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FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

Today, you may receive some kind of material support from family. It is probably for a wise cause, so be sure to use it accordingly, says Ganesha. You may spend the evening with those very loved ones who have supported you.

TAURUS

You are likely to remain unconquerable and unassailable throughout the day. Caution: Stay focussed and avoid frittering away your time and energy. You may face stress at work or in some ongoing project. Expect a relatively serene evening with your beloved, says Ganesha.

GEMINI

A great evening with your sweetheart will be the highlight of the day. It will be one of the better days in business; you will be able to earn enough money to save for the future. In the evening, you may have to spend a little extra, says Ganesha.

CANCER

Today, you will show others, literally, how to be successful in life, feels Ganesha. The example that you will set here is likely to become a benchmark for your company. Despite your tendency of getting into confrontations with your seniors, you are likely to be compliant and cooperative at work.

LEO

You are destined to play the superhero, at least as far as trade and commerce are concerned. Ganesha feels that today, you shall be more tied up in your daily work than is usual. But the upshot of it all is that all your actions seem to get the desired approval as the day progresses.

VIRGO

Ganesha predicts an imaginative and fruitful day for you at the workplace. You will feel your professional best in the afternoon. With your elegance, you will manage to put your ideas across the table and win the approval of your boss.

LIBRA

Today, it is rather unlikely that you will get whatever you wish for. Internal strife with people around you may dominate your workplace, but you shall be able to negotiate this tough state of affairs with deftness, predicts Ganesha. Patience is your key to get over psychological turmoil.

SCORPIO

The day will usher refreshing changes into your personal life, foresees Ganesha. No matter which side of the bed you woke up on, the day promises to present itself in a cheerful light. You will build and enjoy harmonious and cordial relations with your peers at work. Intimacy and pleasure in love relations at night will be the perfect ending for a delightful day.

SAGITTARIUS

Cash transactions will "flow" your way. Money comes easy to itching palms, says Ganesha, and you will enjoy the green scene as you take stock of your finances with precision. Beware of people with a negative attitude as it might inflict worry on your fortunes, says Ganesha.

CAPRICORN

You will be brimming over with power and energy, so much so that you may go head first into a new business venture, something that can match your ability and bring you the desired satisfaction. Pending work will be done away with, leaving you more time for recreation, says Ganesha.

AQUARIUS

Today is a day for creative expression! Sing away to glory, for you may discover you have a wonderful voice. Focus and precision are your best tools today, says Ganesha. But some event may cast a shadow over your clarity in the evening.

PISCES

You will take up a lot of work today. Try to work well in the office as well as in your team. Apart from thin you will also be involved in different tasks. You will also try to do things for making a name for yourself. Ganesha advises you to only take up tasks you are capable of.



GOULDING USED HUSBY'S COAT TO HIDE PREGNANCY

Singer Ellie Goulding reveals she used her husband Casper Jopling's coat to hide her pregnancy for the first six months, to keep the news private. Asked on a show how she hid the news, the soon-to-be mother revealed "It's different. I stole my husband's coat for about six months."

FARROW ENCOURAGED DAUGHTER SOON-YI TO BOND WITH ALLEN

American actress Mia Farrow, in a documentary series *Allen Vs Farrow*, has revealed that she encouraged her adopted daughter Soon-Yi to 'bond with' Farrow's ex-husband, actor-filmmaker Woody Allen, before she discovered about the affair between the two. Later, Soon-Yi went on to marry Allen.



Nomadland, Borat share top honours

Late star Chadwick Boseman was posthumously named best actor for his performance in 'Ma Rainey's Black Bottom'



Los Angeles: *Borat Subsequent Moviefilm* and *Nomadland* were the big winners of the 78th Golden Globe Awards. *The Crown* and late star Chadwick Boseman were among winners, too, while veteran Jane Fonda was feted with the lifetime achievement award.

The ceremony was held virtually and the live audience consisted of front-line workers and first responders of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Actresses Tina Fey and Amy Poehler returned to hosting duties this year, but they were in New York and Los Angeles respectively, marking the first time the Golden Globes have been bicoastal. The best drama film went to *Nomadland* starring Frances McDormand as a homeless woman travelling through the American

named Best Comedy series. Actress Catherine O'Hara, who plays the role of Moira Rose in the show, was feted with best comedy actress honour.

Chloe Zhao took home the award for best Motion Picture Director for *Nomadland*. She became the second female winner of the category in Globes history, after Barbara Streisand in 1983, reports bbc.com. The Sacha Baron Cohen-starrer *Borat Subsequent Moviefilm*, the sequel to 2006's hugely successful *Borat*, was named best musical or comedy film.

Other winners included Rosamund Pike, who was named best actress in a musical or comedy film for *I Care A Lot*. The best supporting actor went

to Daniel Kaluuya for his performance in *Judas And The Black Messiah*.

A 'shocked' John Boyega was named best supporting actor in a limited series for his role in *Small Axe*. "I'm so shocked. I've got trackie bottoms on and I'm comfortable but this is exciting," Boyega quipped. The *Crown* won four honours including best drama series. Josh O'Connor and Emma Corrin both won for their performances as Prince Charles and Princess Diana respectively.

Actress

Gillian Anderson was named in the best supporting category in the series for her portrayal of former prime minister Margaret Thatcher. Late star Chadwick Boseman was posthumously named best actor in a drama film for his performance in *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*. His wife, Taylor Simone Ledward, accepted the award on his behalf. Boseman passed away last summer after quietly battling colon cancer for years.

Actress-singer Andra Day won in the best actress (drama) category for her performance in the OTT film *The United States vs. Billie Holiday*. Day is only the second Black woman to win at the Globes after Whoopi Goldberg, who won 35 years ago for *The Color Purple*, according to Variety. The *Queen's Gambit* was named best limited series and its star Anya Taylor-Joy, was named best actress in a limited series.

Veteran actress and activist Jane Fonda was feted with the Cecil B DeMille Award for lifetime achievement and used her acceptance speech to call for greater diversity in the industry.

