The way the BJP government is being insensitive towards farmers and acting towards them with a defiant attitude is directly an insult to the farmers

**AKHILESH YADAV** | SAMAJWADI PARTY CHIEF

## LOTUS CULTIVATION



Farmers harvest lotus stem, locally known as Nadroo, in the frozen Dal lake during the winter season in Srinagar

PTI PHOTO

# Govt places order with SII for 11mn vaccine doses

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Jan 11:** The Union government Monday placed a purchase order with Serum Institute of India (SII) for 11 million doses of Oxford COVID-19 vaccine, Covishield, each costing Rs 210 including GST, official sources said. Dispatch of the vaccine is likely to start by late Monday evening, they said. According to the order placed, each dose of the vaccine has been priced at Rs 200 and with GST of Rs 10 it would cost Rs 210.

The health ministry is also likely to soon sign a purchase order for another anti-coronavirus vaccine, Covaxin, which has been indigenously developed by Bharat Biotech, a source said. Covishield vaccine doses would be initially shipped to 60 consignee points from where those would be distributed to various vaccination centres across India, the sources said.

As many as 2,54,500 doses of Covishield are set to be delivered at Delhi's central storage, Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality hospital, in Tahirpur. The HLL Lifecare Limited, a public sector undertaking, issued the supply order on behalf of the Union Health Ministry in the name of Prakash Kumar Singh, Additional Director, Government and Regulatory Affairs at Serum Institute of India.

"The Ministry of Health has nominated HLL Lifecare Limited vide letter dated January 11 as procuring agency for procurement of vaccine. For the purpose of this order, the Ministry of Health, Government of India is the 'purchaser' and HLL Lifecare Limited (HLL) is 'procuring agency'. Vaccine-laden trucks will move out from Manjari location of the Pune-based SII amid elaborate police security. The Maharashtra government has decided to provide police security

to the trucks carrying the vaccine up to airports and to the borders of the state.

India had recently approved two vaccines, Oxford's Covishield manufactured by the Serum Institute in the country and Bharat Biotech's Covaxin, for restricted emergency use. According to the Health Ministry, two doses of the vaccine need to be taken by an individual 28 days apart to complete the immunisation schedule. Protective levels of antibodies are generally developed two weeks after receiving the second dose, it has said.

The country will launch its COVID-19 vaccination drive from January 16 in what Prime Minister Narendra Modi has called the world's largest inoculation programme with priority to be given to nearly three crore healthcare and frontline workers. According to the 'COVID-19 Vaccine Operational Guidelines', the shots will be offered first to healthcare workers, and frontline workers and then to persons above 50 years of age, followed by persons younger than 50 years of age with associated comorbidities based on evolving pandemic situation.

**'Made in India vaccines most cost effective':** Prime Minister Narendra Modi Monday emphasised that India is entering into a decisive battle against Covid-19, as the country prepares for the Made in India vaccination drive from January 16. Making the closing remarks at the meeting with the Chief Ministers on Covid vaccine roll-out, the Prime Minister said that the public representatives are not in the priority list and the first round of vaccines will be given to the frontline workers. He also said that the state governments will not have to pay for the first round of Covid vaccines as the Centre will bear the cost.



Representative image

## SHORT TAKES

### 'Army, police on alert in J&K'

**Srinagar:** The Army and police are on alert to foil any attempt of infiltration into Jammu and Kashmir by terrorists assembled at launching pads across the Line of Control, a top police officer said Monday. Asserting that attempts were being made to revive terrorism in Poonch, a border district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said six terrorists and over-ground workers of terror groups have been arrested in Mendhar-Poonch district in the last few months.

### Rawat in Ladakh

**New Delhi:** Chief of Defence Staff Gen Bipin Rawat is on a visit to Ladakh to review the country's overall military preparedness as thousands of Indian and Chinese troops remained deployed in a high state of combat readiness in various mountainous locations in the region amid the eight-month-long border standoff. Official sources said Monday that Gen Rawat will be briefed by Lt Gen PGK Menon, the commander of the Leh-based 14 Corps, popularly known as Fire and Fury Corps, and other senior military officials on the dynamic security matrix in eastern Ladakh.

### Yellow alert in Raj

**Jaipur:** The Meteorological Department here Monday issued a yellow alert for cold wave in several areas of Rajasthan for the next 24 hours. Cold wave conditions prevailed in parts of the state as the minimum temperature dropped by up to four degrees Celsius in the last 24 hours, a MeT Department official said. Churu recorded 1.9 degrees Celsius Sunday night while Ganganagar registered a low of 3.9 degrees Celsius, showing a drop of three and four notches respectively against the previous night.

### Girl ends life

**Moradabad (Uttar Pradesh):** A Class 12 student allegedly shot herself with an unlicensed revolver after she was scolded by her mother for not studying. The girl was rushed to a private hospital where she succumbed during the treatment.

### Teacher dies

**Jaipur:** A 55-year-old woman, who was a relative of a Rajasthan Administrative Services (RAS) officer, died at a hospital after being found unconscious with her hands and legs tied in Mansarovar area here Monday, police said. Vigya Devi (55) was the sister of an RAS officer posted as a sub-divisional magistrate (SDM) in Jaipur.

## Union Min Sripad Naik injured in road mishap, wife killed



AGENCIES

**Bangalore, Jan 11:** Union Minister for Ayush and Defence Sripad Y Naik was injured and his wife Vijaya and personal assistant killed when their car overturned at Ankola in Uttara Kannada district Monday night, police said.

The minister's condition was stable, they said. Police said Naik, along with his wife, personal assistant Deepak, his close confidante Sai Kiran, gunman and the driver were heading from Yallapur to Gokarna Monday night.

On the way, the driver lost his control over the car near Hosakambi village in Ankola Taluk of Uttara Kannada and the vehicle overturned. "It was not a collision between vehicles. Prima facie it appears to be the case of the driver losing control of the car" a police officer told PTI.

Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa expressed shock over the accident and condoled the demise of Naik's wife. "Shocked to know that the car which Union Minister Sripad Naik ji was travelling met with an accident in Uttara Kannada and the death of his wife. My heartfelt condolences on the tragic death of Smt Naik and prayers for the speedy recovery of Shri Naik and those injured," Yediyurappa tweeted.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has spoken to Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant to make sure that proper arrangements were made for the treatment of Naik. Sawant visited the hospital where Naik is being treated. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh also spoke to the Goa Chief Minister and asked him to fly Naik to Delhi if the need arose.

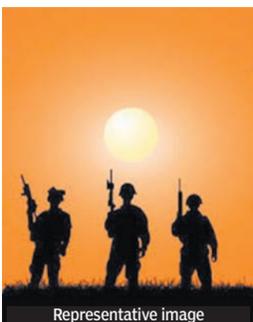
# 'Galwan heroes' likely to be honoured on Republic Day

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Jan 11:** Colonel B Santosh Babu and some of the other Indian Army personnel, who were killed while valiantly fighting Chinese troops in the Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh in June last year, are expected to be honoured with gallantry awards on Republic Day, sources said Monday.

