



NO KHANDAGIRI MELA

The Magha Saptami Mela organised at Khandagiri with much fanfare won't be held this year DOWNTOWN

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

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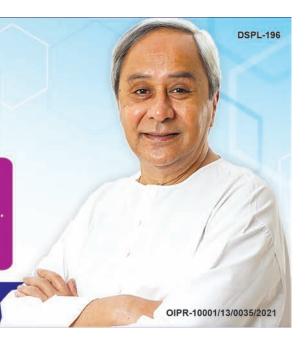


HEALTH COVERAGE FOR ALL

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



wanted to share personal anecdotes withou hurting govts, religious groups, courts, etc. So I deleted my social media accounts

RAJIV KAPOOR DIES

MUMBAI: Actordirector Rajiv Kapoor, son of celebrated filmmaker-actor Raj Kapoor, passed away



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 blockbuster "Ram Teri Ganga Maili" (1985), which was Raj Kapoor's last directorial venture. P2

MARKET WATCH

INDEX VARIATION								
BOURSES	SENSEX	51329.08	•	19.69				
	NIFTY	15109.30	•	6.50				
CURRENCY	DOLLAR	73.32	•	₹0.06				
CURR	EURO	88.37	1	₹0.38				
NO	GOLD	₹48,045	1	₹206				
BULLION	SILVER	₹69,750	•	₹334				

WEATI			
	BHUB	СТК	
₽ MAX	31.7℃	31.2°C	1711
≅ MIN	14.2°€	13.5℃	- Forecast
Humidity	91%	78%	
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	Mainly clear sky

State government Ultra gets bro killed for leaving Red camp POST NEWS NETWORK Malkangiri, Feb 9: A former ultra who surrendered before Chhattisgarh 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

POST NEWS NETWORK

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 Swaminathanheaded 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

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 vounger 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 wavlaid and shot dead.

U'khand toll up to 31



Congress calls for shutdown Feb 15

POST NEWS NETWORK

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

fresh highs in the country as rates were_ hiked after a three-day prices in Bhubaneswar were hiked by 36 paise and 38 paise

hiatus. Petrol and diesel per litre respectively, according to state-owned fuel retailers.

Tuesday climbed to

Class IX pupils of 19-20 batch can

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-

ing by inexorably, fears escalated about those missing since the disaster struck on Sunday morning. according to officials who stepped up efforts to locate survivors.

The missing people include those working at NTPC's 480 MW Tapovan-Vishnugad project and the 13.2 MW Rishiganga Hydel Project and villagers whose homes nearby were washed away.

Teams of the Army, Indo-Tibetan Border Police, National Disaster Response Force and State Disaster Response Force coordinated efforts to rescue about 30 people. The workers have been trapped in the 12-fthigh and about 2.5-km-long 'head race tunnel' (HRT). "Clearing of debris and slush continued the whole night. About 120 metres of the tunnel entrance stretch is now clear," ITBP spokesperson Vivek Kumar Pandey said in Delhi.

POST NEWS NETWORK Bhubaneswar, Feb 9: Class IX stu-

sit for board exam

dents 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 gave 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

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 ঽ 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 asto ensure that social distancing is maintained.

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

AGENCIES

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- 19 by sniffing samples of sweat and urine, senior Army officials said.

A demonstration of their skills using real samples was held on Tuesday on the premises of the 48 Military Veterinary Hospital at Delhi Cantonment. Their handlers

were wearing full PPE kits. Lt Col Surinder Saini, instructor at the Dog Training Facility of the Remount Veterinary Corps (RVC) Centre in Meerut, said these dogs are "pioneering canines" of not just the Army, but of entire India.

"Countries like the UK, Finland, France, Russia, Germany, Lebanon, the UAE and the US have already trained dogs for detection of COVID-19. Dogs have been previously used abroad to detect malaria, diabetes and Parkinson's disease, but this



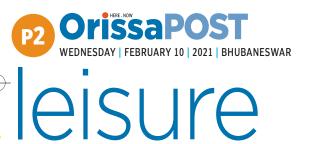
is the first time canines have been used for medical detection in India.' he told reporters

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 them, to avoid any surface contact transmission to people handling the dogs, the samples are first exposed to UV rays," Saini said.

"This is the first time in India that the olfactory capability of canines are being used to detect tissues infected with pathogens releasing volatile metabolic biomarkers," he added.

The Indian Army has around 1,200 dogs, out of which nearly 700 are deployed, a senior official said.

"Besides these two dogs, eight other dogs, including four labradors, are also undergoing training," Saini said. One-year-old Mani, another chippiparai dog undergoing training, also showed his skills during the demonstration. Mani is the elder brother of Jaya.



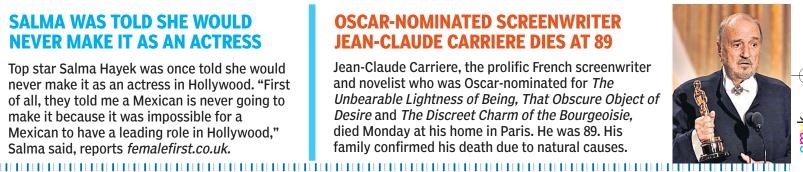


SALMA WAS TOLD SHE WOULD **NEVER MAKE IT AS AN ACTRESS**

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.



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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

CANCER You may get a gift from

glery, says Ganesha.

have to spend your money. You will

spend your day in all this financial jug-

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 companion ship with spouse, giving you joy.

Decisions taken in

haste will prove to be

LEO

carefully weigh the pros and cons of every decision that sible alternative thoroughly. You need to be extremely industrious on the **VIRGO**

Something you achieve

in a most unexpected manner will make vou very happy today. But your happiness may possibly be marred by getting agitated about the problems you are facing. You may expect new Your business will flourish today

LIBRA

Ganesha says that you will be able to see a huge change in your tus. Ganesha says that this may be due 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 spir ituality 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 worka holic 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 deter orating 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 Maili actor's exit

hearts out on social media and recalled the time they spent with late actor Rajiv Kapoor, who died Tuesday

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

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

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

Priyanka shared that the first person she

met suggested that she should fix her 'propor-

tions', and her then-manager agreed with the

"After a few minutes of small talk, the di-

rector/producer told me to stand up and

twirl for him. I did. He stared at me long

and hard, assessing me, and then sug-

gested that I get a boob job, fix my

jaw, and add a little more cushioning

She admitted: "I never had the

to my butt," she wrote in the book.

'Now on the other side of

courage to stand up for myself.'

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

her autobiography Unfinished.

ject 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 j My deepest condolences to the entire family," tweeted Akshay

"My heartfelt condolences. Sending

family. "Shocked Devastated

on his micro blogging site. Noted

Shirodkar commented. Sunny Deol. in his tweet. wrote: "Shocked to hear about Rajiv Kapoor's passing. Deepest condolences to the Kapoor

> #RajivKapoor passing away. Seen you grow up. Condolences to the entire family. RIP," tweeted pro-

ducer-director Boney Kapoor

"Saddened to hear about the passing of Rajiv Kapoor! I was a fan from his Ram Teri Ganga Maili 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

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.

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 shar-

ing 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,"

"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 care-

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

> 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 aware-

paid actor in India.

about stress. anxiety and de-

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBES



THE RAIN WHO ARE THESE TO ACCOMPLISH? WHY WAS JACK IN SUCH A HURRY? AND WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE WHERE THEY STARTED FROM ?



BREVITY



FUN DOST

CROSSWORD

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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
- 3 Organise
- 17 Like goats
- 20 Highwaymen 21 Broad valley 23 Midpoint
- 24 Give the cold shoulder
- **Down** 1 Ditty
- 2 Extremely hot
- 4 Rifle
- - peaks attachment
 - 22 Songbird

5 Volcanic rock

6 Bawl out

12 Monitored

(3,4)

18 Business

(3,3)

19 Peruvian

16 Metal bars

owner's fear

14 Diver's gear

SUDOKU

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

5						С	D			Α				Γ
				Α			6				1	2		:
	9		П				2	5	D	Ε	6	0		Γ
Е	6		8	7	1	В	9			С				Γ
3					Ε								С	8
				П	5				1			С	Г	4
D		0		Г	С			3			9	2 5		Γ
		1	0	Г	7		Α					3	6	Γ
	В			3		Ε			Г		D	Α		Γ
		3		9	6	5		В			С			Γ
		4	Г	2		9		1		D	Г	П	Г	Γ
	3	5		Е			0	6	7				9	Γ
В	Α		1	Г	4	8	5	С	6					Γ
		9		Г	Α				8				Г	Γ
				Г	0		Ε		С	1	В			[

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

SUDOKU

TASKROULETTE

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



downtown



WATER-RICH FRUIT

	*23.4	COV	/ ID-19 1	TRACK	ER
WATER-RICH FRUIT			INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
A woman sells		World	10,71,14,868	7,90,05,929	23,39,402
watermelons alongside a road at College Square in		India	1,07,91,123	1,04,79,508	1,54,742
Cuttack, Tuesday		Odisha	3,35,797	3,33,139	1,910
		111111111	: 	: 	;

Investments worth ₹1,242Cr get nod

POST NEWS NETWORK

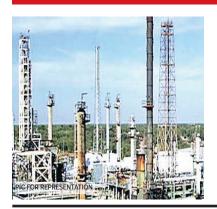
Bhubaneswar, Feb 9: In yet another move to create employment opportunities through industrialisation, the state government Tuesday approved eight investment proposals worth Rs 1,242

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

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

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

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 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.

