HERE.NOW VOLUME 10, ISSUE 307 | www.orissapost.com 12 PAGES | ₹4.00 BHUBANESWAR | MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8 | 2021

Glacier break triggers massive deluge in U'khand

AT LEAST TEN PEOPLE WERE KILLED, 17 RESCUED AND 125 ARE STILL MISSING IN MASSIVE FLOOD

1991 Uttarkashi

earthquake: An

earthquake of

the undivided

state of Uttar

Pradesh in

6.8-magnitude hit

AGENCIES

Chamoli (Uttarakhand), Feb

7: A portion of the Nanda Devi glacier broke off in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district Sunday, triggering an avalanche and a deluge in the Alaknanda river system that washed away hydroelectric stations, leaving at least ten people dead and 125 missing who are feared dead. The sudden flood in the mid-

dle of the day in the Dhauli Ganga, Rishi Ganga and Alaknanda rivers – all intricately linked tributaries of the Ganga – triggered widespread panic and large-scale devastation in the high mountain areas.



A view of damaged dam after a glacier broke and crashed into the dam at Raini Chak Lata village in Chamoli district in Uttarakhand, Sunday

Two power projects - NTPC's aged with scores of labourers Tapovan-Vishnugad hydel projtrapped in tunnels as the waters ect and the Rishi Ganga Hydel came rushing in. Project - were extensively dam-Seventeen men were rescued

Oct 1991 in which at least 768 people were killed safely from a tunnel in the Tapovan project but about 125 were still missing. As night fell in the ecologically fragile Himalayas and rescue work in

the difficult to access areas became more difficult, there were

Maior natural disasters in U'khand 1998 Malpa landslide: The small village of Malpa in Pithoragarh district was wiped in the landslide in

which about 255 people, including 55 Kailash Mansarovar pilgrims, were killed 1999 Chamoli earthquake: An earthquake of 6.8

magnitude hit Chamoli district killing over 100 people.

2013 North India floods: In June 2013, a multi-day cloudburst centered on U'khand caused devastating floods and landslides killing more than 5,700 people

> fears they may be dead. Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat said seven bodies were recovered and at least 125 were missing. Homes along the way were also swept away as the waters rushed down the mountainsides

in a raging torrent. There were fears of damage in human settlements downstream, including in heavily populated areas. Many villages were evacuated and people taken to safer areas. By evening, it became clear that downstream areas were safe.

A 13.2 MW small hydro project on the Rishi Ganga was swept away in the glacier burst but there was no danger of floods in downstream areas as the water level had been contained, the National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC), headed by Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba, was informed at an emergency meeting in the national capital More P8



J&K to lose representation in RS

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Feb 7: Jammu & Kashmir is set to lose it representation in the Rajya Sabha after the retirement of four members from the erstwhile state, including Congress' Leader of Opposition Ghulam Nabi Azad. The terms of two PDP

MPs - Nazir Ahmed Laway and Mir Mohammed Fayaz - will end February 10 and 15, respectively, while Azad's term ends February 15 and **BJP's Shamsher Singh** Manhas' February 10. The erstwhile state's Assembly has been dissolved so it cannot elect new members to the Upper House.



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IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Nah! 5G is here. Soon we'll enjoy blocking Internet better!!



SJTA opposes NMA draft notification on Srimandir

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 7: The Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) Sunday objected to the draft notification prepared by the National Monument Authority (NMA), a constituent body of the Union Ministry of Culture.

The draft notification talks about notifying 100 metres around any of national monument as a 'prohibited area', which has raised uproars in the state. SJTA Chief Administrator Krishan Kumar Sunday wrote to the NMA citing the possible plights of people owing to the decision.

SJTA has demanded that the draft rules be withdrawn or consultations arranged with different stakeholders in Puri and the state



before taking a final decision. He apprised the NMA about the existence of SJTA, established as per a passed by the state Assembly and its agreement with the Archeological Survey of India (ASI) for the conservation of Srimandir.

"Large number of habitations (Sahis) which are more than a thousand years old also exists around the temple. These habitations are mainly of Sevavat families, who have been rendering service to the Lords since time immemorial. As they are likely to be adversely affected by any intervention, such as the new NMA draft notification, they must be consulted before initiating any process," he said.

He further said, "This is also important because any adverse impact on Sevavats have a direct bearing on continuity of Niti-Kanti (rituals) of Lord Shree Jagannath.'

Seeking the withdrawal of the draft rules, Kumar wrote, "I request you to immediately withdraw the draft notification under reference. If the NMA is still of the view that further regulatory framework of any nature is required to protect and further the cause of Mula Peetha of Shree Jagannatha at Puri, then vou are invited for a detailed consultation with SJTA members before taking any new initiative.'

Undertrial prisoner dies in Puri, kin cry murder

PNN & AGENCIES

Puri, Feb 7: An undertrial prisoner lodged at the district jail died under mysterious circumstances at the district headquarters hospital (DHH) here Sunday, with his spouse alleging that he was murdered.

According to sources, Sridhar Das, who had been arrested and lodged at the district jail here on charges of domestic violence, fell ill Saturday following which he was admitted to the DHH. However, he was declared dead while undergoing treatment at the staterun facility, they added. Meanwhile, Sridhar's wife Sabita alleged that her spouse was murdered. She has lodged a complaint with Ramchandi police in this regard. Puri superintendent of police (SP)

KB Singh, on the other hand, assured that Sridhar's death will be investigated as per the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) guidelines. Notably, K Ramesh, a resident of Baseli Sahi in the Holy City, had died due to alleged police excess in November last year. The death of Ramesh had created a flutter in the state with Opposition parties - BJP and Congress — stalling the Winter Session of the Assembly many times.

Following the incident, the state government transferred the then SP, Akhilesvar Singh, as an immediate measure and also effectedsuspensions of a few police officials, sources said.





SINGER CHERYL BAKER IS **SELLING HER FURNITURE**

Singer Cheryl Baker has revealed that the pandemic has left her broke and she has to sell her furniture to get some money. "My daughters help me sell the belongings. Though I haven't got any proper jewellery, it's all fake, along with my furniture and the paintings on the wall," she said.

DAISY RIDLEY IS TERRIFIED OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Actress Daisy Ridley says the amount of anxiety that is linked to social media is terrifying. The actress, who shot to fame playing Rey in the new Star Wars films, reveals she has vowed not to use sites like Facebook and Instagram.



FORTUNE FORECAST



Decisions about career and finance will keep you preoccupied today. After a hectic day, all you may want to do is relax. In that case, Ganesha may send a short but pleasurable trip your way, which is sure to rejuvenate you

TAURUS

This day. Ganesha sees you brimming with pep and vigour. You'll be feeling playful and frisky and will want to amuse yourself, keep others amused. You are likely to hang out with old friends and cronies and will love very second of it.

GEMINI

You will receive unprecedented love and affection from all your friends and family members today. It is a good day to conduct important personal or profession al meetings. A lot of joy and happiness awaits. savs Ganesha

You may donate to a

charity organisation, for your mental happiness. On the job front, stick to your routine, rather than taking a new bold step, says Ganesha. A good day on the financial front.

LEO



You will pen down the things to be done today. However, Ganesha suggests that just making a note of them is not enough; you need to set practical goals according to priority. Moreover, Ganesha warns that items you mark on the top of the list will demand immediate action.





Disha recalls unleashing of 'madness'

Mumbai: Mohit Suri's Malang released last year on this day, and actress Disha Patani, who made heads turn with her stunning screen presence and performance in the film, recalls unleashing the madness.

'It's been one year to Malang already, time definitely flies! I have had a blast shooting this film, the message was to unleash the madness and we absolutely did. The film had a bit of everything from action, drama, romance and thrills," Disha

Malang starred Anil Kapoor, Kunal Kemmu and Aditya Roy Kapur along with Disha, and had a couple of hummable songs. For Disha, her role of Sara has been among her strongest yet. She recalls the underwater sequences, and how she thor oughly enjoyed filming those

shots. "My character demanded quite a bit physically but I am a water baby and I thoroughly enjoyed performing water sports so that was my favourite part of the whole shoot," she said. IANS

Big B's definition of good friend

Mumbai: Legendary actor Amitabh Bachchan Sunday offered the definition of a good friend. The actor said a good friend could be compared to white colour and explained why he feels this way.

"Good friends are like white colour, if you mix any colour in white, a new colour can be formed. But even if all colours of the world are mixed together, it cannot create white, Amitabh Bachchan wrote in Hindi.

Last week, the veteran actor took to social media to celebrate his film Black completing 16 years of its release date. Talking about the Sanjay Leela Bhansali directorial, Big B said Black is a movie which was made way ahead of its time.

In the critically acclaimed film, Big B played Debraj Sahai, teacher of a differentlyabled girl Michelle McNally born with visual and hearing impairment. The character of Michelle was played by actress Rani Mukerji

IANS

Kajol shares her Covid thoughts

Mumbai: Actor Kajol has shared her Covid thoughts on social media. She says perseverance is the key.

Kajol posted a picture on Instagram. In the image, the actress is seen looking into the camera and smiling. "Covid

Perseverance is the key... whether it's two lines of crochet, two i (love emoji) u as , a chapter a day. At the end of it you have a sweater, a relationship and u have read (books emoji)" the actress wrote as the caption.

Kajol enjoys popularity on social media for her humour. guirky posts and words of encouragement for fans. The actress recently mentioned in a post how the world is changing, post pandemic.

thoughts :-On the work front, Kajol was recently seen in the digitally re-

leased film Tribhanga: Tedhi Medhi Crazy. Actress-director Renuka Shahane has helmed the film that also stars Mithila Palkar and Tanvi Azmi.

B-TOWN HOPES FOR A BIG-BUDGET SUMMER

t a time when Hindi film industry is battling the twin on-Austry is batuming the time slaught of post-lockdown blues and the rise of OTT platforms, many producers are taking the easy way out and selling films to digital platforms. However, some moretalked-about projects are expected to bail out a box office that is trying hard to woo back the audience. April to August is traditionally a

hectic phase for the film exhibition business, with summer vacations followed by the festive weekends of Eid and Independence Day, among others

This year, a handful of big budget films are tentatively scheduled to open within this phase, subject to the Covid situation, of

"DEAR FRIENDS, I ACCEPT YOUR INVITATION TO ATTEND THE TESTIMONIAL

DINNER FOR MR. BROWN .. M

USUAL FEE FORSICH AFFAIRS IS ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS

How far apart were Jack

Joe when they started



Kingdom, the film has so far officially not shifted its date. Directed by Ranjit M. Tiwari, the film also stars Vani Kapoor, Lara Dutta and Huma Qureshi.

RADHE: YOUR MOST WANTED BHAI

The Salman Khan film, billed as an ultra-action extravaganza, has locked an Eid release. The film is directed by Prabhu Deva, who scored a blockbuster with Salman way back in 2009 with Wanted, though the response was more lukewarm when they collaborated on Dabangg 3 in 2019. Radhe is scheduled for May 13 as of now. The film co-stars Disha Patani.

SATYAMEV JAYATE 2 Last heard, the sequel to John

SOORYAVANSHI The Rohit Shetty's action drama stars Akshay Kumar as supercop Veer Sooryavanshi, who fights against terrorism. The film also stars Katrina Kaif.

May 13 release. The film brings

back John as vigilante cop Virendra

Rathod, who wages war single-

handedly against corruption and

misuse of power.

83

Kabir Khan's much-talked about movie tells the story of India's first cricket World Cup win in 1983. Ranveer Singh stars as the underdog Indian team's captain Kapil Dev while his real life partner Deepika Padukone dons the role of Romi, wife of the former Indian skipper.



AUDIENCE

MUCH-TALKED ABOUT MOVIES ARE EXPECTED TO BAIL OUT

A BOX OFFICE THAT IS TRYING HARD TO WOO



PEANUTS

QUIZ

Jack and Joe leave their omes at the same time and

Irive toward each other. Jack

trives at 60 mph, while Joe

drives at 30 mph. They pass

each other in 10 minutes

BREVITY

HONEY, THERE'S A GUY

AT THE DOOR WITH A

FACE FULL OF SHAVING

CREAM AND WEARING

A DREW BREES JERSEY.

LOOK! I

RECEIVED AN ANSWER FROM

JOE SHLABOTNIK

CALVIN AND HOBBES

but you will be able to face the situation with your inner strength.

SCORPIO

Negative thoughts are likely to surround you today, try to avoid it. You may feel lonely and leftout when the day begins. However, a long list of activities and responsibilities will keep you occupied throughout the day. There are possibilities that you may land up in tricky situations, but you have the knack of handling things gracefully.

SAGITTARIUS

Beauty therapies or a new hair do, pick one; makeover and personal grooming is on your mind. Once you decide to shop, nothing in

the world can stop you. You have decided to de-stress yourself with shopping.

CAPRICORN

Generally, it is difficult for you to maintain a cool head over your shoulders, especially

during the stressful times. But. to everyone's surprise, you will display remarkable composure while dealing with challenges today, feels Ganesha

AOUARIUS

With no major highs or lows, you will have a balanced day today. You wil handle everything with great efficiency and Ganesha gives you a pat on your back for that. Continue to work hard for the day as your efforts will get noticed and not only that, you will also understand the value of your hardships.

PISCES Today will not find you in

the best of spirits. You need to guard against being sad for the smallest of reasons. Pessimistic thoughts could creep in, owing to some external influences. You need to keep your will-power strong to remain positive



BELL BOTTOM

This Akshay Kumar spy thriller Covid lockdown in the United

is slated for April 2. Shot amid

Abraham's 2018 action hit is scheduled to clash with Salman Khan's *Radhe* in the Eid weekend, with a



SUDOKU

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

					6	С						Е	8	A
	Е	5	3		D				9	1		6		С
С		D	4		1	Е	\Box			3			2	0
	9	1		Е	С	2	6				В		7	
7		4									6		1	9
А				7			1						5	
4	8	7								В	1	3		6
		В					D			Α			0	
		3		5	Е				D			8	4	
	1		9			0		С			3			
В	2		А					4		6		С		
			2	0										
		Α			В	D	0					2		
		С			9	1				0	7			
			С	D			Α	9		Е				







COVID NORMS

A civic employee sanitises the surroundings of Srimandir in Puri, Sunday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
Vorld	10,64,29,999	7,80,86,208	23,22,075
ndia	1,07,91,123	1,04,79,508	1,54,742
disha	3,35,620	3,32,948	1,909

State parties blast NMA draft bylaws

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 7: Several political parties in the state Sunday attacked the National Monument Authority (NMA) for their proposed draft bylaws for Srimandir and other shrines

Senior BJD leader Shashi Bhushan Behera said, "The decision of the NMA has hurt the sentiments of 4.5 crore Odias. The Union government and ASI seem to have given their viewpoints on the issue to the NMA. The beautification works taken by the state government for Srimandir is known to all.

He added that raking up the issue of development around Srimandir is not good. "This is done when the

The decision of the NMA has hurt the sentiments of 4.5 crore Odias. The Union government and ASI seem to have given their viewpoints on the issue to the NMA. The beautification works taken by the state government for Srimandir is known to all SHASHI BHUSHAN BEHERA | BJD LEADER

Police to keep

for more days

POST NEWS NETWORK

its disposal.

in the case.

beheaded body

Bhubaneswar, Feb 7: The head-

less body of the unknown woman found near Dasapur village is

likely to be kept for more days for

identification. Police usually keep the unknown dead bodies for 72

hours awaiting claims from the rel-

atives of deceased persons before

However, the Commissionerate

Police has reportedly decided to

keep the beheaded torso for five

more days to establish the iden-

tity of the body. Sources claimed

that many persons whose women

relatives have gone missing re-

check the body. However, police

are yet to receive any vital lead

ruling party at the Centre boasts about protecting Hindu religion,'

Behera said. Congress party also attacked the NMA for the planned bylaws. Party leader Suresh Routray said, "Srimandir is one of the oldest temples of Odisha. First, the experts need to visit the site and understand the ground reality before making any norms for Srimandir." What kind of beautification is when you plan to demolish the structures, he questioned.

Union minister and BJP leader Dharmendra Pradhan also said that the bylaws are restrictive in nature and more time and consideration should be given on matters of such religious importance. "Shri@prahladspatel has assured

This is nothing but drama.

Now, it has awakened and thought to protect the temple. Where were the agencies earlier? First study where there are issues of water-logging and weak structures before making any decision

DHARMENDRA PRADHAN UNION MINISTER



Servitors hold a demonstration in front of Srimandir to protest against the draft bylaws by the National Monument Authority OP PHOTO

that GOI will not take any step that hinders the development of Sri Mandir & in anyway interferes with local sentiments," he tweeted.

Pradhan said he has also requested Union Culture Minister Prahlad Singh Patel to publish these draft by laws in Odia. "He assured me to uphold the best interest of the people of Odisha with

highest regards for the sentiments of Lord Jagannath's devotees," Pradhan added.

"This is nothing but drama. Now it has awakened and thought to protect the temple. Where were the agencies earlier? First study where there are issues of water-logging and weak structures before making other decisions.

Meanwhile, a section of servitors living close to the temple staged a demonstration before the Lion's Gate of the Jagannath temple Puri strongly opposing the provisions of the NMA's draft heritage bylaws.

"We will not hesitate to take the matter to the Supreme Court as it directly affects the lives of hundreds of servitors," said Binayak Dasmohapatra, a senior servitor of the temple.

As tension mounted in the holy city over the NMA draft notification. Puri District Magistrate-cum-Collector Samarth Verma said: "We are examining the draft notification. Steps will be taken on basis of suggestions from the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA), district authorities, Srimandir servitors and other stakeholders.'

Meanwhile, besides Srimandir, the NMA has also planned bylaws for Brameshwar temple at Bargarh and sought suggestions from people on the issue.

The Office of the Endowments Commissioner Sunday wrote to the NMA to reconsider their decision. It talked about lack of consultations before formulating the rules.

SEX RACKET IN DIVYANG TRAINING CENTRE

Six, including prime accused, and Khurda DSSO clerk, held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar. Feb 7: The **Commissionerate Police Sunday** arrested six persons, including prime accused Suresh Behera, in connection with the alleged sex racket at a Divyang training centre in Palaspalli area under Airport police station here.

Behera, 38, a native of Khandapada area of Nayagarh, is the secretary of the All Odisha Orthopedically Handicapped Welfare Association.

The other accused persons arrested in the case have been identified as Rakesh Sarangi, 39, of Niali in Cuttack, Umesh Chandra Routray alias Lulu of Kalayanpur in Khurda, Sangram Keshari Das. 37. of Mendhashala in Chandaka, Basanti Sahoo alias Jyotshna, 30, of CDA Sector-10 in Cuttack and Sanjukta Meher of GGP Colony in Mancheswar here.

Police sources revealed that Sangram works as a clerk in Khurda District Social Security Office

Sanjukta, who had alleged sex racket being operated at the institute, has also been arrested

UMASHANKAR DASH DCP

(DSSO) while Rakesh and Sanjukta are the employees of the training centre.

Jyotshna has past record of involvement in immoral trafficking or flesh trade while Lulu used to work as a pimp.

Speaking to Orissa POST, DCP Umashankar Dash stated that Sanjukta who had alleged sex racket being operated at the institute has also been arrested. Police are also trying to fetch the CCTV footage at the centre for further probe. February 1, the police also arrested one Madhu Manjari Dhal, an employee of the institute, for allegedly torturing and forcing an inmate to keep sexual relationship with a person.