Col Babu, the commanding officer of the 16 Bihar regiment, was among 20 Indian soldiers who laid down their lives in the fierce hand-to-hand combat on June 15 in the Galwan Valley, an incident that marked one of the most serious military conflicts between the two sides in decades.

China is yet to disclose the number of its soldiers killed and injured in the clash though it officially admitted to having suffered casualties. According to an American intelligence report, the number of casualties on the Chinese side was 35. The Galwan Valley clash had escalated the border row in eastern Ladakh and resulted in a large deployment of troops and



Representative image

heavy weaponry by both the armies in the friction points.

"Some of the Army personnel including Col Babu who displayed extreme courage during the Galwan clash are expected to be honoured on Republic Day," said a source. The Chinese soldiers used stones, nail-studded sticks, iron rods and clubs in carrying out brutal attacks on Indian soldiers after they protested the erection of a surveillance post by China around patrolling point 14

Nearly 50,000 troops of the Indian Army are currently deployed in a high state of combat readiness in the mountainous region in sub-zero temperatures as multiple rounds of talks between the two sides have not yielded concrete outcome to resolve the standoff.

Last month, India and China had held another round of diplomatic talks under the framework of Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination (WMCC) on India-China border affairs.

## 'Holding breath may increase nCoV infection risk'

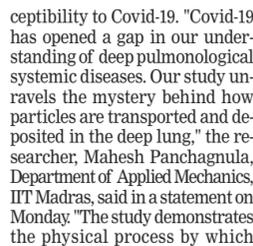
INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, Jan 11:** Researchers, at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras, have found that the process of virus-laden droplets being transported into deep lung increases with decreasing breathing frequency.

The team modelled the breathing frequency in a laboratory and found that low breathing frequency increases the time of residence of the virus and therefore, it increases chances of deposition and consequently the infection. Also, the multi-scale lung structure has a significant effect on a person's susceptibility to Covid-19.

"Covid-19 has opened a gap in our understanding of deep pulmonary systemic diseases. Our study unravels the mystery behind how particles are transported and deposited in the deep lung," the researcher, Mahesh Panchagnula, Department of Applied Mechanics, IIT Madras, said in a statement on Monday. "The study demonstrates the physical process by which aerosol particles are transported into the deep generations of the lung," Panchagnula added.

The research team worked to gain a deeper understanding of how the rate of flow of droplet



Representative image

laden with virus determines the deposition of the virus in the lungs. In their research, the team reported that holding the breath and having low breathing rate can



Representative image

increase chances of virus deposition in the lungs. Airborne infections such as Covid-19 spread immensely through sneezing and coughing as it instantly releases a lot of tiny droplets. The research team imitated the droplet dynamics in the lung by studying the movement of droplets in the small capillaries which were of a diameter similar to bronchioles.

They took water mixed with fluorescent particles and generated aerosols from this liquid using a nebulizer. These fluorescent aerosols were used to track the movement and deposition of particles in the capillaries.

## SECURITY ALERT IN KASHMIR

# Recovery of mortar fuze used by Pak army alarms forces

AGENCIES

**Srinagar, Jan 11:** Security agencies have raised an alarm over the recovery of three Point Detonating (PD) fuzes, used by the Pakistani army in their 82 mm mortar shells, from a terrorist in North Kashmir two weeks back, officials said Monday.

The three PDs were recovered by the Baramulla Police on the eve of New Year when the force intercepted a vehicle. Unaware of the material recovered, the police had declared it as "unique grenade". However, senior officers at the police headquarters examined the material and came out with a finding that it was a PD used by the



Pakistani army for the 82 MM mortar shells, they said. A report was shared with other security agencies including the army which has now taken up the matter with all seriousness, the officials said. They

said the PD could be used during the fabrication (manufacture) of an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) to increase its impact. It helps in super-quick detonation of explosives or at times can delay the impact mode for a bigger damage, the officials said.

The terrorist, identified as Asif Gul, from whom the PDs were recovered, is alleged to be a known Over Ground Worker (OGW) of The Resistance Front (TRF), a shadow outfit of banned Lashker-e-Taiba terror group. He had concealed the fuze inside a sack full of charcoal.

Gul, against whom 29 cases have been registered since 2015, was in touch with now Pakistan-occupied Kashmir-based Aabid Qayoom Lone,

who is believed to be a top commander of TRF and instrumental in running modules of shadow terror groups in the valley from across the border. Gul had picked up the consignment from North Kashmir and was on his way to deliver it to his cadres in South Kashmir, the officials said.

This is the first case of mortar fuze being seized by the police, and the officers fear that some consignments may have remained undetected and reached the terror modules in the Valley. The year 2020 saw several consignments of arms being smuggled from the other side of the border, some of them being dropped from across the LoC using drones.

## Iron rod inserted in widow's private part, three held



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Sidhi (Madhya Pradesh), Jan 11:** In a shocking incident, an iron rod was inserted in a widow's private part by three men in Sidhi district of Madhya Pradesh, leaving her seriously injured, police said Monday. The three accused have since been arrested.

The woman is admitted in a Rewa hospital in a serious condition. The woman along with her two sons lived in a shanty and ran a tea stall in Amaliya area. The three men went to her shanty on Saturday night and asked for water. When she refused, they barged into her shanty and inserted an iron rod in her private part. The woman was admitted in the Sanjay Gandhi Hospital in Rewa district, where doctors removed the rod after an operation.

Home Minister Narottam Mishra said that strict action will be taken against the accused. On the other hand, senior Congress leader KK Mishra said: "Shivraj Singhji (Chouhan), the Hathras and Badaun spirit has entered Madhya Pradesh. Gang rape in Sidhi, rod inserted in private part. All nationalists, self-styled guardians of faith have turned deaf and dumb. Pro-Tem Speaker is also silent; you also have not tweeted; till when will the double face remain?"



I am making an urgent appeal to leaders, from all sectors and from around the world, to give their support to this 'Terra Carta', to bring prosperity into harmony with nature, people and planet over the coming decade

## SAUDI, WORLD'S TOP OIL PRODUCER, LAUNCHES CITY WITH NO CARS

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman unveiled his latest vision for Saudi Arabia's future beyond oil: a city with no cars, roads or carbon emissions. The 170 km-long development, called "The Line," will be part of the \$500 billion project called "Neom"



### of the day quote

Taiwan-US relations have been elevated to a global partnership. The foreign ministry will not let our guard down and hope to continue to boost the development of Taiwan-US ties



USD 600 is simply not enough when you have to choose between paying rent or putting food on the table. We need USD 2,000 stimulus checks



No matter what your political affiliation is, I ask you to join me in saying to President-elect Biden, 'President-elect Biden, we wish you great success as our President. If you succeed, our nation succeeds'



# Democrats begin 2nd attempt to impeach Trump

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Washington, Jan 11: Democrats began the process of impeaching President Donald Trump for a second time Monday if Vice President Mike Pence and the Cabinet do not remove him from office.