IAN S

National Theatre Fest kicks off with Odia play Seeta

PURBA RANGA - 2021



Actors enact a scene from the play Seeta at Rabindra Mandap, Monday

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar:** Purba Ranga, a five-day National Theatre Festival, began here at Rabindra Mandap, Monday. The event is being jointly organised by the State Culture Department in collaboration with Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre, Kolkata and Odisha Natya Sangh, a confederation of hundreds of theatre troupes from the state.

City-based Jeevan Rekha Theatre troupe presented Odia play *Seeta* on the first day of the festival. Written by late

Ratiranjan Mishra, the play was designed and directed by Abhinna Routray.

The central character of the play was Seeta but she was not the one from epic Ramayan. As the play progresses, she became the reason behind conflicts between four friends who had discovered her in the dead of night. But at the end, none of them succeeded to win her heart.

The moral of the story was every woman should be treated with respect, not like an object.

"Apart from sending a message to the audience, the play has a style of its own. While we have presented it in Geetinatya format, the viewers can enjoy Chhau dance and folk music at various points during the narration. However, the actors deliver contemporary dialogues," said the play director Routray.

Four Hindi plays will be staged over the next four days of the festival, added Routray.

The dignitaries present during the inauguration included Culture Department Director Ranjan Kumar Das, Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi President Ramakrushna Sahoo, Secretary Prabodh Kumar Rath and eminent theatre practitioner Prasanna Mishra.

'Sabyarchita' gets hitched



Sabyasachi and Archita had worked together in a series of hit movies including 'Pagala Karichi Paunji Tora', 'Mu Eka Tumara', 'Smile Please' and 'Abhiman'

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar:** Popular Odia cine actors Sabyasachi Mishra and Archita Sahu tied the knot Monday at Jodhpur, Rajasthan in an intimate ceremony. The couple shared the photos from their captioning "Today onwards all your Joys & sorrows, pleasures & pains are mine. #Sabyarchita."



Earlier, they shared the news on their respective social media handles. They wrote "With the blessings of Lord Jagannatha & our families it gives us immense happiness in sharing that our wedding is happening tomorrow..." The post was flooded by congratulatory messages from fans and several film celebrities.

The two were spotted in royal looks in the images shared by them. While Archita sported a wine-coloured lehenga, Sabya opted for a pastel white sherwani with embroidery works. He wore a pink head gear to complete the look.

The two had worked opposite each other in a series of films including *Pagala Karichi Paunji Tora*, *Mu Eka Tumara*, *Smile Please* and *Abhiman*.

Sabyasachi and Archita have now joined the elite club of star couples like Ranveer Singh-Deepika Padukone, Abhishek Bachchan-Aishwarya Rai, Ajay Devgn-Kajol and Uttam Mohanty-Aparajita Mohanty. Sabya, an engineer-turned-actor had

arranged the arrival of hundreds of Odias in around 35 buses, and many more by special trains, from states like Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Kerala earning goodwill from people. He also had arranged a chartered flight from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to help the migrant workers.

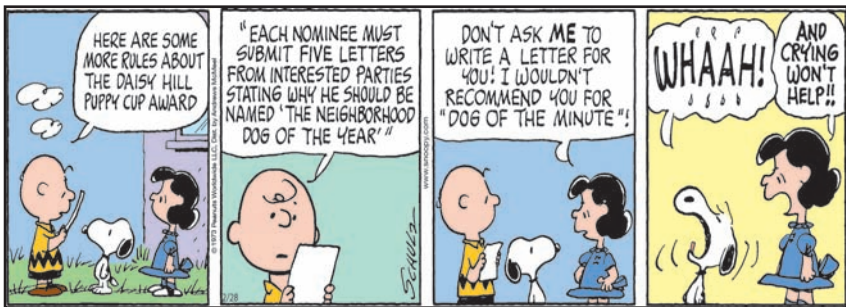
"I am a bank of positivity and want to be remembered as a good human being," the philanthropic artist once said.

No wonder, he is often addressed in media as the 'Sonu Sood' of Odisha.

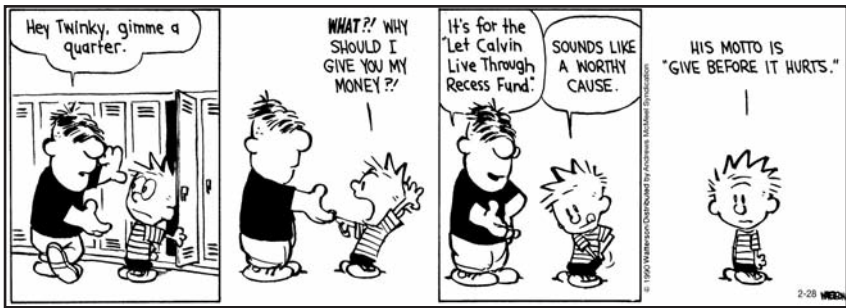


FUN post

PEANUTS



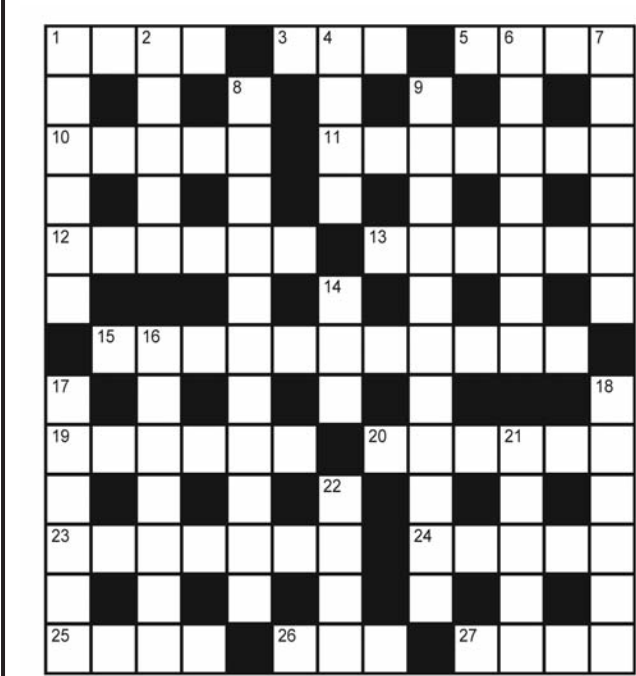
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