Silent stir against animal cruelty

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 7: A city-based animal welfare and safety group, People for Animals (PFA), Sunday organised a silent protest at Master Canteen Square here to highlight police negligence with regard to cases of animal cruelty.

PFA secretary Jiban Ballav Das said, "Animals cannot speak up of their pain and agony. We seldom bother to understand their pain and miseries. But, human beings have a greater responsibility towards animals and birds around us."

Das said that animals such as cattle, (stray) dogs and even domestic cats are highly vulnerable to accidents while crossing the roads and streets in the city. Speeding vehicles often cently are contacting police to kill and maim scores of these innocent and speechless animals. "This shows that we have no

have compassion towards helpless



and hungry animals. In cities and urban locations, animals never or rarely get an open source of drinking water. The municipal authorities never look into the issue," Das added. Das further said that the municipal authorities should take steps to control canine population and ensure medical treatment, including de-worming and anti-rabies measures, for the stray dogs. "All Animal Protection Laws are

not enforced by the police. Unless we come forward as a civilized and animal caring society, nothing can be improved in this regard. Whenever an offence is reported to the police under the relevant Animal Protection Act(s), they do not take the necessary action for the conviction of the accused. Once the accused obtains a bail from the court, the case is forgotten forever," Das added



MESMERISING PERFORMANCE

SARANGI LAUDS Wedding collection enthralls **UNION BUDGET**



Artistes of Bharatanjali, Chennai perform Bharatnatyam on the second evening of 17th Dhauli-Kalinga Mahotsav-2021 in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 7: A wedding collection was launched by Boyanika at National-level handloom expo 2021 being held at Exhibition Ground here, Sunday. Addressing the event, Subha Sharma, Commissioner-cum-Secretary to Handloom department said, "On the 64th year of Boyanika, it's a proud moment to launch the wedding collection where the handloom fabrics are being woven into graceful and luxurious attire. This wedding collection is made by our NIFT designers who have used Sambalpuri, Ikat, Bomkai, Kotpad and tassar fabrics and Odissi handloom is all about tradition. Let's hope our rich tradition is taken way ahead through this amazing collection and our Bandha Kala will be popularised globally too.'

Director of textiles and managing director Jyoti Prakash Das of Boyanika said, "This wedding col-



lection will definitely give one the satisfaction of wearing a rich handloom fabric with designer touch and currently the National handloom fair has profited more than Rs1 crore and 30 lakhs during this exhibition. So, this wedding collection will be showcased at Boyan Bhawan and at western market building Boyanika shop. These products will

also be available on Amazon and one can also order at this expo for wedding collection.

Akanshya Sarkar, Puravi Mishra, Manas Ranjan Das and Binay Kumar Munda, all students of NIFT, designed the collection that enthralled both the guests and onlookers. Shobhan kumar Sahoo director of NIFT was also present at the event.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 7: Union MSME minister Pratap Sarangi Sunday held a press conference in the state capital to talk about the Union budget presented by the government. He lauded the budget and said that it was dedicated to the people

He also appreciated the Prime Minister for working hard to bring the COVID 19 vaccines at a faster time period. "The Modi government must be lauded for their initiatives taken towards production of vaccine against COVID 19. India is among the world's few countries to offer vaccines against the pandemic in such a short duration of time," he said.



Jumbo menace gives sleepless nights to Khurda residents

POST NEWS NETWORK

Khurda, Feb 7: Wild elephants from Chandaka forests have been straying into several localities of the district headquarters town here for last several days, causing panic among the residents.

Many social activists, animal lovers and environmentalists have urged the Forest department to introduce some concrete measures to deal with the wild elephants and save the lives and properties.

According to sources, an elephant from Chandaka forests Saturday strayed into Samantarapur Square area by passing through Kumarbast and Mukundprasad Uparasahi. The incident triggered panic among the locals as well as commuters. The pachyderm was later chased away to the forests by the authorities con-

cerned, sources said. Locals, meanwhile, claimed that this was the second incident, when wild elephants straved into Mukundprasad area of Khurda town.

"Jumbos from Chandaka forests have entered into the district headquarters town for at least five times in last four to five months. The Forest department is taking the issue casually," said a social activist

Two tuskers had strayed into the district headquarters hospital (DHH) in the late hours of October 4, last year and damaged a portion of the boundary wall. Similarly, a tusker had also entered into Palla area of Khurda October 7, 2020, locals said.

"A wild elephant was seen in a cashew forests at Kumarbast village November 7, last year. The pachyderm later entered into



Khurda town in the evening. However, the jumbo returned back to the forests without causing any harm to the locals and their properties," said a local.

Moreover, a herd of at least 20 elephants had damaged a portion of the DHH boundary wall November 25. 2020, before they returned back to the nearby forests.

AN ELEPHANT FROM CHANDAKA FORESTS SATURDAY STRAYED INTO SAMANTARAPUR SQUARE AREA BY PASSING THROUGH KUMARBAST AND MUKUNDPRASAD UPARASAHI

JUMBOS FROM CHANDAKA FORESTS HAVE ENTERED INTO THE DISTRICT HEADOUARTERS TOWN FOR AT LEAST FIVE TIMES IN LAST FOUR TO FIVE MONTHS

TWO PERSONS HAVE LOST THEIR LIVES TO JUMBO ATTACK WHILE MANY OTHERS SUSTAINED INJURIES RECENT-LY AT VILLAGES UNDER TANGI FOREST DIVISION

The locals claimed that an elephant herd from Chandaka forests has been seen roaming in Khurda forest division recently. The jumbo herd is regularly straying into

Jariput, Daleiput, Panabaraj, Deulatangi, Kaipadar, Beruan, Sharadhapur and Chhatipur areas of Khurda forest division and Gayabandh, Damanbhuin, Jankia, Baligadia, Mota, Golbai, Haja, Naragoda, Tankol and Siko areas of Tangi forest range.

The elephants are damaging crops and have become a threat to the lives of the locals.

Two persons have lost their lives to jumbo attack while many others sustained injuries recently at villages under Tangi forest division. The Forest department has failed to check the conflicts between elephants and human beings. The authorities should plan for an elephant corridor and introduce some concrete measures to tackle the jumbo menace," said environmentalist Dhaneswar Bidhar.

He also said that the Made in India call given by the PM has been yielding good results. "Despite challenges, the Prime Minister batted for 'vocal for local' and Atmanirbhar to boost the production of the vaccine in the country itself. The government has now decided to start giving pneumonia vaccines to the kids to reduce child mortality. It is being given in five states but now it will be expanded," he said.

He also added, "The recent budget announcement of the government was a result of strong determination and able leadership. The budget has ensured that the welfare of people from all walks of lives is taken care of. The government has given importance to -(farmer welfare, women empowerment and social justice."







downtown

Minister visits schools ahead of reopening for Class IX, XI

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 7: School and Mass Education minister Samir Ranjan Dash Sunday reviewed the preparedness of the schools ahead of their reopening for Class IX and

XI students February 8 (Monday). Minister Dash visited Utkal University High School Sunday and reviewed the situation and arrangements. The Minister expressed happiness that more than 50 per cent students were in attendance in the school even on a Sunday.

The Minister also reviewed preparations of the school authorities for the commencement of classes for Class IX and XI students and said that teachers are mentally prepared to complete all the courses in 100 days of classroom teaching.

The state government February 1 decided to allow students of more classes to attend physical

learning at schools. School and Mass Education Secretary, Satyabrata Sahu informed students of Class IX and XI will attend the physical learning at

schools from February 8. The classes of Class IX and XI will continue till April 30 from 8:30 am to 10:30am (Monday to Saturday). Earlier January 30, School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash suggested opening schools in the first week of February.

The government has reopened Class X and XII from January 8. Meanwhile, Odisha Secondary School Teachers Association (OSSTA) has threatened not to cooperate in the teaching process and take legal route if teachers are not given leave on Sundays.

They alleged that classes on Sunday are against the government's decision of classes on Sunday for completing courses of Class X.

GYAN RANJAN MOHAPATRA, OF

Bhubaneswar, Feb 7: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated 35 model police stations equipped with advanced technical infrastructures, enough manpower along with other amenities across various districts of the state in 2018. Along with that, newly-constructed Airport police station and upgraded Nandankanan police station in Bhubaneswar were declared as model police stations too. The model police stations were

upgraded with disabled-friendly entry, crèche for children, special amenities for women staff and elderly, room for officers in the Police Station, Community Policing Room, armoury for safe upkeep of the arms and ammunition, wireless and communication room.

However, it seems the officers in-charge of the model police sta-



City Model PS not disabled-friendly

the police stations in the capital as

well as at other places are being

upgraded to make the buildings

Interestingly, the reception desk

tions are indifferent towards the very aim for which these model stations have been set up.

Various higher courts across disabled-friendly. country have repeatedly urged the government to ensure the Police at the Airport model police station Station buildings to be barrier free is located on the first floor in place and disabled-friendly. Almost all of the ground floor. The differently-

POLICE STATION IS LOCATED ON THE FIRST FLOOR THE DIFFERENTLY-ABLED

AND ELDERLY PERSONS USE THE ELEVATOR AT THE POLICE STATION TO GO UPSTAIRS FOR **REGISTRATION OF THEIR** COMPLAINTS

THE RECEPTION DESK AT

THE AIRPORT MODEL

BUT THE ELEVATOR HAS BEEN LYING DEFUNCT FOR THE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS

abled and elderly persons use the elevator system at the police station to go upstairs for registration of their complaints.

On the other hand, the elevator has been lying defunct for the last several months at the model police stations leaving the elderly and differently-abled visitors helpless. The helpless persons have no option but to bring an attendant for lodging their complaint or return empty handed.

Similarly, during a recent visit by this correspondent to the police station revealed that the station was almost empty with no staffers on an afternoon. Even the DCO chair was found vacant

The situation was similar in Nandankanan model police station where the DCO was found cooling his heels upstairs while only three constables were at the reception desk.

It is pertinent to note that several accused persons managed to flee from the lock-ups of both the model police stations.

Speaking on the issue, a senior police official in the Commissionerate Police remarked that all the steps will be taken to address the lacunae, if any.

72 fresh cases push state's Covid-19 tally to 3,35,620

Kandhamal becomes Covid-free with no active case left in the district

Kandhamal, which has emerged

Odisha currently has 853 active

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Feb 7: State's Covid-19 caseload Sunday rose to 3,35,620 after 72 more people tested positive for the infection, a senior Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department official said.

The death toll remained unchanged at 1,909 as no fresh fatality was reported since Saturday, said the official, adding that of the 72 cases, 43 were reported from quarantine centres and the rest detected during contact tracing.

Sundargarh reported the maximum number of new cases at 14, followed by Angul at 10 and Jharsuguda at seven

as the coldest place in the state As many as 12 districts, includwith mercury level settled below 10 ing Bhadrak, Dhenkanal, degree Celsius for the past two Jagatsinghpur, Kandhamal, weeks, became Covid-19 free, with Kendrapara and Keonjhar, did not no active case left in the district, said register any new case in the last 24 the official. hours, the official pointed out.

Ore than 2.75 lakh frontline workers have been administered Covid-19 vaccine in Odisha thus far

> t least 78.40 lakh samples Ahave been examined for Covid-19, including 23,785 Saturday. The positivity rate in the coastal state stands at 4.27 per cent

cases, while as many as 3,32,733 patients have recovered from the highly infectious disease. As many as 53 Covid-19 patients have died in the state due to comorbidities. At least 78.40 lakh samples have

been examined for Covid-19, including 23,785 Saturday. The positivity rate in the coastal state stands at 4.27 per cent.

More than 2.75 lakh frontline workers have been administered Covid-19 vaccine in Odisha thus far. the official added



Hundreds of adulterated ketchup bottles, seized from a manufacturing unit at Jagatpur Industrial Estate in Cuttack, being destroyed by police, Sunday

4 of snatchers' gang, targeting female morning walkers, held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 7: The twin city Commissionerate Police Sunday claimed to have arrested four members of a notorious snatchers' gang, targeting female morning walkers in the Temple City, from Chandrasekharpur area here late Saturday



The four, along with a few others, were hatching a plan to rob morning walkers in BDA area. Though we nabbed the four, a few of their associates managed to flee the spot, taking advantage of the darkness Though we nabbed the four, a few of their associates managed to flee the spot, taking advantage of the darkness," a senior police official said.

The official added that they have recovered gold ornaments, cash, a pistol, a motorcycle, mobile phone, a few sharp weapons and packets of chilli powder from their possession. All four are history-sheeters. A case (79/21) has been registered with the Chandrasekharpur police in this connection. "Efforts are on to nab other members of the

gang," the official pointed out.

POST NEWS NETWORK Bhubaneswar, Feb 7: A consultation workshop on 'Integrated Development of Mahendragiri Hill Complex' was organised by the Odisha Environmental Society in association with Mahendragiri Surakshya Samiti here Sunday. In the workshop, the experts demanded for a biosphere reserve status to Mahendragiri Hill Complex on the Eastern Ghats in Gajapati district. Jaya Krushna Panigrahi secretary of OES said that the forest ecosystem at Mahendragiri was dense and inaccessible in the past. Mahendragiri Surakhya Samiti president, Laxmi Baba, said that the flora and fauna of Mahendragiri hill complex represents Himalayan as well as peninsular Deccan Plateau species. Mahendragiri hill complex is the natural habitat of the tribes including the primitive Lanjia saura, Sudha saura and Bhima saura. The other tribes include Kondh, Gond, Santal and Kolh. The tribals used to collect tamarind, Siali leaf, Sal leaf and seeds, arrowroot, date palm (local study the feasibility of constituting Mahendragiri Biosphere name Khajuri) sap, Kochila seeds, hill broom, timber, bamboo, cane and Reserve. The committee proposed several varieties of medicinal plants for the creation of a biosphere like Patalgaruda and Dhatuki from reserve at Mahendragiri. However, Mahendragiri forests. The forest the state government is yet to products are purely organic in nasubmit the proposal before the ture and known for their rich min-Union Government for accorderals and vitamins contents, Laxmi ing biosphere reserve status to Baba added. the hill complex. OES president SN Patro said 'The state government should that the Forest and Environment send the proposal in this regard to Department of Odisha had conthe Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate



The accused were identified as Biswanath Barik, 23, Arbaj Khan, 20, Lipun Sethi, 20, residents of Nuapatna under Tigiria police limits in Cuttack, and Mangu Behera, 23, a resident of Panda Park slum

BEACH MARATHON

limits here.

under Chandrasekharpur police Mandap in BDA area here late Saturday night.

"The four, along with a few oth-The police crackdown came while the anti-socials, along with a few others, were hatching a plan to rob ers, have assembled at Durga morning walkers in BDA area.

Cold wave condition may return in 6 dists

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Feb 7: After a slight rise in minimum temperature in many parts of the state Sunday, the cold wave condition is likely to return in at least six districts in the next 24 hours, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

G Udaygiri and Phulbani recorded a minimum temperature at 5.4 degrees Celsius and 8.5 degrees Celsius respectively, followed by Kirei in Sundargarh (9

All other stations reported a minimum temperature above 10 desaid. The twin cities of Cuttack and temperature of 14.8 and 17.4 degrees Celsius respectively, it said.

"Cold wave condition is very likely to prevail at one or two places over the districts of Kandhamal, Kalahandi, Keonjhar, Jharsuguda, Sundargarh and Deogarh during next 24 hours," the IMD said in its warning.

stituted a committee in 2011 to

Change," Patro added.

Biosphere reserve status to the hill complex would create opportunities for eco-tourism and other developmental activities. Such a step will help promoting sustainable development of this withering unique ecosystem of Mahendragiri hill complex as well as enhance the socio-economic-cultural condition of the locals, opined several experts.

Convener of the workshop, Manoranjan Mishra, said that Mahendragiri has found mention in religious texts and epics like Ramavana and Mahabharata. "The Tourism department of the state government should send a proposal to the Union Ministry of Tourism to include Mahendragiri in the Ramayana circuit. The department should also take steps to send a proposal to the UN-ESCO for inclusion of the hill complex in the World Heritage Sites," Mishra added.

The experts also suggested that the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) should take steps to conserve ancient temple monuments in the hill complex.

degrees Celsius). grees Celsius, the weatherman Bhubaneswar recorded minimum

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People participate in a beach marathon organised by Bhubaneswar Cycling and Adventure Club in Puri, Sunday









Plea for biosphere reserve

status to Mahendragiri

OrissaPOST MONDAY | FEBRUARY 8 | 2021 | BHUBANESWAF

state

After Kotia, Andhra eyes several Gajapati villages

POST NEWS NETWORK

Paralakhemundi, Feb 7: After encroaching bids on the Kotia panchavat in Koraput district, the Andhra Pradesh government is trying to bring several villages of Gangabada area in Gajapati district under its administrative limits, locals here alleged.

Such bid has come when panchavat elections are scheduled to be held in Sabakota panchayat of Mandusa Mandalam in Srikakulam district February 13.

The residents of Manikapatna, Madiakhol, Burusingh, Amaringi and Gudukhudi villages under Gangabada panchavat are being lured by the Andhra Pradesh government with various facilities such as land documents, voter identity cards, Aadhar cards, ration cards, pension and electricity connection.

What is shocking is that for the first time, a resident of Gangabada panchayat has also been given a ticket to fight panchayat elections to be held on the other side of the border, Laxmi Sabar has been fielded as a ward member candidate. it was learnt.

Worse, some residents of Odisha side are learnt to have decided to cast their votes in the upcoming elections. While some people wish to be with Andhra Pradesh, some others say they will be loyal to Odisha as they live in Odisha.

The voter identity cards provided to villagers by the Andhra Pradesh government show the above-mentioned villages as parts of its Mandusa Mandalam of Srikakulam district.

Similarly, there are five families in Burusingh village that have received voter identity cards from both Odisha and Andhra Pradesh governments. They are also re-



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There are five families in Burusingh village that have received voter identity cards from both Odisha and Andhra Pradesh governments. They are also receiving several benefits from both sides. These families say they will cast votes in the coming panchayat elections as they are under political and administrative pressure for having bought farmlands in Andhra Pradesh side

ceiving several benefits from both sides. These families say they will cast votes in the coming panchayat elections as they are under political and administrative pressure for having bought farmlands in Andhra Pradesh side.

The residents of Gudukhudi village are apparently inclined toward the noighbouring state. They have made their stand clear that they will exercise their voting rights. "The Andhra Pradesh government is providing all types of services and benefits besides col-

On the other hand, the Gajapati district administration has not

supplied rations for the last five months. So what is wrong in participating in elections in Andhra Pradesh," an elderly man asked. Notably, the Gajapati district administration has swung into action and taking steps to foil Andhra

Pradesh's designs. A team of administrative officials visited the villages Saturday. The residents in these villages have urged Odisha government to take steps as it has done in case of Kotia to win the hearts of disillusioned villagers.

Woman drugged, gangraped; two youths arrested

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kandhamal, Feb 7: Two youths were arrested Sunday for allegedly raping a young woman in a forest near Baliguda area under Kotagarh police limits in Kandhamal district. The arrested youths were iden-

tified as Asit Badamajhi and Nilambar Badamajhi.