Surva 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 technological details for discussion.

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



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

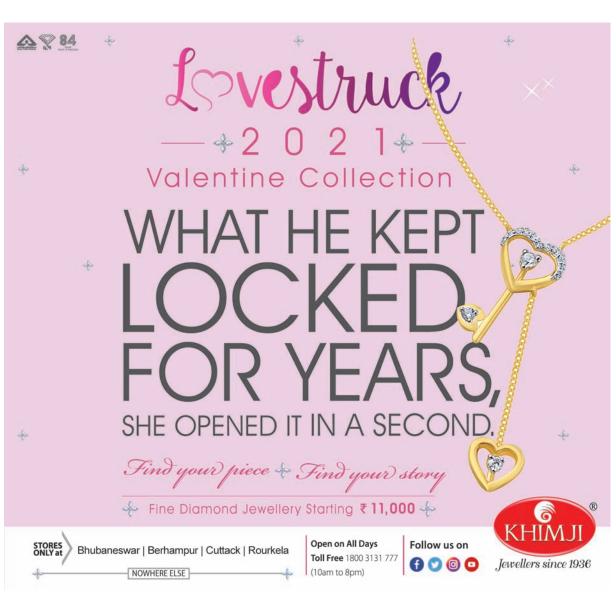
Mishra is the AOR Supreme Court lawyer empanelled by the state government to appear for it in the court. The Revenue and Disaster Management department has been asked to provide Mishra all the relevant documents for filing the petition.

A case of border dispute between the two states over Kotia cluster of villages is sub-judice in SC Supreme While Odisha claims that

three village are in its jurisdiction, Andhra Pradesh avers that they are located under mandal 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.



No Khandagiri Mela this year, says BMC

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 9: Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation 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 ongoing 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



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 mo-

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









WEDNESDAY | FEBRUARY 10 | 2021 | BHUBANESWAR **Integrated Infra Complexes Unnatural deaths up in City during 2020**

Bhubaneswar, Feb 9: The state Cabinet Tuesday decided to construct Integrated Infrastructure Complexes (IICs) in all the districts in a phased manner as per 5T action plan

In the first phase, 10 IICs are taken up for construction out of which 9 complexes - Khurda, Cuttack, Puri, Kandhamal, Sambalpur, Bhadrak, Malkangiri, Ganjam and

Nabarangpur - are DECISIONS Barpali blocks of Bargarh funded from the state budget and the one in Sundargarh out of District Mineral Fund (DMF).

The remaining eight DMF districts will take up construction of such complex expeditiously while setting up of IIC in the remaining 12 districts will be taken up in the second phase starting from the financial year 2022-23.

The complexes will have old age home, home for the destitute, physiotherapy centre, medical unit, re habilitation centre and special schools for visually impaired, hearing impaired and those with intellectual disabilities

Similarly, the Cabinet has also approved tender of Rs 340.36 crore

to come up in all districts to pump water from Bargarh Main Canal to meet the irrigation requirement of Gangadhar Meher Lift Irrigation Project. The work will be executed through Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) mode on turnkey basis.

> The project will be completed within 30 months. On completion of this work, irrigation facility for 25,600 hectares of land in Bijepur, Sohela and

district and Dunguripali block of Sonepur district will be ensured. The panel further approved tenders for execution of four rural piped water supply projects---two each for Jajpur and Kandhamal

By execution of these projects, 3,90,868 people of 69 GPs of Jajpur district and 1,05,217 people under 25 GPs of Kandhamal district will be provided with safe drinking water.

The total cost of Jajpur project is Rs 254.27crore while Rs 185.92 crore to be spent for execution of project in Kandhamal district. Both the projects are targeted for completion within a period of 24

Bhubaneswar, Feb 9: The Capital city witnessed a surge in unnatural deaths under various police stations during 2020. Unnatural deaths include accidental deaths, suicides, deaths due to complications in surgery, attack by some wild animal like snakes etc.

In 2019, as many as 1,483 unnatural death cases were registered at various police stations in the city. The number rose to 1.583 in 2020 registering a 6 per cent rise, said sources at the Commissionerate

Most of the unnatural death cases have been reported at police stations like Khandagiri, Capital, Nayapalli and Mancheswar.

However, the city registered a decline in various serious crimes during 2020. The cognisable crimes are serious in nature that include rape, murder, kidnapping, unnatural offence, dowry death etc.

A police officer has the power to arrest the suspect in cognisable offence without warrant while the police require the permission of magistrate to arrest the suspect in non-cognisable offences.

RISING GRAPH



unnatural death cases were registered at various police

- The number rose to 1,583 in 2020 registering a 6 per cent rise
- Most of the unnatural death cases were reported at Khandagiri, Capital, Nayapalli and Mancheswar police stations

According to the data, as many as 8,229 cognisable cases were registered at various police stations in the city during 2019. However, the city witnessed 7,671 cognisable crimes in 2020.

Major police stations like Chandrasekharpur, Nayapalli and Sahid Nagar have registered significant decline in the registration of cognizable cases in

In 2019, 705 serious crimes were registered in Sahid Nagar as against 542 in 2020. As many as 632 cognisable cases registered with the Mancheswar police in 2019 which decreased to 455 in 2020.

However, the registration of cognisable cases increased in Khandagiri, Capital, Airport and Airfield police stations. Khandagiri police station witnessed a significant rise in the registration of various cognisable cases in 2020. In 2019, 760 serious crimes had taken place in Khandagiri area that rose to 888 in 2020 registering an increase of around 17 per cent.

As many as 593 serious cases were reported at Capital police station as against 501 in the previous

Cybercrime help desk receives 1,207 plaints

 $T^{\text{he recently-opened cyber-}}_{\text{crime help desk at the special}}$ squad office here received 1,207 complaints from the victims across the state during last one

Speaking to media persons, the Commissioner of Police, Sudhanshu Sarangi, Tuesday revealed that the cyber criminals have duped the victims of Rs 1.4 crore during the above mentioned period.

Sarangi further informed the media that the cops succeeded in blocking transfer of Rs 7.19 lakh to the account of alleged cyber fraudsters in the last one month. The city police also managed to block 239 SIM cards used by the criminals to dupe gullible victims.

As many as 289 callers have alleged cheating through UPI transaction while only 46 victims were duped through OTP. Similarly,

the denizens in Bhubaneswar while the remaining were from other parts of the state. Sarangi also urged the victims from outside the Capital city not to call the desk as its power is limited to Bhubaneswar UPD only.

Meanwhile, police through analysis came to know that most of the fraudulent calls to the victims were made from Jamtara in Jharkhand, areas near Deoghar in Bihar and some villages in West Bengal along the border of Bangladesh, Noida in Uttar Pradesh and Kerala.

He also stated that the help desk's prime objective is to provide immediate assistance to the victims during the vital golden hour, the first hour of incident of cheating. Sarangi revealed that the proposed cyber police station in city is likely to come up this year.

ANTI-FILARIA DRIVE BEGINS TODAY

Odisha has planned to eliminate the disease, which spreads through mosquito bites, by 2030

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 9: The state Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department Tuesday said that it has planned to commence its first phase of mass drug administration drive against lymphatic filariasis from Wednesday in eight highburden districts.

Eight districts would be targeted for the drug administration in the first phase planned from February 10 to 19. These districts are: Bhadrak, Balasore, Cuttack, Dhenkanal, Jharsuguda, Khurda, Nuapada and

The second phase of the drive will include nine other districts -Angul, Ganjam, Mayurbhanj, Sundargarh, Keonjhar, Kandhamal, Sonepur, Bargarh and Sambalpur – as a total of 17 districts will be covered in the entire drive. "This time, owing to the close

down of schools and anganwadi

FILARIA FACTS

- Swollen legs, scrotum and milky white urine are the
- The disease is spread through mosquito bites
- Filaria may take 15-20 years to show symptoms post
- Filaria drug can arrest growth of the pathogen in human
- The drug helps in reducing the chances of spread of the disease from one person to others
- Experts said the drug is safe and hardly has any side effect

centres, we have decided to give the filaria drug as well as deworming tablets together. Our health workers will visit door to door and ask citizens to consume the drugs in their presence," Niranjan Mishra, Director, Public Health department said.