CROSSWORD



Across

- 1 Sound rebound
- 3 "Ciao!"
- 5 Farm newborn
- 10 Turbine part
- 11 Gun dog
- 12 Glass ingredient
- 13 Martial art (3,3)
- 15 Pamper
- 19 Angel of the first order
- 20 Fencing word

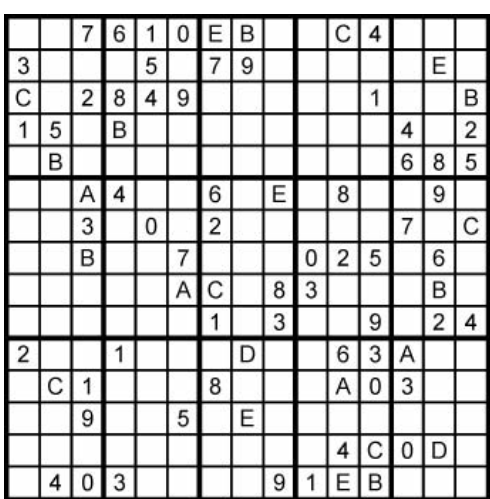
Down

- 23 Spotted wild cat
- 24 Estuary
- 25 Ocean menace
- 26 Hilo garland
- 27 Aid in crime
- 1 Means of escape
- 2 Overnight stop
- 4 Puppy sounds
- 6 Kind of illusion

- 7 Rutabaga
- 8 Cactus type (7,4)
- 9 Quinine water drink (3,3,5)
- 14 Frigid
- 16 Dinghy thole
- 17 Place of refuge
- 18 "Get lost!" (4,2)
- 21 Movie star, briefly
- 22 Not engaged

SUDOKU

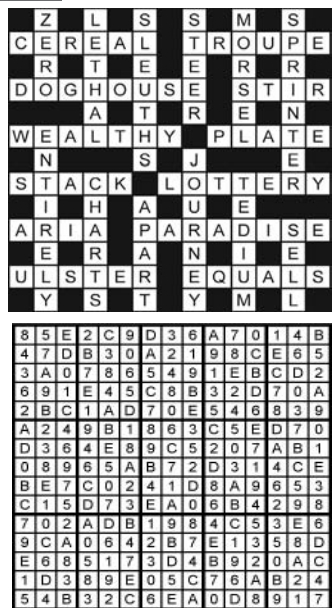
To solve the Sudoku puzzle, each row, column and box must contain the numbers 0 to 9 and the letters A to E.



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

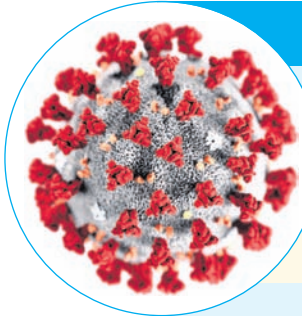


# downtown



## GIVING WAY

Radhaballav Mutt near Srimandir being demolished to give way for the ambitious heritage corridor project in Puri, Monday



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	11,47,89,853	9,03,30,506	25,44,822
India	1,10,63,140	1,07,48,907	1,56,863
Odisha	3,37,277	3,34,647	1,916

# Poor rate of conviction behind growing menace

GYAN RANJAN MOHAPATRA, OP

**Bhubaneswar, March 1:** Food adulteration is a heinous criminal offence since it is not only cheating the consumers, but also poses serious health hazards to them. Despite this, rising cases of food adulteration has turned out to be a major cause of concern, especially in the absence of any exemplary action against the unscrupulous businessmen involved in it.

Data available from the Odisha State Food Safety Department indicate that the conviction rate in food adulteration cases in the state is extremely low and this is largely responsible for such menace to flourish.

A total of 61 cases were registered against people involved in adulteration of food items in Odisha during the 2016-17 fiscal. The department registered 19 criminal cases and 42 civil cases against the accused in 2016-17.

However, only four accused were held guilty for food adulteration by the courts, while the remaining people were either acquitted or are still awaiting completion of their trial. Moreover, those convicted were also let off after paying fines worth ₹50,000.

Similarly, the department registered 42 cases, including 13 criminal and 29 civil cases, in connection with adulteration of food items in 2017-18. In this year too, only four accused were convicted and they were penalised a total sum of ₹43,000.

In the subsequent year, 2018-19, as many as 47 cases, including 14

TOTAL CASES REGISTERED				
Financial Year	Criminal	Civil	Convictions/penalties	Penalty Amount In ₹
2016-17	19	42	4	51,000
2017-18	13	29	4	43,000
2018-19	14	33	2	1,10,000
2019-20	12	61	5	2,20,000

criminal and 33 civil cases, were registered against the traders involved in adulteration of food items. However, only two accused were convicted. The convicts had to pay fines worth ₹1.10 lakh.

As many as 73 cases, including 12 criminal and 61 civil cases, were registered against traders across the state in the 2019-20 fiscal and of these, only five were convicted.

During the last four years, 15

## FOOD ADULTERATION



The conviction rate in food adulteration cases in the state is extremely low and this is largely responsible for such menace to flourish

NEED FOR FOOD SAFETY OFFICERS AND FOOD ANALYSTS TO BE TRAINED IN THE LEGAL AND TECHNICAL PROCEDURES TO STAND LEGAL SCRUTINY IN A COURT OF LAW

traders were convicted for food adulteration. The authorities managed to collect ₹4.24 lakh from these convicts during the period. From the data available from the Odisha State

**HEALTH CONCERN:** A Malgondown police official disposing of a huge amount of adulterated spice packets near Sikharpur area in Cuttack, Monday

are let-off after paying a penalty.”

Exposing the loopholes in system that leads to the acquittal in most of the cases, Supreme Court lawyer Shilpi Chouhan said, “Any conviction is dependent upon whether the prescribed procedure for collecting samples was followed or not. Second, whether or not the sample was tested at any approved lab. What is important is whether the procedure as regards to search, seizure and investigation was adhered to by the food safety officer.”

Chouhan further said, “Food safety officers and food analysts have to be trained in the legal and technical procedures to stand legal scrutiny in a court of law. So, technical and institutional capacity is a huge issue in this field.”

Interestingly, National Crime Records Bureau data reveals that Odisha Police have not registered a single case under Sections 272 and 273 of the IPC, The Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954 and the Food Safety & Standards Act, 2006 dealing exclusively with food adulterations issue between period 2017 and 2019.