According to sources, the unfortunate incident had occurred January 29. However, the matter came to the fore Sunday morning after parents of the victim lodged an FIR in this regard.



The survivor had gone to a nearby forest for picnic along with two other women. The two youths raped her in drunken state

The gangrape survivor had gone to a nearby forest for picnic along with two other women of her village. The accused are distant relatives of the victim. The two youths had consumed country liquor during the picnic.

Two of the village women could manage to return home. The gangrape survivor could not return under the influence of drug-laced country liquor, an official of the Kotagarh police station said.

The ill-motivated youths took advantage of her drunken state. Finding her alone in the forest, the accused duo later raped her.



HEALTHY LIVING

Youths and students take part in a Cyclothon organised by Zilla Yoga Sangh in Nalco Nagar area of Angul district to promote healthy living, Sunday

People feed on pit, creek water

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kantabanji, Feb 7: Over seven decades have passed since the independence, but people of Maoistprone Dangamara village located in a reserve forest under Turekela block of Bolangir have been deprived of basic facilities. Development is miles away from them, locals alleged.

Most of the residents in the village are tribals whose livelihood depends on collection and sales of minor forest produce.

In the hilly area, people have been suffering from absence of basic facilities like road connectivity, drinking water, electricity and education.

People feed on water of creeks and pits while oil lamp is the only means of lighting the houses after



sunset. The village located in Dhundei reserve forest comprises four hamlets like Barihamunda, Pahariapada, Guhariapada and Dangamara.

"Sans revenue status to the village, people are deprived of welfare schemes. All have made their houses with their own efforts.' They lamented.

For the village kids, school education is an impossible proposition. 30 to 40 kids need to have preprimary education through Anganwadi centre.

Some children have to trek six km though hilly terrains to study at Badadakala Ashram school Damanchuan primary school is four km from the village. But children have to risk their lives in traveling through wildlife-infested hilly terrains, villagers said

'We have dug out pits in farmland where we collect water. In summer, water in pits goes dry. We have no other way but to walk seven km to bring water from Dabala creek," they narrated. No healthcare facilities are in the region. Quacks are

the only support for treatment in the forested region. In emergency cases, patients are either carried to Badadakala Avurvedic centre or Turekela CHC

or Komna CHC (in Nuapada district), which are around 20 km away from the village.

and Hospital (SCBMCH)

and had met Titlagarh sub-col-

lector seeking financial help.

However, Kalimun passed away

a month ago. After losing his

mother, Akhtar had been men-

Police said that Akhtar often

visited graveyard and sat for

Later they ran out of money

Fake potato chips Outfit smells rat in 'govt bid' to making unit busted buy land in submergence area



large amounts of empty packets with branding of popular companies, raw materials, spice powder, some bars of chocolates manufactured in 2016 and mosquito-repellants were seized. Taste enhancing spices were also seized. The chips packets manufactured

lecting revenues

here were being supplied to different parts of the district Preliminary investigation re-

veals that the unit does not have requisite permission to manufacture

POST NEWS NETWORK

Loisingha, Feb 7: The submergenceprone area of the Lower Suktel irrigation project in Bolangir is said to be rich with minerals (manganese) Locals affiliated to Budi Anchal Sangrami Parishad (BASP) accused the government of conspiring to hand over the mineral-bearing land to the mining firms and private companies

Notably, BASP is a local

LOWER SUKTEL PROJECT



Shocked by mom's death, youth kills self

in Cuttack.

tally depressed.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Saintala, Feb 7: Unable to come to terms with his mother's demise. a 20-year old youth committed suicide at Belagaon Swadhinpada area under Saintala police limits in Bolangir district, Saturday.

According to the police, Rafi Muhammad -- a resident of Swadhinpada -- has a cycle repairing shop at Belagaon. His son Akhtar Muhammad was doing his Plus II at DAV College in Titilagarh Rafi's wife Kalimun Begum

had some stomach related ailments. The family was treating

hours where his mother was laid to rest. The family members found Akhtar hanging from the ceiling fan of his room Saturday afternoon. He used his mother's saree to end his life. Belagaon OIC Anadi Matari said an investigation into the case



POST NEWS NETWORK

Angul, Feb 7: The special squad of Town police here Saturday busted a fake potato chips manufacturing unit from Kumand-Bhandubar area on the outskirts of Angul town. Earlier, fake edible oil, turmeric powder and wheat manufacturing units were busted in this industry-rich district.

The chips manufacturing unit had been operating for the last five years evading police's watchful eyes. Police have detained Sandeep Goel, the propietor of the unit, for interrogation.

After receiving a tip-off regarding the fake chips manufacturing unit. the special squad led by sub-inspector Dinakrushna Mishra conducted a raid on the unit at Kumand-Bhandubar area.

Besides huge quantity of finished products ready for selling, such food items nor has it been registered.

'These units are just the tip of iceberg. If the police and special squad conduct raids regularly, more such units can be busted and people, particularly children, can be saved from suffering harmful effects of consuming such fake food items,' observed a local resident.

Besides Mishra, Angul SDPO Ashwini Kumar Sahu, Sadar police station IIC Prabhat Tripathy, SI Prakash Chandra Majhi also took part in conducting raids.

Notably, an adulterated wheat and turmeric manufacturing unit was busted at Talamul area under Banarpal police limits January 31. One was arrested in this case. Prior to this, an adulterated edible oil manufacturing unit was busted at Saradapu village under Angul police limits January 29. In this case, five persons including the owner of

the unit and his nephew were arrested.

fighting against the Lower Suktel project.

"The civic body polls are ap proaching. The Lower Suktel dam project is being made an issue. The government is buying the land in the submergence-prone area of the project at throwaway price from people in the name of projects. It has hatched a conspiracy to sell the land to some miners through a secret understanding," alleged functionaries of BASP.

Long awaited Lower Suktel project, which remains incomplete over years, is said to be a lifeline for the people of Bolangir district. The project was initiated since 1997, but its construction is nowhere near completion owing to various bottlenecks. Various issues related to the project and the oustees have not yet been resolved.

A few days ago, a high level committee comprising the chief secretary, 5T secretary, the chairperson of the Western Odisha Development Council

The officials had surveyed the area and dug at different places. It was known that there was huge reserve of manganese underneath

(WODC) had visited the project site, which rekindled hope among the people about resumption of the stalled work.

However, BASP perceived the visit of the high level committee on different perspective.

Rengali samiti member as well as the member of the BASP Vyasa Thanapati alleged, "Since 1997, there has been an effort to submerge 29 villages by starting the work of the Lower Suktel project, BASP has been opposing it since its inception.

Kalimun at SCB Medical College is underway.

Bolangir: Kin cry foul over youth's death

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bolangir, Feb 7: A youth was found dead under mysterious circumstances at Ganjabahal Chowk under Bangomunda police limits in Bolangir district Sunday.

The deceased was identified as Gana Bachha, a resident of Ganjabahal village.

The bereaved family members alleged that Gana was murdered by some miscreants

Cuttack

Dt.07.02.2021

Dt.07.02.2021

the previous night. However, the exact reason behind his death is yet to be ascertained by the police.

Some locals spotted the bodyunder a tree by Bhalumunda-Belpada road side at Ganjabahal Chowk. They informed the family members.

A team from Bangomunda police station sent the body for post mortem and registered an unnatural death case. The police have launched a probe.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to all concerned that Sujata Jena, W/o Ajay Kumar Jena of Nuapada, Dharmasala, Jajpur has lost Original RSD No.1782 dtd. 21.07.2010 executed by Gouri Panja in favour of Bimbadhar Jena

The aforesaid Sujata Jena has applied for a housing loan to the LIC HFL, Cuttack by offering mortgage of the said property documents. All concerned therefore having any claim over the property purchased under the said document i.e. RSD No. 1782 Dtd.21.07.2010 are requied to file their claim with the undersigned within 15 (Fifteen) days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which it will be presumed that the property relating to the said document is free from encumbrances and any claim in respect thereof against the applicant as mortgager and the Company as the mortgagee shall be void and ineffective after the lapse

of 15 (Fifteen) days of publication of this notice Sd./- (U.K. Mishra), Advocate

LIC HFL, Cuttack Area Office Link Road, Cuttack

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to all concerned that Radha Jena, W/o Suresh Chandra Jena of Paikiara, Tigiria, Cuttack has lost Original RSD No.100 dtd.22.02.2008 executed by Bidyadhar Behera in favour o Bini Dei

The aforesaid Radha Jena has applied for a housing loan to the LIC HFL, Cuttack by offering mortgage of the said property documents. All concerned therefore having any claim over the property purchase under the said document i.e. RSD No. 100 Dtd.22.02.2008 are requied to file their claim with the undersigned within 15 (Fifteen) days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which it will be presumed that the property relating to the said document is free from encumbrances and any claim in respect thereof against the applicant as mortgage and the Company as the mortgagee shall be void and ineffective afte the lapse of 15 (Fifteen) days of publication of this notice. Cuttack

Sd./- (U.K. Mishra), Advocate LIC HFL, Cuttack Area Office Link Road, Cuttack

Jagili scripts farming success, courtesy farm pond

PRADHAN MANTRI KRISHI SINCHAYEE YOJANA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, Feb 7: Farming in most parts of Kolnara block of Ravagada district survives only on rain. Lack of irrigation is a hurdle in the development of farming, many farmers say.

Like other co-farmers in Kartikguda village, Jagili Kadraka used to face all odds to raise and nurture crops till harvest

Amid all such odds, he sought to find an effective means to tide over the perennial water shortage. Now, he has managed to script success in farming by making use of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana. His hard work and determination helped him out.

"I have 2.5 acres of land. Without irrigation facility, rising crops on the land was a difficult proposition. Rain was the only support.



Water conservation was needed," he said.

He thought of digging a pond in the farmland under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana and then

applied for assistance at the district watershed and conservation office in Ravagada.

Officials of the department visited his farmland and earmarked a

Like other co-farmers in Kartikguda village, Jagili Kadraka used to face all odds to raise and nurture crops till harvest

managed to script success in farming by making use of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana. His hard work and

Apart from water conservation, the farm pond has checked top soil erosion in the farmland to a great extent

place for the pond.

It may be noted here that the state government providing support to farmers to dig ponds to conserve rainwater in their farmlands lacking irrigation and rainfall.

He expressed his apprehensions

over the state government's sudden

focus on the project. "Six months

ago, officials of the Geological Survey

of India had visited submergence-

prone areas like Kumiapalli,

The officials had surveyed the

area and dug at different places. It was

known that there was huge reserve

of manganese underneath. With a

depth between 5ft and 150 ft, there are

manganese and other minerals. The

government and some mafia have

set their sight on the valuable min-

eral-bearing land in the submer-

gence prone area," Thanapati

An effort is on to buy land from the

people and hand them over to the min-

ing companies. The visit of the top

officials points to this suspicion,

Kapilabahal,

lamented.

he added.

Bagadunguri and Rengali.

Podamunda,

On the recommendation of project director of the Watershed wing, Sushant Kumar Mallick, a pond measuring 160ftX150ft in length and 10 ft depth was excavated on Jagili's farmland at a cost of Rs 8 lakh.

He said that apart from water conservation, the farm pond has checked top soil erosion in the farmland to a great extent.

He has grown a variety of vegetables on the ridge of the pond while pond feeds water to other crops in the patch of his land.

Jagili is that the fish farming in

Several other farmers in the area have been earning enough from farming by making use of farm ponds.







Besides, what is encouraging for

the pond earns enough to meet the expenses of his family.

Amid all such odds, Kadraka has

determination helped him out

FOCUS AGRICULTURE

What you are not able to do today, ou will achieve tomorrow. Persevere and you shall conquer.

THE MOTHER

Both Seem Adamant

he three hour nationwide chakka jam on February 6 by farmers agitating against the three farm laws has nailed the lie dished out by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) to the international community that only a small section of farmers have reservations about the laws. For, the roads were blocked not only in the north, but also in south, east and west of India.

Meanwhile, the government seems to have got itself embroiled in an international Tweeter storm over the farm laws and state repression unleashed on the agitating farmers. Interestingly, it has now the added embarrassment of having to stomach the sharpest ever criticism of its handling of the whole matter by the ruling BJP's all-powerful ideological wing, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

In an obvious attack on Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar over the farmers' protest, senior RSS leader Raghunandan Sharma has said the arrogance of power has gone to his head. Sharma, a former BJP Rajya Sabha member from Madhya Pradesh has, in his Facebook post, rebuked the minister and the government for trying to shove the laws down the farmers' throat when the latter are vehemently opposed to the legislations. "Your intention might be of helping the farmers, but if some people don't want to be helped, what is the use of doing such good?" He even went to the length of chastising the minister with the harsh words that "arrogance of power has gone to your head.'

Critics, however, are wondering whether this is a true rebuke or if the RSS has started recognizing the volcanic eruption about to take place. Observing the obstinacy of the farmer leaders to continue the agitation added with the international social rejection of the Modi government and the slowly but steadily increasing public realization that the past seven years have not helped the common man's life, the organization is most likely reviewing its future course of action. It may be on a distancing mode to save itself from an imminent slow collapse of the BJP's political edifice. There is a strong feeling among political observers that Sharma must be well aware that a nondescript minister like Narendra Singh Tomar could not have brought forth these three farm laws of his own accord. He is certainly incapable of withstanding the strong public pressure being mounted from all over the country against the legislations currently. Therefore, it is not Tomar that the RSS is targeting, rather this Facebook post is probably meant to chasten others that, the RSS thinks, are drunk with power.

The Tweeter storm raised by the three international celebrities - pop icon Rihanna, environmental activist Greta Thunberg and US Vice President Kamala Harris' niece and author-lawyer Meena Harris - is continuing to rage despite the MEA's unprecedented rejoinder and burning of effigies and photos of the three by pro-government protesters in Delhi. Refusing to bow down to the growing backlash, Harris, in one of her latest tweets, stated that she "won't be intimidated and silenced." Tagging a photo of a mob burning posters of her and Greta Thunberg, Meena Harris slammed the government's highhandedness and stated: "Don't tell me to stay out of your affairs. These are all of our issues.

This is only natural since the whole world had got united in condemning the reprehensible killing of black American George Floyd in 2020 by Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin. The protest didn't remain confined within the USA, but transcended geographical frontiers. An estimated 15 million to 26 million people participated in the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests in the USA alone, making it one of the largest movements in not only that country's history but also globally. Similarly, the insurrection at the Capitol in Washington DC had the whole democratic world voice its concern. PM Modi had also issued a statement expressing 'distress' and had hoped 'an orderly and peaceful transfer of power must continue'. The Joe Biden victory has, once again, forced the USA to take a strong stand against elected heads of government that are turning dictatorial across the world. India's case would certainly be ranking high in the new US administration's To Do list since PM Modi had openly campaigned in favor of former President Trump.

In today's global politics, human rights violation issues enable anyone from anywhere to raise voice and the MEA's response to the three celebrities was puerile. Now that the United Nation's Human Rights Commission as well as Hollywood actress Susan Sarandon, like many others from different countries, have jumped into the bandwagon of the Indian farmers' protest, the path going forward seems to be getting further complicated.

Obviously, the government of India must have known all along that the three celebrities were not the end of the line and that they were not just speaking their own minds but were articulating concerns of their respective countries and millions of people across the globe. Rihanna has over 100 million Tweeter followers while Greta has 4.7 million followers. Their tweets and the government's frenzied reactions created such an impact that a day after the MEA had slammed them, the Biden administration voiced its first diplomatic intervention with New Delhi after assuming office. Because of such inept handling of the issue, the USA could meddle in India's domestic affairs. It lectured the government on how to sort out differences between the parties "through dialogue." On Internet restrictions at the protest sites at the Delhi borders, the US administration put across its message bluntly for which Delhi is responsible: "Unhindered access to information, including the Internet, is fundamental to the freedom of expression and a hallmark of a thriving democracy." For decades, the US had kept away from India's internal matters. The present situation arose due to the Indian official involvement in the US election process. Especially because the November 2020 Presidential election was fought with bitterness on both sides not only politically but with massive social issues involved. Things are increasingly going out of hand with both sides remaining adamant in their respective stands. The farmers have rejected the Centre's latest offer to keep the farm laws on hold for 18 months and continue negotiations. The government, on its part, has made it clear that it will not withdraw the laws, which have been billed as its big ticket reforms in the sector that would improve the farmers' income. Buoyed by the success of the chakka jam, the farmers have announced the agitation will continue till 2 October and they won't move out of the venues of protest at the Delhi borders till their demand is conceded.

THREE PATHS TO TAXATION

he UNDP studied agricultural taxation in four developing countries. They found that agriculture has been subject to income tax like other sectors in Kenya since 2018. Previously income tax was payable on agriculture on incomes above \$600 per year. This limit has now been reduced to \$108 or about Rs 11akh per vear. Agriculture is similarly subjected to income tax like other taxpayers in Cameroon though it is not actually collected. The Agriculture Income Tax Act was enacted in Pakistan in 1997 giving power to State Governments to collect income tax on agriculture. In Punjab a farmer owning more than 12.5 acres land or having an income of above Rs 37,000 has to pay income tax. The UNDP says that the tendency of all developing countries is to move towards collecting income tax on agriculture.

Income tax is not payable on agricultural incomes in India. Thus, Kaveri Seeds claimed exemption of Rs 186 crore of agricultural income, Monsanto India claimed Rs 94 crore, McLeod Russel claimed Rs 73 crore, Madhya Pradesh Rajya Van Vikas Nigam claimed Rs 62 crore exemption in 2013-14. Such exemptions do not establish food security because these are claimed by entities not producing food grains. Income tax will not hit food security even if it were collected from the farmer because it is collected after he has produced food grains and already established food security of the country. According to a study undertaken by the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, we have a potential of collecting 1.2 per cent of our GDP or Rs 3 lakh crore per year from agricultural income tax. It will also secure social justice because the tax collected from bigger farmers could be used to provide benefits like subsidized food grains to the poor. The revenue of Rs 3 lakh crore, for example, would be sufficient to make a direct transfer of Rs 2,200 per person per year to all citizens and more than compensate for the



According to a study undertaken by the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, we have a potential of collecting 1.2 per cent of our GDP or ₹3 lakh crore per year from agricultural income tax

additional burden due to higher price of food grains. Therefore, farmers having land or income in excess of the prescribed limits should be subjected to income tax.

The UNDP has said that Ghana collects an export tax on cocoa. The amount of tax is adjusted to the difference between the domestic and international price of cocoa. This begets revenue to the government. The UNDP says that most developing countries are already collecting export taxes on agricultural produce or moving in that direction. Such export taxes beget social justice as well. The crop that would have been exported becomes available to the citizens of its own country upon the imposition of export tax. For example, if our government imposes an export tax of Rs 50 per kilo when the price of Basmati rice in India is Rs 60 per kilo while the international price is Rs 100 per kilo, then exports of Basmati rice will be reduced because cost of exported Indian Basmati would become Rs 110 per kilo. That will make that Basmati rice available to our citizens and secure social justice. Food security will also be enhanced because lesser exports will lead to more availability of rice in domestic market. Food security

will be further enhanced because of conservation of our water and soil. We pack our water and soil and export these scarce resources when we export rice. Export tax will provide more revenue to the government although this benefit will be cancelled by less foreign exchange earnings. The mixed impact of the two contrary effects may be negligible. Therefore, export tax establishes social justice and food security and has no impact on economic growth.

