

EMPATHETIC DEEPIKA
Actor Deepika Padukone says she would like to see a world where no life is lost due to mental illness
LEISURE P2

NO KHANDAGIRI MELA
The Magha Saptami Mela organised at Khandagiri with much fanfare won't be held this year
DOWNTOWN P3

INDIA LOSE 1ST TEST
Virat Kohli & co suffer a 227-run defeat in the first Test in Chennai to trail the four-match series 0-1
SPORTS P12






HEALTH COVERAGE FOR ALL

My mother could get her eye Surgery done free of cost at LVPEI Hospital, Bhubaneswar under BSKY, for which I am very much thankful to our Hon'ble CM.

Manoranjan Sethi, Bhadrak

HEALTHY ODISHA, HAPPY ODISHA | DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I wanted to share personal anecdotes without hurting govts, religious groups, courts, etc. So I deleted my social media accounts.

State government supports farmers

Bhubaneswar, Feb 9: In sync with the demand of the agitating farmer unions in the country, the State Cabinet Tuesday passed a resolution, urging the Centre to implement the MS Swaminathan Committee report on raising the minimum support price (MSP) of foodgrains. The Cabinet headed by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik resolved to move the Centre, reiterating its earlier demand for implementation of the recommendations of the Committee regarding hiking of the MSP of all crops to ensure doubling the farmers' income. In a press statement, the government said it has been dedicatedly working towards development of farmers and is committed to the doubling of farmers' income. All government policies and programmes, including the new Agricultural Policy 2020 SAMRUDHI are aimed at achieving rapid farm growth through improved profitability, inclusivity and sustainability, it said. The state government considers that the MSP is an important tool for income generation of farmers. The income of farmers needs to keep pace with the growth of income in other sectors and the rise in the cost of cultivation. The MSP of any agricultural produce has to be fixed in a holistic manner so as to make farming operations profitable and safeguard farmers against all types of risks, the statement said. Earlier, the State Assembly had passed unanimous resolutions in this regard in 2017 and again in 2018. The Cabinet in November last year had also approved a similar resolution. The MS Swaminathan-headed National Commission on Farmers had recommended that "MSP should be at least 50 per cent more than the weighted average cost of production".



The State Cabinet also approved a proposal to bring in the ordinance on the Odisha Agricultural Produce and Livestock Marketing (Promotion and Facilitation) for the third time. Briefing about the decisions, Chief Secretary SC Mahapatra said the cabinet has decided to extend the Odisha Agricultural Produce and Livestock Marketing (Promotion and Facilitation) ordinance to provide competitive rates to farmers for their produces. The government has approved the proposal to implement Rejuvenating Watersheds for Agricultural Resilience through Innovative Development (REWARD) project. The government will spend Rs500 crore on science-based watershed management for six years starting from April, 2021. Out of this, the World Bank will provide a loan assistance amounting to 350 crore. The project will benefit 1,90,000 persons including 10,000 poor and landless households, Mahapatra said. The government has also decided to bring in an amendment to the Biju Patnaik University of Technology Act, 2002 for smooth functioning and academic excellence of the university. It was proposed to convert the status of government engineering colleges from constituent colleges of BPUT and bring them under their respective autonomous Board of Governors for proper administration, the Chief Secretary said. It is proposed to re-designate the conventional designation of pro-

₹1.70L cr budget
BHUBANESWAR: The state council of ministers headed by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Tuesday approved annual budget of approximately ₹1.70 lakh crore for the financial year 2021-22. Finance Minister Niranjan Pujari will present the budget in Assembly February 22. The total budget outlay for the year 2020-21 was ₹1.50 lakh crore.

fessors, readers and lecturers as professors, associate professors and assistant professors in line with the all India pattern and as per AICTE norms. A new section has been inserted wherein the chancellor is made competent to issue direction or instruction not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act and statutes on any matter connected with the university when any authority or Vice-Chancellor fails to act in accordance with the provisions of this Act. In order to bring uniformity with other state universities, it is proposed to fix the term of office of the Vice Chancellor of BPUT at four years instead of the current five years. As part of its 5T mantra, the state Cabinet approved the proposed SOPAN (Strategy for Odisha's Pathway to Accelerated Nutrition) scheme for improving nutrition outcomes in 125 blocks of 22 districts in the state. **More P4**

Ultra gets bro killed for leaving Red camp

Malkangiri, Feb 9: A former ultra who surrendered before Chhatisgarh Police to join the mainstream was shot dead by a contract killer hired by his Maoist younger brother in Bijapur district of the neighbouring state, police said. The deceased was identified as Malesh, a former assistant commander of Katrapal Maoist outfit in Bijapur district. Police registered a case and launched a manhunt to nab the killer Maoist and the accused younger brother. Malesh shunned the life of a Maoist and surrendered before police in 2014. He was rehabilitated as per the rehabilitation policy of the government and was appointed as a DRG jawan. However, his younger brother who too was a Maoist refused to leave the outfit. Malesh tried to make his younger brother listen to him and surrender but he refused him each time. The surrender of Malesh did not go down well with his younger brother. He hired a fellow Maoist to eliminate his brother. The contract killer hired by Malesh's younger brother shot him dead January 28. As per a plan, the brother sent a letter to Malesh informing him that he has undergone a change of mind and wanted to surrender before police. Malesh was asked to come to their native village to participate in his surrender event. Malesh was on his way to his village when he was waylaid and shot dead.



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Congress calls for shutdown Feb 15

Bhubaneswar, Feb 9: The Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee Tuesday announced a statewide shutdown February 15 to protest the rising prices of petrol and diesel in the state. PCC President Niranjan Patnaik said the bandh will be observed from 7 am to 1 pm across the state. "We know that the decision will inconvenience the people. But we have been forced to observe the shutdown to create awareness among people about various issues, including record hike in prices of petrol, diesel and cooking gas," said Patnaik. Meanwhile, petrol and diesel prices Tuesday climbed to fresh highs in the country as rates were hiked after a three-day hiatus. Petrol and diesel prices in Bhubaneswar were hiked by 36paise and 38paise per litre respectively, according to state-owned fuel retailers.

RAJIV KAPOOR DIES

MUMBAI: Actor-director Rajiv Kapoor, son of celebrated filmmaker-actor Raj Kapoor, passed away Tuesday. He was 58. Neetu Kapoor, wife of late actor Rishi Kapoor, was the first to confirm the news on Instagram. The cause of death was not known immediately. Rajiv Kapoor made his acting debut with 1983 film 'Ek Jaan Hain Hum', but made first appearance as a hero in blockbuster 'Ram Teri Ganga Maali' (1985), which was Raj Kapoor's last directorial venture. **P2**

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	VARIATION
SENSEX	51329.08	↓ 19.69
NIFTY	15109.30	↓ 6.50
DOLLAR	73.32	↓ ₹0.06
EURO	88.37	↑ ₹0.38
GOLD	₹48,045	↑ ₹206
SILVER	₹69,750	↓ ₹334

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	31.7°C	31.2°C
TEMP MIN	14.2°C	13.5°C
Humidity	91%	78%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

Forecast: Mainly clear sky

U'khand toll up to 31

Dehradun/Joshimath, Feb 9: The toll from the Uttarakhand glacier disaster rose to 31 with five more bodies being recovered, officials said on Tuesday as multiple agencies raced against time to reach about 30 workers trapped inside a tunnel in a power project site and 175 people remained missing. Two of the bodies were recovered from the debris in Raini village, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) officials said, two days after a portion of the Nanda Devi glacier possibly burst its banks and triggered an avalanche and floods in the Alaknanda river system. The State Emergency Operation Centre said five bodies were found in the morning, taking the death toll to 31, and estimated that 175 people are still missing. With the hours tick-

Class IX pupils of 19-20 batch can sit for board exam

Bhubaneswar, Feb 9: Class IX students of 2019-20 academic session in the state can give matriculation exam in May, said Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Tuesday. This decision was taken looking at the students' situation after schools were closed for more than 10 months since March 2020. Due to closure of schools, Class IX students were not able to give their annual exams. In January, the government opened Classes X and XII for completing their syllabi in 100 days before the exam. The state government also opened the schools Monday for Class IX and Class XI students. For students' doubt clearance there will be special classes to be conducted by the schools. The board of secondary education Monday announced the schedule of matric exams to be conducted from May 3 to May 15. This apart, the government also decided that Class XI students of 2019-20 session can sit for Plus II exam. After resumption of physical classes for Classes X and XII students, classes for IX and XI students resumed Monday after more than 10 months due to Covid-19 pandemic. As per the government SOP, physical classes of Classes IX and XI will continue till April 30 from 8:30 am to 10:30 am (Monday to Saturday). Three periods will be taken up for these classes daily. There will be no recess. Sitting arrangements in classrooms have been made keeping in view the size of the rooms so as to ensure that social distancing is maintained.

Army using dogs to detect COVID-19 to cut time delay

New Delhi, Feb 9: In a first for the country, the Indian Army is using its dogs for quick detection of COVID-19 to cut down time delays associated with regular diagnostic techniques. The canine members of the armed force are known for their pronounced olfactory capability and have earlier helped in explosive and narcotics detection, search and rescue operations, and other challenging tasks. Now, they have another job. Two dogs - two-year-old cocker spaniel Casper and one-year-old Jaya, a 'chippiparai', which is an indigenous breed from Tamil Nadu - have been trained to detect COVID-

PIONEERING PAWS

THE INDIAN ARMY HAS AROUND 1,200 DOGS, OUT OF WHICH NEARLY 700 ARE DEPLOYED



A COCKER SPANIEL AND A 'CHIPPIPARAI' TRAINED TO DETECT COVID-19 BY SNIFFING SWEAT, URINE

THEY HAVE SNIFFED OUT 22 POSITIVE CASES OF COVID-19 FROM 800 SAMPLES AT DELHI TRANSIT CAMP

is the first time canines have been used for medical detection in India," he told reporters. To a question on where the dogs are being deployed, Saini said that after their training in September; the dogs were deployed at the Army's transit camp in Delhi in November. From December, they are being deployed at the transit camp in Chandigarh from where troops move to large areas, including the Ladakh region, under the North Command. "Army dogs were successfully trained on specific biomarkers emanating from urine and sweat samples of positive patients. These samples do not contain living virus, but only volatile metabolic biomarkers, which the dogs have been trained to detect. Prior to bringing in front of



SALMA WAS TOLD SHE WOULD NEVER MAKE IT AS AN ACTRESS

Top star Salma Hayek was once told she would never make it as an actress in Hollywood. "First of all, they told me a Mexican is never going to make it because it was impossible for a Mexican to have a leading role in Hollywood," Salma said, reports *femalefirst.co.uk*.

OSCAR-NOMINATED SCREENWRITER JEAN-CLAUDE CARRIERE DIES AT 89

Jean-Claude Carriere, the prolific French screenwriter and novelist who was Oscar-nominated for *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, *That Obscure Object of Desire* and *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*, died Monday at his home in Paris. He was 89. His family confirmed his death due to natural causes.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Sometimes, pressure is a good thing, as it brings out the best in you. You will outshine your colleagues in whatever you choose to do. But your expectations may far exceed the outcome. Ganesha asks that you have patience. Results take time.

TAURUS
Planning your own milestones and celebrating the success of friends is the agenda for the day. Your thoughts will be progressive in business or at work, and any plans you make will make a rock-solid foundation for your future. Social gatherings and parties will beckon with bubbly and bruschetta.

GEMINI
You will be in a spot of bother owing to financial problems today. You will try to reduce your expenses and increase your savings, but circumstances will be such that you will have to spend your money. You will spend your day in all this financial juggling, says Ganesha.

CANCER
You may get a gift from your life partner. Ties with business partners will be good and you will get a good news from them. Time to make new plans for the future with spouse. You will feel greater companionship with spouse, giving you joy.

LEO
Decisions taken in haste will prove to be harmful. You need to carefully weigh the pros and cons of every decision that you take today, considering all the possible alternative thoroughly. You need to be extremely industrious on the work-front as well.

VIRGO
Something you achieve in a most unexpected manner will make you very happy today. But your happiness may possibly be marred by getting agitated about the problems you are facing. You may expect new funds for new projects, says Ganesha. Your business will flourish today.

LIBRA
Ganesha says that you will be able to see a huge change in your personal and social status. Ganesha says that this may be due to medium like television or due to your innovative ideas in your work place. People will be praising you and your work today.

SCORPIO
Your energy levels are on an all time high today, as you plan to begin a new business venture. You are determined to give in your best and toil hard till you succeed in your plans. Well, and the day turns out to be fruitful and worthy when you garner compliments and positive feedback about your work from your peers, says Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS
You take the path of spirituality for the peace of mind and to stay away from the daily humdrum of life. You will not only seek love, but also spread love around you. In a nutshell, a pleasant day in store for you, says Ganesha.

CAPRICORN
You have become workaholic and others may have complains against you for being so busy. But, you should not take to heart as you are finishing off assignments which have been hanging in there for a long time now. Once done with the work, you'll have ample of time for your lover.

AQUARIUS
Amid all the boring work buzz, you will manage to sustain your sense of humour. And, why not? After all, you are an expert at inducing a laugh riot! You are in a gregarious mood and that explains it.

PISCES
You will experience mixed feelings today. On one hand tension and stress about how to set a deteriorating situation right will keep you worried, and on the other hand you will be in a mood to accept things for what they are. What you learn now will be very vital in your development, and will help you progress and become a better person in the future, says Ganesha.

B-Town mourns Ram Teri Ganga Maail actor's exit

Mumbai: Top stars poured their hearts out on social media and recalled the time they spent with late actor Rajiv Kapoor, who died Tuesday in Mumbai.

Veteran singer **Lata Mangeshkar** tweeted: I just got to know about the passing away of the talented actor Rajiv Kapoor, the youngest son of Raj Kapoor Sahab. I'm deeply saddened by the news. May his soul rest in peace.

Madhuri Dixit, who acted in Rajiv's direction **Prem Granth** wrote: "I had the opportunity of working with Rajiv Kapoor in the film *Prem*

Granth. It was a difficult subject which he handled with great maturity though it was his first film. My heartfelt condolences to the Kapoor family. RIP." "Saddened to hear about the untimely demise of Rajiv Kapoor ji. My deepest condolences to the entire family," tweeted **Akshay Kumar**.