Democrats introduced a resolution calling on Pence to invoke the 25th Amendment of the Constitution and remove Trump from the White House for being unfit to discharge his duties.

Republicans blocked an immediate vote on the resolution and Democrats followed up by introducing an article of impeachment of Trump for "incitement of insurrection" over his role in Wednesday's storming of the US Capitol by his supporters.

The dramatic moves come just nine days before Trump is to leave the White House and President-elect Joe Biden is to be sworn in as the 46th President of the United States.



Democratic Representative Steny Hoyer of Maryland introduced the resolution calling on Pence to invoke the 25th Amendment and declare Trump "incapable of executing the duties of his office."

Republican Representative Alex Mooney of West Virginia objected to passing the resolution by what is known as "unanimous consent" and it will be put to a vote Tuesday.



After Republicans blocked the resolution, a single article of impeachment against Trump was introduced in the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives.

Earlier, US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi has served a notice to Vice President Mike Pence and the cabinet that they should oust President Donald Trump using their consti-

## TRUMP REMAINS DEFIANT

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump enters the last days of his presidency isolated and shunned by former allies and members of his own party as he faces a second impeachment and growing calls for his resignation after his supporters launched an assault on the nation's Capitol in an effort to disrupt the peaceful transfer of power.

try to go on offense in his last 10 days, with no plans of resigning. Instead, Trump is planning to lash out against the companies that have now denied him his Twitter and Facebook bullhorns. And aides hope he will spend his last days trying to trumpet his policy accomplishments, beginning with a trip to Alamo, Texas, on Tuesday to highlight his administration's efforts to curb illegal immigration and border wall construction.

tutional powers within 24 hours or she will begin impeachment proceedings in the fallout from storming of the Capitol by his supporters last week.

She wrote to her Democratic Party Congressional colleagues Sunday that the House of Representatives will take up a resolution demanding that Pence invoke

the Constitution's 25th Amendment that allows him and a majority of the cabinet to remove Trump by declaring him "unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office".

"In protecting our Constitution and our Democracy, we will act with urgency because this President represents an imminent threat to both," she said.

## UN chief Guterres seeks second term: Report



REUTERS

United Nations, Jan 11: United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told the five permanent members of the Security Council that he would like to stay on for a second term, Bloomberg News reported on Sunday citing two diplomats familiar with the matter.

Guterres is likely to officially inform the president of the UN General Assembly soon, the report added.

Guterres, 71, took office as the ninth secretary-general in January, 2017 for a five-year term

Guterres, 71, took office as the ninth secretary-general in January, 2017 for a five-year term that finishes at the end of the year.

Guterres was waiting for the results of the November election in the United States before coming to a decision and was seeking a second term following the win of President-elect Joe Biden, according to Bloomberg. The United States and the United Nations were not on the same page in many instances during the administration of President Donald Trump.

Under Trump, the United States left the World Health Organization and upset Security Council members with its withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal. It also exited the Paris climate accord. Guterres' office had no comment on the Bloomberg report.

## KAMALA HARRIS' VOGUE COVER PHOTO SPARKS A CONTROVERSY

AGENCIES

New York, Jan 11: Kamala Harris will appear on the cover of Vogue's February issue, but when the mag-

social media users who accused Vogue of "whitewashing" and falling short of its normally high standard for photographs.

"What a mess up," wrote New York Times contributor Wajahat Ali. "Anna Wintour must really not have Black friends and colleagues. I'll shoot shots of VP Kamala Harris for free using my Samsung and I'm 100% confident it'll turn out better than this Vogue cover."

"The picture itself isn't terrible as a picture. It's just far, far below the standards of Vogue. They didn't put thought into it. Like homework finished the morning its due," LGBTQ activist Charlotte Clymer tweeted.



The photographs - especially the first one - faced backlash from

### SHORT TAKES

#### Three suspected terrorists arrested

Barcelona: Spanish police have arrested three suspected terrorists in Barcelona suspected to be members of the Islamic State (IS) militant group, a local media report said. The two Libyans and a Moroccan are reported to have previous combat experience in Syria. Xinhua news agency quoted the El Mundo newspaper report as saying Sunday. The trio, who were detained on January 8, are thought to have been preparing a terrorist attack in Spain. Although it is not known when the action was planned for, they are thought to be highly dangerous.

#### 25 domestic terror cases in US

Washington: At least 25 domestic terrorism cases have been opened as a result of Wednesday's assault on the US Capitol by supporters of US President Donald Trump, US Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy told a Democratic lawmaker Sunday. Representative Jason Crow, a former Army Ranger and member of the House of Representatives Armed Services Committee, said McCarthy also told him the Pentagon was aware of "further possible threats posed by would-be terrorists" in the days up to and including the inauguration of President-elect Joe Biden January 20.

#### Burns to be new CIA director

Washington: President-elect Joe Biden announced Monday he has chosen veteran diplomat William Burns to be his CIA director. A former ambassador to Russia and Jordan, Burns, 64, had a 33-year career at the State Department under both Republican and Democratic presidents. He rose through the ranks of the diplomatic corps to become deputy secretary of state before retiring in 2014 to run the Carnegie Endowment of International Peace.

#### Writer Ved Mehta dies at 86

New York: Celebrated Indian-American novelist Ved Mehta, who overcame blindness and became widely known as the 20th-century writer most responsible for introducing American readers to India, has died at his home here at the age of 86. The New Yorker magazine, where he had been a staff writer for 33 years, reported that Mehta died Saturday. Mehta, a writer for The New Yorker for more than thirty years, died at the age of eighty-six, Saturday.

## SEEKING SOLITUDE



A woman wearing a face mask walks with her pet dog at sunset, during the coronavirus outbreak as the number of daily infections reached a record, in Mellieha, Malta

# US designates Yemen rebels as terrorists

THE PLANNED DESIGNATION, ANNOUNCED BY US SECRETARY OF STATE MIKE POMPEO LATE SUNDAY, WOULD TAKE EFFECT A DAY BEFORE PRESIDENT-ELECT JOE BIDEN IS INAUGURATED JANUARY 20

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cairo, Jan 11: Yemen's Iran-backed rebels Monday dismissed the US move to designate them a terrorist organisation in the final days of the Trump administration while a leading aid agency warned such a designation would deal another "devastating blow" to the impoverished and war-torn nation.