UNDP says that Kenya has

started to dismantle agricultural subsidies and other developing countries are moving in the same direction. We are providing subsidies of about two per cent of our GDP or a huge amount of Rs 6 lakh crore per year in terms of fertilizer, water, electricity and other subsidies. These subsidies help establish social justice. The cost of production of food grains becomes less. For example, the price of wheat may become Rs 24 from the present Rs 20 per kilo if the farmer has to pay full market price of these inputs. The eighty per cent population that buys food grains will have to pay a higher price. The impact on poor can be easily managed by transferring the saved Rs 6 lakh

crore to them at the rate of Rs 4,400 per person per year in cash out of the monies saved.

The subsidies help secure our food security because it becomes profitable for farmers to produce food grains. However, our food security is not threatened today. We have not had a famine since the sixties because of the development of irrigation and other agricultural technologies. Today we have surplus production of food grains and we incur losses in storage and in making exports below the cost of production. We can maintain adequate buffer stocks and manage food security. The subsidies also harm our food security. Our farmers overuse the subsidized inputs. They undertake excessive irrigation from canals and tube wells because they do not have to pay according to the volume of the water used. This is pushing these resources towards extinction. The same water would produce much higher income if provided to industries. It is necessary to remove these subsidies to secure efficient use of our resources.

The government must imple ment three changes in the agricultural tax system. One, export taxes must be imposed on agricultural exports so that social justice and food security are secured without harming economic growth. Two, income tax must be collected beyond a specified area of farm land or income so that social justice is secured without harming food security. Three, agricultural subsidies must be removed along with cash transfers to the common man so that food security and economic growth are secured without harming social justice. The present standoff between the farmers and the government presents an opportunity to present these policies before the farmers and to use this opportunity to clean up the act, so to say.

The writer is a former Professor of Economics at IIM Bangalore.

SPECTRUM SUSTAINABILITY

Bharat

Ihunjhunwala

THAT THE

THE UNDP SAYS

TENDENCY OF

ALL DEVELOPING

COUNTRIES IS TO

MOVE TOWARDS

INCOME TAX ON

COLLECTING

AGRICULTURE

The climate challenge to human development

founding father, Lee Kuan Yew, told the story of how leader- laid bare massive vulnerabilities ship and grit transformed a tiny nation on a sandbar into an open.

'n his autobiography, Singapore's haps most clearly illustrated by COVID-19. A tiny pathogen has and gross inequalities in even the strongest and most prosperous so-

- to become carbon-neutral over the next few decades, ordinary citizens must adapt their ways of life. The HDR urges people to reconsider what they value highly and

constraints clearly need not impede the transition to a green economy. Finally, we must understand that nature is not our adversary. The HDR documents 20 cost-effective actions related to forests, wetlands, and grasslands that can lead to 37% of the mitigation needed to keep global temperatures within 2°C of pre-industrial levels. Reforestation alone accounts for two-thirds of this potential. Recognising and protecting the local communities that are nature's stewards will be key. The contribution of the Amazon's indigenous peoples to preserving forest storage capacity, for example, now equals the per capita greenhousegas emissions of the top 1% of global emitters. Sen and Haq's original index of human progress introduced a new way to measure how well societies manage to reach their potential. When adjusted for planetary stress today, however, the index shows how their choices are being radically constricted. Instead of passively awaiting our fate, we must use our knowledge, reason, and agency to establish new development models and shape our collective fortunes.

The BJP swears by Lord Ram who, in his Ram Rajya, we were told, created an example of curbing his ego and sacrificing even his wife in order to accommodate the wishes of his people.

Conceding the farmers' demand may give a fillip to the government's critics to firm up their resolve to go after the government on crucial issues hanging fire while listening to the voice of the people is the cornerstone of democracy. The government, by its adamant stand, is probably closing all doors for any rapprochement.

WISDOM CORNER

- Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated.
- Be kind whenever possible. It is always possible

He who knows, does not speak. He who speaks, does not know.

WORDS**WORTH**

Maieutic

he maieutic method is Socratic: a person is engaged in a dialogue by a questioner until frustration caused by challenges to his ideas leads him to dissatisfaction with his settled convictions and makes him refine his views. The idea behind the method is that the truth is already latent in every human being but that it has to be teased out and brought to the conscious mind. In practice, the questioner knows the answers already and leads the dialogue by supplying clues to allow the other person to work them out. The word is from Greek maieuesthai, to act as a midwife, from maia, a midwife.



Kanni Wignaraja

WE MUST ENCOURAGE **COUNTRIES TO** PURSUE PROSPERITY WHILE MINIMISING **THEIR CARBON** FOOTPRINT

competitive, and prosperous metropolis

In the decades since, Singapore has been governed by a famously efficient and graft-free political class, and it now boasts a highly skilled workforce. In the United Nations Development Programme's latest Human Development Index (HDI) – first conceived 30 years ago by Nobel laureate Amartya Sen and economist Mahbub ul Haq-the country ranks eleventh out of 189 overall.

But when the HDI is adjusted to consider carbon dioxide emissions and so-called material footprint (which measures the share of global extraction of raw materials in a country's final demand), Singapore's rank drops by 92 positions. No country has ever managed to reach a high level of human development with low resource use, and Singapore, having virtually no natural resources of its own, imports almost all of the commodities it needs. There is nothing unusual about this; Singapore is emblematic of growth across the planet. But the natural environment cannot sustain this form of growth and development.

The intense pressure that our current development models are putting on local ecosystems is per-

cieties, with economic and social imbalances reinforcing the damage inflicted by the pandemic.

But while Singapore-style development is not sustainable, nor is it feasible to reframe development as a trade-off between people's livelihoods and saving trees. That is a central argument in UNDP's new Human Development Report (HDR), which examines new or underused pathways to achieving human and environmental wellbeing. In the future, we must encourage countries to pursue prosperity while minimising their carbon footprint by applying the knowledge, science, and technology now at our disposal.

Four important areas for action stand out. First, cities - which account for 85% of energy output and 75% of CO2 emissions (estimates vary)-now need to pave the way for green renewal. The HDR highlights a role for cities as theaters for green action: pricing the true social cost of carbon, protecting green spaces and planting trees, and cleaning waterways and seas of the plastic garbage that is devastating marine life.

Second, in addition to action by cities and national pledges - including in the Asia-Pacific region

to change what they consume and how they produce, commute, and invest. This is not impossible. Throughout history, we have seen that social norms and behaviour can change. Tobacco use, for example, has become socially stigmatised. leading to a decline in smoking, and mask-wearing has become the norm in many places during the pandemic. Third, while behavioural change can stem from hard incentives (say higher tobacco taxes) and regulations, it can also be inspired by collective calls to action, such as those urging large and small institutional investors to finance new green technologies.

Private money must match pub lic funding, reinforced by plugging local and international tax loopholes and withdrawing unnecessary subsidies. The subsidy on fossil fuels alone costs the world economy \$5 trillion a year. In the Asia-Pacific, such subsidies can equal more than 50% of a country's health or education budget. The right taxes on carbon, financial transactions, and extreme wealth can raise an additional \$200 billion annually for green investments, according to the Sustainable Development Solutions Network's report on SDG costing and financing for low-income countries. Financial

The writer is UN Assistant Secretary-General and UNDP **Regional Director for Asia** and the Pacific. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

Implementation is the key

Sir, Though the Indian Railways is known to refurbish its services at frequent intervals, but failure to keep the cost factor in mind is its bane. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has given a huge outlay -- Rs 1.10 lakh crore--to the Railways. The question is, will the lofty plans of the government takeoff or reach their logical conclusion? As expected, the minister has gone gaga on infrastructural development towards safety, and comfort of train travellers. There is nothing special in Sitharaman's declaration that the Railways will go all the way in developing more aesthetic Vistadome Linke Hofmann Busch (LHB) coaches because a lot many mainline trains already possess these coaches. The LHB coaches are already in use in India since 2000. The automatic train protection system, an anti-collision mechanism, is long overdue. But when will it be put to use is a pertinent question. The National Rail Plan for 2030, means nothing unless properly planned. The dedicated freight corridors cannot wait more. A 100 per cent track electrification by 2023 is good news. Expansion of gauge conversion, and enhanced signalling systems, greatly emphasised by the minister, should be hastened. More private sector involvement, via public private participation (PPP), in upgrading railway stations and running of trains on specific routes, should be ensured.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Right to save democracy

Sir, The Delhi police filed a case on Thursday over a tweet supporting farmers' protest by renowned Swedish environmentalist Greta Thunberg, 18. According to police, Greta's tweet conspired to discredit India and create divisions among various groups, but no direct allegations have been made in Greta's name. In response, she said she was with the farmers. She also expressed support for the farmers' long-standing peaceful movement and called for the continuation of internet service. The US government has stated that this is part of the democratic process. "We recognise the peaceful protests as a feature of any de- 🗅 veloped democracy," a US State Department spokesman said on Thursday. The British government has also stressed the need for a peaceful solution to the issue. The peasant movement has been supported by many dignitaries and celebrities from home and abroad. Democracy is not the right to save democracy.

Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR



(200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are 101 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

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DALAI LAMA





CJM's phone call leads to comic Faruqui's release after SC order

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Indore, Feb 7: A day after a Supreme Court bail order, it took a late night phone call from a Chief Judicial Magistrate that prodded Indore jail authorities to swiftly make arrangements for the release of stand-up comedian Munawar Faruqui, who is accused hurting religious sentiments.

In the call Saturday night, Indore's Chief Judicial Magistrate (CJM) asked the Central Prison authorities here in Madhya Pradesh to check the SC's website for the bail order, following which Faruqui was set free, a senior official from the jail administration said Sunday.

Arrested January 1 for allegedly hurting religious sentiments, Faruqui was in the jail for 35 days. Friday, the SC granted him in-

terim bail after the Madhya Pradesh High Court rejected his bail plea January 28.

The apex court also stayed the production warrant issued against Faruqui by a court in Prayagraj in connection with an FIR lodged there.

Indore Central Jail's superintendent Rakesh Kumar Bhangre told PTI that, "A CJM rang us up on Saturday night. He said if we have not got the SC's official order regarding Faruqui, it can be checked on the apex court's website."

The jail official said they then checked the order which mentioned that all warrants against Faruqui have been stayed.

"On this basis, he was set free," the official said.

Asked why they did not check the SC's website before the CJM's call,



'Have full faith in judiciary'

INDORE: Stand-up comedian Munawar Faruqui, who has been released from jail after 35 days in a case of allegedly hurting religious sentiments, has said he has full faith in the judiciary and hopes to get justice. In a brief video message after he was set free, the 32-year-old comedian said, "I don't want to comment (on the case again him) now. But, I have full faith in the judiciary and I am hopeful of getting justice."

the superintendent said since the matter is "sensitive," they were waiting for the order (hard copy) to reach them through an official source.

"This caused such a situation."



authorities did not set him free Saturday evening, contending that a production warrant of a Prayagraj court was pending against him. Hours before his release, Faruqui's

lawyers had submitted a copy of the SC's order in a local court, which then directed that he be released on a bond of ₹50,000 and a security of the same amount. But, he was not released at that time.

Another official of the Indore Central Jail Saturday said a court in Prayagraj had ordered Faruqui's production in a similar case February 18.

Citing the jail manual, he had said an order from the Pravagraj court or a competent government officer was needed to release him.



ing farmers, and I hope we will be able to break the deadlock very soon." Tomar said.

Asked about the Congress's demand for a repeal of three new farm laws and other allegations of the opposition, he said the Congress has

no right to speak on farmers' issues. 'Why the Congress did not do anything for farmers when it was in power? The Congress's manifesto for the 2019 Lok Sabha elections

had also promised similar reforms, but it (party) has now taken a turnaround," he said. The Congress will not be suc-

cessful in doing politics in the name of farmers, Tomar asserted. Asked about senior Congress

leader Digvijava Singh's allegation that Tomar doesn't know anything about farming, the minister said,

"Don't take him seriously. Even the Congress doesn't take him seriously."

A ANAL A

Thousands of farmers, mainly from Haryana, Punjab and western Uttar Pradesh, have been protesting at Delhi's border points, demanding a rollback of three new farm laws.

The Centre in September last year enacted the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020, the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act. 2020 and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020.

African nationals growing cannabis have a field day in HP's 'mysterious' valleys



WE WANT A LIQUOR-FREE MADHYA PRADESH: SHIVRAJ

AGENCIES

Katni, Feb 7: Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said his government wants to ban liquor.

Addressing a rally here, Chouhan said, "We want to make MP a liquorfree state. It cannot be done with a liquor ban alone. Liquor will keep getting supplied if there are people to consume it. We will run a liquorfree campaign so that people stop consuming alcohol and we become a good state. We must take a reso-



Municipal corporation polls may be held on party symbols: CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dharamsala (HP), Feb 7: Elections in municipal corporations of Himachal Pradesh may be held on party symbols, and the government will amend the rules needed for this, Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur said Sunday.

Addressing the media in Palampur, the chief minister indicated that the municipal corporations of Dharamsala, Palampur, Mandi and Solan are likely to go to polls in the last week of March.



Farmers' protest limited to a certain area: Tomar

WATER FESTIVAL

Tourists during Jal Mahotsav, organised by MP Tourism at Hanuwantia Island, back water of Indira Sagar Dam in Narmada River, in Bhopal, Sunday. PTI PHOTO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Gwalior, Feb 7: Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar Sunday said the ongoing farmers' protest against the Centre's three new farm laws is limited to a certain area, and expressed hope to break the deadlock over the issue soon.

Talking to reporters in Madhya Pradesh's Gwalior city, Tomar also accused the opposition Congress of playing politics over the farmers' agitation.

"The farmers' agitation is limited to a certain area. The government is ready for talks with the protest-

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Shimla, Feb 7: Foreigners, it seems, are cultivating a number of locals. who have brought large tracts of land under the cannabis in 'mysterious' valleys of Kullu, besides rugged mountains of Himalayas across Himachal Pradesh -- the land of gods.

They are having a 'field day' in remote villages for a long time by ensuring the multimillion-dollar narcotics trade mainly high-class marijuana reaches across India and even off-shores

The involvement of foreigners, of late largely from African countries, in the murky trade of charas or hashish that grows naturally in the wild is an open secret.

Director General of Police Saniay Kundu said 23 foreign nationals have been arrested by the Kullu police for drug trafficking since July 2019, out of which 17 are African nationals, who were indulged in heroin peddling.

"Our focus is to break large networks of drug suppliers and studying their modus operandi rather than pursuing street-level peddlers," Kundu told IANS.

Official sources said the African nationals arrested in Kullu district in drug trafficking cases are mainly from Nigeria, Ivory Coast, and Zambia.

Kundu said the police would also go for financial investigation and attachment of ill-gotten assets of the accused with the help of Central agencies.

As per the police, 1,538 NDPS cases were registered in the state in 2020. A total of 351.018 kg of charas, a cannabis resin, and 6.751 kg of heroin was seized and arrested 2,044 Indians and 14 foreigners. In this year alone, a total of 149 cases under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act were registered with the

FACT FILE

According to officials, over 60 per Accent of the poppy and cannabis produced in Himachal is smuggled to countries such as Israel, Italy, Holland and other European countries. The rest finds its way to Nepa or Indian states like Goa. Puniab. and Delhi

According to police, cannabis and poppy (opium) plants are grown illegally on vast tracts in Kullu. Mandi, Shimla, and Chamba districts. Police records show that 50,000 acres in Kullu Valley alone is under cannabis cultivation

A part from the notorious 'Magic Valley' in the upper reaches of Malana, some 50 km from Kullu, easy availability of narcotics in McLeodganj and surrounding areas in Kangra district and Karsol in Kullu district has turned these areas into a haven for addicts, say police officials

he police say 'chitta' -- a derivative of opium and laced with synthetic drugs -- is the new fad among addicts, especially the youth, in the state

seizure of 179.195 kg charas and 840.286 grams heroin from 189 accused till date

In an official statement, Kundu said the biggest catch in the recent times was arrest of a 38-year-old lvorv Coast national from the national capital on February 2 with the seizure of 6.297 kg of heroin and 362 grams of ganja worth ₹25 crore.

The accused is the kingpin of heroin trade and was supplying heroin across India for many years.

A drug haul of 123 kg of charas and 295 kg of ganja, considered one of the biggest seizures of narcotics in recent years, was made on January 14 in a 20-hour-long operation in interiors of Kullu with

the arrest of four people.

lution for this.

Chouhan announced that in the next three years every village house of Katni district will get a supply of clean drinking water through taps. "In next three years, there will be taps and drinking water in every house," he said.

Chouhan also said poor people would be provided with money to build pucca houses, adding that about 3,25,000 Ayushman cards were made including free treatment of up to ₹5 lakh for the needy.

Chouhan asserted that Madhya Pradesh is the first government that announced capital punishment for misconduct with daughters of the state. "So far 37 have been sentenced, two have filed mercy petition." Chouhan added. The Chief Minister made these statements while inaugurating a project in Katni.

The BJP leader also participated in the meeting organised with the public representatives and senior officials for the presentation of the We want to make MP a liquor-free state. It cannot be done with a liquor ban alone. Liquor will keep getting supplied if there are people to consume it. We will run a liquor-free campaign so that people stop consuming alcohol and we become a good state. We must take a resolution for this

SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN I MADHYA PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER

he said while addressing a press conference. Chouhan inaugurated several projects here to bring about an Atmanirbhar Madhya Pradesh.

Liquor is banned in Bihar. There is a restriction on the sale of liquor in Gujarat as well.

"The Himachal government is planning to conduct elections in all the municipal corporations of the state on party symbols, and for that, the government shall amend the needed Act." he said.

"Recently, elections have been completed for gram panchayats, nagar panchayats, nagar parishads, zila parishads and block development committees in Himachal Pradesh. Of course gram panchayat elections were not contested on party symbols, but in these elections, supporters of the Bharatiya Janata Party have won the majority of seats." Thakur said.

According to the results available so far, the BJP has won all seven zila parishads, 18 nagar parishads out of 29, 14 nagar panchavats out of 21, 61 block development committees out of 69 and 75 per cent of the total declared seats of gram pradhans in the re-

The Himachal government is planning to conduct elections in all the municipal corporations of the state on party symbols, and for that, the government shall amend the needed Act

JAI RAM THAKUR | CHIEF MINISTER

cent elections, he said.

Thakur said his government has created a record by constituting three new municipal corporations, 379 new panchavats and seven new nagar parishads in the state in a single stroke.

He said the state government will organise 51 programmes in Himachal Pradesh on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee Year of state hood. These programs will start from April 15.

Livelihood mission transforming lives of women

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Shimla, Feb 7: The National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) is playing an important role in transforming lives of women of Himachal Pradesh by making them self-reliant, officials said Sunday.

In this fiscal, the state has set up 3,384 self-help groups and 90 rural organisations.