Speaking on the role of police, DCP Umashankar Dash said, “We have been taking food adulterations complaints seriously. We immediately carry out raids after coming across reliable inputs in this regard.”

## Satyajit Mohanty takes charge as OPSC chairman

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Cuttack, March 1:** A day after taking voluntary retirement from the service, 1988-batch IPS officer Satyajit Mohanty assumed charge as the chairman of Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC), Monday.

Mohanty was serving as the Director General of Fire Services prior to opting for voluntary retirement. He was given a farewell by Odisha Fire Service in Cuttack, Sunday.

Mohanty will hold the post of OPSC chairman till he attains the age of 62, according to a notification of the General Administration and Public Grievance department.

“Conducting regular examinations will be our priority. We'll try our best to conduct all the examinations in a transparent manner with the help of top and experienced bureaucrats and educationists in the board,” said Mohanty.



**Mohanty will hold the post of OPSC chairman till he attains the age of 62**

In a career spanning for a period of 33 years, Mohanty had earlier served many key positions in the state police. He worked as superintendent of police (SP) of Koraput, Rourkela, Cuttack and Balasore districts. Besides, Mohanty had served as the Additional SP of Puri.

In July 2018, Mohanty was appointed as the twin city police commissioner and later Director of Intelligence before assuming the office of the DG of Fire Services.

He is a recipient of Police (Antrik Suraksha Seva) Medal, Police Medal for Meritorious Service and President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service.

## RABINDRA KUMAR LENKA

# WE TOOK THE PANDEMIC AS A CHALLENGE: RK LENKA

*Jayram Lenka is a leading business in the readymade garment retail sector in the state. Despite the boom in online shopping, it has garnered the trust and love of its customers for its quality products. Excerpt from the interview with JRF Fashion Managing Director Rabindra Kumar Lenka:*



### ■ What impact did COVID-19 have on your business?

■ We continuously face ups and downs in our business. But a business people always prefer to be alerted to carry forward their business. Yes, the pandemic was a major crisis for us for a while. But we took it as a challenge and stood firm. Nevertheless, it impacted us for a period of time. We did not fight it alone, but everyone together. We remained calm and alerted and faced the challenge wisely.

### ■ Was there any change in consumer behavior post lockdown?

■ First of all, we focused on creating awareness among our customers and encouraged them not to panic. Though the impact of COVID-19 was severe in the market, it did have a major affect on business. Now we are again seeing normal business in the market. Every sector will grow again, even Jayram Lenka industry.

### ■ Did you receive any support from the government?

■ The pandemic was a disaster not only to individuals but also to the state, country and world. However, Odisha government along with the Union government worked hard to contain the outbreak. Lockdowns and shutdowns at the right time helped to contain the virus from spreading. The governments are doing their best to keep us safe.



### ■ How does Jayram Lenka see competition in the market?

■ We have been satisfying our customers since its inception. In fact, we have set an example in the market. Our industry has grown because of customers' love and affection. Jayram Lenka aims to be present in every corner of the state to offer our services.

### ■ Do you have any expansion plan?

■ We aim to be present everywhere. Our target is to be at the service of our customers always and at all times. We are opti-

mistic about the future.

### ■ E-commerce is becoming popular. What would you say to customers buying from brick-and-mortar stores?

■ There is a big difference between buying online and offline. Customers always believe in touch-and-feel factor. Many have regretted buying online as they didn't get same quality product that they saw on their mobile phone or computer screen. Customers trust and believe us. There is a lot of confidence in the touch-and-feel medium.

## College issued showcause notice for submitting fake docu

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, March 1:** The state Higher Education department has issued a show cause notice to Khunta Degree College in Mayurbhanj district for submitting forged documents for sanction of block grant.

As per reports, the college recently had submitted the PG marksheet of Aveepa Patnaik, a lecturer in English, which shows that she had secured 472 marks out of 800. But on verification by the Controller of Examination, Utkal University, it was found out that she had actually secured 412 marks out of 800.

**Khunta Degree College, Mayurbhanj, submitted fake marksheet of a lecturer for block grant**

This clearly shows that the college had forwarded a forged marksheet for sanction of block grant in favour of Patnaik. The college had also submitted a false affidavit stating that the documents are true.

The Higher Education department director Ashwini Kumar Mishra has now asked the principal of the college to showcause why disciplinary action will not be taken against the college for submitting forged documents to the department for the sanction of block grant.

The college has been directed to submit its response by March 10, 2021.



**A woman agitating near the Cuttack Collector's office drinks water under a scorching sun, Monday. Meanwhile, the MD said heat-wave condition will prevail in 9 districts of Odisha, Tuesday. The condition will continue for the next 4-5 days. Maximum temperature is very likely to be above normal by 3-4 degrees Celsius at many places during next 2-3 days. Talcher and Baripada Monday recorded a highest maximum temperature of 39.8 degrees**

OP PHOTO

# Doc gets bail on 'good faith doctrine'

THE SAID DOCTOR HAD TERMINATED THE PREGNANCY OF A RAPE VICTIM

POST NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi, March 1:** Citing the provisions of the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, the Orissa High Court has granted bail to a doctor, who was arrested for terminating pregnancy of rape survivor, on the good faith doctrine.

A bench of Justice SK Panigrahi observed that "only a prima facie view needs to be formed as to whether the doctor has acted in good faith or not."

Justice Panigrahi referred to Section 3 of the MTP Act and held that the Act prescribes that no registered medical practitioner shall be held guilty of an offence under the IPC or any other law, if preg-

nancy is terminated by him in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

"Explanation 1 of Section 3 of the MTP Act states that when any pregnancy is alleged by the pregnant woman to have been caused by rape, the anguish caused by such pregnancy shall be presumed to constitute a grave injury to the mental health of the pregnant woman," the bench noted in the judgment.

Referring to various judgments of the Supreme Court and high courts, Justice Panigrahi observed that the right approach in view of the statutory framework under the Act, which specifically provides that there is a presumption that any pregnancy caused on account



of rape of the victim shall be presumed a grave injury to the mental health of the victim. The High Court noted that the Legislature being cognisant of the malady existing in society has carved out an

exception for such circumstances.