"My heartfelt condolences. Sending love and light," **Namrata Shirodkar** commented. **Sunny Deol**, in his tweet, wrote: "Shocked to hear about Rajiv Kapoor's passing. Deepest condolences to the Kapoor family." "Shocked n Devastated on #RajivKapoor passing away. Seen you grow up. Condolences to the entire family. RIP," tweeted producer-director **Boney Kapoor** on his micro blogging site. Noted

director **Ashutosh Gowariker** posted: "Saddened to hear about the passing of Rajiv Kapoor! I was a fan from his *Ram Teri Ganga Maail* days. We had wrapped shoot for my home production *TOOLSIDAS JUNIOR*. Rajiv was so affable and played his part with much fun & ease. Will miss him deeply!"

Netizens flooded social media to pay their condolences. They also sent love and prayers for the Kapoor family, who in the last one year has seen the passing away of Rishi Kapoor in April 2020 and sister Ritu Nanda in January 2020.



When Priyanka was asked to fix her 'proportions'

Los Angeles: Actress Priyanka Chopra says she had been advised in her early days to get a boob job done if she wanted to become an actress in Hindi film industry. The 38-year-old actress, who was crowned Miss World in 2000, has recalled the incident in her autobiography *Unfinished*.

Priyanka shared that the first person she met suggested that she should fix her 'proportions', and her then-manager agreed with the idea.

"After a few minutes of small talk, the director/producer told me to stand up and twirl for him. I did. He stared at me long and hard, assessing me, and then suggested that I get a boob job, fix my jaw, and add a little more cushioning to my butt," she wrote in the book.

She admitted: "I never had the courage to stand up for myself."

"Now on the other side of 35. I know that's a normalised thing that girls hear so often. I fell for it too, even though I consider myself a forward-thinking, smart girl," she added.

IAN S



Kangana compares herself to Streep, Gadot

Mumbai: Actress Kangana Ranaut Tuesday declared she has raw talent like Oscar winning actress Meryl Streep, and skilled action capabilities and glamour like actress Gal Gadot.

She also stated that she is 'open for debate if anyone can show me more range and brilliance of craft than me by any other actress on this planet'.

The actress made her assertion sharing several images from her upcoming films, *Thalaivi* and *Dhaakad*. The photographs show Kangana's physical transformation, when she gained weight for her role in *Thalaivi* and shed the extra kilos for the action film *Dhaakad*.

"Massive transformation alert, The kind of range I display as a performer no other actress on this globe has that right now, I have raw talent like Meryl Streep for layered character depictions but I can also do skilled action and glamour like Gal Gadot #Thalaivi #Dhaakad," she wrote.

"I am open for debate if anyone can show me more range and brilliance of craft than me by any other actress on this planet I promise to give up my arrogance, until then I can surely afford the luxury of pride #Thalaivi #Dhaakad," she added.



Deepika wants to see a world with no death due to mental illness

Mumbai: Actress Deepika Padukone, who has openly spoken about her battle with depression at the peak of her career, says she would like to see a world where no life is lost due to mental illness.

Deepika posted a picture of her organisation, The Live Love Laugh Foundation, on Instagram Monday.

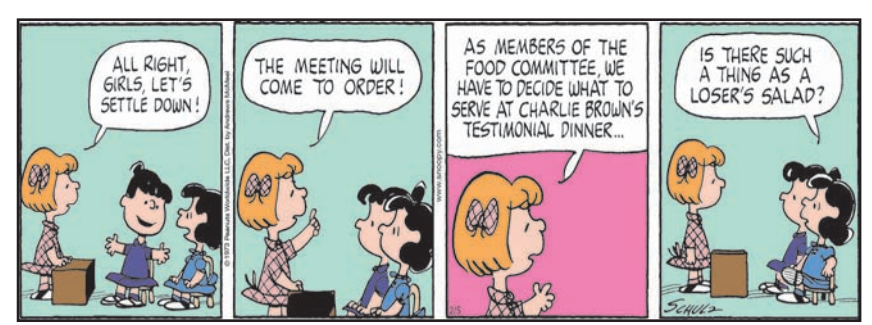
Alongside the image, she wrote: "Mental health is a cause that is extremely personal and dear to me. Over the last 5 years, donors, partners, government authorities and our incredible team have all played a crucial role in LiveLoveLaugh's journey, but the greatest impact has been from those who have had a lived experience with mental illness, and their caregivers."

Deepika added: "I would like to see a world where no life is lost due to mental illness, and LiveLoveLaugh is committed to delivering on that aspiration."

One of the highest paid actor in India, Deepika, who started her career with Om Shanti Om in 2007, has set up a foundation to create awareness on mental health named The Live Love Laugh Foundation in 2015, which creates awareness about stress, anxiety and depression.

IAN S

PEANUTS



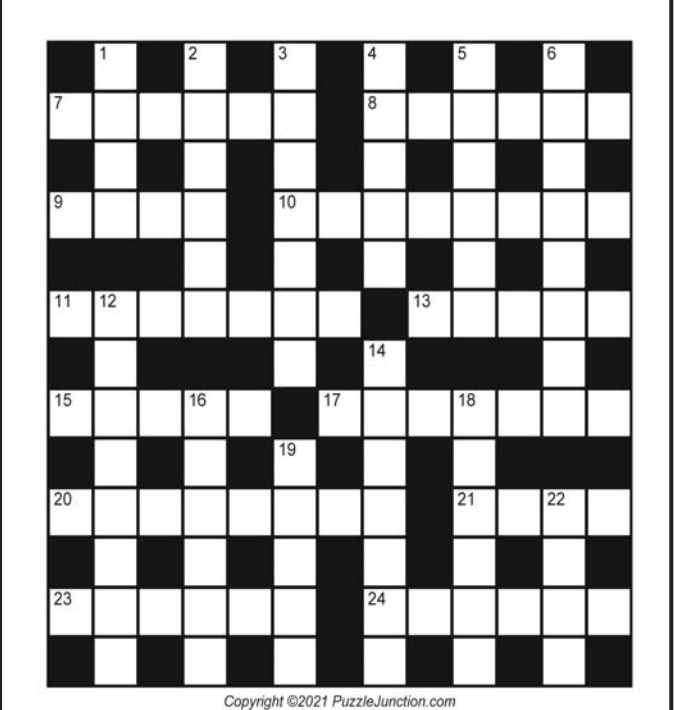
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



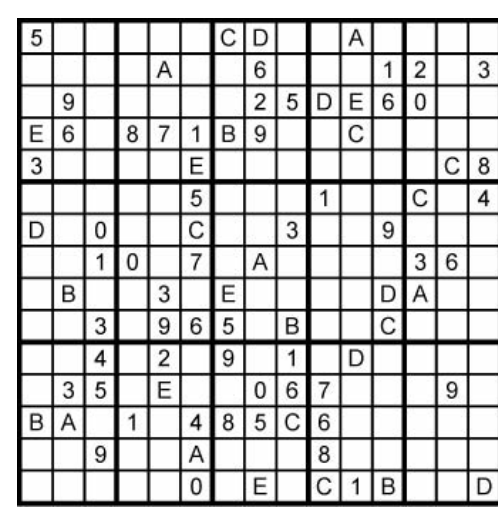
FUN post CROSSWORD



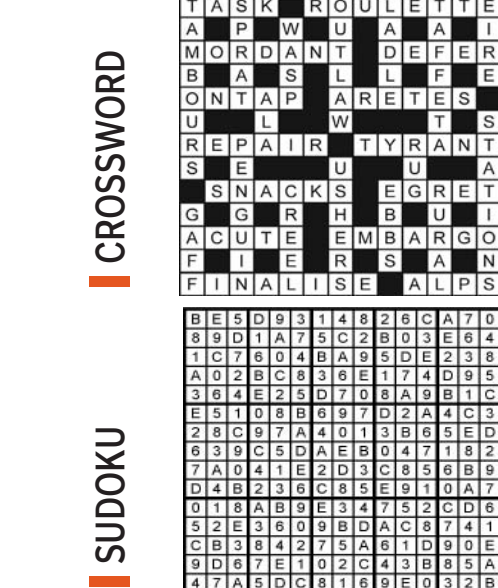
- Across**
- 7 Funny stuff
 - 8 Latin American dance (3-3)
 - 9 Lightly burn
 - 10 Evaluate
 - 11 Stadium treats (3,4)
 - 13 Beer mug
 - 15 Old Roman port
 - 17 Like goats
 - 20 Highwaymen
 - 21 Broad valley
 - 23 Midpoint
 - 24 Give the cold shoulder
- Down**
- 1 Ditty
 - 2 Extremely hot (3,3)
 - 3 Organise
 - 4 Rifle attachment
 - 5 Volcanic rock
 - 6 Bawl out
 - 12 Monitored
 - 14 Diver's gear (3,4)
 - 16 Metal bars
 - 18 Business owner's fear
 - 19 Peruvian peaks
 - 22 Songbird

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS

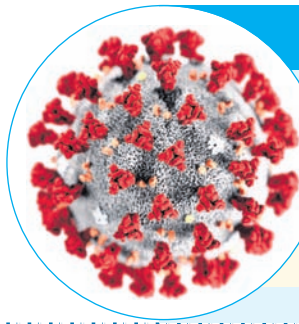


CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



WATER-RICH FRUIT

A woman sells watermelons alongside a road at College Square in Cuttack, Tuesday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	10,71,14,868	7,90,05,929	23,39,402
India	1,07,91,123	1,04,79,508	1,54,742
Odisha	3,35,797	3,33,139	1,910

Investments worth ₹1,242Cr get nod

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 9: In yet another move to create employment opportunities through industrialisation, the state government Tuesday approved eight investment proposals worth Rs 1,242 crore.

The State-Level Single Window Clearance Authority (SLSWCA) headed by Chief Secretary SC Mahapatra has approved the project proposals which will create employment opportunities for 3,135 persons.

The proposal to set up an Integrated Heavy Beach Sands project by IREL IDCOL Ltd at Krushnaprasad in Puri was approved by the government. The project will be set up at an investment of Rs 460 crore and has employment potential for 800 persons.

The government has approved Oricon Enterprises Ltd's proposal to set up a food & beverage unit in Khurda with an investment of Rs 120 crore. This project will generate employment avenues for 110

EMPLOYMENT BOOST



THE PROJECTS WILL CREATE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR 3,135 PERSONS

CHIEF SECRETARY ASKS OFFICIALS TO FACILITATE EARLY GROUNDING AND TIMELY COMMISSIONING OF THE PROJECTS

IPICOL WAS DIRECTED TO PROVIDE NECESSARY HANDHOLDING SUPPORT

crore having employment potential of 345.

Atomized Iron Powder plant project of SLM Powders Private Limited also got government approval. The plant will be set up at IDCO Industrial Estate Kulanga in Sundargarh district with an investment of Rs 67.83 crore. It has the potential to create employment opportunities for 430 persons.

Surya International's proposal to set up an electronic manufacturing unit at Info Valley in Khurda with a cost of Rs 67.50 crore was approved by the single window authority. The project will provide employment to 680 persons.

Mahapatra directed the departments concerned to facilitate early grounding and commissioning of the projects.

Industrial Promotion & Investment Corporation of Odisha (IPICOL) was directed to provide necessary handholding support. Industry Secretary Hemant Sharma presented the scrutinized projects with its financial, product and technical details for discussion.

persons.

Logistics Park proposal by Jagannath Industrial and Logistics Parks Private Limited at Tangi-Choudwar in Cuttack district also got government nod. The park will be set up with an investment of Rs 140 crore and provide employment to 110 youths.

Similarly, Pravat Hospitality Private Limited will set up a 5-star

hotel-cum-luxury resort in Puri at an investment of Rs 135.69 crore. The project is likely to create 350 jobs.

The panel approved the proposal of Swosti Premium Ltd to set up a 5-star luxury resort in Puri. The cost of the project is Rs 134 crore with an job potential of 310.

A 4-star hotel will be set up by Hotel Eden Roc in Bhubaneswar with an investment of Rs 117

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Govt to move SC on Kotia issue

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 9: The state government is all set to knock doors of the Supreme Court challenging Andhra Pradesh government's announcement to conduct panchayat election in three villages of Kotia gram panchayat in Koraput district February 13 and 17.



Law department deputy secretary Bhagaban Nayak Tuesday directed Advocate on Record (AOR) Sibho Sankar Mishra to file a writ petition before the apex court challenging the notification of State Election Commission, Andhra Pradesh to hold panchayat elections in three villages of Kotia GP which are under the territorial jurisdiction of Odisha.

Mishra is the AOR Supreme Court lawyer empanelled by the state government to appear for it in the court. The Revenue and Disaster Management department has been asked to provide Mishra all the relevant documents for filing the petition.

A case of border dispute between the two states over Kotia cluster of villages is sub-judice in SC Supreme Court.

While Odisha claims that three village are in its jurisdiction, Andhra Pradesh avers that they are located under Salur mandal in Vizianagaram district.

Odisha government has been objecting to Andhra Pradesh government's alleged move to lure the inhabitants of the Kotia cluster of villages by giving them additional rations and other benefits.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik recently inaugurated Rs 18 crore development projects for Kotia gram panchayat and laid the foundation stone for other projects worth Rs five crore for the region.

(MORE PAGE - 5)

No Khandagiri Mela this year, says BMC

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 9: Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Commissioner Prem Chandra Chaudhary Tuesday said that the traditional Magha Saptami Mela organised at Khandagiri with much fanfare every year will not be held this year in view of Covid-19 pandemic.

However, the usual rituals of Magha Saptami may be conducted in strict adherence to Covid safety protocols, said the BMC Commissioner.

Despite the assurance from Jatra Committee that had submitted proposals and undertakings to abide by Covid-19 safety protocols, the BMC observed that due to the on-going expansion work on NH-16 the road being used is extremely narrow and there will be serious traffic snarl if the opera shows are allowed.

The BMC Commissioner also said that the law and order issue due to congregation of large number of people will be a cause of concern. Further, there will be no space available on the road to accommodate temporary erection of stalls. "There is apprehension that maintenance



Civic officials said that law and order issue due to gathering of large number of people will be a cause of concern

of social distancing as per Covid-19 safety protocol will be impossible due to expected large congregation which will endanger public safety, read the order, adding, "Now, therefore, in view of public safety it has been decided that the Magha Saptami Mela (Khandagiri Mela) will not be held for this year."