Each self-help group gets a financial assistant for creating sustainable livelihood opportunities at a low rate of interest

The aim of the NRLM is to promote sustainable community-based institutions that would facilitate provision of financial services, economic services and other entitle-

ments to the rural poor. Officials said the priority is being accorded to below poverty line (BPL) women, who comprise up to 70 per



cent of the total members in a selfhelp group. To enable each group to earn livelihood by setting up any kind of business, they are being provided a low-interest loans.

five-year action plan for the urban

riverfront should be developed on

both sides of the river in Katni and

it should be a place that will in-

crease the glory of the city of Katni,"

"I have given instructions that the

areas of Katni district.

In 2019-20, about 4,666 self-help groups and 121 rural organisations were constituted in the state. A loan of ₹1.10 crore was provided to 4.392 self-help groups and a start-up fund

SELF-HELP

n this fiscal, the state has set up 3,384 self-help groups and 90 rural organisations

ach self-help group gets a Efinancial assistant for creating sustainable livelihood opportunities at a low rate of interest

he formation of self-help groups has led to the social, economic, political uplift of women and information about various developmental schemes run by the state government is also being provided to them from time to time

of ₹25 lakh to 57 organisations. In this fiscal. ₹49 lakh was distributed to 5,945 groups and a start-

up fund of ₹64 lakh to 143 organisation till date.

The state government is also providing a revolving fund and a community investment fund to selfhelp groups to earn livelihood and carry out any type of business.

In 2019-20, the revolving fund of ₹4.64 crore was provided to 3,043 groups and ₹1.69 crore as the community investment fund to 282 groups. In 2020-21, the revolving fund of ₹5.24 crore was distributed among 3,667 groups and the community investment fund of ₹78 lakh to 161 groups.

The formation of self-help groups has led to the social, economic, political uplift of women and information about various developmental schemes run by the state government is also being provided to themfrom time to time, an official statement said.











We have learnt about the tragedy and immediately called for an emergency meeting with the top brass as the matter pertains to the river Ganga. Our officials are in contact with their counterparts in Uttarakhand

NITISH KUMAR | BIHAR CHIEF MINISTER

BIHAR ASSEMBLY BUILDING COMPLETES 100 YRS

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar Sunday highlighted the glorious past of the Bihar Legislative Assembly on completion of 100 years of its building and told those sitting in the government not to confuse themselves as the "masters" as in the democracy people are the "maalik" and we are their "sevaks" (servants)





If any person criticises Modi and his government, ED CBI, NIA, IT Department and all other agencies will come after him. People are even scared to speak on social media. Democratic space is shrinking in India

GAURAV GOGOI CONGRESS LOK SABHA MA

When I was a minister, my ministry in its affidavit about the dams in Uttarakhand in the

Himalavas had requested that it is a very sensitive region, and, therefore, power projects should not be built on the Ganges and its main tributaries

UMA BHARTI BJP LEADER

This government is sensitive towards farmers issues. The PM and the government is ready to discuss it with them. The PM even said he

was just a phone call away, but somebody at least has to call so that we can move forward PIYUSH GOYAL UNION MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

PM to reply on motion of thanks

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to reply on Monday on the motion of thanks on the President's address following the motion moved by BJP's Bhubaneswar Kalita February 3. Urban Development Minister Hardeep Singh Puri will lay on the table, a statement explaining the circumstances which had necessitated immediate legislation by the National Capital Territory of Delhi Laws (Special Provisions) Second (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020 and will move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the National Capital Territory of Delhi Laws (Special Provisions) Second Act, 2011.

U'KHAND TRAGEDY 2019 STUDY WARNED HIMALAYAN GLACIERS MELTING AT ALARMING SPEED



New Delhi, Feb 7: As a part of the Nanda Devi glacier broke off in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district Sunday, leading to massive floods, a study published in 2019 had warned that Himalayan glaciers have been melting twice as fast since the start of this century due to climate change.

The Army Sunday deployed four columns and two medical teams in the rescue of people affected by a massive flood in the Dhauli Ganga river after a part of the Nanda Devi glacier broke off at Joshimath in Chamoli district of Uttarakhand, officials said. They said one engineering task force of the Army was also deployed in Ringi village in Joshimath.

The glacier collapse at Joshimath Sunday led to a massive flood in the Dhauli Ganga river and caused large-scale devastation in the upper reaches of the ecologically fragile Himalavas

REMINDER OF KEDARNATH DELUGE

deluge of 2013 which led to widespread devastation

Dehradun: The massive flood in the Dhauli Ganga

river came as a grim reminder of the Kedarnath

in the ecologically fragile Himalayan region. A

torrential rains of unseen magnitude had struck

Chorabari lake in Kedarnath collapsed due to a

causing widespread destruction in Uttarakhand

and led to heavy losses to infrastructure.

agriculture lands, human and animal lives.

Kedarnath on 16-17 June in 2013. The banks of the

cloudburst that had resulted in a major flash flood

devastating natural disaster in the form of

The 2019 study, spanning 40 years of satellite observations across India, China, Nepal and Bhutan, indicates that climate change is eating the Himalavas' glaciers, the researchers said. The study, published in the journal Science Advances in June 2019, shows that glaciers have been losing the equivalent of more than a vertical foot and half of ice each year since 2000 -- double the amount of melt-



Deeply worried about the glacier burst near Joshimath, Uttarakhand, that caused destruction in the region. Praying for wellbeing and safety of people. Am confident that rescue and relief operations on ground are progressing well

ing that took place from 1975 to 2000. "This is the clearest picture

RAM NATH KOVIND PRESIDENT

yet of how fast Himalayan glaciers are melting over this time interval, and why," said Joshua Maurer, a PhD candidate at

Am constantly monitoring the unfortunate situation in Uttarakhand. India stands with Uttarakhand and the nation prays for everyone's safety there. Have been continuously speaking to senior authorities and getting updates on NDRF deployment, rescue work and relief operations

NARENDRA MODI PRIME MINISTER

Columbia University in the US. While not specifically calculated in the study, the glaciers may have lost as much as a quarter of their enormous mass over the last four decades, said Maurer, lead author

of the study. The study synthesised data from across the region, stretching from early satellite observations to the present.

The data indicates that the melting is consistent in time and space, and that rising temperatures are to blame, the researchers said Temperatures vary from place to place, but from 2000 to 2016 they have averaged one degree Celsius higher than those from 1975 to 2000. they said

Researchers analysed repeat satellite images of some 650 glaciers spanning 2,000 kilometres from west to east. Many of the 20th-century observations came from declassified photographic images taken by the US spy satellites

'Climate change event'

 $T^{\rm he\ massive\ flood\ in\ doubt\ that\ global\ warming\ has}$ area is a rare incident of a glacial burst, and may be "a climate change event", say leading climate scientists. Satellite and Google Earth images do not show a glacial lake near the region, but there is a possibility that there may be a water pocket, or lake inside the glacier, in the region that may have erupted leading to the disaster, Mohd. Farooq Azam, who is an Assistant Professor at IIT Indore, told IANS. "We need further analysis, weather reports and data to confirm if this indeed was the case. It's unlikely that this was a cloudburst, since weather reports in Chamoli district show sunny weather till today with no record of precip-

doubt that global warming has resulted in the warming of the region. Climate change driven erratic weather patterns like increased snowfall and rainfall, and warmer winters have led to the melting point of a lot of snow falling. The thermal profile of ice is increasing..., where earlier the temperature of ice ranged from minus six to minus 20 degree Celsius, it is now minus two, making it more susceptible to melting," he said. Another scientist, Anjal Prakash, who is the Research Director and Adjunct Associate Professor at the Indian School of Business in Hyderabad, said prima facie this looks very much like a climate change event



ITBP personnel carry out search and rescue operation at Tapovan Tunnel

PM OKAYS ₹2 LAKH EX-GRATIA FOR KIN OF THOSE DEAD

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved an ex gratia of ₹2 lakh each for the next of kin of those who lost their lives due to the avalanche caused by a glacial burst in Uttarakhand's Chamoli, the Prime Minister's Office said Sunday. The PMO also said ₹50,000 would be given to those seriously injured.

RISHIGANGA HYDRO PROJECT WASHED AWAY

New Delhi: A 13.2 MW small hydro project on the Rishiganga river was swept away in the glacier burst but there is no danger of floods in the downstream areas as the water level has been contained. This was conveyed to the National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC), headed by Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba, at an emergency meeting held here Sunday evening. The NCMC was also informed that people trapped in a hydropower project tunnel were rescued by the Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), while efforts are on to rescue those trapped in another tunnel.

Lucknow: The Uttar Pradesh government on Sunday asked authorities in all districts on the banks of the Ganga river to be on high alert and continuously monitor the water level after the glacier broke off. In a disaster alert issued to all district magistrates in Uttar Pradesh on Sunday, the relief commissioner said. 'Report of breaking of a part of the Nanda Devi Glacier in Uttarakhand has been received.

HIGH ALERT IN UP

Tracing the Ganga's intricate waterweb ^{T'gana CM rules} out change in out change in leadership from Vasudhara Tal, perhaps the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Still on a southern course, the

Churches in Mizoram reopen

Aizawi: Churches in Mizoram reopened Sunday after a gap of over 10 months. The government has allowed churches to reopen with only 50 per cent seating capacity and permitted church services only during the daytime on every Saturday and Sunday. The decision to reopen the places of worship in the Christian-majority state was taken following a dip in COVID-19 cases.

Charas worth Rs 35 cr seized

Gopalganj (Bihar): Three Nepalese were arrested and 265 kg of charas seized from their possession in Bihar's Gopalganj district Sunday. police said. During a regular vehicle-checking drive, a police team searched a pickup van at Balthari check-post on National Highway 28 in Kuchaikot police station area and seized the contraband worth ₹35 crore, SHO Ashwini Kumar Tiwary said.

Jawan killed

Raipur: A jawan of the Special Task Force (STF) was Sunday killed when a pressure improvised explosive device (IED), planted by Naxals went off in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district, police said. The incident occurred around 4.30 pm near Peddagellur village under Tarrem police station area when a joint team of security forces was out on an anti-Naxal operation. Inspector General of Police (Bastar range) Sundarraj P told PTI. The personnel belonging to STF, CoBRA- an elite unit of the CRPF, and the District Force were involved in the operation, he said.

New Delhi, Feb 7: As the Ganga flows down from the Himalayas and snakes its way through the plains, its numerous tributaries intersect, flow into one another or meander away passing through several towns from five states.

In Uttarakhand, the Ganga and its tributaries pass through important tourist places like Rishikesh, Hardiwar, Rudraprayag and Karnaprayag. On Sunday, as a portion of the

Nanda Devi glacier broke off, that intricate lacing led to rippling flash floods in the Dhauli Ganga and the Rishi Ganga and also impacted the

Alaknanda. This also brought spotlight on the 2013 flash floods in the hill states that wiped out settlements and killed over 5,000 people. Originating

largest glacial lake in Uttarakhand, the Dhauli Ganga flows in a meandering course, which takes it through the Nanda Devi National Park.

Dhauli Ganga is joined by Rishi Ganga river at Raini where the disaster at the power project dam took place.

The river takes a V turn and continues to flow in the opposite direction, toward north, as Dhauli Ganga for another 30-odd kilometres, through Tapovan, until it is joined by Alaknanda river at Vishnuprayag near Joshimath. There it loses its identity and

Alaknanda flows southwest -through Chamoli, Maithana, Nandaprayag, Karnaprayag until it meets the Mandakini river, coming from the north at Rudraprayag. After subsuming Mandakini, the



Alaknanda carries on past Srinagar, before joining the Ganges at Devprayag near Kedarnath. Alaknanda then disappears and the mighty Ganges carries on its pan-

India journey, first flowing south then west through important pilgrimage centres such as Rishikesh and finally descending into the Indo-Gangetic plains at Haridwar.

Ganges goes past Bijnor when it loops back on an easterly course toward Kanpur. Yamuna, Ramganga and Ghaghara are other Himalayan rivers that join the Ganga.

Dhauli Ganga is one of the important tributaries of Alaknanda, the other being the Nandakini, Pindar, Mandakini and Bhagirathi. The Himalavan rivers pass through environmentally fragile areas. However, like other Himalayan rivers, the Dhauli Ganga too has been dammed. Dhauli Ganga also has a power station of the National Hydropower Corporation Ltd of 280 MW at Pithoragarh in Uttarakhand.

According to South Asia Network on Dams, Rivers and People, a think tank, under construction HEPs threaten about 50 per cent of the Dhauli Ganga's length.

Conspiracy hatched abroad to Bengal will show 'Ram card' to TMC soon: PM defame Indian tea: PM in Assam



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dhekiajuli (Assam), Feb 7: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Sunday claimed an international conspir acy has been hatched to "defame" Indian tea, on a visit to Assam, a

major producer of the brew. On a second visit to the election-bound state in a fortnight, he also pitched for setting up at least

one medical college and a technical institution in each state that will impart education in the native language. He was addressing a gathering after launching 'Assam Mala' scheme to upgrade state highways and laying the foundation for two medical colleges. Modi said he always linked the condition of tea garden workers to the development of Assam. "But documents have emerged to show that a conspiracy has been hatched outside the country to defame Indian tea. I am sure the tea workers from Assam will give a befitting reply.

"No tea garden worker in Assam can tolerate this attack and I am sure they will win this fight against these conspirators as they are stronger than these forces with vested interest," he said. The Prime Minister was apparently referring to NGO Greenpeace's report about alleged overuse of pesticides in Indian tea industry. He said the Centre had earmarked ₹1,000 crore for the tea sector in the budget and an assistance of ₹3.000 was extended to each tea garden worker of Assam Saturday. Mobile medical units were also functioning in tea gardens, he said. Modi also spoke about his dream of imparting medical and technical education in mother tonue

He said this will improve medical services in remote areas as more and more doctors will be able to reach out to people in their mother tongue and understand their problems.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Haldia (WB), Feb 7: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Sunday tore into the Mamata Banerjee government, alleging it "criminalised politics, institutionalised corruption and politicised the police". He insisted instead of 'mamta' (affection) people suffered 'nirmamta' (cruelty) under her rule.

Addressing his first public rally in the state ahead of the assembly polls, he exuded confidence about forming the next government, saying the TMC government committed "several fouls in the last 10 years and the time has come to show it the 'Ram Card' in the assembly elections"

Cautioning people about "matchfixing" between the TMC, Congress and the Left, Modi said only a BJP government can free the state of "misgovernance" and bring about a "real change" in their lives as was being experienced in Tripura.

He assailed the West Bengal government for not implementing central schemes like Avushman Bharat and PM Kisan Samman Nidhi in the state, and asserted that once the BJP formed its government it will take a decision at the very first cabinet meeting to execute all such stalled programmes.

Mocking Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for getting angry over slogans of 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai', Modi wondered why she remained silent when conspiracies were hatched to malign the country.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hvderabad. Feb 7: Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrsekhar Rao Sunday put an end to speculation about leadership change saying he will continue in the post for next 10 years.

The Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) chief made this clear at the party's state executive meeting held at party headquarters Telangana Bhavan.

Amid speculations that his son and cabinet minister K. T. Rama Rao will soon become the Chief Minister, Chandrasekhar Rao told the meeting that he was in the pink of health and will continue in the Chief Minister's post for the next 10 years.

The TRS chief pointed out that he has already made it clear in the state Assembly that there will be no change in the leadership. He said despite this some leaders were indulging in speculations.

Several TRS leaders had predicted in recent weeks that Rama Rao will soon be sworn in as the next Chief Minister.

KCR, as Chandrasekhar Rao is popularly known, advised the party leaders not to make unwarranted comments on the issue.

The TRS executive meeting presided over by KCR discussed various issues pertaining to party membership, constitution of the party committees from village level to the State level, election of party President, the party plenarv to be held on party formation day April 27 and other issues.

It is also learnt to have discussed the party strategy for the upcoming elections to two seats of Legislative Council, Nagarjunagar bypoll and alsomunicipal elections to around six Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).









Healthcare delivery in India is poised to undergo a change at all stages prevention. diagnosis and treatment. No single entity in the the healthcare sector can deliver results and achieve outcomes RAM NATH KOVIND | PRESIDENT

SERO SURVEY IN KASHMIR

A sero survey conducted in various hospitals of the Kashmir Valley has found that around 27 per cent of the healthcare workers have antibodies against COVID-19





After losing his son in an alleged fake encounter, Athar Mushtaq's father has been slapped with an FIR for

demanding his dead body. His crime was to stage a peaceful protest. The inhabitants of Naya Kashmir can't even question a callous admin & have been reduced to living corpses

MEHBOOBA MUFTI PDP PRESIDENT



since 1984. Practice makes perfect OMAR ABDULLAH NATIONAL CONFERENCE (NC) VICE-PRESIDENT

Over 29 lakh people visited the "Hunar Haat" organised at Avadh Shilpgram here from January 22 to February 7 and

purchased handmade products of indigenous artisans and craftsmen worth crores of rupees

MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI UNION MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

40 shanties gutted in Delhi

New Delhi: Forty shanties were gutted and six domesticated animals died after a fire broke out near the Harikesh Nagar Metro Station in southeast Delhi's Okhla Phase II in the early hours of Sunday, fire service officials said. Delhi Fire Service (DFS) Director Atul Garg said it was medium category fire and information about it was received around 2.23 am Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal took to Twitter to express his concerns and assured all possible help to those affected.

Iragi boy gets new lease of life

New Delhi: A nine-month-old boy from Iraq got a new lease of life after undergoing liver

Farmers' vegetable, flower diplomacy

Some Kashmiri youths

who travelled to Pak

never came back

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 7: Land plots filled with wild grasses near Ghazipur, Tikri and Singhu protest sites have been converted into well-curated nurseries with a variety of flowers like marigold and rose.

The protesting farmers have also sowed seeds for potatoes and sugarcanes in the nurseries surrounded by concertina wires that came up as part of stringent security installation at the agitation sites to hinder the protestors' movement to Delhi.

"Our motivation is simple. The government had fixed iron nails. But we are planting flowers, fruits and crops. We are farmers, this is what we do," Ramraji, who hails from Jind in Haryana, said at UP Gate (Ghazipur). The 54-year-old farmer is among the several who are now curating the nurseries for which seeds and saplings are being sourced from nearby nurseries in Ghaziabad.

Another protestor volunteering for the work said the nursery has flowers like rose and marigold besides varieties of plants like palm, pine and others set in



"We had also planted planters. flowers next to the iron nails fixed near the barricading by police. We give flowers and crops in exchange for nails," he said. Farmers from Dhurana village in Sonipat planted

flowers at Singhu border protest site. Satyanaryan, 74, said his group even brought soil from their village to plant the flower saplings.

"It is our message to the government that we will spread love even if it uses force to suppress us," he said. A farmer leader from Haryana, Suresh Koth, said, "Sarkar kaante bo rahi hai, ham phool laga rahe hain." Meanwhile, a commotion ensued at the protest site after a small snake was spotted in the freshly dug-up soil brought for preparing plant bed. One of the farmers killed the snake with a spade as it tried to wriggle

out to safety from the crowd. Some of the farmers tried to stop the man from hitting the snake, but it was too late.

Thousands of farmers have dug their heels in at Ghazipur. Tikri and Singhu at Delhi's outskirts since November last with a demand that the Centre repeal the three new contentious agrimarketing laws and ensure legal guarantee for minimum support price (MSP) of crops. The Centre, which has held 11 rounds of formal talks with the protesting farmer unions, has maintained the laws are pro-farmers.