"What has also weighed in favour of the petitioner is the fact that the enquiry conducted by a board of doctors has rendered a finding that the doctor has acted in good faith," the HC said.

The bench observed that the doctor followed the provisions of MTP Act while terminating the pregnancy of the minor rape victim. The bench noted that the doctor terminated the pregnancy of the victim in a hospital maintained by the government and the doctor acted in good faith having believed that the consent of the lady constable who was taking care of the victim girl which sufficiently complied with the law.

## Services of Bhubaneswar-Bangiriposi Special extended

*Temporary stoppage for Rourkela-Bhubaneswar special at Bamra extended up to March end*

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, March 1:** The East Coast railway (ECoR) has decided to extend the services of Bhubaneswar-Bangiriposi-Bhubaneswar Special w.e.f. from March 1, 2021 till further notice.

"The Bhubaneswar-Bangiriposi-Bhubaneswar Special from Bhubaneswar w.e.f. 1st March and from Bangiriposi in Mayurbhanj district w.e.f. 2nd March, 2021 will run till further advice," an ECoR official said.

This train leaves Bhubaneswar at 1730hrs and arrives at Bangiriposi at 2305hrs. On its return journey, the train from Bangiriposi will leave at 0420hrs and will arrive at Bhubaneswar at 1000hrs.

This train comprises one second class chair car, nine second class seating and two guard-cum-second class seating. The stoppages of the train are at Cuttack, Jajpur Keonjhar Road, Bhadrak, Markona, Soro, Balasore, Rupsa, Thakurtota, Jugpura, Jugal, Betonati, Krishnachandrapur, Baripada and Rajaluka between Bhubaneswar and Bangiriposi from both the directions.

Meanwhile, the ECoR has decided to have temporary stoppage of the Rourkela-Bhubaneswar-Rourkela Special at Bamra from

March 1 to March 31, 2021. Stoppages for this train at scheduled stations will remain unchanged.

Earlier, the ECoR revised the timings of 13 pairs of special trains. The trains are Puri-Ahmedabad-Puri Special, Puri-Mumbai LTT-Puri Special, LTT-Bhubaneswar-Mumbai LTT Special, Puri-Durg-Puri Special, Puri-Jodhpur-Puri Special, Valsad-Puri-Valsad Special, Rourkela-Bhubaneswar-Rourkela Special, Puri-Surat-Puri Special, Puri-Ajmer-Puri Special, Bhubaneswar-Anand Vihar-Bhubaneswar Special, Bhubaneswar-New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Special Rajdhani, Bhubaneswar-Balangir-Bhubaneswar Special, and Sambalpur-Howrah-Sambalpur via Bhadrak.



# SC notice to Odisha govt on plea challenging fee waiver

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, March 1: The Supreme Court Monday issued a notice to the state government on a petition filed by the Association of Odisha ICSE Schools challenging the state government's notification regarding fee waiver in private un-aided schools.

A two-judge bench of the apex court comprising Justices AM Khanwilkar and Dinesh Maheshwari issued the notice to the government returnable in two weeks in the petition filed against the order of the Orissa High Court that dismissed a writ petition by the association challenging a state government notification January 19 regarding the fee waiver.

The Association of Odisha ICSE Schools challenged the state government's January 19 notification, issued in compliance to the order of Orissa High court January 7 that taken on record the memorandum of understanding dated September 10, 2020 where government and several other parties were agreed to fee waiver in a flat rate and prepared a slab of fees to be waived by private Un-aided institutions.

The petitioner contended in the petition that MoU was contradictorily taken support of by the state



**A TWO-JUDGE BENCH OF THE APEX COURT ISSUED THE NOTICE TO THE GOVERNMENT RETURNABLE IN TWO WEEKS IN THE PETITION FILED AGAINST THE ORDER OF THE ORISSA HIGH COURT THAT DISMISSED A WRIT PETITION BY THE ASSOCIATION CHALLENGING A STATE GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION JANUARY 19**

government despite its clear submission before the High Court that there is no provision under the Orissa Education Act, 1969 for fixation of fee structure of different Private Un-Aided schools.

"Contrary to the above stand, the High Court erroneously placed its reliance upon a government resolution dated September 23, 1996 which does not hold any force pursuant to the coming into force of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009,"

The petitioner also contended that the high court completely lost sight of the fact that the Fee Structure of Private Un-Aided Schools is governed by a report of the Fee Structure Committee (FSC), Odisha headed by Justice KP Mohapatra constituted by the apex court in a civil appeal.

"The impugned order precariously violates the rights of the petitioner association under the principles of natural justice as the petitioner association was never allowed to participate in the deliberations leading to MoU despite being a necessary party to that deliberation," the petitioner contended.

Petitioner submitted that the high court failed to appreciate that during the lockdown almost all schools are conducting online classes and teachers are discharging their duties by imparting course work over online system and supervising the students to complete the work task given.

"There is also a burden on the school to pay their salary during these months," the petitioner contended.

# Fraudsters dupe man of ₹13.20L

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 1: Fraudsters targeting gullible job aspirants or people desiring to get a seat in prominent educational institutions are on the prowl in the city. Recently, one such fraudster was arrested by Dhauli police for duping several people of lakhs of rupees on the pretext of getting them jobs in the Railways and Police force.

In the latest incident, Budhadeba Kumar Singh of Baunsuni area in Baudh alleged that some city-based miscreants duped him of Rs 13.20 lakh by promising him to get his son an MBBS seat in a medical college.

Singh has lodged a complaint with Sahid Nagar police in this regard.

In his complaint, Singh alleged that his son Biswajit Singh qualified in the NEET entrance exam in 2019 and he was trying to get his son admitted in any reputed medical college in Odisha. This is when Singh received a call from the miscreants. They asked Singh to meet them at their office at plot No. 101 in Sahid Nagar area here. The miscreants assured him that they would arrange an MBBS seat for his son in Hi-Tech Medical College and Hospital on the outskirts of the City.

Accordingly, he met the alleged fraudsters at their office and he was asked to deposit Rs 10 lakh as donation and another Rs 6.50 lakh

as admission fee.

They also asked Singh to pay Rs 20,000 as first installment in order to make necessary arrangements for the provisional allotment letter from OJEE office. He deposited Rs 5 lakh as first installment in the account of one of the accused, Manas Parida, August 22, 2019.