It's worth mentioning here that a writ petition was filed in Orissa High Court seeking a directive to allow the 'Khandagiri Mela'. But the court dismissed the petition and directed the local authorities to take a decision in this regard.

On morning walk, lady loses gold chain to muggers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 9: Three unidentified bike-borne miscreants snatched a gold chain from a woman in Jharpada area of the Capital city Tuesday morning.

The incident took place at around 7am when victim Manorama Sahoo was out for her daily morning walk. She tried to resist the miscreants who tugged at her chain. In the process, Manorama fell down and suffered bruises, it was learnt.



According to a source, the woman was on her regular morning walk Tuesday and was on her way home. The three youths were waiting for her near an apartment. As she got close to the building, one youth walked up to her and threatened her with a sharp weapon which he placed on her neck. He snatched the gold chain and the trio fled the spot on a motorcycle.

Tipped off about the incident, police launched a manhunt to nab the accused. They are scanning the footage captured in the CCTV cameras installed in the locality, it was learnt.

Check twice before buying kitchen items

With the seizure of adulterated ghee, sauce, turmeric and chilli powder from various manufacturing units in Cuttack, concerns have been raised regarding food safety. At least 5 tonnes of adulterated food materials worth several lakhs were destroyed by the officials, Tuesday



PICS: RAJKISHORE MOHANTY

AP govt all set to conduct panchayat polls in Kotia

POST NEWS NETWORK

Pottangi, Feb 9: Odisha government's attempts to make Kotia panchayat under Pottangi block in Koraput district free from the Andhra Pradesh administration is yet to have any positive effect as the AP government is going ahead with its plans to conduct panchayat elections in three newly-formed panchayats.

While sarpanchs of two panchayats won uncontested, it has been learnt that the villagers of the third panchayat will exercise their franchise coming February 13. All the arrangements for the election are at the last stage.

According to sources, the Andhra Pradesh government has renamed

Ganjeipadar village of Kotia panchayat as Ganjei Bhadra panchayat. In this panchayat, Dambu Gemel, Bishu Gemel and Dibakar Gemel had filed their nominations as sarpanch candidates. Later, Dambu and Bishu had withdrawn their nomination papers, paving way for Dibakar to be the sarpanch of Ganjei Bhadra panchayat.

Similarly, the Andhra Pradesh government has changed the name of Phagunasineri village of Kotia panchayat to Patugu Chenuru. For the panchayat election here, Kuneti Kusuamma, wife of Beturu Hareka, has filed her nomination papers for sarpanch post. Since she is the sole candidate, she has already been considered as the next sarpanch of newly-formed



Dibakar Gemel of Ganjeipadar village of 'Ganjei Bhadra' panchayat (renamed by AP government) won uncontested as the sarpanch

Patugu Chenuru panchayat. The third village of Kotia panchayat where panchayat election will be held is Phatusinery, which

Reportedly, sarpanchs of two panchayats won uncontested, while the villagers of the third panchayat will exercise their franchise coming February 13. All the arrangements are in the last leg.

The Andhra Pradesh government has reportedly renamed Ganjeipadar village of Kotia panchayat as Ganjei Bhadra panchayat. Dibakar Gemel won uncontested to be the sarpanch of Ganjei Bhadra panchayat after two other candidates withdrew their nominations.

Sub-collector Bijay Kher and Salur tehsildar K Srinibas Rao from Andhra Pradesh have paid a visit to Kotia Monday to give finishing touch to election preparations

has been renamed as Patuchenuru by the Andhra Pradesh government. Here, Kami Himirika, Kondapali Paidi Taliamma of Belagabalasa village in Andhra Pradesh and Sidharapo Kami of Phatusinery village have filed their nomination papers for the sarpanch post. Meanwhile, Kami Himirika has withdrawn his nomination papers, leaving two contestants.

Notably, Phatusinery, or Patuchenuru panchayat has eight wards. There are 1,027 voters in 32 villages. The villagers said they will participate in the February 13 election. Sub-collector Bijay Kher and Salur tehsildar K Srinibas Rao from Andhra Pradesh have paid a visit to Kotia Monday.

WANTED

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MAHANADI WATER DISPUTE

CWC denies valuation of four ongoing projects in state

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bolangir, Feb 9: The dispute over Mahanadi water sharing between Chhattisgarh and Odisha has seriously hit the implementation of four ongoing projects in the state, a report said.

The Mahanadi water dispute has backfired on the state as Central Water Commission returned the Detailed Project Reports (DPR) of four projects, including the Lower Suktel Irrigation Project, the report said. The four projects being implemented in the Mahanadi river basin are Tel Multi-purpose Project, Lower Suktel Irrigation Project, Khadang Barrage Project and Telijor Irrigation Project.

The CWC has returned the DPR of Tel MPR, the second DPR of Lower Suktel and the feasibility of Khadang barrage project and Telijor irrigation project.

The matter came to light following a reply to an application filed by rights activist Hemant Kumar Panda under Right to Information Act (RTI). This has been informed by the Union Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation department in a response to the RTI query; Panda said while addressing a press meet here, Monday.

According to Panda, the Centre formed the Mahanadi Water Tribunal following a demand of the state and on the order of the apex



Lower Suktel Irrigation Project

court. On the basis of the tribunal's award, the CWC directed the state to file the revised outlay of the four projects, October 3, 2019. Since then 16 months have passed but the state government has remained silent on the issue.

Even as the CWC has returned the DPR of four projects, the political leaders and government officials are not speaking the truth but creating confusion by making unnecessary presentations on Lower Suktel Project and Mahanadi, Panda alleged.

He even questioned the visit of a high-level committee comprising state Chief Secretary, WODC chairman and ST Secretary to Lower Suktel project site a few days back, saying that people were not properly informed and many things have been concealed from them.

Reports said that the state gov-

ernment termed the construction of a barrage by the Chhattisgarh government in the upstream of Hirakud illegal and raised objections to it. The Chief Ministers of the two states had a meeting to resolve the issue, September 17, 2016.

In the meeting, the then Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Raman Singh h argued in the presence of his Odisha counterpart that the barrage constructions in his state started 10 years back. As a result, the barrage works were not stopped but it had a reverse effect in the case of Odisha. The work on the Lower Suktel project which started 20 years back has been stopped.

He said, after the CWC denied carrying out the valuation of the under-construction projects, it is unfortunate that the state government has remained silent on the issue.

Odia man missing after U'khand glacier burst

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhadrak, Feb 9: Among the more than 150 people still missing due to the glacier burst in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district Sunday morning, is a 25-year-old youth from Odisha. He has been identified as Nagarjuna Das, a resident of Dharma area in Bhadrak district. He was working as an electrician at Tapovan Reni barrage under Rishi Ganga Power Project in Uttarakhand since November 5, 2020.

Even though there is every possibility of Nagarjuna being washed away due to the massive floods caused by the glacier burst, his family members have not given up hope. They still believe that he is alive. A source said that the last time Nagarjuna's family members had spoken to him over phone was February 6. Worried, family members had tried to contact Nagarjuna over his mobile.

MOCK DRILL



Personnel of NDRF take part in a mock drill on the disaster management and safe rescue operation on the premises of Rourkela Steel Plant, Tuesday

Malkangiri girl breaks stereotypes, lights dad's pyre

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Feb 9: Setting aside the age-old Hindu tradition of only male members being allowed to light the pyres of their parents, a girl in this district carried the bier of her father to cremation ground and also lit the pyre.

Meet Sanjukta Nayak of Pradhaniguda village in Malkangiri district headquarters for whom duty took precedence over tradition. There are several instances where families have been forced to



face social boycott and wrath of fellow villagers for allowing girls to conduct rituals traditionally conducted by men. However, Sanjukta has been praised for showing

In the past, families have been forced to face social boycott and wrath of co-villagers for allowing girls to light the pyre

courage in breaking the age-old tradition.

According to a source, Satyanarayan Nayak (55) met with a road accident Monday and died. He did not have a son so the family

members and relatives were in a fix. Then Sanjukta came forward and expressed the desire to light her father's pyre. Initially, her family members and local villagers were taken aback by her proposal, but they eventually accepted her request. "If girls can fly aircraft, run trains and travel to space, what is wrong in allowing a girl to light her father's pyre," some villagers observed.

Notably, Satyanarayan was earning the livelihood for his family as an auto-rickshaw driver.

Families allege 'social boycott', stage sit-in

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhadrak, Feb 9: Some families are allegedly facing social boycott at Tiadisahi under Tihidi block in Bhadrak after they sought information under the RTI Act regarding alleged irregularities in relief distribution.

The members of these families staged a sit-in at the Collectorate here seeking justice, Tuesday.

They alleged that a village head has enforced social boycott against them and demanded action against government official who had misappropriated relief material by forging signatures of some dead beneficiaries.

Sasmita Mallick, Pramila Das, Abasi Das and Seshab Das alleged



that Barasar panchayat was severely affected by floods in 2020. The state government had made provision of relief for the affected. The relief was distributed according to the 2011 census. However, relief material meant for of beneficiaries like Pagali Das, Mohan Das and Gangadhar Das, who are now dead, was misappropriated.

Fate plays cruel joke on Rinki

Assuming her to be dead, Rinki's husband Nabakishore Kabat had set their house on fire - little did he realise that his wife was still alive

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, Feb 9: Fate couldn't have played a crueler joke on Rinki Mahakud (26). Assuming her to be dead, Rinki's husband had set their house on fire. Little did he realise that his wife was still alive. When Rinki's agonising screams pierced his ears, it was too late. The house was reduced to ashes and Rinki was charred beyond recognition.

This is the heart-wrenching story behind the murder of Rinki (26) at Chunaragadi village under Kankadahad police limits in Dhenkanal district. Her husband Nabakishore Kabat had slapped her and she had collapsed. Assuming that Rinki had died, Nabakishore



doused the kitchen with kerosene and put it on fire.

But Rinki was not dead. She had just been unconscious. Due to the flames, she regained her senses and cried for help. However, by then it was too late as Nabakishore could

not save her. The police recovered Rinki's body February 6.

Nabakishore, during police interrogation, confessed to his crime. He was arrested and produced in a court Monday and was remanded to judicial custody as his bail plea was rejected.

According to the police, Nabakishore married Rinki of Badakathia village under Bhuban police limits in Dhenkanal district March 2017. They have a two-year-old daughter. The couple had been quarrelling regularly for the last few days. The scene turned ugly on the night of February 5. In the heat of the moment, Nabakishore slapped Rinki. She lost her sense and collapsed.

Ruins of twin forts lie neglected in Sunabeda sanctuary

POST NEWS NETWORK

Tarbod/Naupada, Feb 9: The ruins of ancient Jumagarh and Manikgarh forts are lying scattered amidst the dense forest of Sunabeda wildlife sanctuary in Naupada district. The damaged sculptures are the testimony of history and the lineage of monarchs in the region. Unfortunately, the state government and the Archeology department have not turned their attention to restore restoration and maintenance the treasures, a report said.

Historians and archeological experts have now undertaken archeological research at the site to learn about the history of the monarchy in the region. "If the sites lying hidden in the forests are excavated, the archeological findings would disclose many unknown aspects of Odisha's history," said Dr Ranbir Singh, head of the Archeology department in Khariel Autonomous College.

A team of researchers and histori-



ans led by Ranbir Singh had visited the sites inside the Sunabeda sanctuary a few days ago. In the Jonk river basin, lie the ruined walls of Manikgarh fort, which were built with stones. A part of the fort is still existent.

On visiting the spot, the team comprising culture researchers Mayadhar

Saraf, Ajit Panda, Tapan Ranjan Das, Prameswar Barik, Mukesh Kumar Sahu, Sunil Kumar Sahu and Dambarudhar Majhi found that the Jumlagarh fort was built with both stones and baked bricks. Besides, there are some broken stupas (mound or round structures) at the site.

IN THE JONK RIVER BASIN, LIE THE RUINED WALLS OF MANIKGARH FORT, WHICH WERE BUILT WITH STONES. A PART OF THE FORT IS STILL EXISTENT

It is believed that both the forts had been developed at during the Maraguda civilization in the district. Though the area is rich in valuable archeological remains, there has been no survey or excavation in the area, the team said.

Dr Singh noted that if the Archeology department undertakes excavation at the fort sites, more valuable information relating to Odisha's Odisha history will be unearthed.

Government of Odisha "e" Procurement Notice

e-mail ID: rw_sambalpur@yahoo.co.in, Phone No. 0663-2401850
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 No. 568 Dated: 08.02.2021

- Name of the Work : Building Works as per DTCN available in the website: www.tendersodisha.gov.in
- Total No. of Work : 01 (One) No.
- Estimated Cost : Rs. 14.73 lakhs
- Period of Completion : 03 (Three) Calendar Months
- Period and time of availability of bid document in the portal : 11.02.2021 at 11.00 A.M. to 20.02.2021 upto 5.00 P.M. for bidding
- Date and time of opening of tender : 22.02.2021 at 11.00 A.M.
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Government of India

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan)
 5th Floor, Pt. Deendayal Antyodaya Bhawan, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi -110003
Inviting applications for financial support under National Fund for Persons with Disabilities

Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Government of India is implementing Scheme under National Fund for Persons with Disabilities for empowerment of Divyangjan w.e.f. 28th August, 2018. The Department invites applications for financial support to Divyangjan in the following areas: -

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- Support persons with high support needs as recommended by the State Assessment Board on a case to case basis.

2. For details of the scheme and how to apply, please visit website of the Department <http://disabilityaffairs.gov.in>. Please send hardcopy of your application in prescribed proforma to the officer whose name and address is mentioned in the scheme as well as email to nfdpepwd@gmail.com. You can apply round the year. Please contact 011-24369054 for any queries.