India 3rd topmost country to give highest vax doses

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 7: India has become the third topmost country in the world in terms of the number of COVID-19 vaccine doses administered, the Union Health Ministry said Sunday.

Only the United States and the United Kingdom remain ahead of India. The ministry said 12 states in India have vaccinated more than 2 lakh beneficiaries each. Uttar Pradesh alone accounts for 6,73,542 of all vaccinated beneficiaries. Till February 7, 8 am, a total of 57.75 lakh beneficiaries have received the vaccine under the countrywide COVID-



19 vaccination exercise.

The cumulative vaccination coverage includes 53.04.546 healthcare workers and 4,70,776 frontline workers, the ministry said. In a span of 24 hours, 3,58,473 beneficiaries were vaccinated across 8,875 sessions.

Also, a total 1.15.178 sessions have been conducted so far. There has been a sustained in-

crease in the number of beneficiaries being vaccinated every day," the ministry said. "In another significant development, the country has reported less than 80 daily deaths in the last 24 hours, lowest in nine months," it said

The country's total COVID-19 active case is 1.48 lakh which consists of 1.37 per cent of India's total infections. India's cumulative recoveries surged to 1.05 crore. A total of 12,059 new daily cases have been recorded in a span of 24 hours whereas 11,805 patients have recovered and discharged during the same period. The ministry said 81.07 per cent of the new recovered cases are observed to be concentrated in 6 states and UTs. Kerala has reported the maximum number of single day recoveries with 6,178 newly recovered cases. A total of 1,739 people recovered in Maharashtra in a span of 24 hours followed by 503 in Tamil Nadu.

The ministry said 84.83 per cent of the daily new cases are from 6 States and UTs. Kerala reports the highest daily new cases at 5,942. It is followed by Maharashtra with 2,768, while Karnataka reported 531 new cases.

Twitter India's Public Policy head Mahima Kaul guits

New Delhi: After serving for five years at Twitter India, Mahima Kaul who is currently Director, Public Policy, India and South Asia at the micro-blogging platform has moved on, the company said Sunday. Kaul, who will be at the helm till Marchend, quit in January, according to the company, which is currently in the eye of the storm following the brouhaha over some controversial farmer tweets that resulted in the Indian government sending a 'stronglyworded' notice to the company. "At the start of this year, Mahima Kaul decided to step down from her role as Twitter Public Policy Director for India and South Asia to take a well-deserved break," Monique Meche, VP, Public Policy, Twitter, told IANS.

out by the security agencies, the officials said, adding some inconvenience was caused but precaution was always better than cure.

agencies were asked a valid reason for their travel to Pakistan, the officials said, adding that the background history of all these people was checked and verified at the minutest level.

While the security agencies believe easily available explosive material

BORDER AREA OF HANDWARA IN NE OF THEM WAS A LOCAL WHO WENT TO PAKISTAN IN

FROM SECURITY AGENCIES SAID

Those questioned by the security

ARM BELLS RANG IN APRIL LAST YEAR WHEN A GROUP OF FIVE TERRORISTS WERE KILLED IN JUNGLES OF THE NORTH KASHMIR

2018 AND HAD NOT RETURNED SINCE, VARIOUS OFFICIALS

that there was a six weeks' training course for new terror recruits, intelligence inputs suggest that some of the youths were provided a quick module of fabrication of improvised explosive devices using HAPPY FEET



Artistes performing traditional Assamese Bihu dance in Assam's Sonitpur

UNI PHOTO

transplant a hospital in Delhi. Such a transplant in considered risky among those aged less than on year. However, doctors of Manipal Hospitals in New Delhi took up the challenge and performed the nine-hour-long surgery on Ali Hamad January 3. Hamad's mother donated a part of her liver to save her son's life who was born after three kids who died perhaps of a similar disease that could not be diagnosed and treated timely, the hospital said.

on valid visa for durations ranging more than seven days over the last three years, the officials said.

AFP FILE PHOTO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Feb 7: Nearly 100

Kashmiri youths, who travelled to

Pakistan on valid visas for short du-

rations, have either not come back

or have disappeared after their re-

turn in last three years, raising an

alarm within security agencies

which fear that they could be pos-

sible sleeper cells of terror groups

operating from across the border.

year, youths hailing from Shopian,

Kulgam and Anantnag districts of

South Kashmir were seen as part

of the infiltrating groups of ter-

rorists and all of them had travelled

to Pakistan on valid documents

and never returned thereafter, they

Security agencies, along with

the immigration officials at Wagah

border as well as at the New Delhi

airport, have been collecting data

of Kashmiri youths who travelled

said.

Between April one to six of last

The figures were astonishing and in some of the cases it was found that the youths never returned and in others they disappeared after their return, raising speculation that they could have become "sleeper cells", waiting for instructions from the masters in Pakistan's snooping agency, ISI, or handlers in terror groups located across the border.

Kashmiri youths, who travelled to Pakistan even two years back, were called for questioning and a proper analysis of their activities after their return was being carried

various terror organisations is also being carried out discreetly and it is quite possible these youths could also be doubling as "recruiters" for brain-washing of vulnerable men in the militancy af-

within a week's time, they said.

The recruitment of youths for

fected union territory. The missing youth are mainly from an average middle class and have been described as the new faces of terrorism in Kashmir. They could be waiting for delivery of arms and ammunition for all of them which has been substantially been choked due to heightened surveillance at the Line of

their re-entry into the NDA or some

Control, they said.

No 'ghar wapsi' till demands are met: Tikait

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Charkhi Dadri (Har), Feb 7: Asserting that the agitation against the Centre's farm laws is a people's movement that will not fail. Bharatiya Kisan Union leader Rakesh Tikait on Sunday said there will be no "ghar wapsi" till protesting farmers' demands are met.

Tikait lauded the role of "khap panchayats" (caste councils) and their leaders in supporting the farmers' stir. Addressing a "Kisan Mahapanchayat" near here, Tikait

gave hope in despair and at times

said the government should rollback the contentious farm laws, frame a new legislation to assure the continuation of the minimum support price (MSP) for crops and release the farmers arrested recently.

'There will be no 'ghar wapsi' till farmers' demands are met," he said. "Yeh jan andolan hai, yeh fail nahi hoga (this is a people's movement, this will not fail)," he added. Tikait claimed the campaign against the agriculture laws is going strong. With many "khap" leaders present at the "mahapanchayat",



Tikait lauded their role in strengthening the stir. Independent MLA from Dadri and chief of the Sangwan Khap, Sombir Sangwan, who in December withdrew his support to the BJP-JJP government in Haryana, dubbing it "antifarmer", was present at the event.

Earlier on February 3, Tikait had addressed his first "Kisan Mahapanchayat" in Haryana's Kandela in Jind. The BKU leader from Uttar Pradesh has been camping at Ghazipur on the Delhi-UP border as part of a campaign by farmer unions against the central laws enacted in September.

Tikait said that "khaps" go back to the days of King Harshvardhana and have been playing their role in society ever since.

Fire at MSEDCL office in Thane

Thane: A fire broke out at an electricity department's office in Maharashtra's Thane city, but there has been no report of any casualty, an official said Sunday. The blaze erupted around 10 pm Saturday in the Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company Limited's (MSEDCL) office in Wagle Estate locality, Thane civic body's regional disaster management cell chief Santosh Kadam said. Two fire engines, police and the disaster management cell staff rushed to the spot. The fire was brought under control within an hour. he said.

BSP leader kills self

Budaun (UP): A 40-year-old Bahujan Samaj Party leader killed himself by consuming a poisonous substance at a tehsil office in Uttar Pradesh's Badaun district after he was allegedly harassed by the SDM and a revenue official over a land allotment issue, police said Sunday. Harveer Singh (40) had consumed celphos tablets Saturday at the Sahaswan tehsil office.



The politics of Padma awards

Paswan (LJP-Bihar) and Tarun

posthumously to send some

political signals. But the most

surprising pick for the Padma

Bhushan award was Sardar

Tarlochan Singh, a prominent

leader of the Akali Dal (Badal). A

Padma Bhushan award to Sardar

Tarlochan Singh is an indication

Aakalis through back channels for

that Modi is working with the

Gogoi (Congress-Assam)

Drime Minister Modi is known for giving Padma awards to unsung, unknown heroes discarding those living in Lutyens Delhi. But seventh year into the government. Modi decorated more than half a dozen political leaders signaling a change of tack. If he gave Padma Bhushan to late Kesho Bhai Patel (BJP-Gujrat), Ram Vilas

kind of a patch up. Tarlochan Singh is also close to the Chautala family, which is in the forefront of the farmers' movement. It may be recalled that Harsimrat Kaur Badal had quit the Cabinet and Aakali Dal walked out of the NDA in protest against the three new farm Acts. If former Speaker Sumitra Mahajan was also placated with a Padma Bhushan, former Union Minister Bijoya Chakravorty was also given Padma Shri. Another BJP leader and former Governor of Goa Mridula Sinha was given Padma Shri too. Obviously, Modi is trying to consolidate his political support in Punjab, Assam and Bihar. It may be worth mentioning that of the total 119 Padma awards, nearly 35% went to the states going to polls in April-May.

Shedding tears to turn head

66 When I see a man crying, I view it as a weakness," Donald Trump had told the People magazine in 2015 and added, "the last time I cried was when I was a baby." But Trump was living in his make-believe world. He didn't realise the power of tears. There are dozens of leaders in globe who moved the millions by shedding tears, lifted morals in dark times

changed the course of history. Abraham Lincoln to Barack Obama to Russian premier Putin to Indira Gandhi to Prime Minister Modi, have all shed tears. Many of them have broken down owing to a variety of reasons. Modi broke down while addressing a parliamentary meeting of BJP MPs. But this was not the first time the man with 56" chest had cried. He had also shed tears in 2014 in Parliament when he was elected leader of the BJP parliamentary party. A "poor farmer" leader HD Deve Gowda from Karnataka literally wept on the floor of Parliament. The saffron-clad Yogi Adityanath is known as a 'tough guy' of India. But back in 2007, he broke down in Parliament to narrate his plight. He won the day in Lok Sabha and ten years later became the Chief Minister to make Samajwadi Party leaders shed tears in Lucknow. The power of tears was witnessed once again at Ghazipur borders last month where the farmers' agitation was dving a slow death after the January 26 violence and lakhs who had assumed had vanished to their homes. Rakesh Tikait emerged from the brink to resurrect by shedding tears and threatening to die for his brother farmers. Not only the crowd was back, Rakesh Tikait also emerged as the sole negotiator and unquestioned leaders of the farmers. Gone are the days when he used to be one among 40 leaders of various Unions.

Sonia plays on front foot

Sonia Gandhi is trying to do what Sshe is known for; stitching alliances. She did that perfectly in 2004 and successfully dislodged Atal Behari Vajpayee in 2004 by fixing alliances with regional and other Opposition parties. But she knows 2021 is not 2004 as she has lost her most-trusted aide in Ahmed Patel and her son Rahul Gandhi has failed to enthuse the workers and people at large. He tried hard to connect with leaders of other parties but largely remained in his own shell. Secondly, in 2004, he was a new face in politics and Congressmen thought that they have got an ace up their sleeves to counter the 'foreigner card" against Sonia Gandhi. It is in this context that Sonia Gandhi decided to play on the front foot and made a passionate appeal to all Congressmen including the dissidents at the previous CWC that the first priority is to defeat the BJP in the Assembly polls in five states. After clinching peace within the

party. Sonia Gandhi has now charted a course of action in the ensuing polls. Her prime focus is to retain Puducherry and win back Assam. In Kerala, the Congress may be face-to-face with the Left parties. But the dichotomy is that both are in alliance in West Bengal. In Tamil Nadu, the Congress is playing a second fiddle to the DMK for a long time. The way Sonia Gandhi deputed Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel as key observer to Assam and clinched alliance with five other Opposition parties, has made BJP worried. The BJP and Bodoland People's Front have already parted ways though it continues to be a formidable force. But unity among the Opposition parties in Assam will make its task difficult to repeat its 2016 performance

Modi determined to pass 33 Bills

he Modi government is determined to ensure passage of 33 Bills including financial agenda during next 30 sittings of the Budget session of Parliament. The two days have already gone by in adjournments and the President's address. Modi has made it clear to the Parliamentary Affairs Minister Prahlad Joshi and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh who is head of the

CCPA (Parliamentary Affairs Committee of Cabinet) that all bills listed for passage must be passed irrespective of the ruckus by the Opposition parties. The government has made it clear that 13 bills were passed during the din in the Rajya Sabha when UPA was in power including Constitutional amendment bills as well. The issue ran into controversy after former Vice President Dr Hamid Ansari recently said in his book that PM Modi walked into his chamber one day to ask why the Rajya Sabha could not pass the bills in the din. Ansari said how he could do it. But the Modi government reminded the ex-Vice President that he was in chair when bills were passed in the din during the UPA era. The government has now decided that the agenda listed will be completed irrespective of hurdles. The BJP and NDA have a huge majority in the Lok Sabha and a working majority in the Rajya Sabha. The two presiding officers of the two houses have been sounded out. The 33 bills include four Bills to replace Ordinances which include Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill. Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region, Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Bill and NCT of Delhi Laws (Special Provisions).

OrissaPOST MONDAY | FEBRUARY 8 | 2021 | BHUBANESWAR international

All viruses accumulate mutations over time and for influenza vaccines, there is a well-known process of global viral surveillance and selection of strains for an annual update of the vaccines SARAH GILBERT | PROFESSOR OF VACCINOLOGY AND CHIEF INVESTIGATOR, OXFORD VACCINE TRIAL

BREAKING FROM TRADITION

Pope Francis appointed Frenchwoman Nathalie Becquart as one of the two new undersecretaries Saturday to the synod, where she has been a consultant since 2019.





We are supportive of them. We are ready to cooperate with them for Libya's recovery and to prepare for the elections in Libya

ABDEL FATTAH EL-SISSI PRESIDENT OF

We've backed many horses no matter where they're from. It's a great example of what we can achieve together working as one United Kingdom MATT HANCOCK | HEALTH SECRETARY, UNITED KINGDOM

The Biden administration believes there are more suitable ways to work with our partner governments to manage migration across the regior

ANTONY BLINKEN US SECRETARY OF STATE

SHORT TAKES

Israel eases restrictions

Jerusalem: Israel has started to ease restrictions nearly six weeks after entering its third nationwide lockdown to prevent the spread of the virus. Some businesses began reopening on Sunday and people are now allowed to move more than a kilometer (half a mile) from their homes. But schools remain shuttered and international flights are severely restricted. More than 3.4 million Israelis have received the first shot of the Pfizer vaccine and at least 2 million have received a second dose.

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Snowstorm hits Germany

Berlin: A snowstorm and strong winds pounded northern and western Germany on Sunday, forcing trains to cancel trips and leading to hundreds of road accidents. Police said 28 people were injured on icy roads. Authorities brought homeless people into warm shelters amid the sub-zero temperatures. Police in the western state of North Rhine-Westphalia said early Sunday they had counted 222 accidents due to the bad weather conditions since Saturday afternoon. They said two people among the 26 were severely injured.

Protests gather steam as internet returns Bangla kicks off

Thousands rally across Myanmar to denounce last week's coup and demand the release of elected leader Aung San Suu Kyi, in the biggest protests since the 2007 Saffron Revolution

Yangon, Feb 7: As enthusiastic crowds of tens of thousands marched through the streets of Myanmar's biggest city Sunday to protest last week's coup, their spirits were lifted by the return of internet services that had been blocked a day earlier.

AGENCIES

MYANMAR UNREST

Separate protests that began in various parts of Yangon converged at Sule Pagoda, situated in the center of a roundabout in the city's downtown area. Protesters chanted "Long live Mother Suu" and "Down with military dictatorship".

Oli's decision

faces protest

AGENCIES

of Oli

to dissolve Parl

Kathmandu, Feb 7: Hundreds of

students belonging to the Nepal

Communist Party's rival faction

led by Pushpa Kamal Dahal

'Prachanda' Sunday held a rally

here against Prime Minister K P

Sharma Oli's decision to dissolve

Parliament, as the rivalry between

The rally by Prachanda's sup-

porters came two days after pro-gov-

ernment students chanting slo-

gans like "We love KP Oli", "Oli is

our hero", "Oli for the prime min-

ister" staged a massive show of

strength in Kathmandu in favour

Supporters of Prachanda Sunday

shouted slogans like "We hate you

KPOli" and "We hate KPOli for tak-

of Representatives

the two top leaders escalated.



Authorities had cut access to the internet as the protests grew Saturday, fanning fears of a complete information blackout. On Sunday afternoon, however, internet users in Yangon reported that data access on their mobile phones had

suddenly been restored. The demonstrators are seeking

to roll back last Monday's seizure of power by the military and demanding the release from detention of the country's ousted leader, Aung San Suu Kvi, and other top figures from her National League for Democracy party.

The military has accused Suu Kyi and her party of failing to act

on its complaints that last November's election was marred by fraud, though the election commission said it had found no evi dence to support the claims.

The growing protests are a sharp reminder of the long and bloody struggle for democracy in a country that the military ruled directly for more than five decades before loosening of its grip in 2012. Suu Kyi's government, which won a landslide election in 2015, was the first led by civilians in decades, though it faced a number of curbs to its power under a military-drafted constitution

During Myanmar's years of iso-

TAKING CARE OF CA

lation under military rule, the golden-domed Sule Pagoda served as a rallying point for political protests calling for democracy most notably in during a massive 1988 uprising and again during a 2007 revolt led by Buddhist monks.

The military used to deadly force to end both of those uprisings, with estimates of hundreds if not thousands killed in 1988. While riot police have been sent to watch the protests this past week, soldiers have been absent and there have been no reports of clashes.

Showing little fear, protest crowds have grown bigger and bolder since Monday's coup, while remaining nonviolent in support of a call by Suu Kyi's party and its allies for civil disobedience.

In one of Sunday's gatherings, at least 2,000 labor union and student activists and members of the pub lic gathered at a major intersection near Yangon University. They marched along a main road, snarling traffic. Drivers honked their horns in support Police in riot gear blocked the main entrance to the university. Two water cannon trucks were parked nearby.

Covid vax drive

The country has a stock of 7 mn doses of the Oxford-AstraZeneca (Covishield) vaccine, of which the govt procured 5 million from SII and the rest were gifted by the Indian govt



AGENCIES

Dhaka, Feb 7: Bangladesh's Covid-19 vaccination programme began Sunday across the country with a target to inoculate 3.5 million people in the first phase.

Bangladesh had received the Oxford-AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine from the Serum Institute of India (SII) under grants assistance on January 21.

Health Minister Zahid Maleque has received his first shot of the corona virus vaccine after the inauguration of the vaccination drive through video conferencing from the health directorate of Bangladesh.

Maleque was administered the jab at Sheikh Russel Gastroliver Institute and Hospital in the capital's Mohakhali area around 11.30 a.m.

Deputy Minister Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury Nowfel became the first person in the Chittagong Division to be vaccinated after the inauguration of the inoculation campaign at the Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH).

Khan Kamal, Agriculture Minister Abdur Razzaque, Science and Technology Minister Yeafesh Osman and Public Administration Minister Farhad Hossain have also

people, including ministers, law-

makers and physicians, will be vaccinated in five booths at the hospital.