Mishra said that filaria, which spreads through mosquito bites, is one of the leading causes of triggering disability in human beings.

"The disease leads to Hydrocele (inflammation of the scrotum), lymphoedema (swelling in the limbs) and Chyluria (milky white urine)

in later stages," he said. Bijoy Kumar Panigrahi, Director, Family Welfare said, "The administration of deworming drug-Albendazole is also important. This drug helps kids in better nutrition absorption better physical and mental growth. This time due to closure of Angwandi centres and schools due to COVID, we are giving it through our health workers.'

Bijay Mohapatra, Director, Health Services, informed the media that the drug will be given amid adherence to Covid-19 safety protocols by the grassroots workers. "The drugs are safe but it will not be given to kids below two years of age, pregnant ladies and persons with serious illness," he said.

The state government has planned to eliminate the disease by 2030. The experts claimed that after getting infected, the infected persons show symptoms after a very long time, around 15 years post infection. The health official said that filaria

drugs need to be taken annually and after five years of consumption of the drug, the pathogen, present in their initial stages, will be

Courtesy call



A delegation of Srimandir servitors calls on Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik at his residence in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday, to thank the CM for his personal intervention with regard to the withdrawal of draft bylaws for the 12th century shrine.

ADIVASI MELA CONCLUDES

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 9: Adivasi here Tuesday. The fair that lasted for 15 days helped to make tribal women financially independent by selling their organic products.



More than 2.50 lakh people visited the fair with a staggering business of over Rs 2.5 crore. On the concluding day, Subroto Bagchi Chairman of Odisha Skill Development Authority, joined the fair as the chief guest while Susmita Bagchi, Chairperson of Mo School and nodal officer Akhila Bihari Ota attended the event. Two books penned by Professor Ota was released at the fair.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Covid-19 protocols.

Bhubaneswar, Feb 9: All the

technical and professional insti-

tutions across Odisha will reopen

February 10. However, physical

mode of teaching will resume

February 17 in compliance with

Similarly, classroom teaching

for pre-final year undergraduate

(UG) and first year postgraduate

BJP team meets Shah State's urban initiatives picked for Puri development for Guangzhou Int'l Award

Bengal man held for murder of minor

Bhubaneswar: Airfield Police Tuesday arrested a person hailing from West Bengal on

Hamidul Lakshar was produced before the court and was taken on transit remand. The

tered in the Diamond Harbour GRP Police Station in Bengal. Police sources said that after

cops have now handed over the accused to West Bengal police as the case was regis-

committing the crime, the accused had fled Bengal and started residing in the Capital

city here. He was working as a construction worker and was staying in the Airfield area.

charges of kidnapping and murdering a 14-year-old girl. The accused identified as

New Delhi, Feb 9: A delegation of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led by Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and servitors (sevayats) of Srimandir Tuesday met Home Minister Amit Shah urging him to take steps for the development of Puri city and preservation of Odia culture.

The saffron delegation also thanked the Home Minister and Union Culture Minister Prahlad Singh Patel for withdrawal of the

Engg colleges, ITIs, polytechnics reopen today

(PG) students will begin Wednesday.

Skill Development and Technical

Education Department, all ITIs,

polytechnics, engineering colleges

and other professional institutions

will resume their work from to-

chancellors and principals, Higher

Education (HE) department

Principal Secretary Saswat Mishra

Earlier, In a letter to the vice

As per a notification issued by

controversial draft heritage bylaws. The servitors of Srimandir also urged the Home Minister to take steps for the development of the heritage city

"We met Home Minister Amit Shah over the controversial draft by-laws and we were assured that as long as Modi government is in power, no harm will be done to Odia culture or heritage and all efforts will be made to preserve Jagannath culture," said Lekhashri Samantsinghar, Odisha BJP general secretary.

February 2 notified that the State

Public Universities and

Government as well as non-gov-

ernment degree colleges coming

under HE department are hereby

directed to commence physical

classes for students of 2020-21 pre-

final year UG (2nd year in case of

3-year UG course and 3rd year in

case of 4-year UG course) and first

year PG courses from 10-02-2021

Bhubaneswar, Feb 9: Two innovative urban initiatives of the state government have been shortlisted in the top 15 at the prestigious 2020 Guangzhou International Award for Urban Innovations exemplary models of innovative policies and practices.

Odisha is the only state from India with two initiatives in the top 15 and one initiative in the next top 30 deserving interventions for Global Award

The two innovative urban initiatives Urban Wage Employment Initiative (UWEI) implemented in all 114 urban local bodies (ULBs) and Faecal Sludge and Septage Management (FSSM) in Berhampur—have been shortlisted in the top 15 at the prestigious 2020 Guangzhou International Award for Urban Innovations exemnlary models of innovative policies and practices.

Another innovative and people-centric urban mission 'Drink from Tap Mission' in Puri has also been selected in the top 30 list of deserving interventions.

Panchayati Raj Minister Pratap Jena congratulated the department and officers concerned for their persistent hard work and dedication in setting benchmarks in urban development and being an example for others

While the UWEI was shortlisted for reducing vulnerabilities and en-



File photo of murals being painted in Bhubaneswar under the Urban Wage

Odisha is the only state from India with two initiatives in the top 15 and one in the next top 30 deserving interventions

hancing the resilience of the urban population in the state, the initiative in Berhampur was chosen for promoting sustainable environment conservation and women empowerment through Faecal Sludge and Septage Management in the city.

The 2020 Guangzhou Award aimed at recognising innovation in improving social, economic and environmental sustainability in cities and regions across the world,

had received 273 initiatives submitted from 175 cities from 60 countries.

The award is co-sponsored by the City of Guangzhou and reputed global networks of cities and local, regional, and metropolitan governments, namely United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and the World Association of the Major Metropolises (Metropolis).

The award is also supported by renowned global networks committed to sustainable development and addressing climate change namely, ICLEI and C40.

All 15 shortlisted cities will receive medals and certificates and all the 45 interventions will be featured in the special publication to be brought out on the Innovative Interventions

NCC cadets feted in Cuttack -

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Feb 9: The NCC Group awarded cadets with commendation cards for their outstanding per-

formance. According to sources, cadet Sasmita Das of 7 (O) Bn NCC, Bhadrak was felicitated with Raksha Rajya Mantri Commendation Card, while cadets .Ivotsnarani Sahu of 7(O) Bn NCC. Bhadrak, Srusti Samikshya of 1 (O) Girls Bn NCC, Bhubaneswar and Nibedita Tarai of 3 (O) NU NCC, Cuttack were awarded with

DG Commendation Card. "Cadets Himanshu Bhol of 1 (O) Bn NCC, Cuttack, Ananta Das of 1(O) Bn NCC, Cuttack, Soumya Ranjan Jena of 12 (O) Bn NCC,



Dhenkanal, Sai Subhashree Sahoo of 1 (0) Girls Bn NCC, Bhubaneswar, Arpita Biswal of 1 (O) Bn NCC, Cuttack, Sremavee Satapathy of 12 (O) Bn NCC, Dhenkanal, Babi Sahu of 12(O) Bn NCC, Dhenkanal, Santosh Kumar Sahoo of 3 (O) NU NCC, Cuttack and Ashutosh Behera of 3(O) NU NCC. Cuttack were felicitated by the Group Commander for participating in Republic Day camp at New Delhi," added the source.

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AP govt all set to conduct panchayat polls in Kotia

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

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 Ganiei Bhadra panchayat.

Similarly, the Andhra Pradesh government has changed the name of Phagunasineri village of Kotia panchayat to Patugu Chenuru. For the panchavat 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



Pradesh have paid a visit to Kotia Monday village of 'Ganjei Bhadra' panchavat (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

The Andhra Pradesh government has

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 con-

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.

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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,

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 5T 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 underconstruction projects, it is unfortunate that the state government has remained silent on the issue.

Odia man missing after U'khand glacier burst

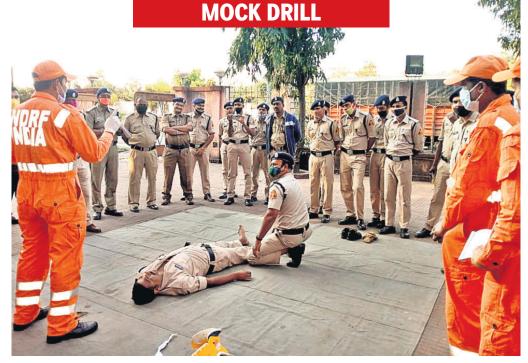
POST NEWS NETWORK

to give finishing touch to

election preparations

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 harrage 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 Nagariuna over his mobile



Personnel of NDRF take part in a mock drill on the disaster management and safe rescue operation on the premises

In the past, families have

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

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

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

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.