The planned designation, announced by US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo late Sunday, would take effect a day before President-elect Joe Biden is inaugurated January 20. It was not clear whether Biden would overturn the decision.

Yemen is mired in a disastrous humanitarian crisis, with millions of people in wide swaths of the country on the brink of famine as a result of six years of civil war.

Pompeo said he was proceeding



with the designation of the rebels, known as Houthis, along with separate terrorist designations for the three top rebel leaders. At the same time, he pledged the US would help absorb the impact on aid groups and allow humanitarian assistance to continue to flow into Yemen.

Hours later, several senior rebel figures slammed Pompeo's announcement. "We are not fearful," tweeted Mohammed Ali al-Houthi. "America is the source of terror-

ism. It's directly involved in killing and starving the Yemeni people."

Others said the designation was an attempt to deflect attention from the US political crisis in the wake of the deadly Capitol rioting and efforts to impeach President Donald Trump. "We are honored to be terrorists and the world's gangsters," tweeted the Houthi media official Abdel-Rahman al-Ahnuumi.

In Iran, the Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh con-

demned the designation as a "doomed-to-failure" action at the end of Trump's administration. He said the US would eventually have to enter into negotiations with the legitimate representatives of Yemen - referring to the Houthis - to find a peaceful solution to the conflict.

Yemen's internationally recognised government described the Houthis as a "terrorist militia" and in a statement called for a "continuation of the escalation and intensification of the political and legal pressures on the Houthis to pave the way for a peaceful solution to the conflict."

Yemen, on the tip of the Arabian Peninsula, is the scene of the world's worst humanitarian disaster. The war has killed more than 1.12,000 people and has left the majority of the country's nearly 30 million people in need of humanitarian aid.

# N Korea's Kim adds title: Now, General Secretary of ruling party

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Seoul, Jan 11: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un was given the title of general secretary of the ruling Workers Party formerly held by his late father and grandfather, state media reported Monday, in a move apparently aimed at bolstering his authority amid growing economic challenges.

The designation was North Korea's latest step taken during its first ruling party congress since 2016.

During the meeting, Kim also vowed to build more sophisticated nuclear weapons, disclosed economic developmental goals and reshuffled party officials. But observers doubt whether such moves can offer North Korea any substantial solutions to difficulties that include coronavirus-related economic shocks, natural disasters and persistent US-led sanctions.

The congress announced Kim's



new title during the sixth day of the meeting Sunday. A congress statement said Kim "has gloriously realised the historic mission to complete the country's nuclear build-up plan," according to the official Korean Central News Agency.

Kim already was the party's top leader. During a 2016 party congress, he was named party chairman and before that had led the party with the title of first secretary. But general secretary has important symbolism in the country led by dynastic rule since it was the title held by his father, Kim Jong Il, and grandfather, Kim Il Sung.

## ORIGIN OF CORONAVIRUS PROBE

# WHO EXPERTS' TEAM TO VISIT CHINA JAN 14

THE TEN-MEMBER TEAM OF WHO EXPERTS IS EXPECTED TO VISIT WUHAN, BUT IT IS NOT CLEAR YET WHETHER THEY WOULD VISIT WIV TOO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, Jan 11: China said Monday that a group of experts from the WHO will arrive in the country Thursday for a long-anticipated probe into the origins of the coronavirus pandemic, ending the uncertainty and delay which drew sharp criticism from the world health body.

Experts from the WHO will conduct a field visit to China January 14, the state-run CGTN quoted China's National Health Commission as saying in a report.

Confirming the visit, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian told a media briefing Monday that China supported scientists around the world to conduct a global study on the origins and trans-

mission routes of the virus. Zhao declined to provide details of the schedule of the experts and whether they would be permitted to visit the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV).

US President Donald Trump, who has termed coronavirus "China virus", has alleged that the virus may have emanated from WIV and called for a probe into it.

WIV has denied the allegation, saying it is politically motivated.

The ten-member team of WHO experts is expected to visit Wuhan, but it is not clear yet whether they would visit WIV too.

When asked about it, Zhao directed the questions relating to the schedule of the WHO experts to relevant authorities. "China stands ready to closely



cooperate with WHO and international experts. With specific details of itinerary, I refer to you to competent authority," he said. "The origin tracing may involve

more countries. The WHO needs to conduct similar studies in other countries and regions," Zhao said, highlighting Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi's recent comments

that China "raced against time" and was the first country to report coronavirus cases to the world.

"More and more research suggests that the pandemic was likely to have been caused by separate outbreaks in multiple places in the world," he said.

The team's visit to China, especially to Wuhan where the virus first emerged in December last year, has become a bone of contention as Beijing, which questions the widely-held view about the virus' origins in Wuhan, had delayed granting permission to the 10-member team of experts.

China has been proactively questioning the view that the deadly outbreak took place in a wet market in Wuhan where live animals, birds and reptiles are sold and

spread to humans. The market remained closed and sealed since early last year.

Monday's confirmation came after WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, who is often accused of being pro-China, in a rare instance of criticism, expressed disappointment over Beijing for not finalising the necessary permissions for the experts' team's arrival.

"I'm very disappointed with this news, given that two members had already begun their journeys and others were not able to travel at the last minute, but had been in contact with senior Chinese officials," he said.

Tedros said he "made it clear" that the mission was a priority for the UN health agency and it was eager to get it "underway as soon as possible".



**The focus should be on moving towards EVs, but also on moving people and not moving vehicles which can be achieved through public transportation and its electrification**

AMITABH KANT | CEO, NITI AAYOG

## SENSEX SCALES 49,000-MARK

Indian stock markets Monday surged to close at all-time highs following strong earnings from TCS. The blue-chip NSE Nifty 50 index rose 0.96% to 14,484, led by gains in IT stocks. Sensex gained about 490 points to 49,269, its first close above 49,000. The Nifty IT index rose 3.3%, with TCS climbing 1.8%



## of the day quote

**Samunnati is working with FPOs (farmer producer organisations) on the supply side and agri-enterprises on the demand side across 19 states in India. We are delighted to partner with FMO and Triodos Bank as this will help us further offer customised financial solutions**

ANILKUMAR SG | FOUNDER AND CEO, SAMUNNATI



**All factors considered, the (housing) sector has shown remarkable tenacity in 2020 against all odds. The fact that housing sales in India's key markets have started to bounce back, despite the general gloom caused by the pandemic, shows the immense potential of the real estate sector**

DHRUV AGARWALA | GROUP CEO, HOUSING.COM, MAKAAN.COM, AND PROPTIGER



**CY2020 has been a challenging year for all of us but we can look back with a certain degree of satisfaction on what we did to keep Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) up and running and help maintain the supply of essential goods and trade flows critical for the country**

SANJAY SETHI | CHAIRMAN, JNPT



# Auto registrations log positive growth in Dec

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, Jan 11:** Vehicle registrations in December 2020 logged an 11 per cent growth on a year-on-year (Y-o-Y) basis, the first positive growth in a month in the current financial year.