CMCH Director Brigadier General S M Humayun Kabir, Chattogram City Corporation chief medical officer Doctor Selim Akhter, Divisional Health Director Doctor Hasan Shahriar Kabir, Civil Surgeon Doctor Sheikh Fazle Rabbi, CEO of Chattogram Field Hospital Bidyut Barua and Chattogram range DIG Anwar Hossain received

vaccine on Sunday morning. They were kept in observation

unit after taking vaccine. Some 2,400 teams are working in 1,005 hospitals under the vaccination programme.

A total of 204 teams are facilitating the vaccination in 50 hospitals in the capital and 2,196 teams are carrying out the job in 955 hos pitals outside Dhaka.

Some 7,344 vaccination teams are operating the vaccination programme across the country. According to the Directorate

General of Health Services (DGHS), around 3.5 lakh people registered for vaccine till Saturday evening. People who registered for vaccine

received text messages Saturday night confirming the date and centre for their vaccination

The frontline workers will receive the vaccine in the first phase,_ while people under 18 and pregnant mothers will not be inoculated



Disabled dogs in mobility aids run during a daily walk at The Man That Rescues Dogs Foundation in Chonburi Thailand. Most victims of accidents, the dogs are being nursed back to health at a shelter in Thailand's province of Chonburi southeast of the capital, Bangkok

regression by dissolving the House

ing the country towards the path of

Ecuador goes to polls

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Quito: Ecuador will choose a new president Sunday facing unprecedented health measures due to the pandemic and the influence of a populist former head of state who was blocked from a place on the ballot due to a corruption conviction Sixteen candidates are vying to succeed President LenÃn Moreno, a protegeturned-rival of former President Rafael Correa. who governed Ecuador for a decade and remains a major force despite a criminal conviction that blocked him from seeking the vice presidency this year.

The rally was part of the phasewise anti-government agitation led by Prachanda and Madhav Kumar Nepal against the prime minister's controversial decision to dissolve Parliament on December 20 and hold new elections on April 30 and May 10.

The ruling NCP has been witnessing months-long tussle between two factions, one led by 68-year-old Oli and Party's chairman and another led by 66-year-old "Prachanda, also the executive chair of the party and former premier. Defending his move to dissolve Parliament, Oli said some leaders tried to obstruct the functioning of his government and he had no other alternative other than seeking a fresh mandate.

The ruling NCP has split over Oli's call for a new Parliament to be elected more than a year ahead of schedule. Both Oli and the rival group claim to control the Nepal Communist Party and the issue is being disputed at the Election Commission. The rival faction even announced that it had ousted Oli from the party at a meeting last month.

Pak Army to get nCoV vax from China's PLA

AGENCIES

Beijing, Feb 7: Chinese military delivered a batch of COVID-19 vaccines to the Pakistan Army Sunday; days after Islamabad received 500,000 doses of the corona virus vaccine from its all-weather ally Beijing The People's Liberation

Army (PLA) said in a statement that the Pakistan Army has become the first foreign military to receive the COVID-19 vaccine aid from the Chinese military. The statement, however, did not mention the number of vaccines supplied to the Pakistan Army. The PLA also delivered a

batch of COVID-19 vaccines to the Cambodian military after receiving a request for it. The

Cambodian Army was among the first batch of the foreign military to receive COVID-19 vaccine aid from the Chinese military, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

The vaccines delivered to the Pakistan Army are reportedly in addition to the five lakh doses provided by China to Pakistan. Pakistan on Monday received the first batch of 500,000 doses of the coronavirus vaccine from China: as the country was gearing up to kick start its immunisation drive. The move comes as the number of COVID-19 cases in Pakistan reached 554,474. With 53 new deaths, the number of fatalities has gone up to 11,967, according to the Ministry of National Health Services.

US must lift sanctions before it lives up to nuclear deal, says Iran

AGENCIES

Tehran, Feb 7: Iran's supreme leader Sunday urged the United States to lift all sanctions if it wants Iran to live up to commitments under its nuclear deal with world powers, state TV reported, his first comments on the matter since US President Joe Biden took office.

"If (the US) wants Iran to return to its commitments, it must lift all sanctions in practice, then we will do verification ... then we will return to our commitments," state TV quoted Ayatollah Ali Khamenei as saying.

Former President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew the US in 2018 from the atomic deal, which saw Iran agree to limit its enrichment of uranium in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions. Biden has said he will seek to revive the

deal, but insisted that Iran must first reverse its nuclear steps, creating a contest of wills between the nations. "This is the definitive and irreversible policy of the Islamic Republic, and all of the country's

officials are unanimous on this, and no one will deviate from it,' Khamenei added Sunday, reiterating Iranian leaders' previous remarks that the US must ease its sanctions before Iran comes back into compliance.

The supreme leader, 81, has the final say on all matters of state in Iran and approved the efforts at reaching the nuclear deal in 2015.

In response to Trump's so-called "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran, the country began to gradually violate its atomic commitments, and threatened further provocations in a bid to increase its leverage and get Biden to prioritise a return to the deal as he moves to dismantle Trump's legacy.

Biden has signed a series of executive actions that reverse course on a wide range of issues, including climate change and immigration.

China's new anti-monopoly rules target its tech giants

AGENCIES

Earthquake jolts Philippines

Manila: An earthquake measuring 6.3 on the Richter scale jolted the Davao del Sur province in the Philippines Sunday, authorities said, adding that damages were expected. The Philippine Institute of Seismology and Volcanology (Phivolcs) said the quake, which struck at 12.22 p.m. (local time), hit at a depth of 15 m, about 6 km southeast of Magsaysay town, reports Xinhua news agency.

Beijing, Feb 7: China's market regulator released new anti-monopoly guidelines Sunday that target internet platforms, tightening existing restrictions faced by the country's tech giants. The new rules formalise an earlier antimonopoly draft law released in November, and clarify a series of monopolistic practices that regulators plan to crack down on.

The guidelines are expected to put new pressure on the country's leading internet services, including e-commerce sites such as Alibaba Group's Taobao and Tmall marketplaces or JD.com. They will also cover payment

services like Ant Group's Alipay or Tencent Holding's WeChat Pay.

The rules, issued by the State Administration for Market Regulation (SAMR) on its website, bar companies from a range of behaviour, including forcing merchants to choose between the country's top internet players, a long-time practice in the market. SAMR said the latest guidelines would "stop monopolistic behaviours in the platform economy and protect fair competition in the market.

The notice also said it will stop companies from price fixing, restricting technologies and using data and algorithms to manipulate the market



In a Q&A accompanying the notice, SAMR said reports of internet-related anti-monopoly be-

The guidelines | They will also cover are expected to payment services like Ant Group's Alipay or put new Tencent Holding's pressure on the WeChat Pay country's leading internet The rules, issued by the SAMR on its website, services,

bar companies from a including range of behaviour, e-commerce including forcing sites such as merchants to choose Alibaba between the country's Group's Taobao top internet players, a and Tmall marketplaces long-time practice in the market or JD.com

haviour had been increasing, and "The behaviour is more concealed, the use of data, algothat it was facing challenges regrithms, platform rules and so on make it more difficult to discover and determine what monopoly agreements are," it said.

China has in recent months started to tighten scrutiny of its tech giants, reversing a once laissez-faire approach.

In December, regulators launched an antitrust investigation into Alibaba Group following the dramatic suspension of the \$37 billion initial public of- 🛁 fering plan of its payment affiliate, Ant Group.

At the time, regulators warned the company over practices including forcing merchants to sign exclusive cooperation pacts atthe expense of other internet platforms.





ulating the industry.







AGENCIES



Going ahead, we believe the market momentum may continue with the focus now back to fundamentals, viz corporate earnings. The Budget along with strong corporate commentary reaffirms the positive long term structure of the market SIDDHARTHA KHEMKA | HEAD - RETAIL RESEARCH, MOTILAL OSWAL FINANCIAL SERVICES LTD.

INDIA'S COAL IMPORT UP BY 15 PC IN DEC

The country's coal import rose by 15.1 per cent to 23.63 million tonnes (MT) in December 2020 compared to 20.52 MT in the year-ago month



uote

Those going for scrapping of their vehicles will get some benefits from the manufacturers. In fact, scrapping

policy will prove to be a boon... Not only it will boost economy, benefit automobile sector but also check vehicular pollution

NITIN GADKARI MINISTER FOR ROAD TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS

I don't think that rating will be under pressure because every country across the world was impacted by the pandemic. This crisis was not only limited to India. Our recovery is faster than in the Western world

TARUN BAJAJ SECRETARY. ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

On the dine-in channel specifically, the constraint is more on supply than demand. That (restrictions) is what has held back the recovery significantly

PRATIK POTA CEO AND WHOLETIME DIRECTOR, JUBILANT FOODWORKS

SHORT TAKES

Avalanche damages hydropower project

New Delhi: State-run power giant NTPC Sunday said that an avalanche near Tapovan in Uttarakhand has damaged its under-construction hydropower project. Earlier in the day, a glacier broke off in Joshimath in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district which caused a massive flood in the Dhauli Ganga river and endangered lives of people living along its banks. It is reported that massive destruction is feared. Later in the day, NTPC tweeted. "An avalanche near Tapovan in Uttarakhand has damaged a part of our underconstruction hydropower project in the region.'

Biz confidence up 'with vax rollout'

No disinvestment in major port trusts, AAI

THE NEW PSE POLICY FOR AATMANIRBHAR BHARAT, WHICH CLASSIFIES PUBLIC SECTOR COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES AS STRATEGIC AND NON-STRATEGIC SECTOR, WOULD BE LIMITED TO CPSES, PSBs AND PUBLIC SECTOR INSURANCE COMPANIES

New Delhi, Feb 7: Certain classes of public sector entities, like major port trusts, Airport Authority of India, those undertaking security printing and minting, will not fall within the purview of the new PSE policy for strategic disinvestment.

The new Public Sector Enterprise (PSE) policy for Aatmanirbhar Bharat, which classifies public sector commercial enterprises as strategic and non-strategic sector, would be limited to central public sector enterprises, public sector banks and public sector insurance companies

'The policy, however, does not apply to certain classes of public sector entities such as not-for-profit companies or CPSEs providing support to vulnerable groups or having developmental/promotional roles,³ said the scope of the PSE policy announced in the Budget.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Budget unveiled the Disinvestment/Strategic Disinvestment Policy, which had four strategic sectors in which "bare minimum" number of CPSEs will be retained and the rest would be privatised or merged or made subsidiary of another CPSE or closed down

The four sectors are atomic energy, space and defence; transport and telecommunications: power. petroleum, coal and other minerals; and banking, insurance and financial services in non-strategic sectors, CPSEs will be privatised, or will be considered for closure.

The classes of public sector entities which would be out of the scope of the new PSE policy include public sector entities in the



Our privatisation policy is for growth and employment and not for the plugging of fiscal deficit. The government has pegged the fiscal deficit for FY21 at 9.5 per cent of the GDP. The latest . privatisation push actually completes the liberalisation reforms of 1991

TUHIN KANTA PANDEY | SECRETARY, DEPT OF INVESTMENT AND PUBLIC ASSET MANAGEMENT

nature of development and regulatory authorities, autonomous organisations, development financing or refinancing institutions. Major port trusts and Airport Authority of India, set up under

the Acts of Parliament, would not fall within its ambit. Further, CPSEs concerned with providing support to vulnerable

groups through financing of SCs, STs, minorities, backward classes and 'safai karmacharis' etc, or manufacturing aids and appliances for 'Divyangs' or those assisting farmers in mainly getting access to seeds, promoting innovation in agriculture, or procurement and distribution of food for Public Distribution

System would not be covered under the policy. The policy would not extend to CPSEs involved in security print-

critical data having bearing on the national security. Also departments of the Government, like Railways and Posts, that undertake commercial operations with a development mandate would not be within the scope of the PSE policy.

The PSE policy states that NITI Aavog will recommend the CPSEs under strategic sectors that are to be retained under government control or to be considered for privatisation or merger or putting under the control of another PSE or for closure.

The alternative mechanism for strategic disinvestment, comprising Finance Minister, Road Transport Minister and Ministers of the Administrative Ministries willl give final approval for the CPSEs to be retained, or privatised or merged or made subsidiary or closed down. The Department of Investment

Realme introduces two 5G handsets

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 7: Realme, India's popular mobile brand unveiled the first look of Realme X7 5G and Realme X7 Pro 5G. Both Realme X7 5G and Realme X7 Pro 5G are powered by laudable MediaTek chipsets ensuring parexcellence performance, and feature bold and futuristic designs, officials said.

Govt's disinvestment policy not akin to selling family silver: FM

noted that for the growth of the

Indian economy, the country re-

quires at least 20 banks of the size

of the State Bank of India (SBI)

She reiterated that the govern-

ment would have bare minimum

presence in the strategic sectors

where it is very important for the

The Finance Minister who pre-

sented her third Budget February

1 noted that the strategic sectors

will not remain totally under the

government's domain and private

players too will be allowed in the

Presenting the Union Budget

for FY21-22, Sitharaman had

proposed that two public

sector banks (PSB) would

be up for strategic disin-

vestment in the next fiscal

along with IDBI Bank. One

state-run general insur-

ance company will also be

privatised in the coming

fiscal

government to stay

sectors.

MUMBAI: Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Sunday said the government's latest disinvestment policy including the proposal to privatise two staterun banks is not akin to "selling the family silver" as alleged by the Opposition.

Speaking at an event here, Sitharaman said that the government's focus is to strengthen the public sector undertakings (PSU) and make sure they professionally run themselves.

"It should be looked at with the correct perspective. It is

not as the opposition says as 'selling the family silver'. Family silver should be strengthened. It should be your strength," she said. On the bank-

ing sec-

tor,

she

and Public Asset Management, which manages government equity in public sector companies, will approach the Cabinet for strategic disinvestment of a specific PSE from time-to-time, on a case-to-case basis.

Rs 1.75 lakh crore to be mopped up from disinvestment. Of this, Rs 1 lakh crore is estimated to come from sale of government stake in PSU banks and insurance companies and Rs 75,000 crore from CPSE stake sale.



Vedanta Jharsuguda wins 'Best Exporter'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 7: Vedanta Jharsuguda, India's largest producer of aluminium, bagged the 'Best Exporter' Award for the years 2017-18 and 2018-19 at the Odisha State Export Award. Organised by the Directorate of Export Promotion & Marketing (DEPM), Odisha, the awards were presented to the company in a virtual ceremony chaired by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. GG Pal, Chief Operating Officer-Metal, received the award on behalf of the company.

Vedanta's Jharsuguda plant was awarded for being the largest exporter from the state of Odisha consecutively for two years, 2017-18 and 2018-19.

Vedanta's aluminium smelters at Jharsuguda produce an array of top-of-the-line products like Ingots, Billets, Wire Rods, Primary Foundry Alloy (PFA), Slab, and others, for domestic and global markets. Manufactured using stateof-the-art technology, these products are acclaimed globally for their quality and performance standards and cater to critical industries like aerospace, automotive, construction, electrification, transportation and others, officials said.

CN Singh, CEO-Vedanta Ltd., Jharsuguda said, "Our Jharsuguda smelters single-handedly produce more than one-third of India's aluminium, strengthening the state government's endeavours to 'Make in Odisha'

Awareness drive on oil and gas conservation held in twin city

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 7: As a part of the SAKSHAM-2021 programme, GAIL (India) Limited organised CNG Auto/Car Rally Sunday in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack for spreading awareness regarding switching over to CNG which is a cleaner fuel and results in fossil fuel conservation.



merchant bankers, including Goldman Sachs, JM Financial and Axis Capital, are in race for managing the sale of the government's 26.12 per cent stake in Tata Communications Ltd.

11 merchant bankers line up to

manage Govt's stake sale in TCL

gic disinvestment, the name of the company was changed to Tata Communications Ltd (TCL). As per the disinvestment plan of TCL, a part of the government shareholding will be offered through OFS mechanism and the balance, including any leftover portion in the OFS, will be offered to strategic partner Panatone Finvest Ltd.

ing and minting, or maintaining

The budget has set a target of

New Delhi: The Business Confidence Index (BCI) developed by the Delhi-based economic think tank NCAER rose 29.6 per cent between second and third quarter of the current financial year on the back of rollout of COVID-19 vaccines in different countries, including India. The proportion of respondents expecting that overall economic conditions will improve in the next six months' increased by 4.8 percentage points, from 29.8 per cent in 2020-21:Q2 to 34.6 per cent in 2020-21:Q3.

MFs' unstoppable selling spree is on

New Delhi: Continuing the selling spree for the eighth consecutive month, mutual funds pulled out Rs 12,980 crore from equities in January as surge in markets provided an opportunity to book profits. MyWealthGrowth.Com cofounder Harshad Chetanwala said investors may prefer to book profits for some more time as they witness more surge in the stock market.

Sun Pharma recalls **36,275 cartons**

New Delhi: Sun

Pharmaceutical Industries is recalling 36,275 cartons of a drug used to treat low testosterone levels in the US market for incorrect labelling. The US arm of the domestic pharma major is recalling Testosterone Cypionate Injection in the American market, according to the latest enforcement report of the US Food and Drug Administration. The affected lot of the intramuscular injections was manufactured by the drug maker in India.

tire stake in Tata Communications Ltd (TCL), erstwhile VSNL, through an offer for sale and strategic sale route by March 20, 2021.

The government will sell its

New Delhi, Feb 7: As many as 11

AGENCIES

The merchant bankers would be making presentations before the officials of the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management February 9, according to a notice posted on the DIPAM website.

The other merchant bankers who are in the fray include ICICI Securities, Credit Suisse Securities, IDBI Capital Markets, Kotak Mahindra Capital, SBI Capital Markets, IIFL Securities, Yes Securities and Elara Capital.

Public sector VSNL was privatised in 2002 by divesting 25 per cent shareholding along with transfer of management control to Panatone Finvest Ltd, the strategic partner. Subsequent to the strate-

As per the shareholding pattern of TCL, the promoters hold 74.99 per cent in the company. Of this, the Government of India holds 26.12 per cent stake while Panatone Finvest holds 34.80 per cent and Tata Sons holds 14.07 per cent. The remain-

ing 25.01 per cent is with the public. The government has so far this fiscal mopped up Rs 19,499 crore from CPSE disinvestment. The revised disinvestment target for this financial year has been set at Rs 32,000 crore, substantially lower than budgeted Rs 2.10 lakh crore.

The official claimed that X75G is India's first smartphone to be powered by MediaTek Dimensity 800U chipset. It features a 6.4 Super AMOLED screen, 64MP AI triple camera set-up, 50W SuperDart Charger and a large 4310mAh battery. Available in two variants, the smartphone is priced at Rs 19,999

(6GB+128GB) and Rs 21,999 (8GB+128GB) and will be up for sale February 12, 2021 at 12 noon. The Realme X7 Pro 5G is pow-

ered by the latest Dimensity 1000+ processor and features a superthin and lightweight body. It boasts a massive 4,500 mAh battery with 65W SuperDart Charge, 6.5" Super AMOLED Full screen, and 64MP 686 Quad Camera set-up. This model will be available in a single variant, 8GB+128GB and priced at Rs 29,999

Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA), a government agency, also engaged in promoting energy efficiency in various sectors of economy took part in it.

According to a report, GAIL is having 14 CNG stations in operation and catering to about 4,000 autos by selling about 10,000 kgs of CNG per day in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack.