DAVP 38117/11/0060/2021

(Director)

FOCUS POLITICS

DEMAGOGUES VS DICTATORS



To be sure, demagogues in modern democracies can do a lot of harm, even if they cannot (and do not intend to) abolish elections, establish police states, and put their opponents in concentration camps

Throughout Donald Trump's single term as president of the United States, his opponents in both the Democratic and Republican parties frequently portrayed him as a would-be fascist dictator. But with Trump ousted from the White House, this analogy has become untenable. The Italian leader Trump resembles most is not the fascist dictator Benito Mussolini but rather Silvio Berlusconi, the scandal-prone former prime minister. Figures like Trump and Berlusconi – tycoons or media celebrities who ran for office as anti-establishment populist demagogues – are not uncommon in contemporary Western democracies. In Europe, the list includes elected leaders like Czech Prime Minister Andrej Babiš, one of the country's wealthiest men; former Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, previously his country's "Chocolate King"; and his successor, Volodymyr Zelensky, a comic actor who had previously played a Ukrainian president on television. Although Trump is the first true demagogue to be elected to the American presidency, the entertainer or plutocrat who wins office by posing as a champion of the common people has been a staple of mayoral and gubernatorial races for generations. Media celebrity, in particular, has become an increasingly common basis for electoral success in America. In the 1930s, the country music radio star W. Lee "Pappy" O'Daniel became governor of Texas and then a US Senator. In the 1960s-80s, Ronald Reagan famously made the transition from Hollywood actor to California governor and then to the White House. Similarly, Jesse Helms, the late US senator from North Carolina, started out as a right-wing radio star. Then, in 1999, the TV wrestling celebrity Jesse Ventura (who, along with Trump, had attempted to take over Ross Perot's Reform Party) was elected to a single term as Minnesota's governor, and in 2003, the movie star Arnold Schwarzenegger became governor of California with no prior political experience. (Ventura had previously served as mayor of a Minneapolis suburb.) Populist demagogues in democratic countries generally do not intend to create police states, and they could not even if they tried. Whereas interwar fascist dictators were backed by their countries' military, police, bureaucratic, and business establishments, populists rely on the support of alienated non-elite groups and are typically opposed by most of the other power centers in society. Hence, many flamboyant demagogues in the American South – such as Louisiana Governor (and then US Senator) Huey P. Long or the husband-and-wife team of populist Texas governors, James "Pa" and Miriam "Ma" Ferguson – represented small farmers and the white working class against the rich gentry who monopolised wealth and political office in their states. Some demagogues exploit minority ethnic groups' bitterness over their own exclusion from wealth and power. In the first half of the twentieth century, James Michael Curley, the corrupt four-term mayor of Boston and one-term governor of Massachusetts, won and held power by representing working-class Irish-Americans against the Anglo-American Protestant elite – the so-called Boston Brahmins. But while populist demagogues can identify legitimate grievances among some voters, they almost never deliver on their promises to followers. Some, like O'Daniel in Texas, become fronts for establishment interests, whereas

others merely create personal patronage machines, using their official powers to reward family members or cronies. Very rarely do demagogues create new institutional structures that can carry out reforms long after they leave office. In Curley's case, his Harvard-educated son-in-law, Edward Donnelly, played a role similar to that of Trump's Harvard-educated son-in-law, Jared Kushner. In Louisiana, Long created a family dynasty that included his brother Earl, who followed him as governor, and Russell Long, who became a long-serving US senator from Louisiana. In any case, demagogic populists' political careers tend to be rich in scandal and corruption. Whereas Berlusconi had his infamous "bunga bunga" parties, Trump had the "Access Hollywood" tape, where he boasted about sexually assaulting women. And then there are the instances of graft and outright crime. Like Curley, Berlusconi was sentenced to prison. As Louisiana's political boss in the 1930s, Long made a deal with the New York gangster Frank Costello to share gambling profits in the state, even as his minions "deeducted" money from state government payrolls to benefit a campaign slush fund that became known as the "deduct box." In Texas, Pa and Ma Ferguson financed their political machine by selling pardons to the families

of convicted criminals. Recent reports that Trump allies were paid to lobby the outgoing president for pardons reek of corruption, not dictatorship.

Of course, the storming of the US Capitol by Trump supporters has inevitably led to facile comparisons to Nazi Storm Troopers and Italian Fascist Blackshirts. But America's own history offers more accurate analogies for understanding the MAGA mob. It is no accident that in Tennessee Williams' 1959 play *Sweet Bird of Youth*, the character of Boss Finley, the demagogic leader of a Southern state, has his own criminal gang ("Youth for Tom Finley") whom he unleashes against his political opponents.

To be sure, demagogues in modern democracies can do a lot of harm, even if they cannot (and do not intend to) abolish elections, establish police states, and put their opponents in concentration camps. But opposing demagogic populists when they appear is not enough. We also need to understand the conditions that allow this species of politician to flourish.

When major groups in society have adequate representation through electoral politics and institutions like trade unions, religious organisations, and community groups, populist demagogues seldom find significant public support. It is only when large groups in a given city, state, province, or country feel disfranchised and ignored by conventional leaders that they are tempted to turn to flamboyant outsiders who claim to represent them, even though they usually represent only themselves.

Unfortunately, while wealth and status are becoming increasingly concentrated in modern Western societies, intermediate institutions and local communities have decayed, and traditional political parties have declined to the point of being mere labels that billionaires and media celebrities can easily co-opt. That means the conditions will remain ripe for more Berlusconi – and for more Trumps.

The writer is Professor of Practice at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin.

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Michael Lind

POPULISTS RELY ON THE SUPPORT OF ALIENATED NON-ELITE GROUPS AND ARE TYPICALLY OPPOSED BY MOST OF THE OTHER POWER CENTERS IN SOCIETY

Tweet Plot

We have every one of us a role to fulfill, a work to do, a place which we alone can occupy.

THE MOTHER



What has been in the realm of suspicion, surmise and disbelief will now be probed to ascertain whether there was truth in it or not.

There could be high voltage politics in the move to investigate the matter, but one way to get to the bottom of it is the Maharashtra government's decision on February 8 to order an inquiry into the tweets by celebrities such as cricketer Sachin Tendulkar and singer Lata Mangeshkar. Their tweets were a sharp rejoinder to those by international celebrities like pop icon Rihanna, Swedish environment activist Greta Thunberg among others. The international celebs had incurred the ire of some Indian celebrities of the celluloid and sports world for expressing their solidarity with the farmers' agitation against three contentious farm laws.

The Maharashtra government's decision also comes in the midst of a war of attrition between the Central government and Twitter over the dissemination of information on the same issue. The government is mulling action against Twitter for not complying with the order, with speculation of slapping a seven-year jail term for some of its officials.

The Maharashtra government has ordered the probe to find out whether the BJP-led NDA government had coerced Tendulkar, Mangeshkar and other celebrities into joining the Twitter chorus against the foreign celebrities. These Indian names lent their support in line with what the Ministry of External Affairs had officially stated condemning some of the international tweets. Many of the tweets by celebrities such as Tendulkar, Mangeshkar, actor Akshay Kumar, filmmaker Karan Johar and the Indian cricket team head coach Ravi Shastri included the hashtag #IndiaAgainstPropaganda in response to the tweets from international personalities. The Maharashtra government's probe will investigate whether these big names and others were pressured into tweeting by the central authorities. It is also likely to look into the reasons for identical tweets being posted by some of these people.

Announcing the probe, Home Minister of Maharashtra Anil Deshmukh said if a person opines on his or her own, it's fine but there's room for suspicion that the BJP could be behind this spate of tweets which are nothing but attempts to drum up support of the country's iconic figures in defence of the government's handling of the farmers' agitation. For this reason he has given orders to the intelligence department to probe the Twitter response from India.

Maharashtra Congress chief Sachin Sawant at a press conference said the timing of the tweets by Tendulkar, badminton champion Saina Nehwal and actor Suniel Shetty looked dubious. The pattern followed in the tweets has given rise to the suspicion that there could be some communication between the celebrities and the Union government, he claimed.

Recently, Nationalist Congress Party leader Sharad Pawar had asked Tendulkar to be more careful while speaking on farmers' issues. "I would suggest to Sachin (Tendulkar) that he should be careful while speaking on the issues related to other fields," Pawar said. In fact, Tendulkar's tweet was the "most unkindest cut of all" for the farmers. The cricketing icon is adored by many for his genius irrespective of one's political affiliation as he stays away from political controversies. But, his tweet was an indirect condemnation of the agitating farmers which appears most uncharacteristic of the cricketing maestro.

What strengthens the suspicion about the coercion charge is the BJP's response to Maharashtra government's decision to probe. Within hours of the announcement, former Chief Minister of the state Devendra Fadnis questioned the state government's sanity. Mounting a fierce attack, Fadnis stated the state government should be ashamed of even using the term "probe" against Bharat Ratnas - Lata Mangeshkar and Sachin Tendulkar. "It now seems necessary to probe the mental state and stability of the ones who made such a demand," Fadnis said in a tweet. He has even invoked "Marathi Pride" to dissuade the government from the probe.

The state government asserts its intent is not to show any disrespect to the celebrities, but to find out if any pressure was put on them, in which case they need protection.

The question is if the BJP had no hand in the celebrities' Twitter response, why is the party getting so worked up over the probe order. A sad fact of the internet revolution is that weaponisation of the media – social and mainstream – has become a lethal political tool to remain entrenched in power.

Looking at the list of Indian big names, it is evident that people like Karan Johar could easily have been coerced to tweet in favor of the Union government because of the pending drug abuse investigation of the Bombay film industry in the Sushant Singh Rajput case. Similarly, people like Sachin, Saina, Suniel or Lata would be easy meat if any Income Tax or Enforcement Directorate peon would have called them up and dictated the tweets along with the hashtags. The Maharashtra government's probe result might help create a healthy atmosphere for the future in such matters.

WISDOM CORNER

- There is no greater harm than that of time wasted. MICHELANGELO
- Always seek out the seed of triumph in every adversity. OG MANDINO
- Remember that failure is an event, not a person. ZIG ZIGLAR

WORDSWORTH

Make no bones about it

This is so ancient, dating practically from time immemorial, that it has long since achieved the status of an idiom. When you think about it, the saying is certainly odd. Why should the notion of having no hesitation or scruples in speaking about or dealing with some matter, no matter how awkward or unpleasant, have any connections with bones? It has been argued that the phrase had its origin in dice games, since dice have been called bones since the fourteenth century at the latest, for the good reason that they were originally carved from bone. The image presumably is that the player doesn't stop to call on Dame Fortune or talk to the dice after the manner of craps players ("Baby needs new shoes!") but just rolls them. A more probable, but somewhat surprising, origin is from the meal table. The oldest version of the expression is to find bones in something, meaning to find a difficulty or objection in some course of action. The first example is from one of the Paston letters of 1459. It seems to have been linked especially with soup: to have a bone in that certainly presented difficulties in eating it. To find no bones in something meant that you had no problems or difficulties. The idiom seems to have grown out of that. There are other expressions connected with bones, such as having a bone to pick with somebody (to have a dispute with that person) and bone of contention (something that causes discord or dissension). Both seem to be connected with the way that a meaty bone thrown to a group of dogs will cause intense rivalry and dispute.

LOL

We are the best of friends

The patient shook his doctor's hand in gratitude and said, "Since we are the best of friends, I would not want to insult you by offering payment. But I would like for you to



know that I had mentioned you in my will." "That is very kind of you," said the doctor emotionally, and then added, "Can I see that prescription I just gave you? I'd like to make a little change."

IN JEST THIS

Too much monkeying around in city



Melvin Durai

WE IMPRISON HUMANS FOR BURGLARY AND THEFT, BUT THE ONLY MONKEYS WE PUT BEHIND BARS ARE THE ONES WHO HAVEN'T COMMITTED ANY CRIMES

Monkeys are a nuisance in many parts of India and the rest of the world, partly because they have a propensity to steal food and other objects. Monkeys are the gangsters of the animal world. Not all monkeys, of course, but the ones you come across in cities who haven't yet found religion.

They travel around in gangs and get away with all kinds of crimes, largely because we don't take their actions seriously enough. We think they're just monkeying around, but if any humans choose to monkey around in similar fashion, we throw them in jail.

We imprison humans for burglary and theft, but the only monkeys we put behind bars are the ones who haven't committed any crimes. Go to any zoo and you will find innocent monkeys being imprisoned. Meanwhile, their thieving kin are wandering free. They're committing crimes without consequences, without even bribing the police. Just drive around a big city like

Delhi and you'll probably spot a monkey stealing some food from someone, perhaps a vendor at a roadside stall. Tell a policeman about it and he'll just shake his head and give you an expression that says, "That's what monkeys do."

Like other animals, many monkeys are just hungry and scavenging for food, but unlike dogs and cats, they're very skilled at swiping. Some are just beginner thieves, still learning the tricks of the trade, while others are experts, possessing master's degrees from MIT (Monkey Institute of Thievery).

Monkeys are a lot smarter than we think. They've been known to break into apartments, open refrigerators and help themselves to food. They've also been known to steal objects from people and hold them for ransom. Only when the people pay them in monkey currency (fruit, cracker, etc.) do they relinquish the objects.

A group of scientists studied these ransom-seeking monkeys and recently published a paper

about them in a Royal Societyscience journal. The monkeys in the study – long-tailed macaques that roam freely around Uluwatu Temple in Bali, Indonesia – didn't just seek food as payment for the objects they had stolen, they were able to figure out which items were more valuable and negotiate a higher reward for them.

If a monkey stole a tourist's hat, the tourist could offer the monkey a cracker and get it back. But if the monkey stole a cellphone, a cracker wouldn't suffice. The tourist would have to give the monkey a bag containing a few pieces of fruit, as well as tickets to watch the latest Shahrukh Khan movie.

You may believe that these monkeys are just "monkeying around," but the sophistication of their scheme should scare you. What happens if these monkeys stop returning cellphones to tourists and others? What if they instead make phone calls to people, impersonating government officials, claiming that taxes are owed and de-

manding repayment in the form of bananas?

You may think this is farfetched, but there are many reports of monkeys behaving more and more like humans. Last May, for example, a group of monkeys attacked a laboratory technician at a state-run medical college in Meerut, Uttar Pradesh.

"Monkeys grabbed and fled with the blood samples of four COVID-19 patients who are undergoing treatment," Dr SK Garg, a top official at the college, told Reuters. "We had to take their blood samples again."

Garg and others were not sure what the monkeys did with the blood samples, but I have my own theory. The monkeys took the samples to their lab at MIT. They injected each other with human blood, part of a grand scheme to help them become smarter criminals. Before long, they'll be stealing credit cards and ordering biryani for themselves through Zomato. The worst part is, I don't think the monkeys will tip the driver.