Data released by the Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) Monday showed that over 18.44 lakh vehicles were registered last month, compared with over 16.61 lakh units in December 2019.

"December registrations for the first time in FY20-21 witnessed positive growth of 11 per cent (Y-o-Y) largely due to the festival spillover demand and pre-buying due to announcement of price hike in January '21," said a FADA statement.

Registration of two-wheelers, personal vehicles, and tractor categories rose by 11.8 per cent, 24 per cent, and 35.5 per cent (Y-o-Y) respectively while that of commercial vehicles and three-wheelers continued to decline by 13.5 per cent and 52.7 per cent respectively compared with the same period in 2019.

As per the data, dealer inventory continues to fall with personal vehicles' inventory ranging from 15-20 days and two-wheelers' inventory from 30-35 days.

Personal vehicle dealers continued to face supply-side issues for the second straight month, leading to higher waiting period that went as far as eight months.

Commenting on the registration data, FADA President Vinshesh Gulati said: "A good crop season, better offers in 2W segment, new launches both in PV as well as 2W and a fear of price increase in January 2021 kept the demand going."

"Supply-side issues in passenger vehicles continued for the 2nd straight month, thus making the waiting period stretch to as long as 8 months in select OEM vehicles," he said.



## FIRST TIME IN FY'21

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Increased intra-city goods movement continued to help SCVs outperform medium and heavy commercial vehicles' segments

Gulati noted that the commercial vehicle segment continues to see demand pressure even though on a Y-o-Y basis the segment fell by 13.5 per cent.

Increased intra-city goods movement continued to help small commercial vehicles outperform medium and heavy commercial vehicles' segments as axle-load norms, increased fuel and vehicle costs and higher freight rates continued to play the spoilsport, he said.

Tractors continue to outshine the supply for six straight months, further confirming the fact that the rural economy carries on to lead India's economic recovery, the FADA President added.

FADA looks forward to initiatives to spur demand in the upcoming Union Budget and specific initiatives for the auto industry to continue auto sales in higher gear, said the statement.

## Soybean meal exports nearly triple to 2.68L tonnes in Dec



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Indore, Jan 11:** India's soybean meal (soybean khali) exports rose nearly three times to 2.68 lakh tonnes during December last year on higher demand in the global market, SOPA said Monday.

In December 2019, soybean meal exports stood at 90,000 tonnes, as per data released by Indore-based Soybean Processors Association of India (SOPA).

France (43,257 tonnes) and Iran (41,500 tonnes) were among the biggest importers of Indian soybean meal in December, the data showed.

The leftover product after extracting soybean oil is called soybean meal.

India's soybean meal exports grew two-and-a-half times to 5.99 lakh tonnes during the first quarter of current oil marketing year (October 2020-September 2021).

During the previous oil marketing year, 2.36 lakh tonnes of soybean meal was exported from the country during October-December.

"Indian soybean meal prices are competitive against this product from the US, Brazil and Argentina. This is increasing India's soya khali exports and we are looking forward to regaining our lost market," SOPA Chairman Davish Jain said.

# Stretched valuations of financial assets pose risks to stability: Das

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, Jan 11:** Raising concerns over a disconnect between the financial markets and the real economy, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das Monday said that stretched valuations of financial assets pose risks to financial stability.

In his foreword to the Financial Stability report of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for January, he noted that banks and financial intermediaries need to be cognisant of these risks and spillovers in an interconnected financial system.

"The disconnect between certain segments of financial markets and the real economy has been accentuating in recent times, both globally and in India. Stretched valuations of financial assets pose risks to financial stability," he wrote.

The Governor's statement comes at a time when the Indian equity markets are scaling new highs amid the pandemic, while the economy is going through a recession.

Das said that in spite of rising public commitments for mitigating the impact of the pandemic, fiscal authorities are also witnessing revenue shortfalls. The resultant expansion in the market borrowing programme of the government has imposed additional pressures on banks, he added.

So far, the borrowing programme has been managed smoothly so far, with the lowest borrowing costs in 16 years and elongation of maturity, Das said, adding that the corporate sector has also raised substantial funds from financial markets amidst easy financing conditions, which have been mainly used for deleveraging and building up precautionary buffers.

"As growth impulses take root, the private sector capex cycle should revive as existing capacities get utilised and new capacities are added. This will require the financial system to intermediate expanded growth requirements of Indian business," Das wrote in the foreword.

Noting that India's banking system faced the pandemic with relatively sound capital and liquidity buffers built assiduously in the aftermath of the global financial crisis, he said: "Notwithstanding these efforts, the pandemic threats to result in balance sheet impairments and capital shortfalls, especially as regulatory reliefs are rolled back."

In addition, banks will be called to meet the funding requirements of the economy as it traces a revival from the pandemic. Consequently, maintaining the health of the banking sector remains a policy priority and preservation of the stability of the financial system is an overarching goal, Das said.



**The disconnect between certain segments of financial markets and the real economy has been accentuating in recent times, both globally and in India. Stretched valuations of financial assets pose risks to financial stability**

SHAKTIKANTA DAS | RBI GOVERNOR

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## GST SHORTFALL

# Centre releases ₹2,578.45cr to Odisha in 11th tranche

According to the Ministry of Finance, an amount of ₹6,000 crore as back-to-back loan to states to meet the GST compensation shortfall has been released as eleventh weekly instalment

POST NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi, January 11:** The Union government has released ₹2578.45 crore to Odisha so far to meet the GST compensation shortfall. The Finance ministry Monday released eleventh weekly instalment of ₹208.08 crore to Odisha.

The Union government has also allowed ₹2,858 crore additional borrowings to the state to meet the shortfall to help them in mobilising additional financial resources.

According to the Ministry of Finance, an amount of ₹6,000 crore as back-to-back loan to states to meet the GST compensation shortfall has been released as eleventh weekly instalment.

The Union government has released ₹5,516.60 crore to 23 states and an amount of ₹483.40 crore to 3 Union Territories (UTs) with Legislative Assembly (Delhi, Jammu & Kashmir & Puducherry) who are members of the GST Council. The Finance Ministry said that the remaining five states, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and Sikkim do not have a gap in revenue on account of GST implementation.

The Ministry also informed that 60 per cent of the estimated GST compensation shortfall has been released to the states and UTs with Legislative Assembly. "An amount of ₹60,066.36 crore has been released to the states while ₹5933.64 crore has been released to the three UTs with legislative assemblies," the Finance ministry said.

Significantly, the Union government had set up a special borrowing window in October 2020, to meet the estimated shortfall of ₹1.10 lakh crore in revenue arising on account of implementation of GST. The Finance Ministry informed that the borrowings are being done through this window by the Union government on behalf of the states and UTs.