Families allege 'social 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

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 in-

terrogation, 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 twoyear-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.

Government of Odisha "e" Procurement Notice e-mail ID: rw_sambalpur@yahoo.co.in, Phone No. 0663-2401850 Bid Identification No. TENDER ONLINE SBPR-12 of 20-21 Dated: 08.02.202

Name of the Work

Building Works as per DTCN available in the website: www tendersodisha.gov.in

Total No. of Work **Estimated Cost** Period of Completion

01 (One) No. Rs.14.73 lakhs 03 (Three) Calendar Months 11.02.2021 at 11.00 A.M. to Period and time of availability 20.02.2021 upto 5.00 P.M.

of bid document in the portal for bidding Date and time of opening of tender

22.02.2021 at 11.00 A.M. Name and address of the E.E.R.W. Divn., Sambalpur

Officer Inviting Bid (1) Other details can be seen from detailed notice inviting tenders available in website: www.tendersodisha.gov.in.

(2) Corrigendum if any shall only be published in the website: www tenderodisha.gov.in. Sd./- Executive Enginee

Rural Works Division, Sambalpur OIPR-25076/11/0010/2021

Ruins of twin forts lie neglected in Sunabeda sanctuary

POST NEWS NETWORK

Tarbod/Nuapada, 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 main-

tenance 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 Kharial 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, Aiit 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

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.

No. O-1054

No. 18-08/2020- DD-III

Government of India

5th Floor, Pt. Deendayal Antyodaya Bhawan, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi -110003

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divayangjan)

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: -

(i) Support organizing exhibitions/workshops to showcase the products including

paintings, handicraft etc. made by PwDs; Support persons with benchmark disabilities who have excelled in sports or in fine arts/ music/dance at the State level to participate in the National/International events; and

(iii) Support persons with high support needs as recommended by the State Assessment Board on a case to case basis

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 nfdepwd@gmail.com. You can apply round the year. Please contact 011-24369054 for any queries.

DAVP 38117/11/0060/2021

(Director)



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

THE MOTHER



Tweet Plot

hat 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 Fadnavis questioned the state government's sanity. Mounting a fierce attack, Fadnavis 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," Fadnavis 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, Suneil 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.

Always seek out the seed of triumph in every adversity.

MICHELANGELO

Remember that failure is an event, not a person.

ZIG ZIGLAR

WORDS**WORTH**

■ Make no bones about it

his 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 dissention). Both seem to be connected with the way that a meaty bone thrown to a group of dogs will cause intense rivalry and dispute.

We are the best of friends

he 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



"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."

FOCUS POLITICS

DEMAGOGUES VS DICTATORS



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

√hroughout Donald Trump's single term as president of the United States, his opponents in both the Democratic and Republican parties frequently portraved 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 antiestablishment 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

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

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 demo-



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

cratic 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 fourterm mayor of Boston and oneterm 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

In Curley's case, his Harvard-educated son-in-law, Edward Donnelly, played a role similar to that of Trump's Harvard-educated sonin-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 "dee-ducted" 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 Berlusconis – 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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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**

TO THE EDITOR

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onkeys 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 vet 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 monkevs 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 lat-

est 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)

JDU set caste equations right

THE 17 MINISTERS INCLUDE 10 FROM THE BJP. SIX FROM THE JDU AND ONE INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE WHO HAS GIVEN SUPPORT TO THE JDU

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Patna, Feb 9: Both the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Janata Dal United (JDU) have set the caste equations right in Bihar, as Nitish Kumar expanded his cabinet Tuesday after he became the Chief Minister again in November last vear. Seventeen legislators were sworn in as Ministers by Governor Fagu Chauhan.

The 17 ministers include 10 from the BJP, six from the JDU and one Independent candidate who has given support to the JDU.

Both the BJP and the JDU have tried to appease the minorities by inducting Syed Shahnawaz Hussain and Jaman Khan into the cabinet, even as the BJP banked on "Kayastha" votes by including Nitin Naveen as one of the Ministers.

Interestingly, the cabinet expansion also saw the inclusion of four Ministers from the Rajput community. Both the JDU and the BJP exuded confidence after the induction of leaders from the 'up-

While the BJP has included Neeraj Kumar Babloo and Subhash Singh, the JDU inducted Leshi Singh and Independent candidate Sumit Singh as Ministers.

Both the parties have appointed one leader each from the 'Brahmin caste'. While the BJP has inducted Alok Ranjan Jha, the JDU has reposed faith in Sanjay Kumar Jha. Banking on the 'Vaishya' vote

bank, Pramod Kumar and Narayan Prasad from the BJP were also ad-

ministered the oath. The JDU has reposed faith in



With the induction of Hussain and Khan, BJP now has ammunition in its armour to counter the charge of not having a **Muslim in the Cabinet**

the Koeri and Kurmi vote banks as they have appointed Nitish Kumar's confidant Shravan Kumar from Kurmi and Jayant Raj from Kushwaha castes, while Madan Sahni, who comes from the Mallah community, has also been inducted as a Minister.

The BJP has included former MP from the Dalit community Janak Ram in the cabinet, while the JDU has also played the 'Dalit card' for the ministerial berths.

Through the expansion of the cabinet, both the parties have tried to appease their vote banks in their own way, as well as to try new political equations.

BJP MLA Gyanendra Singh

Gyanu said that no experienced leaders have been included in the cabinet and an attempt has been

made to reconcile the Nahe region. Lesi Singh's induction has raised the number of women in the cabinet to three. Earlier, BJP's Renu Devi and JD(U)'s Sheela Mandal had been sworn in and the former was elevated as a Deputy CM.

The NDA had been facing flak from the opposition over the absence of a Muslim in the cabinet. With the induction of Hussain and Khan, it now has ammunition in its armour to counter the charge.

Shahnawaz Hussain took oath in Urdu, Sanjay Jha did so in Maithili language while others chose Hindi at the swearing-in. The first-time minister Neeraj Kumar Singh "Bablu" is a cousin of deceased film actor Sushant Singh Rajput.

Nitin Nabin, the four times MLA from Bankipore constituency in capital Patna, had defeated Luv Sinha, son of actor-politician Shatrughan Sinha in the recently

Bihar Cabinet expansion: BJP, Anti-cow slaughter Bill is anti-farmer: Cong, JD(S)

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, Feb 9: Amid protests by the Congress and JD(S) legislators, the ruling BJP in the Karnataka legislative council Monday passed the contentious anti-cow slaughter Bill. Congress and JD(S) MLCs termed the Bill as 'anti-farmer'.

The anti-Cow slaughter Bill is officially termed as the Karnataka Prevention of Slaughter and Preservation and Protection of Cattle Bill 2020, and the passage of the Bill will help the ruling party replace the ordinance that was passed January 8.

The Bill, already passed by the Assembly during the winter session in December last year, was put to vote by Deputy Chairman of the council, MK Pranesh.

With this, slaughtering of nearly all cattle - bull, ox, bullock, buffalo and cow - is now illegal in

Karnataka. For the Bill to become a law, its passage in both Houses followed by assent of the Governor is necessary. As the same Bill was approved in the form of ordinance by the Governor last month, it is likely to get the Governor's nod shortly.

Karnataka Animal Husbandry Minister Prabhu Chauhan tabled the Bill for consideration of the Upper House Monday. During the discussion, several Congress and JD(S) MLCs termed it as anti-farmer, and some of them even tore the Bill besides claiming that it is aimed at targeting certain sections of people They also demanded that the Bill should be withdrawn or be referred to the joint select committee for

"With the Act coming into effect, the efforts for conservation would gain strength," Chauhan said.

After the members of the Congress and the JD(S) trooped into the well opposing the Bill, it was passed through voice vote as the BJP had the higher numbers in the



Yediyurappa celebrates Bill passage with cow worship

BANGALORE: Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa Tuesday offered special prayers passage of the contentious anticow slaughter bill in the Legislative Council.

Flanked by his cabinet colleagues, including Animal Husbandry Minister Prabhu Chauhan and Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai, the CM put vermilion and turmeric powder on the forehead of the 'Go Mata' and showered 'Akshat' and flowers on them, at his residence

After garlanding the cattle, Yediyurappa offered them raw rice, lentils and banana

One of the flagship bills of the BJP government as promised in the party's election manifesto, the Karnataka Prevention of Slaughter and Preservation of Cattle Bill got stuck in the legislative council after getting passed in the as-

As the Deputy Chairman M K Pranesh took up the matter in the Council on Monday, the Congress and JD(S) trooped in the well of the house and started raising slogans.

Amid din and strong opposition by the opposition, Pranesh announced that the bill was passed.