Debacle at home

Sir, Cricketing fans were deeply hurt at the defeat team India suffered Tuesday at Chepauk. The men in white had brought laurels to the country a few days back when they had registered a historic win over the Kangaroos on their home turf. The tables turned on the Indians now at home when the inaugural Test match after a long gap was convincingly won by England led by Joe Root who contributed a lion's share in his team's run box. Certainly, credit goes to this valiant skipper who had made enough homework before taking on the Indian team, considered the best combination in the Test format. Reasons for the Indian debacle can be attributed to two important aspects; one, a sense of complacency accruing from the Australia tour; and two, the field conditions. Win over their opponent abroad must have given enough impetus to the hosts as they were facing the visitors, a little less formidable team. Moreover, Indian tailenders who had exhibited enough grit in all the encounters in Australia failed to repeat the performances. It is for the team management in India to select a winning combination for the remaining matches. It is desirable that too much experimentation may not work well. However, the youngsters in the team must face the forthcoming challenges in a coordinated way so that the series is not snatched away from them.

Sanjib Das, CUTTACK

Education for all

Sir, It is welcome to note that the Kerala Infrastructure and Technology for Education (KITE) has launched audio books for all students, with a special focus on the visually-challenged children. The KITE has also released audio books and sign language adapted classes highlighting the focus areas for Classes X and XII for the annual examination, as part of its 'First Bell' Digital Classes aired through the KITE VICTERS educational channel. The revision classes in audio books shall be heard in an enjoyable way like listening to a radio program and are easily downloadable and shareable in mp3 format and this is the first such module in the country in the general education sector. This is a praiseworthy move to ensure inclusive education for children with special needs on digital platforms. The National Education Policy 2020 also emphasises providing an appropriate educational environment for all.

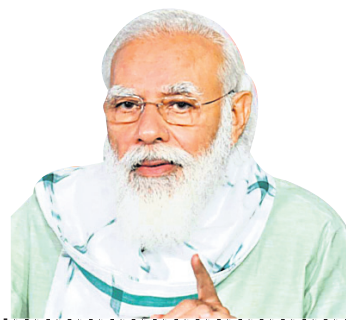
Amit Singh Kushwaha, SATNA (MP)

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST
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I want to assure every Afghan brother and sister, from Badakhshan to Nimroz and Herat to Kandahar that India stands with you. At every step of your journey of patience, courage and determination, India will be with you

NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

NEW TECH TO COMBAT AIR POLLUTION

The Delhi Government claimed Tuesday that it will set up advanced real time resources to monitor air pollution in the city. Sources said the project will take off under the supervision of the Indian Institute of Technology - Kanpur



of the day quote

There is no reason to think I am weak, I am not a person to be afraid of anything. I am a strong person and will keep my head high as long as I live and till then I will live like a Royal Bengal Tiger

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

We need to avoid crowding at public places to control the spread of the coronavirus

RAJESH TOPE | MAHARASHTRA HEALTH MINISTER

People have only seen the politics of cut-money in the last 10-years here. Trinamool leaders have misappropriated the relief funds that the Centre had sent for cyclone-ravaged people of Bengal. They have also stolen their food grains

JP NADDA | BJP NATIONAL PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

Toxicology tests in Arunachal

Itanagar: Amid reports of drug abuse by many government officials, the Arunachal Pradesh administration has decided to conduct toxicology tests on officials suspected to be addicted to drugs in the worst-affected districts of the state, Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar has said. The administration will also keep a close tab on officials suspected to be involved in drug trafficking. Kumar said strong action will be initiated against officials found involved in any drug-related activity. A toxicology test is conducted to determine traces of drugs in a person.

Priyanka to address 'kisan sabhas' in UP

Saharanpur (UP): Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra will hold a series of 'kisan sabhas' in Uttar Pradesh to step up the protest against the three Central farm laws. According to party sources, Priyanka will hold the first such meeting in Saharanpur on February 10. She will then hold similar 'kisan sabhas' in Meerut and Bijpur February 13. According to Naresh Saini, Congress MLA from Behat in Saharanpur, "During her visit, Priyanka will offer prayers at the Shakumbhari Mata temple and also visit a shrine. Later, she will hold a kisan sabha in the Chilkana area.

Major fire in Navi Mumbai

Thane: A major fire broke out in at least four factories in the Taloja industrial area in Navi Mumbai Tuesday, a senior official said. No casualty is reported so far in the fire that is yet to be brought under control since it broke out around 11:51 AM, said Santosh Kadam, chief, Regional Disaster Management Cell (RDMC), Thane Municipal Corporation (TMC). As per preliminary information, the blaze erupted at a factory and spread to three adjacent units that deal in acid, packaging and fabrication. The cause of the blaze is not known.

Man strangles tailor to death

Rae Bareilly (Uttar Pradesh): In a shocking incident, a man strangled his tailor to death because the shirt he had stitched was ill-fitting. The victim's son, Abdul Naeem Khan, claimed that his father, Abdul Majid Khan, 65, was allegedly strangled by one Saleem Sunday night. Saleem was reportedly enraged over the poor fitting of the shirt that Abdul Majid Khan had stitched for him.

'GLACIER DISASTER HIGHLIGHTS PRESSURE ON ASIA'S RIVERS'

"Rivers are really at risk from development projects, dumping of solid waste & liquid waste, sand mining and stone mining," an expert said

AGENCIES

New Delhi/Kuala Lumpur, Feb 9: A glacial burst that triggered a deadly flash flood in the Himalayas at the weekend was a disaster waiting to happen, and one likely to be repeated in a region transformed by climate change and unchecked infrastructure development, experts warn.

Asia is home to some of the world's biggest waterways, from the Ganges and the Indus in India to the Yangtze and Mekong originating in China, that snake for thousands of kilometres.

They support the livelihoods of vast numbers of farmers and fishermen, and supply drinking water to billions of people, but have come under unprecedented pressure in recent years. Higher temperatures are causing glaciers that feed the rivers to shrink, threatening water supplies and also increasing the chances of landslides and floods, while critics blame dam building and pollution for damaging fragile ecosystems. "Rivers are really at risk from development projects, dumping of solid waste and liquid waste, sand mining and stone mining," Himanshu Thakkar, from the South



Asia Network on Dams, Rivers and People, told AFP.

SHRINKING GLACIERS

It is not yet clear what damaged the glacier and triggered the accident, but there are suspicions that construction of hydro-power projects - in an area that is highly seismically active -- may have contributed. "This area is prone to vulnerability, it is not appropriate for this kind of bumper-to-bumper hydro-power development," Mr Thakkar said. Patricia Adams, executive director from Canada-based environmental NGO Probe International, said dam building in such an area was simply too

70 FROM UP MISSING

Lucknow: At least 70 people from Uttar Pradesh are feared missing in the glacier burst. Of the 70 people, 34 are from Lakhimpur Kheri district alone. "As of now, 70 people from Uttar Pradesh are feared missing, including 34 from Lakhimpur Kheri, nine from Saharanpur and five from Shravasti," Relief Commissioner of Uttar Pradesh Sanjay Goyal told PTI on Tuesday. Earlier in the day, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath sent a team of three ministers to Uttarakhand for better coordination with the state in carrying out relief works after the disaster, an official spokesperson said here.

dangerous, as it makes hillsides unstable and causes landslides.

Some have also pointed to rising temperatures as a contributing factor.

A major study in 2019 suggested Himalayan glaciers had melted twice as fast since the turn of the century as in the 25 preceding years.

"The impacts of climate change in the Himalayas are real," said Benjamin P. Horton, director of the Earth Observatory of Singapore.

No new nCoV deaths in 7 states/UTs in 3 weeks

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Feb 9: Seven states and UTs have reported no new COVID-19 deaths in the last three weeks, while 15 have not registered any fatality in the past 24 hours, the Centre said Tuesday, underlining that consistent gains are being made in terms of declining new cases and casualties.

The Centre, however, noted that the last national serosurvey findings have shown that over 70 per cent of the population is still susceptible to the disease.

The seven states and UTs -- Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Mizoram, Nagaland and Lakshadweep -- have reported no new COVID-19 deaths in last three weeks, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said.

Addressing a press briefing, he said India was the fastest country to reach 6 million vaccination doses of COVID-19 in 24 days.

Bhushan said within the country also some states have performed well, while others need to improve their vaccination coverage.

"There are 12 states and UTs that have vaccinated more than 65 per cent of the registered healthcare workers. These states are Bihar (78.1 per cent), Tripura (77.1 per cent), Madhya Pradesh (76 per cent),



Uttarakhand (73.7 per cent), Odisha (72.4 per cent), Mizoram (69.9 per cent), Himachal Pradesh (68.7 per cent), Uttar Pradesh (68 per cent), Andaman and Nicobar Islands (67.9 per cent), Rajasthan (67.2 per cent), Kerala (66.9 per cent) and Lakshadweep (66.7 per cent)," he said. On the other hand, Bhushan said, there are 11 states and UTs that have vaccinated less than 40 per cent of healthcare workers. These are Puducherry (15.4 per cent), Manipur (21.3 per cent), Nagaland (21.5 per cent), Meghalaya (24.3 per cent), Chandigarh (28.7 per cent), Punjab (34.1 per cent), Dadra and Nagar Haveli (34.5 per cent), Ladakh (35.8 per cent), Jammu and Kashmir (37.5 per cent) and Delhi (38 per cent).

97% satisfied with vax experience Over 97 per cent of 7.75 lakh people surveyed after receiving anti-coronavirus vaccine shots have expressed satisfaction with the immunisation process, the Union Health Ministry said Tuesday.

SC grants protection from arrest to Sanjay Singh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 9: The Supreme Court Tuesday granted protection from arrest to Aam Aadmi Party leader and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh in alleged hate speech case lodged against him in Uttar Pradesh but cautioned that he "cannot divide the society on lines of castes and religion".

The apex court made it clear however that UP Police is not precluded from seeking sanction from Rajya Sabha Chairperson to prosecute Singh in the cases.

It also issued notice to the Uttar Pradesh government and sought its response on two pleas of Singh seeking clubbing and quashing of FIRs lodged against him after his press conference on August 12 last year at which he alleged that the state government was favouring a certain class of society. During the hearing, a bench of Justices Ashok Bhushan and R S Reddy told the counsels for Singh, "You cannot divide the society on lines of castes and religion".

The bench said, "In the meantime, we direct that the petitioner be not arrested in Crime No...Under Sections 153A (promoting enmity between groups), 153B (Imputations, assertions prejudicial to national integration), 501 (printing or engraving matter known to be defamatory), 505(2) (Statements conducing to public mischief), IPC registered at Police Station Hazratganj, Lucknow."

Rlys achieves record freight loading in Jan 21

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 9: Indian Railways achieved the highest ever freight loading in January 2021 clocking a figure of 119.79 MT and surpassing its previous record of loading 119.74 MT of freight in March 2019, the ministry said Tuesday.

Indian Railways' freight loading figures for the last few months have been crossing the last year's figures for corresponding months and the cumulative freight loading figure this year is expected to surpass the last year's freight loading figure, a statement by the ministry said.

As per the statistics till February 8, Indian Railways loading was 30.54 million tonnes which include 13.61 MT of coal, 4.15 MT of iron ore, 1.04 MT of foodgrains, 1.03 MT of fertilizers, 0.96 MT of mineral oil and 1.97 MT of cement (excluding clinker). "It is worth mentioning that a number of concessions and discounts are also being given in Indian Railways to make the railways' freight movement very attractive. The COVID-19 pandemic has been used by Indian Railways as an opportunity to improve its all-round efficiencies and performances.

Memories of 2007 terror attack made PM, Azad emotional

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Feb 9: Memories of the 2007 terror attack in Kashmir on tourists from Gujarat made both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and senior Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad emotional in the Rajya Sabha on Tuesday, as the House bid farewell to Leader of

Opposition Azad who is among four members retiring from the Upper House this month.

The Prime Minister recalled the incident to highlight the humane side of Azad. Modi, who was the then Gujarat Chief Minister, recalled that tourists from Gujarat had been attacked in Jammu & Kashmir and then J&K Chief Minister Azad was the first to call him to inform him about the incident and Azad was crying and his tears would not stop. "I will never forget Azad's efforts and Pranab Mukherjee's efforts when people from Gujarat were stuck in Kashmir due to a terror attack and the same night, Ghulam Nabi



grabbed my legs and I too cried loudly - 'Oh God, what have you done? How will I answer these children, these people who came to visit and were on a leisure trip and are going back with bodies.'"

A visibly moved Azad during his speech said that he prays that militancy is finished in the country. The Prime Minister, while referring to Azad's contribution to politics and the House, said: "You are retiring from the House, but I will not let you retire and my doors are open for you and will need your contribution and advice." Modi said the person who will replace Azad will have a tough task to match his contributions.

ji called me from the airport about the despatch of the bodies," Modi said.

Azad while remembering the same incident, just two days after he became J&K Chief Minister, said "this was the terrorists' way of welcoming the CM and at the airport, when I reached one child who had lost his family members

FINISHING TOUCH



An artist gives final touches on a clay idol of Lord Ganesha ahead of the Ganesh Jayanti festival in Mumbai

Nearly 1L SL refugees in India: Govt

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 9: A total of 93,032 Sri Lankan Tamil refugees are living in the states of Tamil Nadu and Odisha and they may acquire Indian citizenship by registration or naturalisation after fulfilling the eligibility criteria laid down in the Citizenship Act, 1955, the Ministry of Home Affairs told Parliament Tuesday.

The Home Ministry cited the data provided by the Tamil Nadu government's Commissionerate of Rehabilitation and Welfare of non-resident Tamils.



In a written reply, Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai informed the Lok Sabha that 58,843 Sri Lankan Tamil refugees are staying in 108 camps in Tamil Nadu while 34,135 are staying as

non-camp refugees but they have registered with the local police.

Besides this, as per available information, 54 Sri Lankan Tamil refugees are staying in refugee camp at Malkangiri, Odisha.

The minister said that citizenship of India is governed by the provisions of the Citizenship Act, 1955 and rules made thereunder. "Any foreigner including a Sri Lankan citizen may acquire Indian citizenship by registration or naturalisation after fulfilling the eligibility criteria laid down in the Citizenship Act, 1955 and the rules made thereunder."