Two days later, he deposited another Rs 10 lakh in the account of one Abinash Purohit. Singh also reportedly gave the accused over Rs 7.50 lakh through various installments towards hostel and course fees. They later demanded and received another Rs 2 lakh claiming the amount paid earlier was insufficient for admission.

The miscreants allegedly presented Singh with fake allotment and admission letters. Few days later, Singh was shocked when he asked a staff member of Hi Tech Medical College and Hospital about the status of his son's admission to the MBBS course. The later informed Singh that the institution had not received any application for admission in the name of his son.

When contacted, the miscreants assured to return the money received from Singh. However, they reportedly managed to return only Rs 3 lakh.

Singh who was yet get back his money sought the help of Sahid Nagar police.

## HC closes case filed by Anjana

Cuttack: The Orissa High Court Monday closed a petition filed by Barang gangrape survivor Anjana Mishra. The victim had then alleged that the investigation being carried out by the CBI had lapses and that a conspiracy has been hatched to delay the case. According to sources, the HC decision came after two sets of affidavits were filed by the state government and the investigating agency. There was no ground for the petition to prolong as the major parties to the case - the erstwhile Chief Minister JB Patnaik and former Advocate General (AG) Indrajit Ray - are no more. Three persons including the prime accused who were involved in the crime have been brought to justice following their arrests, the affidavits stated.

# Pradhan seeks CM's intervention to include 40.5L farmers under PM-Kisan

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 1: Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Monday sought personal intervention of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to ensure procedural formalities so that 40.5 lakh farmers can get cash transfer under the PM-Kisan scheme.

"I would like to bring to your notice the fact that the percentage of farmers receiving the PM-Kisan benefit is significantly less than the number of farmers registered under the scheme in Odisha. This is primarily due to non-compliance to procedural re-

# BMC allows Shivratri fest at Lingaraj Temple


POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 1: Amidst concerns of rise in COVID cases, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Monday allowed Maha Shivratri celebrations at Lingaraj Temple in state capital on March 11 with strict adherence to COVID-19 guidelines.

Ahead of the festival, the civic authority Monday held a preparatory meet with the representatives of the sevayat groups and trust bodies of the 11th century shrine to discuss the arrangements for the festival both within and outside the temple in view of the pandemic restrictions. The meeting was chaired by the BMC Commissioner Prem Chandra Chaudhary.

"It has been decided that those above 60 years and younger than 10 years will not be allowed into the temple for darshan as they have been categorised as the most vulnerable section of people. Moreover, no devotee will be allowed inside the sanctum sanctorum (Garbha Gruha) of the shrine. However, they will be

### IN A NUTSHELL



FILE PHOTO

THOSE BELOW 10 YEARS AND ABOVE 60 WILL NOT BE ALLOWED INTO THE TEMPLE FOR DARSHAN AS THEY HAVE BEEN CATEGORISED AS THE MOST VULNERABLE SECTION OF PEOPLE

- Devotees will not be allowed inside the sanctum sanctorum of the shrine
- Lighting of earthen lamps will be allowed inside and outside the temple
- Devotees will enter through 'Singhadwara' and exit through 'Dakshinadwara' and 'Uttaradwara' of the shrine
- There will be barricades to ensure social distancing. Arrangements for sanitation and thermal screening will be made at the entrance of the temple

allowed to see the rituals of the Lord at the Adakatha (outside the sanctum). There will be barricades to ensure social distancing as per COVID-19 norms," Chaudhary informed.

The BMC Commissioner added that arrangements for sanitation and

thermal screening will be made at the entrance of the temple. While devotees will be allowed entry from Singhdwara they will exit through Dakshinadwara and Uttaradwara of the shrine. "In case, a devotee is found down with any symptom of COVID-19, he/she will be taken for

antigen test at the camps installed outside the temple," he said.

Keeping in view of rise in the mercury, drinking water and shades will be made available for the devotees. Lighting of earthen lamps will be allowed inside and outside the temple. However, people will be allowed to sit with 'diyas' inside the shrine keeping in view the availability to space and adherence to COVID-19 protocols.

It is worth mentioning here that earlier state government had instructed for seven-day mandatory home isolation for people coming from 12 high-risk states by planes and trains.

It had asked all district Collectors, municipal commissioners, directors of Bhubaneswar and Jharsuguda airports and the general manager (operation) of East Coast Railways to increase surveillance and testing on people coming from Maharashtra, Kerala, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Punjab, Delhi, Chandigarh, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

## MORNING CLASSES



With the daytime temperature soaring, students of Capital Girls' High School at Unit-II in Bhubaneswar walk home after attending morning classes, Monday

OP PHOTO

## HC bail for Pathak, son in fraud case

PNN/AGENCIES

Cuttack, March 1: The Orissa High Court Monday granted bail to suspended IFS officer Abhay Kant Pathak and his son, Akash, in connection with a cheating case registered with the Kharavel Nagar police in Bhubaneswar.

The father-son duo was granted bail on a surety of Rs 2 lakh. The court also set certain conditions like cooperating with the investigation and not to intimidate witnesses.

A case (CR No 292/20) was registered against the Pathaks at Kharavel Nagar police station for allegedly defrauding Sky King, a Bhubaneswar-based travel agency of Rs 65 lakh. The father-son duo had reportedly booked chartered flights, five-star hotels and air tickets through the agency which amounted to Rs 2.78 crore. Although they paid Rs 2.13 crore, an outstanding bill of Rs 65,16,233 is yet to be cleared, the travel agency claimed in the complaint filed with the Commissionerate Police.

On January 27, the Vigilance court had granted bail to the father-son duo in connection with a disproportionate assets case against them. They were granted 'default' bail after the investigating agency failed to file the charge-sheet with 60 days.

Notably, the father-son duo was arrested in November last year by the anti-corruption wing of Odisha Police on charges of accumulating massive 'ill-gotten' wealth.

The HC had February 24 granted conditional bail to Gopalpur MLA Pradeep Panigrahi in connection with a fraud case filed by the Crime Branch.