Government of India and MoPNG are committed to double city gas networks to 400 districts, quadruple piped cooking gas connections to households to two crore and also set up 10,000 CNG dispensing stations, officials said

In addition, GAIL has been authorised to lay, build and operate the prestigious Jagdishpur-Haldia and Bokaro-Dhamra Natural Gas Pipeline (JHBDPL) under 'Pradhanmantri Urja Ganga' Project.

GAIL has been authorised by PNGRB for development of City Gas Distribution (CGD) network in six cities namely Varanasi

(Uttar Pradesh), Bhubaneswar (Odisha), Cuttack (Odisha), Patna (Bihar), Ranchi (Jharkhand) and Jamshedpur (Jharkhand).

CGM Indian Oil, Odisha Subhajit Ghosh, CGM GAIL India Limited, Dinabandhu Soren, DGM of LPG HPCL, Dharmendra Behura and State Coordinator LPG, BPCL Anmol Bara were present among others

We've backed many

horses – no matter

where they're from.

It's a great example

of what we can achieve

United Kingdom

line," she said.

Belgium?

together, working as one

MATT HANCOCK | HEALTH SECRETARY, UK

Instead, "it is Britain which is

towering head and shoulders above

the rest," Wanten said. "I keep

asking myself why things are pos-

sible there and not here in

UK's vaccine-gamble paying off, cautious EU still laggard

NEGOTIATING CONTRACTS EARLIER HAS HELPED BRITAIN AVOID SOME OF THE VACCINE SUPPLY PROBLEMS THE 27-NATION EU HAS FACED

AGENCIES

Paris, Feb 7: French pharmaceutical startup Valneva had big news in September: a government contract for 60 million doses of its coronavirus vaccine candidate

The buyer? The United Kingdom — not the European Union, as might be expected for a company on the banks of the Loire.

What a true waste," bristled Christelle Morancais, president of the Pays de la Loire regional council, as she tried to wrap her head around the missed opportunity. The British, she told The Associated Press, "rolled out the red carpet for this company, helping with financing first. and the set-up. ... And we were pow-

erless. The U.K. has now ordered another 40 million doses and has options for more from Valneva, which has a plant in Scotland. The EU is still in talks with the company.

That pattern of Britain investing aggressively and early while the EU takes a slower, more cautious approach has been the hallmark of the vaccine race in Europe - and offers a window into problems that have dogged the vaccination rollout by the world's biggest trading bloc.

As with other countries that moved quickly, negotiating contracts earlier has helped Britain avoid some of the vaccine supply problems the 27-nation EU has faced - as when AstraZeneca said it hit a production issue. Valneva President Franck Grimaud told the AP that Britain will receive vaccine doses earlier because it signed

But the U.K. has also shown speed and agility in other areas: Its regulatory agency has authorized vaccines more quickly than the EU's, and its government has experimented with stretching out the time between shots — allowing it to roll



In this file photo, British PM Boris Johnson watches as nurse Rebecca Cathersides administers the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine to Lyn Wheeler at Guy's Hospital in London

out first doses faster so more people can have some protection quickly. The EU has been more cautious died.

COMMISSION

been left in the U.K.'s rearview mirror. Britain has given at least one shot to about 15% of its population, compared to some 3% in the bloc. This is not only a matter of pride: The EU has already lost more than 470,000 people out of 450 million to the pandemic, and uncounted others who were not tested before they

Diane Wanten, from Alken, Belgium, survived a bout with COVID-19 that put her in intensive care last spring. The 62-year-old now badly hopes for shots for herself and her husband Francesco, who has Parkinson's. "If there is a vaccine for me tomorrow, I'll be in

I see this as a marathon in which we just finished the first few kilometers URSULA VON DER LEYEN PRESIDENT, EU

Britain has its own struggles: a 🛁 death toll of 112,000 in a country of 67 million and plenty who say the Conservative government should have moved faster to fight the virus. Still, it celebrated the Valneva contract as validation of its vaccinestrategy — and its decision to leave the EU





on both counts. While bloc is still get-

ting and distributing vaccines, un-

like much of the world, it has so far





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sports

HOSTS STARE DOWN THE BARREL AFTER PANT'S PYROTECHNICS

Bess breaks India's back



We have had some soft dismissals. The way I got out and how Jinks (Ajinkya Rahane) was dismissed. Ashwin and Washington are batting well. There is a bit of spin but still a good pitch to bat on. Tomorrow will be crucial

CHETESHWAR PUJARA



88b, 9x4, 5x6) beautiful edge-of-the-seat hitting ended with his now custom ary indiscretion at the Chepauk Stadium here Sunday. His dismissal put India under the pump against a supremely confident England gunning for victory at the end of third day's play in the opening Test here. At stumps, India were 257 for six in reply to England's massive first innings score of 578 with 122 runs still needed

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Feb 7: Rishabh Pant's (91,

the followon.

to avoid



119

runs for the fifth wicket with Pant. However, once Dominic Bess (4/55) got Pujara, things started looking ominous for India.

Pant was leather hell bent on taking the fight to the spinners. Even though he was successful against left-arm spinner Jack Leach, he holed out off Bess. Washington Sundar (33 batting) and Ravichandran Ashwin (eight batting), were at the crease when stumps were called on day three.

The day belonged to the current toast of the Indian team, Pant. However, he should have carried on

SCORECARD

England 1st Innings (overnight 555 for 8): Dominic Bess Ibw Bumrah 34, Jack Leach n o 14, James Anderson b Ashwin 1, Extras (b-7, lb-17, w-1, nb-20) 45. Total: 578.

FALL: 1-63, 2-63, 3-263, 4-387, 5-473, 6-477. 7-525, 8-525, 9-567,

BOWLING: Ishant Sharma 27-7-52-2, Jasprit Bumrah 36-7-84-3, Ravichandran Ashwin 55,1-5-146-3, Shahbaz Nadeem 44-4-167-2, Washington Sundar 26-2-98-0, Rohit Sharma 2-0-7-0.

INDIA 1ST INNINGS: Rohit Sharma c Buttler b Archer 6, Shubman Gill c Anderson b Archer 29, Cheteshwar Pujara c Burns b Bess 73, Virat Kohli c Pope b Bess 11, Ajinkya Rahane c Root b Bess 1, Rishabh Pant c Leach b Bess 91, Washington Sundar batting 33, Ravichandran

Ashwin batting 8, Extras (b-4, lb-1) 5, Total: (for six wickets) 257. FALL: 1-19, 2-44, 3-71, 4-73, 5-192, 6-225. BOWLING: James Anderson 11-3-34-0, Jofra Archer 16-3-52-2, Ben Stokes 6-1-16-0, Jack Leach 17-2-94-0, Dominic Bess 23-5-55-4, Joe Root 1-0-1-0.

and not thrown his wicket away going for quick runs. He dazzled with his brilliance and then in an annoving manner, forgot that discretion is always the better part of valour while trying to hit Bess over extra cover against the spin. He found the only man stationed at deep extra cover - none other than Leach, who latched onto the catch as if his life depended on it.

Pujara's batting was in complete contrast to Pant's pyrotechnics. He was in the middle to frustrate the England bowlers. He defended dourly and when the loose delivery came along he was quick to put them away for boundaries. He was quiet, allowing Pant to take the centre stage during their century-plus partnership. However, he was unlucky to get out.

Pujara pulled Bess firmly on to the shoulder of forward short-leg Ollie Pope. The ball struck Pope

0

Rishabh Pant

well in control Bess easily impressed as he got the

and lobbed into the hands of Rory Burns

at gully. It was indeed

a bizarre dismissal

as Pujara looked

dip and drift, something that worked for him while outfoxing Virat Kohli (11), who was caught at forward short-leg. Ajinkya Rahane (1) was brilliantly caught by Root at cover: Rahane failed to keep down a drive off Bess when a full toss dipped on him at the final moment.

ball

to

Root flung himself to his left to come up with a brilliant diving catch. Earlier Rohit Sharma (six) and Shubman Gill (29) were dismissed by pacer Jofra Archer (2/52). He bowled a really lively spell with the new ball. He showed that pace can work wonders.

5TH INDIAN TO DO SO Ankita qualifies for Oz Open main draw



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Melbourne, Feb 7: Ankita Raina became Sunday only the fifth Indian woman tennis player in the Open era to secure a place in the main draw of a Grand Slam. She made the cut for the women's doubles event of the Australian Open. The year's first Grand Slam starts here Monday. After missing out on the women's

singles main draw, Ankita still had a chance to qualify as a 'lucky loser' till the completion of the first round. However, the 28-year-old realised her long-time dream when she signed up with Romania's Mihaela Buzarnecu and earned a direct entry in doubles.

Nirupama Mankad (1971), Nirupama Vaidyanathan (1998), Sania Mirza and Indian-American Shikha Uberoi (2004) have competed in the Grand Slam main draws for India. Ankita is only the

second Indian after Sania, a sixtime Grand Slam champion, to compete in the women's doubles of a Grand Slam.

Ankita said although singles hold a different significance, making the doubles is special too. "It's the first main draw of a Grand Slam, so singles or doubles, I will take it. It's special. Years of hard work, toil and now I am there. Not only my hard work but blessings and support of countless people have brought me here, I can't forget that," Ankita said.

Akhtar **no more**

Kolkata: On a day when Ankita Raina created history, India lost its greatest tennis 'guru' when Akhtar Ali breathed his last here Sunday. He was 83. He is the father of India's current Davis Cup coach Zeeshan Ali. Akhtar shaped many careers, including that of the legendary Leander Paes apart from his own son Zeeshan. His coaching also influenced Vijay Amritraj and Ramesh Krishnan. For the last two weeks, Akhtar was in hopital. He had prostate cancer and had earlier contracted dementia and Parkinson's disease. Akhtar played eight Davis Cup ties between 1958 and 1964 and also captained and coached the Indian team.

"I know it is doubles but India's name will be there. These are the moments that spark something among people. Maybe a few will start dreaming that it's possible. People start believing. We touch many small milestones but this one is at a pinnacle. Anyone who starts playing professional tennis, dreams of playing in a Grand Slam,' added Ankita.

Ankita had signed up Friday with Romanian southpaw Mihaela, who was a top-50 singles player before injury pegged her back. They will open their campaign against Australian wild card pair of Olivia Gadecki and Belinda Woolcock.

SHORT TAKES

Warriors win title

Abu Dhabi: Northern Warriors produced a clinical bowling show to beat Delhi Bulls by eight wickets in the summit clash and clinch their second title of the Abu Dhabi T10 tournament here late Saturday night. Disciplined bowling performances from off-spinner Maheesh Theekshana (3/14), fa bowler Dhananjaya Lakshan (2/14) and Junaid Siddique (2/19) helped Warriors restrict Delhi to a paltry 81 for nine in 10 overs. The Warriors then cruised to victory with 10 balls to spare. Opener Waseem Muhammad (27) top scored for the Warriors. West Indians Lendl Simmons (14 not out) and Royman Powell (16 not out) finished the iob easily.

2ND INDIA-ENGLAND TEST Spectators allowed Mayers scripts Windies triumph

entry to 3 galleries

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dominic Bess

Chennai, Feb 7: Spectators will finally be back on the stands in

AGENCIES

Chattogram, Feb 7: Kyle Mayers (210 not out, 310b, 20x4, 7x6) became the first batsman to score a fourth innings double century on debut as West Indies chased down 395 runs for a stunning three-wicket win against Bangladesh in the first Test here Sunday. His knock guided West Indies to complete the fifth highest chase in Test and also the biggest in Asia. Mayers, who scored 40 runs in the first innings, ended with 250 runs in the match, the second highest for a West Indies batsman on debut. His 216-run partnership with Nkrumah Bonner (86, 245b, 10x4, 1x6) for the fourth wicket, West Indies highest fourth innings partnership for any wicket since 1984, proved to be the game changer. West Indies went into the game needing another 285 runs with seven wickets in hand. They started brilliantly with Bonner pulling offspinner Mehidy Hasan over square leg for a boundary off the first delivery on the fifth day. Mayers and Bonners then survived several tricky moments in the first hour of



1ST BATSMAN TO SCORE FOURTH INNINGS DOUBLE HUNDRED ON DEBUT

ing Bonner in the first over after tea However, that did not stop Mayers from going about the job of accumulating runs in a brisk manner. He was well supported by wicketkeeper Joshua Da Silva (20). The two put on 100 runs for the seventh cket in quick time. Silva was out when the Windies need just three runs for victory. Mayers, meanwhile, brought up his double hundred off 303 balls with a gentle punch to deep backward point for a single. He then hit his seventh six to put the tourists on the verge of the victory before pushing one off Nayeem Hasan to midon for a single to confirm the victory. The hosts came into the fifth day firm favourites to win on a spinning track. However, they had not thought that Mayers would change the complexion of the game. It indeed a dominating innings that helped the visitors to win even after conceding a lead of 171 runs in the first innings. Brief scores: Bangladesh 430 and 223 for 8 declared; West Indies 259 and 395 for 7 (Kyle Mayers 210 not out, Nkrumah Bonner 86, Mehidy Hasan 4/113). West Indies won by three wickets.

Nadal bothered

Melbourne: Back soreness is still bothering Rafael Nadal as he prepares for the Australian Open. Nadal is trying to win his 21st Grand Slam singles title, which would give him sole ownership of the men's record. He equalled Roger Federer on 20 titles October when he won at Roland Garros, his 13th French Open title. "It's true that for the last 15 days I have been suffering with the back," Nadal told a pre-tournament news conference Sunday. I'm doing everything what's possible to be ready for the event. Today I am still hoping to keep improving and hope to be ready for it," he added.

Spinks dead

Las Vegas: Leon Spinks, who won Olympic gold and then shocked the boxing world by beating Muhammad Ali to win the heavyweight title in only his eighth pro fight, has died. He was 67. Spinks, who lived his later years here, died Friday night, according to a release from a public relations firm. He had been battling prostate and other cancers. His wife, Brenda Glur Spinks and a few close friends and other family members were by his side when he passed away. Spinks beat Ali by decision in a 15-round fight in 1978 to win the title. He was unranked at the time. AGENCIES

cricket stadiums in India. The MA Chidamabaram Stadium's three stands – I. J and K – will be thrown open to spectators for an international match for the first time since 2012 when it hosts the second India-England Test from February 13.

The three stands were sealed after the 2011 World Cup owing to various issues. It deprived city the opportunity to host matches at various events, including the World T20 in 2016 and the IPL final in 2019. Tickets for the second Test, to be played here from February 13 to 17. will go on sale from February 8, Tamil Nadu Cricket Association (TNCA) secretary RS Ramasaamy said Sunday. Around 15,000 tick-

ets will be sold and they will be available online only he informed. A TNCA press release said tickets for general public will be sold only through www.Paytm.Com & The game will be played February 13 to 17

Three stands at MA Chidamabaram Stadium will be opened for the public, tickets will be sold online

Spectators will back inside cricket

stadium during India-England 2nd

Test in Chennai

www.Insider.In, Paytm App and Paytm Insider App from Monday 10.00am. "There would be no Counter/Box Office sales," TNCA release added. The daily tickets are priced from

₹100 onwards. Tickets are also available for ₹150 and ₹200, the release said. The TNCA staff is involved in

cleaning work of the stands, Ramasaamy said, adding they will be ready before the second Test. The ongoing opening Test, the

first international game in India since the COVID-19 outbreak, is being played here behind closed doors

GREAT KNOCK: Kyle Mayers raises his bat after reaching his double century against Bangladesh, Sunday PHOTO COURTESY: BCB

the day, with off-spinner Hasan (4-113) and left-arm spinner Taijul Islam (2-91) keeping the batsmen on their toes.

Mayers brought up his century off 177 balls, after getting an outside edge that flew past gully for his

13th boundary. While Mayers chose to counter-attack, Bonner opted to defend in a strategy of caution and calculated aggression that served them well. After two disappointing sessions, Taijul finally gave Bangladesh some hope, dismiss-

RED DEVILS HELD AGAIN AT HOME AS DEFENDERS FALTER Everton snatch last-gasp draw

AGENCIES

Manchester, Feb 7: Manchester United suffered a blow to their Premier League title hopes after Everton's Dominic Calvert-Lewin scored with the last kick of the game to earn the visitors a 3-3 draw in a pulsating clash at Old Trafford here Saturday night. Man U led 2-0 and then 3-2 but were stunned in added on time as they failed to deal with a simple free-kick floated into the area, allowing Michael Keane to flick the ball on for Calvert-Lewin to slide the ball past goalkeeper David De Gea.

The result left United, who last won the title in 2013, second in the standings on 45 points from 23 games. They are two behind leaders Manchester City.

United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer rued United's lapses of concentration. "Results create the mood. The last kick of the ball



OMENT TO CHERISH: Everton's Dominic Calvert-Lewin (left) is over the moon as he celebrates his last-minute equaliser against Manchester United

makes us go home really disappointed. We have lost two points on a long thump which we should have defended," he said.

Edinson Cavani had fired United ahead in the 24th minute and Bruno Fernandes doubled the lead just

before just half time. Everton lacked edge in the first half but drew level with two quick goals after the break.Abdoulaye Doucoure pulled a goal back in the 47th minute and James Rodriguez struck in the 52nd

REAL BACK TO WINNING WAYS

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Madrid, Feb 7: With Sergio Ramos out injured, Raphael Varane stepped up to lead Real Madrid to victory. He did it with goals, too, like his teammate in central defence has often done recently.

Varane scored twice in the second half to help the defending La Liga champions come from behind to win Saturday at last-placed Huesca 2-1.

"It had been a while since I had scored for Madrid," said Varane, who just completed a year without finding the net. "You need to keep having faith. When the ball is in the attack I try to move forward and today I could score," he added.

The victory moved Madrid back into second place in the standings, closer to league leaders Atlético Madrid, who visit Monday struggling Celta Vigo. Madrid trail Atlético by seven points and is one point in front of Sevilla.

SCEB dent JFC's playoff hopes

AGENCIES

Margao, Feb 7: SC East Bengal tasted victory for the first time in almost a month's time beating Jamshedpur FC 2-1 in the Hero ISL encounter at the Fatorda Stadium here Sunday. The win took East Bengal to the ninth spot in the points table. However, Jamshedpur FC's (JFC) hopes of making the playoffs suffered a huge jolt as they remained stuck to the

seventh spot. Goals from Matti Steinmann (sixth minute) and Anthony Pilkington (68th) secured the victory for SCEB. A late goal from Peter Hartley (83rd) proved to be a mere consolation for Jamshedpur. East Bengal got off to the best

start possible with Steinmann putting them ahead in the sixth minute. An early SCEB attack ended with Stephen Eze putting the ball out for a corner. The resultant corner from Narayan Das eluded the entire Jamshedpur defence and was glanced in by



Matti Steinmann of SCEB (centre) wheels away in joy after scoring against JFC during the ISL game

Steinmann. Any hopes Jamshedpur had of extending their run of three straight clean sheets had come to an early end.

In the first half as JFC failed to strike a single shot at the East Bengal goal. SCEB dominated possession in the midfield and \rightarrow looked more threatening among the two sides.

The Kolkata side started the second half as they had the first. Both Steinmann and Narayan had chances to increase the lead, but JFC keeper TP Rehenesh made some fine saves.

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