UPSC LAST BID

Centre says can't relax age rule, SC reserves verdict

Scores of petitioners, who had exhausted their attempt in October 2020 exam amid Covid-19, had moved the top court urging it to grant them an extra chance

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 9: The Centre Tuesday told the Supreme Court that it is not in favour of one-time relaxation to UPSC exam aspirants who are age-barred, as it will be discriminatory to other candidates.

Scores of petitioners, who had exhausted their attempt in October 2020 exam amid Covid-19, had moved the top court urging it to grant them an extra chance.

Additional Solicitor General SV Raju, representing the Centre, submitted before a bench headed by Justice AM Khanwilkar that initially the government was not willing to give an extra chance, but it melowed its stand after a suggestion

from the bench. After a detailed hearing in the matter, the top court reserved its verdict on a plea seeking an extra chance for UPSC aspirants, who exhausted all attempts last October, against the backdrop of mental and physical trauma due to the ongoing pandemic.

"During this pandemic, while everyone had a choice to save their attempt by leaving the exam in 2020, while taking care of their health, the last attempters were given no choice at all and had to sit for the exam, despite the lack of opportunity to prepare," the petitioners have argued.

Raju stressed that the government is not willing to dilute its stand on age-barred candidates, and insisted that these are policy



matters beyond purview of the court. "This is not the exam where you prepare at the last minute. People prepare for years together,"

he submitted. Agreeing to the final attempt, the Centre had said: "Relaxation, only to the extent of providing one extra

attempt for Civil Service Examination (CSE), specifically limited to CSE-2021, may be granted to only those candidates who appeared for CSE-2020 as their last permissible attempt and are otherwise not age-barred from appearing in CSE-2021."

The top court, however, pressed that the government should consider giving age-relaxation as a one-time measure. The Centre had told the top court that no relaxation can be granted for CSE-2021 to those candidates who have not exhausted their permissible number of attempts or to those candidates who are otherwise age-barred from appearing in CSE-2021 as per the prescribed age limits of different cat-

egories, or to any other candidate for any other reason whatsoever.

Senior advocates appearing for petitioners had argued if anyone which requires consideration, it is the age barred group. On Monday, senior advocate C.U. Singh, appearing for a petitioner, argued that if all the 2,236 candidates, had lost their last chance last year, are age-barred, and if this is not relaxed, all SC/ST candidates, and handicapped candidates would be excluded and for this category of candidates, there is no limit in number of attempts.

Similarly, senior advocate Shyam Divan, representing some petitioners, also pressed upon the issue of age bar relaxation.

of the day quote

The BJP government was adopting the 'Foreign Destructive Ideology' of 'divide and rule' that the British colonial rulers introduced in India



Health workers who died while working as a Covid Warrior have received ₹50 lakh as compensation. Government is trying to provide mental and physical welfare



The government will soon issue guidelines for regulation of OTT (over the top) platforms that will address issues such as sensitive content



SHORT TAKES

BSP leader ends life, blames officials

Badaun (UP): A Bahujan Samaj Party functionary and local farmer allegedly committed suicide after accusing officials of corruption. In his suicide note, he has alleged harassment and levelled corruption charges against the sub divisional magistrate (SDM) and revenue official (kanungo). Harveer, 35, who belonged to the Dalit community and was a father of five, had been visiting the Sahaswan tehsil and meeting officials regularly. He went to the tehsil twice before consuming poison on the campus.

Six killed in UP road accident

Jaunpur: Six persons were killed and 11 others injured in a road accident in Jaunpur district of Uttar Pradesh Tuesday morning. The accident took place on the Varanasi-Jaunpur border area and the injured have been rushed to a district hospital with the help of locals in the area. The accident occurred when a vehicle collided with a truck while returning from Varanasi. Further details are awaited.

Murdered woman's head found

Fatehpur (UP): The head of a woman, whose torso was recovered from Sarwal village in Fatehpur district of Uttar Pradesh on February 6, have been found in a well in Sewramau village, Ghazipur police said. The woman's headless body was found from a mustard field by the police three days back. During investigation, the police had recovered a paper with a couple of mobile phone numbers from the pocket of the jeans of the woman. The police found surgical gloves from near the well, where blood stain marks were also found.

Woman gangraped inside a parked bus

Mumbai: A 19-year-old woman was allegedly raped by two men, one of whom was her friend, inside a parked bus at Kharghar February 3. While the police have arrested one of the accused, the other is yet to be nabbed. The accused and the rape survivor lived in the same building in Kharghar, police said. Police added that while the 22-year-old works as a driver, the 19-year-old accused worked as a pizza delivery boy. In her complaint, the woman said that February 3, the key accused (22) asked her to join for a bike ride and promised to buy her a gift.



The way the Prime Minister had urged people to give up their subsidy on LPG cylinders, he should now appeal to MPs and MLAs to give up their pension

RAKESH TIKAIT | FARMER LEADER

TWO INDIAN STARTUPS TO OFFER TAXI SERVICE IN SPACE

Two start-ups - Bellatrix Aerospace and Skyroot Aerospace - have entered into a partnership to ferry small satellites into multiple orbits using a vehicle that will work as a "space taxi"



Need to probe if mutant strain active in Kerala, Maha: Guleria



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 9: At a time when the new cases of Covid-19 have been manifesting a downward trend nationally, its unabated transmission in two Indian states - Kerala and Maharashtra - has become a cause of worry.

The data of last one week by the Union Health Ministry showed that both the states account for 71 per cent of the fresh caseload of the week with Kerala making up almost half of the total.

Of the total 80,536 new cases reported in the duration, Kerala and Maharashtra accounted for 56,932 whereas the southern state logged 39,260 cases (49 per cent) alone.

Speaking on the matter, Dr. Randeep Guleria, Director, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi, evoked the possibility of an undetected mutant strain of Sars-CoV-2 circulating in the two states. "We will have to investigate whether any mutant strain of coronavirus is under circulation in the state which is causing spurt in the daily infection," he told this news agency. In respect of Kerala, Guleria, who is also a

member of the National Covid-19 task-force, acknowledged that the state did a fairly good job in controlling the transmission when pandemic hit the country. However, he added that the situation deteriorated since the restrictions were lifted in the state.

"Kerala did initially good in controlling the measures through putting restrictions. However, since they have opened up, the more number of cases are being reported there," Guleria said.

He also observed that the demography of the state could be possibly not letting the viral infection wane from the community since a significant amount of the population living in Kerala are elderly and are more susceptible to contract the Covid-19 disease.

"A large number of people there (Kerala) are elderly and suffer with comorbid conditions. This fact could also be impacting the emergence of Covid-19 in the state," said Guleria. As per the latest national family health survey (NFHS) report, the level of asthma (4,806 per 1,00,000 population) in Kerala is twice as high as the level reported for India as a whole (2,468 per 1,00,000 population). Dr. Lalit Kant, former head, epidemiology and communicable diseases, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) told IANS that demography plays a huge role in disease spread. "Age structure of the population and presence of chronic illnesses among them are few of the deciding factors of a disease spread," he said.

Twitter reaches out to IT Minister Prasad seeking formal dialogue

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 9: Twitter has reached out to Union IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad for a formal dialogue to resolve the deadlock over the removal of bad accounts amid the ongoing farmer protests.

The Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) has sent three notices to Twitter, the latest one asking the company to block 1,178 accounts believed to be linked to Khalistan sympathisers and those backed by Pakistan.

"Safety of our employees is a top priority for us at Twitter. We continue to be engaged with the Government of India from a position of respect and have reached out to the Honourable Minister, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology for a formal dialogue," a Twitter spokesperson said in a statement. The company said that an acknowledgement to the receipt



of the non-compliance notice has also been formally communicated.

"We review every report we receive from the government as expeditiously as possible and take appropriate action regarding such reports while making sure we hold firm to our fundamental values and commitment to protecting the public conversation," the Twitter spokesperson said. In the first notice, MeitY asked Twitter to block 257 accounts using the #ModiPlanningFarmerGenocide hashtag amid the farmers' protest,

under Section 69A of the IT Act.

Twitter had suspended some high-profile accounts earlier this month, only to unblock them in a few hours saying that the "content is free speech and newsworthy".

The IT Ministry then took cognizance of a clear attempt to polarise India when international celebrities with hardly any expertise on Indian affairs extended their support to the protesters agitating against the three new farm laws.

The government also took a serious note of Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey "liking" a Tweet asking for an emoji for the hashtag #FarmersProtests. "An update is shared through our established channels of communication with the government. We strongly believe that the open and free exchange of information has a positive global impact, and that the Tweets must continue to flow," the company spokesperson said.

COVID-19

At a time when the new cases of Covid-19 have been manifesting a downward trend nationally, its unabated transmission in Kerala and Maharashtra has become a cause of worry

The data of last one week showed that both the states account for 71 per cent of the fresh caseload of the week with Kerala making up almost half of the total

NFHS-5 findings indicated that every third person in Kerala and every fourth person in Maharashtra is obese

ing in the two states. "We will have to investigate whether any mutant strain of coronavirus is under circulation in the state which is causing spurt in the daily infection," he told this news agency. In respect of Kerala, Guleria, who is also a

Actor-activist Deep Sidhu sent to police custody

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 9: A Delhi court Tuesday sent actor-activist Deep Sidhu to 7-day police custody in connection with the Red Fort violence on the Republic Day during farmers' tractor parade against the Centre's three new agri laws.

Metropolitan Magistrate Prigya Gupta sent Sidhu to the custody after the police alleged he was one of the main instigators of the violent incidents at the Red Fort.

Sidhu's counsel, however, claimed he had nothing to do with the violence and was at the wrong place at the wrong time.

The police had announced a cash reward of ₹1 lakh for information leading to Sidhu's arrest.

Tens of thousands of farmers broke barriers to storm the national capital on January 26, their tractor parade to highlight their demands dissolving into unprecedented scenes of anarchy as they fought with police, overturned vehicles and delivered a national insult hoisting a religious flag from the ramparts of the Red Fort, a privilege reserved for India's tricolour.

Thousands of protesting farmers who reached TITO from the Ghazipur border clashed with police. Many of them driving tractors reached the Red Fort and entered the monument, where the religious flag was also hoisted. Over 500 police personnel were injured and one protestor died.

Cong to move pvt members' Bills for repeal of farm laws

The Congress MPs will meet Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and request him to allow discussion on the Bills submitted to the Lok Sabha Secretariat

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 9: Congress' Lok Sabha member Manish Tewari Tuesday said that the party MPs from Punjab have decided to bring private members' Bills in Parliament to seek the repeal of three new Central farm laws opposed by the farmers.

Tewari, who represents Anandpur Sahib, said: "Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke on the farm laws in the Rajya Sabha Monday but no farmer is willing to believe him. We have no alternative, so we decided to adopt this path."

The Congress MPs will meet Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and request him to allow discussion on the Bills submitted to the Lok Sabha Secretariat.

The Congress leader said that they will also meet the Rajya Sabha Chair on the issue.

Another Congress MP Praneet Kaur, who is the wife of Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, said that they stood by their demand for the repeal of these laws.

The Punjab MPs appealed to



other members of Parliament to initiate such Bills on the farm laws.

Congress MP Jasbir Singh Gill said: "Those MPs who have written their profession as agriculture should bring in private member's Bills." Congress MP Ravneet Singh Bittu said: "There are 203 MPs in the Lok Sabha and 64 in the Rajya Sabha who have shown agriculture as their profession. So, we appeal to them to help with these private member's Bills by coming out of partisan politics."

In parliamentary history, 14 such Bills have been made into laws, Tewari said. Modi had appealed to the farmers on Monday to end their agitation and resume talks with the Centre to resolve the issue.

Survivors recount deadly glacier break disaster

A WHISTLE TURNED INTO A ROAR OF WATER THAT TRAPPED A DOZEN MEN IN A HIMALAYAN TUNNEL AFTER A GLACIER BURST IN UTTARAKHAND

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Tapovan, Feb 9: A whistle turned into a roar of water that trapped a dozen men in a Himalayan tunnel after a glacier burst in Uttarakhand, February 3. While the police have arrested one of the accused, the other is yet to be nabbed. The accused and the rape survivor lived in the same building in Kharghar, police said.

Police added that while the 22-year-old works as a driver, the 19-year-old accused worked as a pizza delivery boy. In her complaint, the woman said that February 3, the key accused (22) asked her to join for a bike ride and promised to buy her a gift.

people were telling us to come out. We thought it was a fire. We started running but the water gushed in. It was like a Hollywood movie."

The men clung to scaffolding rods in the tunnel for four hours, keeping their heads above water and debris, trying to reassure each other. "We just kept telling each other - come what may, we must not let go of the rods. Thank god our hands did not lose their grip," said Kumar. As the flood coursed down the valley, the water started to recede in the tunnel, leaving it filled with more than 1.5 metres of debris and mud.

"We climbed across the rock debris and forced our way to the mouth of the tunnel," said Kumar. There they found a small opening but they were not sure where it led.

"All we knew was that we could



feel some air." Eventually, they saw some light coming through and one of the men got a phone signal and called for help. There were emotional scenes as Kumar and his colleagues were pulled out of a tiny hole at the surface.

Some punched the air in joy as

they saw daylight; some were put straight onto stretchers and carried away. One man put his arms in the air and then fell face-first into the mud. Despite their hours-long ordeal, they miraculously managed to escape with just minor injuries.

Shopkeeper Ramesh Negi from

Raini village was basking in the Sunday morning sun at his home overlooking the plant when he heard a loud roar and saw a huge wall of water smash into and sweep away a bridge that led to the Chinese border. Dozens of workers building a concrete dam on the Dhoulai Ganga river bed and grazers leading their cattle along the mountain slopes disappeared beneath the sudden deluge, leaving behind a wasteland of grey and brown sludge.

"There was dust and screams all over," 36-year-old Negi told this news agency. "We tried to alert the grazers but they were blown away by the wind pressure before being consumed by the water and slush. We can only guess what happened."

Mangra, another tunnel survivor, still can't sleep.

R-DAY VIOLENCE

SC stays arrest of Tharoor, Sardesai



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 9: The Supreme Court Tuesday stayed the arrest of Congress MP Shashi Tharoor and six journalists including Rajdeep Sardesai in connection with FIRs lodged against them for their allegedly "misleading" tweets on the violence during the farmers' tractor rally here on the Republic Day.