"The amount has been borrowed this week at an interest rate of 5.1057 per cent. So far, an amount of ₹66,000 crore has been borrowed by the Union government through the special borrowing window at an average interest rate of 4.7271 per cent," the ministry said.



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## BIZ BUZZ

### BoI celebrates World Hindi Diwas

**BHUBANESWAR:** Bank of India, Bhubaneswar Zone organised a memorial competition on the occasion of World Hindi Day (Diwas) under the Chairmanship of Zonal Manager Priyabrata Pattnaik. On the occasion, the winners were awarded. Pattnaik encouraged all the staff members, stating the importance of the official language "Rajbhasha". He also said that Hindi being the official language, most of the internal works should be carried out in Hindi. Deputy Zonal Manager Bharat Barad, RC Das were present on the occasion.

### Sonalika sells 1 lakh tractors in 9 months

**BHUBANESWAR:** Sonalika Tractors achieved 1 lakh tractor-sales in 9 months from April to December, 2020. Sonalika grew by a staggering 33.3% during the year, which is around 3X the industry growth of 12% and has surpassed its entire FY20 sales in just 9 months. Overall, the company registered their highest-ever December sales of 11,540 tractors and highest-ever market share of 16.1%. Executive Director of Sonalika Group, Raman Mittal said, "We have surpassed our entire FY20 sales to sell over 1 lakh tractors in just 9 months of FY21, while recording 33.3% growth, which is 3X the industry growth of 12%."

## FREIGHT HANDLING

# ECoR breaches 150 MT-mark

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 11:** East Coast Railway (ECoR) carried 150.86 million tonne of freight traffic up to January 10, 2021 of the current financial year. With this achievement, it became the 1st zonal railway to reach 150 MT freight loading in the current fiscal.

During the period of time, ECoR carried 84.10MT of Coal, 20.50MT of Iron Ore, 13.03mt of Iron & Steel, 5.67mt of raw materials for steel plants, 5.30MT of fertiliser, 2.29MT of container, 2.05MT of food grains, 2.03MT of petroleum products and 15.88MT of other commodities.

Around 6.58 million tonne of freight was carried during January



1-10 with registering a growth of 15.6% as against the corresponding period of last year.

Also, ECoR carried 20.53MT of freight in the month of December, 2020 only of the current financial year by increasing 11.8% more than the corresponding period of 2019.

By the end of December, 2020 of the current financial year, East

Coast Railway has carried 144.25MT of freight. This include 80.50MT of Coal, 19.50MT of Iron Ore, 12.44mt of Iron & Steel, 5.25mt of raw materials for Steel Plants, 5.16mt of fertilizer, 2.21mt of container, 1.93mt of food grains, 1.95mt of Petroleum Products and 14.77mt of other commodities.

To achieve this loading figure, East Coast Railway has utilised 9945 Wagons per day in December, 2020 as against 8864 wagons during the correspondence period of last financial year. Similarly, up to the end of December, 2020, East Coast Railway has utilised about 7,899 wagons per day from 1st April, 2020 and aims to load more rakes to achieve the goal.

# Future-RIL deal: Amazon urges Sebi to suspend review

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Jan 11:** E-commerce major Amazon has written to Sebi yet again, apprising the market regulator of the formation of the arbitration tribunal at SIAC while urging it to suspend the review of the ₹24,713 crore Future-RIL deal.

It has also filed an appeal with the Division Bench of the Delhi High Court against the December 21 order of the single member bench, according to sources.

On December 21, a single member bench of the Delhi HC had rejected Future Group's plea to restrain Amazon from writing to regulatory authorities about the

SIAC (Singapore International Arbitration Centre) arbitral order but gave a go-ahead to the regulators to decide over the deal.

The court had also made several observations indicating that Amazon's attempt to control Future Retail through a conflation of agreements Amazon has with an unlisted unit of the Indian company will be violative of the FEMA FDI rules.

Emails sent to Amazon and Future Group seeking response on these matters did not elicit a response.

In its letter dated January 5 - a copy of which was seen by PTI - Amazon informed Sebi that the



"Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC) has constituted the arbitral tribunal in the Arbitration Proceedings initiated by Amazon against inter alia FRL,

Kishore Biyani and Rakesh Biyani". Amazon also requested Sebi to suspend "review of the Impugned Transaction as well as the scheme involving the Impugned Transaction,

Amazon also requested Sebi to suspend "review of the Impugned Transaction as well as the scheme involving the Impugned Transaction, and not granting any no-objection" for the Future-RIL deal

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The letter also urged the market regulator to direct the Indian Stock

Exchanges not to issue any no-objection/ approval letter to Future Retail Ltd (FRL).

A three-member tribunal consisting - Singaporean barrister Michael Hwang has been formed at SIAC. The other two members of the tribunal are Albert van den Berg and Jan Paulsson.

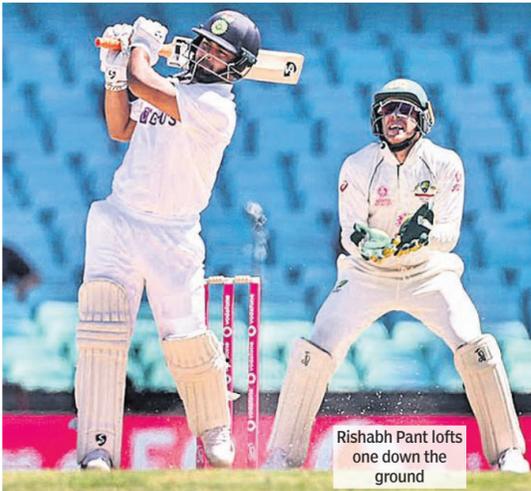
As per the SIAC Rule, the interim award passed by the Emergency Arbitrator (EA) "automatically extended for the duration of the Arbitration Proceedings" unless it is reconsidered/modified/vacated by the arbitral tribunal itself, Amazon further said in its letter addressed to Sebi Chairman Ajay Tyagi.

## 'Mutual fund AUM rises 17%

**Mumbai:** A massive rally in the equity markets since May bringing in heavy inflows into equity ETFs and open-ended debt funds has helped mutual fund AUM grow 17% to top the ₹31L-cr-mark in 2020, which is 1 percentage point lower than 2019, according to a report. During the year, the 44-player industry has added ₹4.5L cr to the AUM, while in 2019 it grew 18% from ₹22,86L cr in 2018, when it had grown only 7.5%, as per Crisil data.