Karnataka is among the select states in the country which has tough provisions against those transporting, smuggling and slaughtering cows and buf-

faloes below the age of 12. Under the new law, slaughter of cattle would lead to imprisonment of upto seven years and a fine ranging from ₹50,000 to ₹5 lakh.

Congress and the JD(S) have been opposed to the bill saying it intends to target the minorities. They alleged that the BJP was not aware of the ground realities as there are many cobblers dependent on

Opposing the Bill, veteran Congress leader B.K. Hariprasad said that this law will not help anyone, neither the farmers nor the common people. "You (BJP) seem to be giving jobs to unemployed VHP and Bajrang Dal workers," he said.

Intervening at this juncture, state Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai said that the Congress believes in killing cows whereas the BJP believes in saving them. "Unlike you people, we are the saviours of our culture and rituals," he said.

Hailing the passage of the Bill, Revenue Minister R. Ashoka said that he was 'truly blessed' to witness such a 'holv event'.

'We have realised the unfulfilled dream of Mahatma Gandhi by passing this Bill. Once Congress had cow and calf as its symbol, but after it changed to the hand symbol, it started helping cow slaughter in the country," he said.

Rebutting both the ministers, Hariprasad said that he too loved cows as several communities in the state, including his own, start their married life by pouring cow milk to solemnise marriages. "Do not teach us what it takes to love an animal. You should accept that this Bill is aimed at creating communal disturbances," he said.

He also dared the BJP to come out with a law to ban fishing or eating pork. "Both fish and boar are directly associated with Lord Vishnu. Why have you not thought of banning the consumption of these meats," he asked.

Congress MLC C.M. Ibrahim said that Karnataka is not like Maharashtra or Uttar Pradesh. "Do not add communal colour to this Bill. Give us time, I will invite all mosque heads. Let's discuss the issue. Refer this Bill to the joint select committee," he suggested.

Ibrahim added that the government should consider discussing the matter with the farmers too.

Wistron likely to resume ops in violence-hit plant

In December, a large number of workers at the Narasapura facility went on a rampage allegedly over issues related to payment of salaries

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 9: Apple iPhonemaker Wistron Corporation may resume operations at its violence-hit Narasapura plant in Karnataka next ing completion, official sources said.

People in the know said that large-scale rehiring after extensive background checks by the police is now underway. As global iPhone demand is on the rise, all-out efforts are on to get the capacity back on track to fulfil the global demand, they said.

The plant is likely to scale up its capacity in four weeks after operations resume.

In December, a large number of workers at the Narasapura facility went on a rampage allegedly over issues related to payment of Taipei-based Wistron Corporation

estimated ₹54-crore loss due to the violence at the plant, about 60 km east of Bangalore, leading to its shutdown. About 150 employees were arrested on December 12-13.

The company has invested about ₹2,000 crore in the plant to roll out about 4 lakh iPhone 7 handsets per



annum and second-generation iPhone SE devices.

Of nearly 10,000 workers, around

contract, hired by six firms. Following the violence, Apple placed Wistron on probation after finding fault with the company over payment delays in October and November to workers at the

Narasapura facility. In its own statement, Wistron said it is looking forward to restarting operations, where a new hiring and payroll systems has been implemented, and all employees have been "fully paid."

The statement from David Shen, CEO, Wistron Smart Devices said:

"We have been working hard on improvements across the board to raise standards and fix the issues. 1,340 are permanent and 8,500 on All employees have been promptly and fully paid."

'We have implemented a new hiring and payroll systems to ensure everyone is paid correctly and provided the correct documentation going forward," he added.

Shen also confirmed the enhanced training programs for all workers, adding: "We have put in a place a new system for workers to get information and raise any concerns they may have, anonymously. We are looking forward to restarting our operations and welcoming back team members.

Heritage buildings set to be razed for revamp

Patna, Feb 9: The iconic heritage buildings of the PMCH, which was founded in 1925 as the Prince of Wales Medical College, are set to be consigned to history as the old structures of the historic institution in Patna are planned to be demolished as part of a major redevelopment project.

The then Prince of Wales, later King Edward VIII, had visited Patna on December 22-23 in 1921 as part of his royal tour of India, and Bihar's and Orissa's first medical college was named after him to commemorate his visit to what was

then a young provincial capital. The college, renamed a few decades after Independence as the Patna Medical College and Hospital, popularly known as PMCH, is dotted with historical buildings, including the Bankipore General Hospital and Women Hospital, which were equipped with special lifts in that era, the main administrative building, and physiology and anatomy departments, among

other structures. A few years ago, these old heritage buildings were proposed to be dismantled in multiple phases as part of the mega redevlopment plan, whose foundation stone was laid by Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar Monday

As part of the revamp plan, a 5462-bed hospital complex will come up at the site at a cost of ₹5,540 cr, and the project is expected to be



At a function held on the PMCH campus, Kumar also unveiled a plaque commemorating the occasion, and said the ambitious project aims to up $grade\,the\,PMCH\,and\,make\,the\,largest$ public health care centre in the state a "world-class facility".

Heritage lovers from Patna and other places, expressed disappointment and criticised the government's move as "an act of sacrificing heritage of Bihar in the name of development".

Soon after the project had been proposed, it had faced opposition from the PMCH alumni, living in Bihar or abroad, who in 2018 had suggested restoring and preserving the historic institution in its original form and developing "extension centres" in peripheral areas of Patna, like Bihta or Fatuha, on the lines of AIIMS extension centres.

Bihar native and UK-based doctor Abu Eesa Siddiqui, said he was shocked that "heritage buildings

stead of being celebrated, will soon face the wrecking balls".

'We have personal memories with this college. My father and youngest brother graduated from Patna Medical College. Hopefully, alumni of PMCH can create awareness on this issue and appeal to the government to spare iconic landmarks on its campus," he said.

The hospital infrastructure will be redeveloped by the Bihar Medical Services & Infrastructure Corporation Ltd (BMSICL) on a turn-key basis. In future, there is a plan to link it with the Ganga Drive.

"The project will be executed in three phases. In the first phase, nurses' quarters, prison ward, cottage and nurses' institution will be demolished. Patient care work is not to be affected, as a 2200-bed hospital will come up first and then patients will be shifted there, and demolition of other buildings will take place in successive phases. As

per the plan, the tallest buildings will be eight-storied," said Dr Indra Shekhar Thakur, the Superintendent

Thakur, also the head of surgery department at the historic institution, said, "After completion, the PMCH will become the world's sec ond-largest hospital by bed count".

In December 2018, the then PMCH Principal Dr Ajit Kumar Verma had said that it would be a state-ofthe-art facility, with "modular-operation theatres" and other high-tech

building has been planned to be preserved, as it also has the old plaque of the inauguration of the college," he had said.

Thakur, who took over as the Superintendent earlier this month, when asked if the administrative building will be preserved, said, "I am not privy to that information.

A huge marble plaque, bearing the old name of the college and the Prince of Wales royal crest, installed right outside the principal's office, albeit minus it shine, tells the story of its inception, and the prestige it

enjoyed earlier, all but faded now. The plaque reads that the college was established in 1925 and formally inaugurated by the then Lt governor of Bihar and Orissa, Sir Henry Wheeler, on February 25, 1927. Principal donors, included erstwhile zemindars of Darbhanga, Dumraon, Mayurbhanj, among others. An official opening ceremony was held as well.

'Farmers being held back due to lack of organisations'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, Feb 9: A dearth of potent farmers' organisations in Bihar has held its peasants back from agitating against the farm laws like their counterparts in states like Punjab and Haryana, senior Congress leader Tariq

Anwar asserted. Addressing a press conference here, the AICC general secretary debunked the claims made by the ruling NDA that the state has remained placid by virtue of the "success" of Nitish Kumar government's experimentation with abolition of APMCs.

"It is not that the farmers of Bihar are better off than those in Punjab, Haryana, Maharashtra and Karnataka. Unlike those states, we do not have organisations which could effectively take up their cause. It is a pity since this is the land where Mahatma Gandhi had



against exploitation of indigo cultivators in Champaran," said the former state Congress chief

He expressed dismay over the Narendra Modi government's "baal hath" (childish obstinacy) in refusing to agree to the farmers demand for repeal of the three

Centre to give up its "ahankaar" (arrogance) Pointing towards Modi's much-

touted move of abolishing many redundant laws which was taken up soon after he rose to power in 2014, Anwar wondered "why is the government so adamant to not do so



It is not that the farmers of Bihar are better off than those in Punjab, Haryana, Maharashtra and Karnataka.

Unlike those states. we do not have organisations which could effectively take up their cause. It is a pity since this is the land where **Mahatma Gandhi had** launched his Satyagraha in protest against exploitation

of indigo cultivators in Champaran TARIQ ANWAR | AICC GENERAL SECRETARY

now when it is being demanded by farmers and attempts to obstruct their agitations are being condemned world over.'