A bench headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde issued notices and sought responses from the Centre and others on the petitions filed by Tharoor, Sardesai and journalists Mrinal Pande, Zafar Agha, Paresh Nath,

Vinod K Jose and Anant Nath.

When the bench said it was issuing notice in the matter, senior lawyer Kapil Sibal, appearing for Tharoor, said that no coercive action be taken against them in the meantime. "Nothing is going to happen. Where is the danger," said the bench, also comprising Justices AS Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian.

Sibal objected to the observation of the bench that nothing would happen to the petitioners in the meantime, saying Solicitor General Tuhsar Mehta is appearing for Delhi Police and the cops of other states might "knock at my doors and arrest me in the meantime".

"Kindly protect us in the meanwhile," Sibal said, prompting the bench to ask the law officer whether the police was planning to arrest Tharoor and others. Mehta said that "horrendous" tweets were made.

Shutdown in Kashmir to mark Afzal Guru's death anniversary



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Feb 9: Normal life was affected in Kashmir Tuesday due to a shutdown to mark the eight death anniversary of Parliament attack convict Mohammad Afzal Guru who was hanged in New Delhi's Tihar Jail on this day in 2013, officials said.

Most of the shops, fuel stations and other business establishments were shut in Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, while public transport was largely off the roads, the officials said. However, they said, private cars, auto-rickshaws and cabs were plying in the city.

The officials said similar reports of shutdown were also received from other district headquarters of the valley.

Security forces have been deployed in strength at vulnerable places in the city and elsewhere in the valley to avoid any untoward incident, they added.

Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) had last week called for a complete strike February 9 and 11 to mark the death anniversary of Guru and its founder Mohammad Maqbool Bhat who was hanged in the Tihar Jail February 11, 1984.

Also, posters, purportedly issued by Hurriyat Conference, were pasted in some areas of the city, calling for a shutdown Tuesday and Thursday. However, the officials said, the authenticity of the posters could not be verified.

Unlike the previous years, the authorities did not impose restrictions on the movement and assembly of people or order the suspension of mobile Internet services as a precautionary measure on the day.

international



I think in fairness to President Trump he was right to take a tougher approach to China. That was the right thing to do
TONY BLINKEN | US SECRETARY OF STATE

PRACHANDA SEEKS SUPPORT FROM INDIA & CHINA

Nepal Communist Party appealed to the international community, including India and China, to extend support to its ongoing struggle against PM KP Sharma Oli's "unconstitutional move" to dissolve Parl



of the day quote

We stand with the people of Burma, support their right to protest peacefully in support of the elected govt, and the right to freedom of expression, to seek, to receive, to impart information both online and offline



NED PRICE | US STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESPERSON

As long as the Beijing authorities are willing to resolve conflicts, we also want to have a dialogue with them under the conditions of equality and dignity



TAI ING-WEN | PRESIDENT OF TAIWAN

I think the US companies are excited. They feel that for the first time in many years you have a budget which provides less government fine-tuning. It is a clearly defined budget which attracts a lot of international investment



MUKESH AGNI | PRESIDENT OF US-INDIA STRATEGIC AND PARTNERSHIP FORUM (USISPF)

SHORT TAKES

Iran starts vax drive

Tehran: Iran Tuesday launched a coronavirus inoculation campaign among healthcare professionals with recently delivered Russian Sputnik V vaccines as the country struggles to stem the worst outbreak of the pandemic in the Middle East with its death toll nearing 59,000. At a ceremony marking the start of the campaign, Parsa Namaki, son of Health Minister Saeed Namaki, received his first dose. The minister said the vaccination would be simultaneously carried out in more than 600 medical centers across the country.

Sahara dust pollutes Euro air

Brussels: A plume of Sahara dust that has blanketed parts of southern and central Europe in recent days caused a sharp rise in air pollution across the region, researchers said on Tuesday. The European Commission's Copernicus satellite monitoring program said measured levels of PM10s spiked in cities such as Barcelona, Lyon and Marseille, Sunday.

28 workers killed in Morocco

Rabat: Heavy rains flooded an illegal garment factory in the northern Moroccan city of Tangier, killing at least 28 workers Monday, state television quoted a medical official as saying. That raised the death toll from 24, reported earlier by the Moroccan news agency MAP. Local authorities said firefighters and emergency workers rescued 10 people from the factory, in the basement of a residential villa. Rescuers searched for others who might have been trapped in the sudden flooding.

Bad Weather halts search for climbers

Islamabad: Families of the three mountaineers who went missing in Pakistan last week while attempting to scale K2, the world's second-highest mountain, were growing more desperate Tuesday, a day after bad weather halted the search for the climbers. Hopes for the survival of the three — Pakistani climber Ali Sadpara, Jon Snorri of Iceland and Juan Pablo Mohr of Chile — were waning as heavy clouds continued to obscure K2.

Biden, Modi commit towards greater Indo-US relationship

Modi is the first foreign leader, whom Biden has spoken with beyond neighbours and key NATO allies, reflecting the significance his administration attaches to ties with India

AGENCIES

Washington, Feb 9: US President Joe Biden and Prime Minister Narendra Modi have committed to defeat the COVID-19, rebuild the global economy, jointly combat the scourge of global terrorism and promote a free and open Indo-Pacific, setting up an ambitious agenda to take the strategic bilateral ties to the next level.

The two leaders, during their first phone call Monday after Biden was sworn in as the 46th US President, agreed to continuing close cooperation to promote a free and open Indo-Pacific, including support for freedom of navigation, territorial integrity and a stronger regional architecture through the Quad, the White House said.

Biden and Modi committed that the US and India will work closely together to win the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, renew their partnership on climate change, rebuild the global economy in a way that benefits the people of both countries, and stand together against the scourge of global terrorism, the White House said in a readout of the call.

After being sworn in as president January 20, Biden has so far had phone calls with nine foreign leaders. Traditionally, the new American

president makes first phone calls to the leaders of two neighbouring countries — Canada and Mexico.

Thereafter, Biden called leaders of close US allies, including Britain, France, Germany, South Korea and Australia. In between, he called Russian President Vladimir Putin, which was necessitated due to the extension of the New Start Treaty for another five years.

Modi is the first foreign leader, whom Biden has spoken with beyond neighbours and key NATO allies, reflecting the significance his administration attaches to ties with India.

Biden and Modi agreed to stay in close touch on a range of global challenges and look forward to what the United States and India will achieve together for their people and for their nations, the White House said.

In a tweet, Modi said that he conveyed his best wishes to the US President and they discussed regional issues as well as shared priorities.

"We also agreed to further our cooperation against climate change," he said.

"President Biden & I are committed to a rules-based order. We look forward to consolidating our strategic partnership to further peace & security in Indo-Pacific region and beyond," Modi said in another tweet.



'Iran may pursue nuclear weapon'

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tehran, Feb 9: Iran's intelligence minister warned the West that his country could push for a nuclear weapon if crippling international sanctions on Tehran remain in place, state television reported Tuesday.

The remarks by Mahmoud Alavi mark a rare occasion that a government official says Iran could reverse its course on the nuclear programme. Tehran has long insisted that the programme is for peaceful purposes only, such as power generation and medical research. A 1990s fatwa, or religious edict, by the country's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei states that nuclear weapons are forbidden.

"Our nuclear programme is peace-

ful and the fatwa by the supreme leader has forbidden nuclear weapons, but if they push Iran in that direction, then it wouldn't be Iran's fault but those who pushed it," Alavi was quoted as saying.

Israel insists Iran maintains the ambition of developing nuclear weapons, pointing to Tehran's ballistic missile program and research into other technologies. The 81-year-old Khamenei, who has the final say on all matters of state in Iran, on Sunday urged the United States to lift all sanctions if it wants Iran to live up to commitments under its 2015 nuclear deal with world powers. However, President Joe Biden has said the US won't be making the first move.

Iran President Hassan Rouhani



in comments aired on state TV on Tuesday reiterated the US must first take steps to honour nuclear deal agreements. "Any day that the US resumes implementing its commitments under the nuclear deal, we will fully implement our promises under the deal as well," he said. Following the killing last December

of an Iranian scientist credited with spearheading the country's disbanded military nuclear programme, Iran's parliament has approved a law to block international nuclear inspectors later this month — a serious violation of the accord.

Alavi, the intelligence minister, was also quoted as saying that a member of the Iranian armed forces "facilitated" the killing of the scientist, which Iran has blamed on Israel.

The minister did not expand on what he meant — and it was not clear if the soldier had carried out the explosion that killed the scientist, Mohsen Fakhri-zadeh. Israel, which has been suspected of killing Iranian nuclear scientists over the last decade, has repeatedly declined to comment on the attack.

DEEP FREEZE



A woman takes pictures of icicles on the fountain in Trafalgar Square with the background of Big Ben as temperatures dropped below freezing point in London, Tuesday

Separate attacks kill 9 in Afghan

AGENCIES

Kabul, Feb 9: A string of attacks Tuesday in Afghanistan killed five government employees and four policemen, officials said. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attacks.

In the capital, Kabul, gunmen opened fire in the Bagh-e Daud neighborhood and killed four employees of the ministry for rural development, according to Ferdaws Faramarz, spokesman for the city's police chief. Hours after the attack, the presidential palace in a statement said the target was Reyaz Ahmad Khalil, the acting provincial director of the department for rural development of Maidan Wardak province. He was among the fatalities in the attack.

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani strongly condemned the attack and accused the Taliban of stalling peace talks by once again escalating the violence. "They have shown that they don't believe in peace," Ghani said. Elsewhere in Kabul, a sticky bomb attached to a car exploded, killing another government employee, Faramarz later said.

Police in Myanmar crack down on protesting crowds



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Yangon (Myanmar), Feb 9: Police cracked down on demonstrators opposing Myanmar's military coup, firing warning shots and shooting water cannons to disperse crowds that took to the streets again Tuesday in defiance of rules making protests illegal.

Water cannons were used in Mandalay, Myanmar's second-biggest city, where witnesses said at least two warning shots were fired to try to break up the crowd.

Reports on social media said police arrested more than two dozen people there. Police also used water cannons in the capital, Natpyitaw, for a second day and fired shots into the air.

Police were reported to have also shot rubber bullets at the crowd in Natpyitaw, wounding several people. Photos on social media showed an alleged shooter — an officer with a short-barreled gun — and several injured people.

Unconfirmed social media reports circulated of shootings with live rounds and deaths among the protesters, with the potential of sparking violent retaliation against the authorities, an outcome proponents of the country's civil disobedience movement have warned against. The AP was unable to immediately confirm the reports. The protesters are demanding that power be restored to the deposed civilian government and are seeking freedom for the nation's elected leader Aung San Suu Kyi and other ruling party members detained since the military took over and blocked the new session of Parliament from convening February 1.

COVID VIRUS LEAK FROM LAB 'VERY UNLIKELY': WHO

AGENCIES

Wuhan, Feb 9: While saying that "accidents do happen", a team of international experts, including those from the World Health Organisation (WHO), investigating the origins of Covid-19 said Tuesday that laboratory leak of the virus is 'extremely unlikely'.

Addressing a press conference at the end of the joint WHO-China study, more than a year after the initial cases of Covid-19 were reported from Wuhan in China's western Hubei province, Peter Ben Embarek, the head of the WHO mission, said more work was required to identify the source of the virus.

Liang Wannian, a member of the WHO-China joint study team, said that there is no evidence of transmission of the novel coronavirus before December 2019 in Wuhan.

The experts did not even deny the possibility that novel coronavirus cases could have been prevalent in other regions even before the early cases were detected in Wuhan.

Their research suggests that



The experts didn't even deny the possibility that Covid cases could have been prevalent in other regions even before the early cases were detected in Wuhan

Wuhan could just be one of the first places where the virus spread. The "wet market" in Huanan which was linked to some of initial human cases was also one of the focus areas of the study.

HISTORIC FLIGHT Arab spacecraft nears Mars orbit

AGENCIES

Dubai, Feb 9: A spacecraft from the United Arab Emirates was set to swing into orbit around Mars in the Arab world's first interplanetary mission Tuesday, the first of three robotic explorers arriving at the red planet over the next week and a half.

The orbiter, called Amal, Arabic for Hope, traveled 300 million miles in nearly seven months to get to Mars with the goal of mapping its atmosphere throughout each season.

A combination orbiter and lander from China is close behind, scheduled to reach the planet Wednesday. It will circle Mars until the rover separates and attempts to land on the surface in May to look for signs of ancient life.

A rover from the U.S. named Perseverance is set to join the crowd next week, aiming for a landing Feb. 18. It will be the first leg in a decade-long U.S.-European project to bring Mars rocks back to Earth to be examined for evi-



dence the planet once harbored microscopic life.

For the UAE, it was the country's first venture beyond Earth's orbit, making the flight a matter of intense national pride.

For days, landmarks across the UAE, including Burj Khalifa, the tallest tower on Earth, glowed red to mark Amal's anticipated arrival. This year is the 50th anniversary of the country's founding, casting even more attention on Amal.

"This mission was never about just reaching Mars," said Omran Sharaf, Amal's project manager. "Mars is just a means for a much bigger objective."

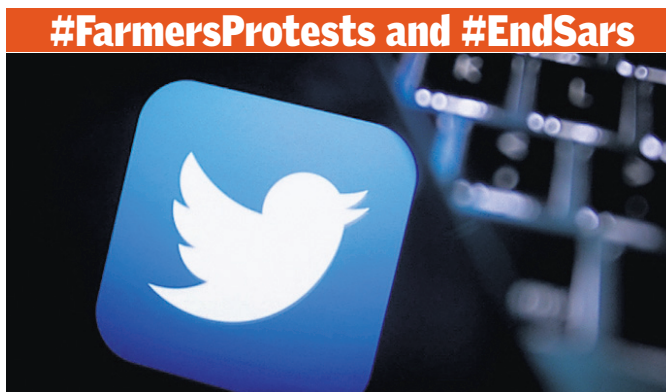
What happens when governments start fearing Twitter

AGENCIES

New York, Feb 9: Rihanna has no connection whatsoever with India or Nigeria, but she has been successful in binding the people of both nations, despite their diverse socio-economic background.

Her recent tweet supporting the farmers' protest in India has created a global awareness about the plight of the farmers in India and the government's authoritative actions against them. Tweeting an article in the CNN using the #FarmersProtest, she wrote "Why aren't we talking about this?" Soon, this became the rallying point for the Indian farmers as support from celebrities, both in India and abroad surged.