# NEVER-SAY-DIE

**A FIGHT TO REMEMBER:** Vihari, Ashwin pull off memorable draw for injury-ravaged Team India after Pant pyrotechnics, Pujara's gritty knock



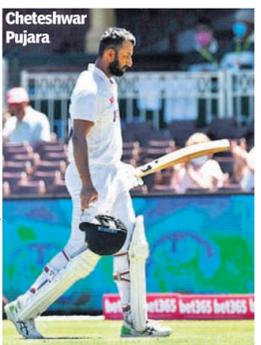
Rishabh Pant lofts one down the ground

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sydney, Jan 11: Ravichandran Ashwin and Hanuma Vihari battled pain and a hostile Australian bowling attack while resolutely displaying the largely extinct art of Test-saving batsmanship to snatch a remarkable draw for India after Rishabh Pant raised visions of an improbable win here Monday.

Chasing a Herculean target of 407, Pant (97, 118b) and the ever-steady Cheteshwar Pujara (77, 205b) produced an amazing 148-run stand before India were forced to down the shutters finishing on 334/5 in 131 overs when players shook hands.

The series stands at 1-1 going into the fourth Test in Brisbane but an Indian team who have turned into a 'mini-hospital' would be walking away with a lot of pride. They put up a proper fight in adverse cir-



Cheteshwar Pujara

umstances already soured by racist chants and abuses from the crowd here during the course of the game.

Pant's innings will be remembered for a long time but none can forget that Ashwin (39 n.o., 128b) and Vihari (23 n.o., 161b), battling a hamstring injury, put their bodies on a line to save a game which could have been lost in a jiffy after their two best batsmen were gone on the day. Pat Cummins (1/72), Josh Hazlewood (2/39), Mitchell Starc (0/66) and Nathan Lyon (2/114) threw everything they had, peppering them with short balls, hitting the patches with a few jumping from the spot. The duo, in 42.4 overs, scraped their way for a 62-run stand, which certainly would have made Rahul Dravid proud on his 48th birthday. Vihari hobbled with a torn hamstring but defended doggedly. Ashwin got hit on the ribs but carried on manfully while also engaging in some chatter with Tim Paine and close-in fielders. Catches landed in no man's land and that was the slice of luck they

needed. When Marnus Labuschagne was brought in the 112th over, one knew that they had done their job. Perhaps, it was the best way to honour the brilliance of Pant and the assuredness of Pujara. So much so that Ravindra Jadeja, with his broken thumb, was all gloved up and ready to go in if needed to be. There was method to madness in Pant's exhilarating innings. His 'cat and mouse' game with off-spinner Nathan Lyon was one for the ages. But it was Lyon, who had the last laugh when Pant's desperation to get to the three-figure mark before the second new ball saw him try to hit the spinner against the turn.

The result would have horrified his partner Pujara, who looked far more purposeful during his 205-ball knock. He got a beauty from Josh Hazlewood and was bowled in the manner he has often been - playing inside the line to a delivery that moves a shade after pitching.

Pant was promoted above Vihari as playing the surviving game wouldn't have helped on this track at least in the first session and also the left-right combination needed to be in place.

**SCORECARD**

**AUSTRALIA 1ST INNINGS 338**  
**INDIA 1ST INNINGS 244**  
**AUSTRALIA 2ND INNINGS 312/6D**  
**INDIA 2ND INNINGS (overnight 98/2)**

Cheteshwar Pujara b Hazlewood 77, Ajinkya Rahane c Wade b Lyon 4, Rishabh Pant c Cummins b Lyon 97, Hanuma Vihari not out 23, Ravichandran Ashwin not out 39; Extras: 11 (lb-3, nb-6, w-2); Total: 334/5 (131 overs).

Fall: 1/71 (Gill), 2/92 (Rohit), 3/102 (Rahane), 4/250 (Pant), 5/272 (Pujara).

Bowling: Mitchell Starc 22-6-66-0, Josh Hazlewood 26-12-39-2, Pat Cummins 26-6-72-1, Nathan Lyon 46-17-114-2, Cameron Green 7-0-31-0, Marnus Labuschagne 4-2-9-0.

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R Ashwin and Hanuma Vihari (with helmet) walks off the field after getting the job done

**MOST OVERS BATTED OUT BY INDIA IN 4TH INNINGS IN DRAWS**

150.5	vs Eng	The Oval	1979
136.0	vs WI	Kolkata	1948/49
132.0	vs WI	Mumbai BS	1958/59
131.0	vs Pak	Delhi	1979/80
131.0	vs Aus	Sydney	2020/21

**11** Cheteshwar Pujara became only the 11th Indian to cross the 6000-run mark in Test (80 matches)

**MOST OVERS BATTED OUT BY ASIAN TEAMS IN 4TH INNINGS IN DRAWS IN AUSTRALIA**

131.0	Ind	Sydney	2020/21
89.5	Ind	Sydney	2014/15
85.0	SL	Cairns	2004
75.0	Ind	Adelaide	1980/81

**131** overs is the most number of overs India have batted in the fourth innings of a Test since 1980

## POST MATCH REACTIONS

### AJINKYA RAHANE

**DAY 5 STRATEGY:** Our talk coming this morning was to show character and fight till the end. Not to think about the result. Really happy with the way we fought especially today but also throughout the game. Even in the first innings when Australia were 200/2 and getting them all out for 338 was really good.

**ON VIHARI:** I think this knock was more special than his hundred (in 2019 in the West Indies) especially the way he batted after getting injured. To show that kind of motivation, hunger and hang in there for your team, that's what shows the character of an individual. It's all about what the team wants and credit to him. There was pressure and the way he batted was special.

**CREDIT TO TEAM:** This is as good as winning a Test match. When you come abroad and play a match like this, it was really special as I said. It's as good as victory. Credit to Vihari, Ashwin, Pant, Pujara, the way they batted. Rohit at the start. Everyone chipped in but credit to those two guys (Vihari & Ashwin) in the end.

**ON PANT:** As captain and team man-

agement, you can make strategies but it's upto the individual to execute that plan (No.5). Rishabh did that for us. Unfortunately he was out on 97. The way he counter-attacked was really good to see and about Rishabh's character, we know that he can actually win the game for us in any situation. We had that belief, he is improving day by day as a cricketer.

**ON RACISM AGAINST SIRAJ:** We have lodged a complaint and I spoke to the match referee and umpires whatever I had to speak. Whatever happened is not acceptable at all and shouldn't happen anywhere in the world and we were upset about it

### TIM PAINE

**DROPPED CHANCES:** The dropped catches have played a part in the result. Probably going both ways to be fair. But I am bitterly disappointed, I pride myself on my wicketkeeping. Haven't had too many worse days than that today. It's a horrible feeling knowing our fast bowlers and our spinner (Nathan Lyon) bowled their hearts out and gave everything to the team. I certainly feel I let them down. I have to wear that (gloves), but I'll get another

crack at it next week so move on.

**DUEL WITH ASHWIN:** There was a bit of by-play going on. They were wasting a bit of time, we were getting a bit frustrated, we let him know, he had a bit of say back and again it's all part of the game. No harm done.