## HITTING THE STREETS



NSUI activists demonstrate at Rajmahal Square in Bhubaneswar, Monday, condemning the rising fuel prices and unemployment in the state

OP PHOTO

# OUAT students' protest enters 8th day

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 1: Despite pressure from the Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT) and the state government to remove the protesting students from their agitation site, protest by students of Forestry department reached the eighth day, Monday.

On Monday, the students staged protests by washing vehicles on the roads of the university to draw the attention of government as well as the varsity authorities.

On Sunday, the protesting students sold puffed rice and mixture along the university road as part of their agitation urging the state government to make the four-year BSc degree in Forestry as minimum qualification for recruitment to key posts like forest range officer, assistant conservator of forests, assistant manager and junior manager of Odisha Forest Development



MEANWHILE, THE UNIVERSITY IS PRESSURISING THE STUDENTS TO END THE PROTEST AS THEY ARE BREAKING THE COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS, THEREBY, THREATENING THE HEALTH OF STUDENTS AND OTHERS

Corporation (OFDC). This apart, they also protested by cleaning shoes and sweeping the roads.

Meanwhile, the university is pressurising the students to end the protest as they are breaking the

On Monday, the students staged protests by washing vehicles on the roads of the university to draw the attention of government as well as the varsity authorities

On Sunday, the students sold puffed rice and mixture as part of their agitation urging the state government to make the four-year BSc degree in Forestry as minimum qualification for recruitment to key posts

COVID-19 restrictions, thereby, threatening the health of students and others. The varsity authorities have warned that if the students did not end their protest they would be removed forcibly from the prem-

ises. OUAT Dean KK Rout had informed the students that the varsity had sent their demands to the government and department for review.

The student are saying that one-third of Odisha's geographical area falls under natural forests and a huge additional area under plantations by farmers, industries, state Forest departments, OFDC and various other agencies. These vast resources and plantations are contributing immensely to various forms of goods and services to the human and animal population of the state.

In order to enhance the productivity of such resources and to ensure sustained supply of goods and services to the ever-increasing population, it is essential to induct more technical manpower having forestry background in the forestry sector instead of hiring non-forestry graduates in some key posts.

### FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-DayalAgency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech-Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-976056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemann-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.



# SIMILIPAL IS BURNING

SUMMER HAS JUST STARTED BUT THE MERCURY LEVELS MAKE US FEEL THAT IT IS ALREADY MAY! ALREADY SEVEN— CHANDANCHATURI, DIGDIGA, DUKURA, PODADIHA, THAKURMUNDA, BAREHIPANI AND ASTAKUAN— OUT OF 21 FOREST RANGES OF SIMILIPAL ARE REELING UNDER WILDFIRE, WILL IT WORSEN WITH THE TEMPERATURE SOARING AHEAD?

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Baripada, March 1:** Hundreds of hectares of forest land in Similipal national park have been burnt to ashes due to wildfires ahead of the summer season, a report said.

Even as summer season is yet to completely set in, the wildfire is fast spreading inside the sanctuary with a sharp rise in temperature in the state. Fires are raging inside the sanctuary which includes the tiger conservation project and forested areas under the wildlife division.

The wildfire is showing no sign of abatement which is spreading from one place to another inside the sanctuary causing serious loss of vegetation, wildlife and medicinal plants inside the sanctuary.

As a result, wild animals are straying into the human habitats to save their lives. The rush of wild animals to human habitat has spread panic among the residents. The forest and fire personnel have tried all tricks in the book to douse the fire but in vain which is spreading fast in the area.

Reports said that the sanctuary is spread over 21 forest ranges under five forest divisions. The fire has been spreading in seven



**Poachers set fire to the dry leaves in the forest to catch animals which then spreads from one place to another causing loss of flora and fauna. Moreover, people collecting Mahua flowers are also responsible as they also set fire to the leaves while collecting the flowers**

AMAR SINGH | RESIDENT, PODADIHA

**Wildfire has become an annual occurrence as the inferno occurs every year after the trees shed their leaves in winter. This has resulted in serious loss of flora, fauna and medicinal plants inside the sanctuary**

BHANUMITRA ACHARYA | HONOURARY WILDLIFE WARDEN

**Serious efforts are being made to douse the fire with the involvement of forest officials, members of Vana Surakshya Samiti, villagers and local public representatives**

JAGNYADATT PATI | DEPUTY DIRECTOR, SIMILIPAL TIGER CONSERVATION PROJECT

patches of reserve forests under Chandanchaturi, Digdiga, Dukura,

Podadiha, Thakurmunda, Barehipani and Astakuan forest

## Wait for rly underpass soon to end in Kesinga

EVEN AMBULANCES USED TO GET STUCK FOR HOURS DUE TO THE LEVEL CROSSING



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kesinga, March 1:** The seemingly eternal wait for a railway underpass near the level crossing in this town of Kalahandi district will finally come to an end March 4. The underpass will be inaugurated for the public on that day.

The residents have suffered a lot due to the level crossing, a report said. They have the bad experience of getting stuck in traffic snarls, sometimes for more than an hour. Even ambulances used to get stuck for lengthy periods due to the level crossing. In one such incident, a patient while being shifted to a hospital in an ambulance succumbed as it got delayed due to traffic congestion.

Demanding an under pass near the level crossing, the 'Railway Kriyanusthan Committee' had launched a 24-day long demonstration in Kesinga town in January, 2020. While the residents had extended full support to it, leaders like former Union Minister Bhakta Charan Das, Leader of Opposition Pradipta

**Construction work of the under bridge is in its last stage. It will be inaugurated as per schedule March 4**

KASHI SAHA | RAILWAY OFFICIAL, ADAEN/TITLAGARH

Kumar Naik, Narla MLA Bhupinder Singh attended the dharna on different days.

The agitation was withdrawn February 14, 2020 when District Collector Dr Gavali Parag Harshad reached the dharna site with the letter from works department and assured them that an under bridge would soon be constructed.

While the construction of the under pass was started in March, 2020, the facility was scheduled to be inaugurated March 4, 2021.

When contacted, Kashi Saha, a senior railway official at ADAEN/Titlagarh informed that the construction work of the under bridge is in its last stage. "It will be inaugurated as per schedule March 4," he informed.

This piece of news has certainly made the residents of this town a very happy lot.