He also disclosed that the Congress has decided to hold districtlevel "padayatras" across the country, including in Bihar, to express solidarity with the agitating farmers.

Training his guns at Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, the former Union minister said the JD(U) leader used to accuse the Manmohan Singh government of not granting special status to Bihar since the UPA was not in power in the state, and asked "why is he not able to get the BJP, which rules the Centre and shares power with him here, to do

the needful". Anwar also deplored the recent order issued by the Bihar police wherein those taking part in demonstrations have been warned of adverse entries in their police verification reports, which could deprive them of getting government jobs

and contracts. "This is undemocratic," he said.

Mobile application to help farmers find new market

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, Feb 9: In a bid to eliminate middlemen and to give farmers' access to multiple markets, the ICAR-Indian Institute of Horticultural Research (IIHR), Bangalore, Monday launched its 'Arka-Vyapar' mobile application during five-day national horticulture fair 2021.

IIHR Director M.R. Dinesh told IANS that the very aim of this app is to provide direct marketing linkage to farmers. "It is an open application and any one can install it on his or her mobile. Through it, one can sell or buy produce," he said. The director said that this app will also provide market updates

regularly. He added that for a long time, farmers have faced the biggest hurdle in terms of middlemen controlling the market, and now it is



farmers who will be in control of the things. "The market dynamics will change as the farmer will have control since he can sell his produce to whoever pays the highest rate,"

After releasing this app virtually Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) Director-General Trilochan Mohapatra said that the 'Ark Vyapaar' will help farmers to double their income. "Most of the horticulture produces being perishable... this app will bridge the demand and supply gap. This could turn out be disruptive technology," he said.

national

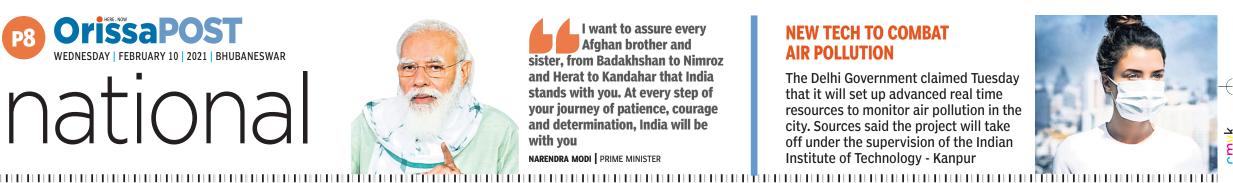


I want to assure every **Afghan brother and** sister, from Badakhshan to Nimroz and Herat to Kandahar that India stands with you. At every step of your journey of patience, courage and determination, India will be with you

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



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

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



MAHARASHTRA HEALTH MINISTER





the Centre had sent for cycloneravaged people of Bengal. They have also stolen their food grains

JP NADDA BIP 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 Bijnor 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 vet 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 Bareli (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 contribut-

ing 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

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 casualities.

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 Raiesh 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),

FINISHING TOUCH

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 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 pros-



ecute 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

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 Raiya Sabha on Tuesday, as the House bid farewell to Leader of

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



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



visit and were on a leisure trip and are going back with bodies.'



dren, these people who came to

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

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

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 Nitvanand 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 mellowed 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 onetime 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 categories, 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.



national



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"





government was adopting Ideology' of 'divide and rule' that the

DIGVIJAY SINGH | SENIOR CONGRESS LEADER

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

HARSH VARDHAN UNION HEALTH MINISTER will soon issue guidelines for regulation of OT

(over the top) platforms that will address issues such as sensitive

PRAKASH JAVADEKAR | 1&B MINISTER

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 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

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.

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 circulat-

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 9: Congress' Lok

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 op-

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."

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and

request him to allow discussion

on the Bills submitted to the Lok

The Congress leader said that

Another Congress MP Praneet

Kaur, who is the wife of Chief

Minister Amarinder Singh, said

that they stood by their demand

The Punjab MPs appealed to

for the repeal of these laws

they will also meet the Rajya Sabha

The Congress MPs will meet

posed by the farmers.

Sabha Secretariat.

Chair on the issue.

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

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

COVID-19

- 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

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

other members of Parliament to ini-

tiate 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 agricul-

ture as their profession. So, we ap-

peal to them to help with these pri-

vate member's Bills by coming out

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.

people were telling us to come out.

We thought it was a fire. We started

running but the water gushed in. It

The men clung to scaffolding rods

was like a Hollywood movie.^{*}

In parliamentary history, 14 such

of partisan politics.

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, epi demiology 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,"

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

olent 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.

cash reward of ₹1 lakh for information leading to Sidhu's arrest.

Tens of thousands of farmers India's tricolour.

Thousands of protesting farmers who reached ITO 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.

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 vi-

The police had announced a

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

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.

HOLY DIP



Pilgrims take holy dip at Sangam confluence of three rivers, the Ganga the Yamuna and mythical Saraswati, ahead of Mauni Amawashya festival during Magh Mela in Prayagraj, Tuesday

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' trac-

tor 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

to mark Afzal Guru's death anniversary

Shutdown in Kashmir $oldsymbol{\perp}$



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 anniversaries of Guru and its founder Mohammad Maqbool Bhat who was hanged in the Tihar Jail February 11, 1984 Also, posters, purportedly is-

sued 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

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, but Rajesh Kumar lived to tell the tale.

Over 20 people were confirmed dead but at least 170 others remained missing after the glacier broke off a mountainside, triggering a flash flood through a valley in Uttarakhand. On Sunday, floodwaters swamped a nearby hydroelectric power complex where Kumar and his colleagues were working 300 metres inside a tunnel.

We didn't think we were going to make it," the 28-year-old told this news agency from his hospital bed. "Suddenly there was a sound of

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.



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 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.

concrete dam on the Dhouli 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

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 bor-

der. Dozens of workers building a

by the wind pressure before being consumed by the water and slush. We can only guess what happened."

Mangra, another tunnel survivor,

at the surface. whistling... there was shouting, "All we knew was that we could Some punched the air in joy as Shopkeeper Ramesh Negi from still can't sleep.

international



fairness to **President Trump he** was right to take a tougher approach to China. That was the right thing to do TONY BLINKEN I 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





the people of support their right peacefully in elected govt, and the right to

freedom of expression, to seek, to receive, to impart information both

NED PRICE US STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESPERSON

As long as the Beijing willing to resolve dialogue with them under the conditions of equality

TSAI 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

MUKESH AGHI 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

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 Tuesdav. 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 secondhighest 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

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 Indoopen 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 al-

lies, reflecting the significance his administration attaches to ties with

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

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

nations, the White House said.

"We also agreed to further our cooperation against climate change,'

"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

'Iran may pursue nuclear weapon'

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 81year-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 Fakhrizadeh. 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

Separate attacks kill 9 in Afghan

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 secondbiggest 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 Naypyitaw, 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

COVID VIRUS LEAK FROM LAB 'VERY UNLIKELY': WHO

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.

may have jumped from animals to humans, the team investigating the origin of the virus said they do not have any proof. Bats and pangolins are thought to be possible sources of the virus, but conclusive evidence is still lacking.

The WHO team also emphasised on studying the possibility of the transmission of the virus through imported frozen food, along with other possibilities. After the first cases of novel coronavirus emerged from Wuhan in December 2019, a theory circulated on social media that the virus may have leaked from a laboratory there. Former US President Donald Trump also made similar suggestions.

In an open letter issued in February 2020, the Wuhan Institute of Virology said that assumptions were false rumours and the conscience of the staff in the institute was "absolutely clear".

The pandemic has so far killed over 2.3 million people worldwide and caused widespread economic and social disruptions.