**ON THE RESULT:** Well, obviously, we wanted to win the game. I thought we created enough chances to do so, wouldn't say it's deflating, thought there were a lot of positives out of the game and it was an awesome game of Test cricket. Thought India fought hard like we knew they would. Clearly, we are disappointed not to get a win but thought there were some good signs for us after the Melbourne Test. We were good enough to get over the line and India fought really hard and deserved the result.

**ON RACISM AGAINST SIRAJ:** I think it's bitterly disappointing. Cricket Australia and the Australian cricket team, we don't condone any sort of abuse, particularly racial abuse. I just wanted to let the Indian team know we were with them on that. Like I said, it's not condoned by any of us and really disappointed that that happens when teams come to Australia and we want it to stop. Just wanted to make sure the Indian boys knew we are also against it and we support them.

## Vihari ruled out of Brisbane Test

**NEW DELHI:** India's injury woes in the Test series against Australia compounded Monday after the hero of their drawn game in Sydney Hanuma Vihari, was ruled out of the fourth and final Test with a hamstring tear that could keep him out of action for a considerable time.

It has been learnt that Vihari was taken for scans after the match. However, a BCCI source confirmed to PTI that Vihari is unlikely to be fit in

time for the next Test match starting in another three days' time.

"The extent of Vihari's tear can only be ascertained after the scan reports come through. But even if it's a grade 1 tear, he is out for at least four weeks and then will need some rehabilitation time. So it's not only Brisbane Test but also, he won't be a part of England Tests at home," a senior source revealed Monday.

As far as Vihari's replacement is concerned, the team only has two

options - either to play Wriddhiman Saha as a wicketkeeper and Rishabh Pant purely as a batsman or bring in Mayank Agarwal as a middle-order batsman.

In another important development, Shardul Thakur, with way more first-class experience and better batting abilities compared to rookie T Natarajan, is likely to replace an injured Ravindra Jadeja on a track that is supposed to be the bounciest of the series.

### PRaises FOR TEAM INDIA

**SACHIN TENDULKAR:** Really proud of Team India! Special mention to Pant, Pujara, Ashwin and Vihari for the roles they've played brilliantly. Any guesses in which dressing room the morale will be high? #OneTeamOneCause #AUSvIND

**SOURAV GANGULY:** Hope all of us realise the importance of Pujara, Pant and Ashwin in cricket teams. Barring at No.3 in Test cricket against quality bowling is not always hitting through the line. Almost 400 Test wickets don't come just like that. Well fought India. Time to win the series

**RICKY PONTING:** Loved the fight and determination of India all day today. Starting with Pant and Pujara, and then for Vihari and Ashwin to withstand Australia and look largely in control for most of the day was very impressive. Can't wait for Brisbane now.

**VIRENDER SEHWAG:** Pant showed why he needs to be treated differently & the grit showed by Vihari, Pujara & Ashwin was unbelievable. Tried all tricks including Steve Smith trying to remove Pant's batting guard marks from the crease. Par kuch kaam na aaya. Khaaya peeya kuch nahi, glass toda barana (But it didn't yield any result). But I am so proud of the effort of the Indian team today. Seena chonda ho gaya yaar (my chest swelled with pride).

**WASIM JAFFER:** Even a half-strength, battered, bruised, injured, ridiculed, abused, bio-bubble fatigued India is difficult for a full strength Australia to beat at home. No praise high enough for this Herculean effort.

**JAY SHAH:** Cometh the hour, cometh the man, and cometh the team! Extremely proud of Team India for putting up a fight on Day 5. Special mention to Pant, Vihari, Pujara & Ashwin. Well done, guys! Hello Brisbane Flag of India

## Kenin crashes out of Abu Dhabi Open



SOPIA KENIN

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Abu Dhabi, Jan 11: Australian Open champion Sofia Kenin was eliminated from the season-opening Abu Dhabi Open in the quar-

terfinals Monday after a three-set loss to Maria Sakkari.

Kenin won the opening set but faded as ninth-seeded Sakkari won 2-6, 6-2, 6-0. It was only Kenin's third loss in 14 career four-quarterfinal matches.

The Greek player hit nine aces against none for Kenin and 23 winners to the American's eight. Sakkari's next opponent is fourth-seeded Aryna Sabalenka, who made it 13 tour wins in a row by beating Elena Rybakina 6-4, 4-6, 6-3 for a place in the semifinals.

Sabalenka finished last season with titles at the Ostrava and Linz indoor tournaments and has started 2021 with four wins in Abu Dhabi. Sabalenka has won three of the four matches she has played against Sakkari, all of them on hard courts.

## ISL: Ogbeche goal seals MCFC victory

AGENCIES

Goa, Jan 11: Mumbai City FC (MCFC) extended their lead at the top of the Indian Super League (ISL) table to five points after the 1-0 win over second-placed ATK Mohun Bagan at the Fatorda Stadium, Monday.

Bartholomew Ogbeche scored the only goal of the match in the 69th minute from Hugo Boumous' assist to seal full points for the Islanders. Herman Santana won the ball from Edu Garcia in their own half and made a run down the middle before finding Boumous on the edge of the box. Boumous kept possession of the ball and then back-flicked it towards Ogbeche who found the back of the net with a swerving shot.

Sergio Lobera's side ended the first phase of the league with 25 points from 10 matches while ATK Mohun Bagan managed to accumulate 20 in 10 games.



BARTHOLOMEW OGBECHE

MCFC squandered a brilliant chance in the 11th minute. Boumous exchanged a quick one-two with Goddard and made a run down the middle before squaring the ball to his right for Amey Ranawade who entered the box and sent a square in the middle.

Goddard managed to touch the ball and Arindam parried it away but it came off the chest of an ATKMB player from the goalline before going out of play.

ATKMB's first major chance came after the change of ends. In the 56th minute, Edu Garcia received a defence-splitting forward ball from Pronay Halder and beat Mourtada Fall before placing the ball perfectly which went past Amrinder but the ball hit the far post and came back.

It later proved costly as MCFC broke the deadlock 13 minutes later and held on to the lead to bag a full three points.

## Kohli announces arrival of baby girl

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 11: India captain Virat Kohli and his actor wife Anushka Sharma were Monday blessed with a baby girl. Kohli made the announcement on his official Twitter handle.

"We are thrilled to share with you that we have been blessed with a baby girl this afternoon. We thank you all for your love, prayers and good wishes," Kohli tweeted.

"Anushka and the baby are both healthy and we are feeling beyond blessed to start this new chapter of our lives. We hope that you can respect our privacy at this time," added the star batsman who returned from Australia on paternity leave after the first Test.

The news came on a day when India snatched a remarkable draw in the third Test against Australia in Sydney to keep the series alive at 1-1.