More than anything else, Rihanna's simple tweet rattled the Indian government to such extent



that the External Affairs Ministry of the country, instead of ignoring the message on social media, retorted saying, the views of such "celebrities and others" were "neither accurate nor responsible" Going a step ahead, the govern-

ment alleged that several foreign agencies were "trying to spread false propaganda against India". While Rihanna's tweet strengthened the global discussion on the #FarmersProtests, the real credit goes to thousands of farmers and

activists who have been protesting against the three new agricultural laws braving the cold, the vitriol and violence. Even journalists covering the protests have not been spared. It has been reported that a 23-year-old Dalit activists Nodeep Kaur, an activist and protester, was arrested and allegedly sexually assaulted by the police.

Currently, the government is pressuring Twitter to shut down accounts of people supporting the farmers' protests, labelling them as "anti-nationals" and "Khalistanis". While Twitter is yet to oblige the Modi government in this regard, the social media giant, which has been a platform for many such justified protests, has approached the Union IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad for a direct dialogue.

Whether Twitter will be able to maintain its stand or bow down under pressure of the Modi government only time will tell. What, however, is significant is that the #FarmersProtests in India has a striking resemblance to the #EndSars movement in Nigeria last year. Rihanna lent her support to the people of Nigeria who were protesting against the police brutality on the pretext of maintaining law and order.

In fact, numerous people in Nigeria took to the streets to protest against the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (Sars), which was infamous for torture, extortion and sexual assault of the citizens. Unable to contain the uprising against such human rights abuse, the government ordered the police to open fire on the citizens.

ENGLAND DRAW FIRST BLOOD

Anderson, Leach help England win by 227 runs as India put up disappointing performance to go down in the four-Test series 0-1



GAME CHANGER: James Anderson celebrates after getting rid of Ajinkya Rahane on the final day of the Test at Chepauk, Tuesday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Feb 9: Veteran James Anderson's artistic spell of reverse swing trumped Virat Kohli's show of grit as England decimated India in the opening Test by a comprehensive 227-run margin here Tuesday.

A target of 420, with 381 left on a fifth day worn out Chepauk track, was always a tough ask going by cricketing logic and Anderson's mid-morning burst blew away the Indian middle-order. In the end, the hosts could manage only 192 in 58.1 overs.

That spell ensured that there wasn't a Sydney like heist or the magic of Brisbane final day which many had hoped for despite the world record target. Kohli (72) seemed like a lonely general standing on a burning deck as he showed his colleagues how to bat on a difficult track.

He covered the swing and shuffled towards the off-stump to counter Anderson, ran purposefully and scored his runs against spinners. But there was that one ball that was always going to keep low and he got that from Ben Stokes.

Courtesy Anderson (3/17), the

match became a mismatch within an hour and India now need to win two out of the next three Tests to qualify for the World Test Championship final in June. The player of the match honours went to England skipper Joe Root for his match-defining double hundred in the first innings.

It was left-arm spinner Jack Leach

(4/76), who after his first innings humiliation at the hands of Rishabh Pant, finished with the best figures but the effort paled in comparison to the effect that Anderson had on the psyche of the Indian team.

Anderson sowed doubts among rank and file of the home line-up, whether they had the technique to play the moving ball which swings the other way round. Kohli can but can his colleagues do it will be the big question going forward.

The man from Burnley, in his 19th Test match season, showed his artistry with a semi-new ball, on a fifth day track and sapping Chennai heat, far removed conditions from the grey skies and cool breeze that Old Trafford gives him.

But then Anderson is a devotee and best practitioner of Test match ethos and doesn't need to take refuge in conditions because of his supreme control over his craft.

Wasim Akram made reverse swing fashionable as a pro in Lancashire and Anderson spent his teenage years watching the 'Sultan of Swing' practice his craft.

But what he did Tuesday would have certainly made Akram proud as the Indian batting line-up, save Kohli, didn't have an idea as to how they could stop Anderson.

When he made his Test debut, Shubman Gill was in play-school and Rishabh Pant in nursery. At 38 years 194 days and in his 158th Test match, Anderson became an example of why one should never discount experience.

Shant Sharma, on first two days, bowled a few spells of lively reverse swing. What Shant did well, Anderson just did that way better.

Gill (50) once again looked dazzling till the time he was at the crease. The sinewy wrists were in play as he hit seven fours and a six, dealing with spinners comfortably.

Even Cheteshwar Pujara's (15) dismissal off Leach's 'peach' didn't unfaze the young man from Punjab as he along with Kohli calmly went about their business.

SCORECARD

England 1st innings 578
India 1st innings 337
England 2nd innings 178

India 2nd innings (overnight 39/1)

Shubman Gill b Anderson 50, Cheteshwar Pujara c Stokes b Leach 15, Virat Kohli b Stokes 72, Ajinkya Rahane b Anderson 0, Rishabh Pant c Root b Anderson 11, Washington Sundar c Buttler b Bess 0, Ravichandran Ashwin c Buttler b Leach 9, Shahbaz Nadeem c Burns b Leach 0, Ishant Sharma not out 5, Jasprit Bumrah c Buttler b Archer 5; Extras: 14 (b-8, lb-5, nb-1); Total: 192 all out (58.1 overs).

Fall: 1/25 (Rohit), 2/58 (Pujara), 3/92 (Gill), 4/92 (Rahane), 5/110 (Pant), 6/117 (Sundar), 7/171 (Ashwin), 8/179 (Kohli), 9/179 (Nadeem), 10/192 (Bumrah).

Bowling: Jofra Archer 9.1-4-23-1, Jack Leach 26-4-76-4, James Anderson 11-4-17-3, Dominic Bess 8-0-50-1, Ben Stokes 4-1-13-1.

It was the 27th over when Anderson first came into the attack and the second ball was a perfect reverse inswinger which had Gill in a daze as the off-stump went for a walk.

The way the shiny part on the inside tailed in was a sight to behold. Rahane (0), for all the appreciation coming his way, was in very poor form for the better part of the Australia series, save a hundred at MCG where he was dropped thrice.

The first ball he faced Tuesday was another one that came back a shade and it was hitting the middle of the middle stump with the Umpires' Call saving the vice-captain of what looked like a plumb leg before. The wily Anderson realised that an out-of-form Rahane's feet are not moving. The next time he just went a shade wide off the crease and delivered another reverse inswinger. Rahane knew that there was no comeback.

Pant (11) has had three great knocks but he was facing a bowler



EFFORTS IN VAIN: Virat Kohli drives one through the off side during his gritty knock

POST MATCH REACTIONS

VIRAT KOHLI

No excuses: Our body language and intensity was not up to the mark, second innings we were much better. We were better in the second half of the first innings with the bat. We have to understand the things that we have done decently in this game and the things that we haven't and as a side we are always looking to improve. England were far more professional and consistent throughout the Test match than we were.

Sundar, Nadeem disappointment: That's a fair assessment (duo not up to the mark with ball). You need your bowling unit to step up and create pressure on the opposition. We didn't achieve that in this game which is fine, lack of execution is acceptable but to understand our mindset was right is very important for us.

WTC ranking: Nothing changes for us. If suddenly the rules (WTC league standings would be determined by the percentage of points) can change when you are in lockdown, nothing is in your control at all. The only thing that you are in control is what you do on the field. We are not bothered about the table or things that are going on in the outside. For some things, there's no logic.

JOE ROOT

Set a benchmark: I'm very proud of the way we've played this week. We have set a benchmark now, we've got something to work for to compare ourselves. Still there are areas we can improve on. We can still get better. We know that India are an extremely good team, especially in these conditions. And they're a very proud nation as well. They've got some exceptional players so they'll come back hard.

Praising bowlers: To take 20 wickets in alien conditions is a brilliant job from the bowlers. We knew from the outset it was going to be a good week. The first partnership got us going. Different stages guys came in and contributed.

India slip to 4th position in WTC

DUBAI: India Tuesday slipped to fourth position in the World Test Championship (WTC) rankings after their 227-run defeat to England in the opening Test in Chennai as the visitors kept alive their hopes of making the final of the inaugural event.

New Zealand have already qualified for the WTC final, to be held at Lord's later in the year, winning 70.0 per cent of their matches (with no other series scheduled).

The victory at Chepauk lifted England to first place and 70.2 percentage points on the table and they have improved their chances of securing one of the three series results in their favour that could see them through to the final - 3-1, 3-0 or 4-0, the ICC said in a release.

India grabbed the top spot after their incredible series win

Australia last month. India, who have slipped to fourth position with 68.3 percentage points, will now be looking to win at least two of the remaining three matches to secure a 2-1 or 3-1 result and a place in the final.

Australia will get to feature in a Trans-Tasman summit clash if the India-England series is drawn or if England win 1-0, 2-1 or 2-0, the ICC said in the release issued shortly after England's victory.

Pakistan's 2-0 home win over South Africa saw them finish the series in fifth position with 43.3 percentage points, while South Africa slipped to sixth position with 30.0 percentage points.

West Indies are seventh with 23.8 percentage points after their epic victory in the first Test against Bangladesh, who are last on the table and yet to win a point.



SPINNING WEB: Jack Leach rejoice with teammates after dismissing an Indian batsman in Chennai

PTI PHOTOS

Australian Open: Nadal through in straight sets

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Melbourne, Feb 9: Facing a break point late in the third set, Rafa Nadal sprinted to his left and hit a running, around-the-post forehand that landed just inside the line.

Laslo Djere, ranked 56th, shrugged, his head dropped and he no doubt wondered what more he needed to do to win a point against the 20-time major champion. He'd had three break points when Nadal was serving for the second set, and didn't get close to cashing in one.

When Djere, going for everything, double-faulted to open what became the last game of the match, a woman in the crowd at Rod Laver Arena yelled out 'It's all right, Laslo'. Easy for her to say.

Nadal finished off a 6-3, 6-4, 6-1 win in just under two hours when Djere, facing triple match point, served another double-fault. The 34-year-old Spaniard showed no signs of a back problem that hampered his preparation for the year's first major.

Nadal didn't play for Spain at the ATP Cup last week and was troubled by stiffness in his lower back dur-



Rafa Nadal goes for a backhand during his match against Laslo Djere (not in pic), Tuesday

ing practice. While Nadal has been slowly building into the tournament, Russia's ATP Cup-winning teammates have been on a roll.

Fourth-seeded Daniil Medvedev extended his winning streak to 15 matches with a 6-2, 6-2, 6-4 win over Vasek Pospisil and seventh-seeded Andrey Rublev beat Yannick

Hannfmann 6-3, 6-3, 6-4.

Defending champion Sofia Kenin struggled in her first match as a defending champion at a Grand Slam tournament before setting aside an early deficit and beating 133rd-ranked Australian wild-card entry Maddison Inglis 7-5, 6-4.

The woman Kenin defeated for the

title in Melbourne, two-time major champion Garbine Muguruza, also advanced to the second round, defeating Margarita Gasparyan of Russia 6-4, 6-0.

But Victoria Azarenka, a two-time Australian Open champion and the runner-up at last year's US Open, appeared to have trouble breathing and received medical attention in the second set of a 7-5, 6-4 loss to Jessica Pegula of the US.

Azarenka didn't want to discuss her health afterward, but she did note how difficult it was to prepare for a major tournament after being one of 72 players who were in a hard quarantine for two weeks — not allowed to leave their hotel rooms for any reason — after potentially being exposed to COVID-19 on her flight to Australia.

Paula Badosa also lost in the first round after going through a three-week isolation because she tested positive for COVID-19. Badosa served for the match but dropped the last four games and was beaten 6-7(4-7), 7-6(7-4), 7-5 by Russian qualifier Ludmila Samsonova.

In other results on Day 2 on a

sunny day with the temperature in the low 70s Fahrenheit (low 20s Celsius), Australian wild-card entry Alexei Popyrin beat No.13 David Goffin 3-6, 6-4, 6-7(4-7), 7-6(8-6), 6-3 and 17-year-old Spaniard Carlos Alcaraz had a 6-1, 6-4, 6-4 win over Botić Van de Zandschulp to become the youngest man to win a Grand Slam match since Thanasi Kokkinakis in 2014.

And an even younger player, 16-year-old Coco Gauff, won 6-3, 6-2 against Jil Teichmann to set up a second-round showdown against No.5 seed Elina Svitolina.

A seeded woman exited the tournament when Ann Li, a 20-year-old American playing in her third Grand Slam tournament, beat No.31 Zhang Shuai 6-2, 6-0 to improve to 5-0 this season.

Li is coming off an unusual accomplishment at a tune-up tournament at Melbourne Park last week: Li shared the title of the Grampians Trophy with Anett Kontaveit because organizers decided not to hold a final so as not to wear out the players right before the Australian Open.

Krishna, Pereira goals help ATKMB beat BFC



AGENCIES

Goa, Feb 9: Roy Krishna and Marcelo Pereira struck apiece to help ATK Mohun Bagan (ATKMB) register a 2-0 win over Bengaluru FC in their Indian Super League (ISL) encounter here, Tuesday.

After a couple of close failed opportunities, ATKMB finally broke the deadlock in the 36th after Pratik Chaudhari brought down Roy Krishna in the penalty box and the referee pointed to the spot.

It was after Marcelo Pereira crossed towards Roy Krishna from left. Pratik got to the ball before the Fijian but a poor touch allowed Krishna to get on the ball. He tussled with Pratik while entering the

box and drew a foul.

Krishna was clattered to the floor and the result was a penalty to ATKMB and a yellow card for Pratik. Krishna made no mistake as he hit it to the left of the keeper sending him the wrong way.

Bengaluru were on their recovery process when ATKMB doubled their advantage in the 44th. Pereira beat Sandhu's despairing dive to double the Mariners' lead.

Harmanjot Khabra committed a silly foul just outside his penalty area as he rammed into David Williams. Pereira shot the resulted free-kick with his left foot aiming the ball into the frame of the goal at the near post and he found the back of the net.

The second half was not that productive for either side as both the teams tried desperately for goals but couldn't find one as ATKMB cut table toppers Mumbai City FC (34 points) to one point, having 33 points in their kitty after 16 matches. BFC, meanwhile, are sixth with 19 points from 17 matches.