HISTORIC FLIGHT

Arab spacecraft nears Mars orbit

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 farmin India and abroad surged.



that the External Affairs Ministry of the country, instead of ignoring "celebrities and others" were "nei-

ment alleged that several foreign agencies were "trying to spread 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-yearold Dalit activists Nodeep Kaur, an activist and protester, was arrested and allegedly sexually assaulted by the police Currently, the government is

pressurising Twitter to shut down accounts of people supporting the farmers' protests, labelling them "anti-nationals" and "Khalistanis". While Twitter is yet to oblige the Modi government in this regard, the social media giant,

Whether Twitter will be able to maintain its stand or cow 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

which has been a platform for many Kyi and other ruling party memers as support from celebrities, both the message on social media, refalse propaganda against India". assault of the citizens. Unable to conbers detained since the military torted saying, the views of such While Rihanna's tweet strengthsuch justified protests, has aptain the uprising against such More than anything else, took over and blocked the new human rights abuse, the govern-ened the global discussion on the proached the Union IT Minister Rihanna's simple tweet rattled the Ravi Shankar Prasad for a direct diment ordered the police to open session of Parliament from conther accurate nor responsible" #FarmersProtests, the real credit vening February 1. Indian government to such extent Going a step ahead, the governgoes to thousands of farmers and fire on the citizens.

business

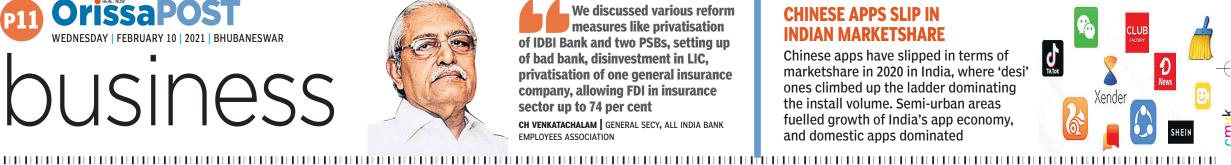


We discussed various reform measures like privatisation of IDBI Bank and two PSBs, setting up of bad bank, disinvestment in LIC, privatisation of one general insurance company, allowing FDI in insurance sector up to 74 per cent

CH VENKATACHALAM | GENERAL SECY, ALL INDIA BANK

CHINESE APPS SLIP IN INDIAN MARKETSHARE

Chinese apps have slipped in terms of marketshare in 2020 in India, where 'desi' ones climbed up the ladder dominating the install volume. Semi-urban areas fuelled growth of India's app economy, and domestic apps dominated





In the financial year 2020-21, appreciated by 3.53 per cent till

February 2, 2021, as per the information provided by Reserve Bank of India

MINISTER FOR STATE FOR FINANCE

Triumph Motorcycles have been dominating the premium adventure segment in the country since the

first Tiger made its way to the SHOEB FAROOO BUSINEES HEAD, TRIUMPH

MOTORCYCLES INDIA



role in helping Max Life continue its progression despite COVID

MOHIT TALWAR MD, MAX FINANCIAL SERVICES

SHORT TAKES

Profit booking eats into gains

Mumbai: A massive bout of profit booking erased the entire intra-day gains that led both key indices to touch record highs during Tuesday's trade session. The market opened at record high on back of favourable cues from global bourses. The positive cues led S&P BSE Sensex touched a record high of 51,835.86 and the Nifty50 on the National Stock Exchange to a record high of 15,257.10 points. The market continued to remain in favour of advancing counter till around 2.15 p.m. However, a last hour profit booking pulled the market lower.

DIIs continue selling spree

New Delhi: Equity and equity-linked mutual fund schemes saw a net outflow of ₹9,253.22 crore in January, showed data from the **Association of Mutual Funds** in India (AMFI) Tuesday. The net outflow stood at ₹10,147.12 crore in December, ₹12,917.36 crore in November, ₹2,724.95 crore in October and ₹734.40 crore in September. However, the contributions through systematic investment grew to ₹8,023.39 crore last month.

Tata Steel is back in black

New Delhi: Tata Steel swung back into black in the October-December quarter posting a consolidated profit of ₹4,010.94 crore for the quarter on the back of increased income. The company had clocked a loss of ₹1,228.53 crore in the year ago guarter, Tata Steel said in a BSE filing. During the October-December period of the current fiscal, its total income rose to ₹39.809.05 crore from ₹35.613.34 crore a year ago.

NMDC clocks 53pc jump in Q3 profit

New Delhi: The country's largest iron ore producer NMDC has reported a 53 per cent jump in its net profit in the October-December quarter on the back of smart recovery in both production and sales that beat market expectations on account of disruptions caused by the Covid pandemic. Accordingly, the company reported a net profit of ₹2,109 crore in the third quarter of FY21 against ₹1,376 crore during Q3 of 2019-20. NMDC's turnover during the 3rd quarter of 2020-21 stood at ₹4,355 crore.

Jan vehicle registrations fall 9 pc YoY Oil hits 13-month

THE FALL COMES AFTER DEC 2020'S REGISTRATION ROSE ON A YOY BASIS

AGENCIES

New Delhi. Feb 9: Vehicle registrations in January 2021 declined 9.66 per cent on a year-on-year (YoY)

Tuesday, data released by the Federation of Automobile Dealers' Associations (FADA) showed that over 15.92 lakh vehicles were registered in January 2021, compared with over 17.63 lakh units in January 2020.

The fall comes after December 2020's registration rose on a YoY

Notably, December 2020's rise was the first positive growth in a month during the current financial year. At that time, 18.44 lakh vehi-

cles were registered compared with over 16.61 lakh units in December 2019.

In January 2021, registration of personal vehicles fell 4.46 per cent on a YoY basis to 2.81 lakh units.

Similarly, two-wheeler registration fell. It slid by 8.78 per cent to 11.63

However, tractors' registration rose 11.14 per cent on a YoY basis



positive growth in a month during the current financial

Similarly, two-wheeler registration slid by 8.78 pc to

conductors," FADA President Vinkesh Gulati was quoted as saying in a statement. 'This has resulted in a shortage

ket has created a vacuum for semi-

in supply for all categories of vehicles especially Passenger Vehicles even though enquiry levels and bookings remained high. New launches and SUV's continued to see high traction and helped in restricting the overall PV registrations fall by a bigger margin."

Besides, he cited recent price hike undertaken by OEMs as adding to the woes as two-wheelers which became more expensive for lower and middle income class.

"Commercial Vehicle registrations were also hit due to vehicle financing still not back to normal and high BS-6 cost.

In addition, FADA said the Centre's announcement of scrappage policy though voluntary is in the right direction.

"The spending on infrastructure projects like roads and public transport will help build traction for commercial vehicles over a longer period of time," FADA said in the

highs on supply cuts, weak dollar

London, Feb 9: Oil hit 13-month highs Tuesday with the Brent benchmark staying above \$60 a barrel, supported by supply cuts, a weak dollar and optimism over a recovery in fuel demand.

Brent crude futures for April were up 16 cents, or 0.3 pc, to \$60.72a barrel by 1301 GMT.

US West Texas Intermediate crude (WTI) for March was at \$58.00 a barrel, up 3 cents. Both contracts had hit their highest since January 2020 earlier Tuesday after having risen for six straight sessions.

The dollar was down 0.4 pc against a basket of currencies, making dollar-priced commodities more attractive to holders of other currencies.

Top exporter Saudi Arabia is curbing supply in February and March, on top of cuts by producers in the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and their allies, prompting fore-



casts of a supply deficit this year. Also, Libya's output has fallen to 1.04 million barrels per day (bpd) from 1.3 million bpd late last year due to an ongoing strike by Petroleum Facilities Guards, a Libyan oil source said Monday.

Signalling no swift return of Iranian barrels into the market, Tehran and Washington appeared to be deadlocked over a resolution of sanctions on the OPEC member. Investors are also pinning hopes on demand recovery when COVID-19 vaccines take effect and as governments and central banks deploy huge stimulus packages to shore up economic activity

No proposal to hike excise duty on cigarettes: Centre



New Delhi, Feb 9: The Centre informed the Rajya Sabha Tuesday that there was no proposal to raise the excise duty on cigarettes, 'bidis' and smokeless tobacco. In a written reply to a question.

Minister of State for Finance Anurag Thakur said that there was no recommendation by the GST Council to raise the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on these tobacco products.

'The GST rates on goods are fixed on the basis of GST Council recommendations. At present, there is no such recommendation. Also, there is no proposal to increase the excise duty on such products,"

Finance Ministry data showed

that the overall GST collection from these products, including cess, during FY 2019-20 was ₹53,540 crore and excise collection ₹1,610 crore. From July 2017, the central excise duty collected on tobacco has been subsumed in the GST.

Thakur said in his reply that the taxes collected from tobacco, similar to taxes collected from other sources, together form a part of the overall Gross Tax Revenues (GTR) of the government of India and are used to fund various government schemes and programmes.

"In Budget 2020-21, ₹67,111.8 cr has been allocated to fund the requirements of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. This will be met from both capital and revenue receipts of the government of India." he said

46 FIRMS BUSTED FOR FRAUDULENTLY **CLAIMING ₹82CR ITC**

As per the data, dealer inven-

tory continues to fall with personal

vehicles' inventory ranging from

10-15 days and two-wheelers' in-

"After witnessing a one off growth

in December and January, the auto

registration fell once again by 10 per

cent YoY. Auto industry clearly mis-

judged the demand which returned

post-lockdown. Industry's under

estimation of post-Covid rebound

along with chipmakers prioritis-

ing higher-volume and more lu-

crative consumer electronics mar-

ventory from 30-35 days.

New Delhi, Feb 9: GST officers have busted a network of 46 fake firms which used to generate fake invoices and fraudulently avail input tax credit (ITC) worth ₹82.23 crore, the Finance ministry said Through the use of extensive

data analytics, officers of Delhi East GST were able to identify and unravel a network of 46 fake firms which were operating since 2017 and had passed on fake ITC to multiple of beneficiaries, it said in a statement. The investigation conducted revealed that the fictitious firms

were being controlled by Arvind

Kumar and his associates. He was arrested January 17 and is in judicial custody till date," the ministry added. The ministry further said Kamal Singh (alias Kamal Solanki), a key associate of Kumar, also has confessed to have been involved in

the racket of fake billing through which fake invoices of ₹541.13 crore were raised involving fake ITC of ₹82.23 crore, which is expected to increase as the investigation progresses.

Kamal Singh has also been arrested and remanded to judicial custody till February 23.

AMAZON-FUTURE CASE

'Group of Companies Doctrine' can't be invoked, says Delhi HC

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Feb 9: A division bench of the Delhi High Court has said in its order that a reading of the agreement clauses shows that Amazon has no intent to exercise control over Future Retail Limited (FRL) and prima facie there was no reason to seek a status quo order before the learned single judge.

A division bench of the Delhi High Court comprising of Chief Justice DN Patel and Justice Jyoti Singh has stayed the operation and effect of order passed by the single judge ordering a status quo in the deal between Future group and

The order says it relied on the following reasons - that 1) Future Retail (the Appellant herein) is not a party to the agreement between Amazon and Future Coupons, 2) that in an agreement between Reliance Retail and FRL, Amazon is not a party and prima facie all the three agreements, as stated hereinabove, are different and therefore, 'Group of Companies Doctrine' cannot be invoked.

Clause No 15.17 of the agreement dated 22nd August, 2019



between Amazon and FCPL reads as under:

"For the avoidance of doubt, Parties hereby expressly record their understanding that the Promoters and the Investor have no agreement or understanding whatsoever in relation to the acquisition of shares or voting rights in, or exercising control over, FRL and that the Company, the Promoters and the Investor otherwise do not intend to act in concert with each other in any way whatsoever."

"A reading of the aforesaid clause son to seek a status quo order be-

fore the learned Single Judge," the order said.

NCLT etc should not be restrained from proceeding in accordance

evidences that Amazon have no intent to exercise control over FRL and thus, Prima facie there was no rea"Statutory authorities, like SEBI,

with law," the order added. "It is made clear that the observations made in this order are only a prima facie view for the purpose of grant of interim relief and shall not come in the way of the learned single judge in passing the final order and needless to state that the order shall be passed uninfluenced

above," the order by the division bench said. The matter is listed for further hearing February 26.

by any observations made herein-

Godrej launches ultra-low temp freezers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 9: Godrej Appliances Tuesday added state of the art ultra-low temperature freezers to its portfolio, strengthening the vaccine cold chain further. These advanced medical freezers can preserve life-saving medical supplies including critical vaccines below -80°C and are aimed at boosting both Indian and global medical cold chain. Godrej Appliances is currently

deploying vaccine refrigerators which maintain a precise temperature of 2 to 8°C to store the highly temperature sensitive Covaxin and Covishield vaccines being administered in India, as part of the national tender it received in October 2020.

Medical Freezers which maintain -20°C are also being deployed for diluents and ice packs needed for the last mile delivery in the Covid vaccination drive. The vaccines run the risk of damage if

Inadequate cold chain equipment is one of the key challenges which can lead to inefficacy of the vaccines and cost human health

JAMSHYD GODREJ | CMD, GODREJ & BOYCE

they are subjected to fluctuations beyond the specified temperature band, leading to both health and economic implications.

The current capacity for Ultra

Low Temperature Freezers is 12,000 units per annum, which Godrej Appliances is working towards quickly ramping up to 30,000 units per annum, to meet the growing global demand.

CMD of Godrej & Boyce Manufacturing Company Ltd. Jamshyd Godrej, said, "Inadequate cold chain equipment is one of the key challenges, which can lead to inefficacy of the vaccines and cost

Govt may clarify FDI rules in e-commerce

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Feb 9: Amid domestic traders complaining alleged violations of FDI norms by foreign online players. Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal Tuesday said the government is considering coming out with certain clarifications to ensure that the e-commerce sector works in the "true spirit" of the law and rules.

He said the current FDI policy for the e-commerce sector is robust and well-designed. However, there are certain complaints from consumers and small retailers about certain practices of the ecommerce companies, which are under investigation, he added.

"We have sought several information, they are being looked into. We are also considering certain clarifications to ensure that the ecommerce sector works in the true spirit of the law," Goval told reporters. "E-commerce companies are supposed to provide an agnostic platform so that buyers and sellers can trade with each other.'

Bitcoin powers towards \$50K as Tesla takes it mainstream

THE MOST POPULAR **CRYPTOCURRENCY HAS GAINED 1,150 PC** FROM MARCH 2020 **LOWS AS** INSTITUTIONAL **INVESTORS SEARCH FOR ALTERNATIVE WEALTH STORES AND RETAIL TRADERS RIDE** THE WAVE

AGENCIES

London, Feb 9: Bitcoin was fast approaching the \$50,000 mark Tuesday



as the afterglow of Elon Musk-led Tesla's investment in the crvptocurrency had investors reckoning it may become a mainstream asset

class for both corporations and money managers.

The most popular cryptocurrency has gained 1,150 pc

from March 2020 lows as institutional investors search for alternative wealth stores and retail traders ride the wave. It traded at a few hundred dollars only five years back.

Monday, it leapt 20 pc after Tesla announced it had a \$1.5 billion investment and that it would eventually take the cryptocurrency as payment for its cars. That was its largest daily rise in more than three years.

The price of one bitcoin climbed to a peak of \$48,216 -- almost enough to buy one of the best-selling Tesla vehicles, Tesla Model Y SUV. Rival cryptocurrency ethereum struck a record high of \$1,784.85 Tuesday.

Musk, a well-known supporter of cryptocurrencies, foresees accepting the currency as a payment

for Tesla cars and analysts reckon this is a larger shift as companies and big investment houses follow small traders into the asset.

"Bitcoin is definitely capturing investors' attention -- I get more and more questions about it," said Marija Vertimane, senior strategist at State Street Global Markets.

"From a practical point of view, using bitcoin to buy anything -Tesla cars - would be still extremely difficult given its excessive volatility.'

Bitcoin's volatility has been a hindrance for some serious investors and a sticking point in using it for transactions. Realised volatility, or daily price swings measured in terms of closing prices for Bitcoin over the past 90 days was at 72% compared with 16 pc for

the S&P 500 stocks index and 6% for the euro currency

What's more, with Bitcoin's value tripling in the past three months, analysts raised questions over how its volatility would affect someone

buying a Tesla car in Bitcoin. "Unless the price of Bitcoin stabilises, either Bitcoin's price falls drastically and you end up having won a Tesla in a lottery, or its price triples and you end up paying your Tesla far too expensive," said Ipek Ozkardeskaya, senior analyst at 🗦 Swissquote Bank.

For example, if someone bought a Tesla Model 3 for one bitcoin Sunday - when it traded for \$38,000 the same car could be bought for iust 0.8 bitcoin Tuesday, when the cryptocurrency traded at \$46,413

as of 1145 GMT.















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

(4/76), who after his first innings hu-



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

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

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 dif-He covered the swing and shuf-

fled 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

milation 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 Kohl, 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 ex-

Ishant Sharma, on first two days, bowled a few spells of lively reverse swing. What Ishant 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 inning** (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

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

with supreme game awareness and immaculate understanding of conditions. Against a left-hander, he predictably came round the wicket and angled a few in with a busy Pant hitting a boundary. By then, Anderson had gauged that Pant could be hurried on the drive.

So the master changed his tactic and bowled a slower one enticing Pant to go for a drive. Pant tried his best to check it but the bowler had asked his skipper Joe Root to specifically stand at short cover for that particular shot.

From 92/2, it was 110/5 and Kohli cut a lonely figure at the other end. Washington Sundar (0) was then picked by Dom Bess with the one that turned away leaving India in com-

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 disappoint: 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.

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 wicket. The first partnership got us going. Different stages guys came in and

India slip to 4th position in WTC

DUBAI: India Tuesday slipped to Australia last month. India, who fourth position in the World Test have slipped to fourth position Championship (WTC) rankings with 68.3 percentage points, will after their 227-run defeat to England now be looking to win at least two in the opening Test in Chennai of the remaining three matches to 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 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

Australian Open: Nadal through in straight sets

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

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 Diere, 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-



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

Hanfmann 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 twotime 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 threeweek 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

Liudmila 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 Botic Van de Zandschulp to become the youngest man to win a Grand Slam match since Thanasi Kokkinakis in 2014.

And an even younger player, 16year-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 tussleed 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.

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