## BHADRAK PROJECT DIRECTOR DONS LABOURER'S HAT, VIDEO GOES VIRAL

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhadrak, March 1:** The project director, District Rural Development Agency, Bhadrak, was seen working as a labourer at a road construction site in Dhamra panchayat.

The incident was of Saturday but a video showing the administrative officer digging earth and carrying basket on his head went viral Sunday. He has since been receiving praises from different sections of society.

Labourers were working on Jhadakata village road under Dhamra panchayat Saturday. The work was being done under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural



Employment Guarantee Scheme. Project director, DRDA, Madhusudan Das had been informed that the road construction work was being done by machines. To find out the veracity in

the allegation, Das along with Chandbali BDO Jyotibikash Das had paid a visit to the work site Saturday.

There at the work site, he took all by surprise when he picked up a spade, dug earth and carried it in a basket on his head. Seeing him working like a labourer, BDO Das could not hold him back for longer. He too joined him and the other labourers.

Later Madhusudan Das said that he had worked among the labourers to encourage them, bring transparency in such works, see the labourers get the benefits of the government schemes and ensure fulfillment of the government's aims and objectives.

## Officials take measurements near Subarnarekha

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Jaleswar, March 1:** Revenue officials and scientists of Odisha and West Bengal met at the disputed site of Subarnarekha river here in Balasore district and conducted a measurement of the reference points on the eve of the Tuesday-meeting between the two states on interstate border dispute.

The points of contention between the two states are at Jaleswar in Balasore district and in Dantun area of West Midnapore district of neighbouring West Bengal.

The officials while measuring the reference points also identified the places which have been in contention between the two states. Jaleswar tehsildar Dillip Chand, revenue officials Manas Behera, Gourang Jena and Pradipt Bhanja, and five officials of West Bengal were present during the measurement of the reference points.

The development comes after the National Green Tribunal directed the authorities of the two states to resolve the dispute relating to border.



**BORDER DISPUTE**

*The points of contention between Odisha and Bengal are at Jaleswar in Balasore district and in Dantun area of West Midnapore district of West Bengal*

Notably, several cases have been filed before the NGT with regard to sand mining and environmental pollution.

Reports said that the dispute began on the jurisdiction of the Subarnarekha river which is flowing for about 10 km on the borders of the two states. Earlier, the officials of two states met at the Circuit House of West Midnapore to resolve the border dispute, February 15. The officials of two states had visited the spot after the meeting and conducted

a measurement of South Praharaipur village in the state and Sunakania and other places in West Bengal.

According to decision of Odisha Space Application Centre (ORCAS), 36 reference points have been identified in Odisha border and 52 reference points in West Bengal border with the use of GPS and DGPS systems. Five officials and scientists of West Bengal and three from Odisha rechecked the reference points in Gobarghata, Bilaspur, Makidia and Rajnagar mouzas in Odisha.

## Jeweller shot dead, gold ornaments robbed in Bargaon



*The deceased was identified as Rohit Verma, 26, son of the proprietor of Maa Mangala Jewellery in the town*

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bargaon, March 1:** Miscereants shot dead the son of a jeweller and decamped with a bag of ornaments in front of his shop here, Monday. The shop is about 500 metres from the Bargaon police station and is also next to the post office.

The deceased was identified as Rohit Verma, 26, son of the proprietor of Maa Mangala Jewellery in the town.

According to police sources, the shop named Maa Mangala Jewelers is located near Bargaon bus stand and a few yards away from the local police station. Three armed bike-borne miscereants confronted Rohit when he was about to open the shutter of the shop.

They opened two rounds of bullets at him and decamped with his bag containing gold ornaments. Meanwhile, a person named Saroj Das tried to save Rohit when the robbers were trying to flee. One of the miscereants fired at Saroj following which the bullet hit his thigh and rendered him critical.

Verma sustained grievous bullet injuries in his head and ab-

domen. The youth was rescued by locals and immediately rushed to a private hospital in Rourkela.

Later, he succumbed to his injuries while undergoing treatment at the hospital, a police official stated. The injured person has been admitted to the hospital and was undergoing treatment.

On being informed, Bargaon police reached the spot and started an investigation. A gun was seized from the highway where it had fallen off the hands of the escaping miscereants. Police have registered a case in this connection and launched a detailed probe to nab the assailants.

The daylight murder of the jeweller's son has nevertheless created unrest in the locality, traders in particular who are demanding the immediate arrest of the culprits involved in the incident.

Notably, five months back miscereants decamped with Rs 5 lakh gold ornaments from the shop of Verma after demolishing a portion of the wall of his store. Police launched an investigation then but are yet to arrest the culprits.

## Man rapes minor niece; arrested in Kalahandi dist

**Bhawanipatna:** A three-year-old girl was raped by her uncle after he took her out under the pretext of buying her chocolates at a village under Lanjigarh police limits in Kalahandi district, police said Monday. The accused was identified as Kunu Majhi of Shantapur village under Narla police limits in the district. The incident occurred when the girl accompanied by her mother was visiting her maternal grandfather's house to witness a fair in the area.

### EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. ST-OT-SIG-ZONAL-BBS-213, Dated : 23.02.2021  
Name of Work: SIGNALING ZONAL WORK EACH COSTING RS. 5,00,000/- OR LESS IN THE SECTION UNDER JURISDICTION OF SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER SIGNAL/ BHUBANESWAR OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION, EAST COAST RAILWAY FOR 12 (TWELVE) MONTHS.  
Tender Value : ₹ 49,74,515.80  
Bidding start date : 03.03.2021 Tender closing date & time : at 11:00 hrs. of 17.03.2021.  
No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders.  
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : <http://www.irops.gov.in>  
Note : The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 15 (Fifteen) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigenda issued for this tender.  
Divisional Railway Manager (Signal & Telecom), PR-588/L/20-21, Khurda Road

Phone No. 06821-241026(O)/241079(F) Fax No. 06821-241026/240056 e-mail: eewws\_bri@ort.nic.in; eewwsbri2009@gmail.com  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RWS&S DIVISION, BHANJANAGAR-761126**  
**1st Corrigendum to Bid Identification No. E.E. RWS&S\_67 of 2020-21**  
1. Date and Time of availability of bid document in the Portal may be treated as dt.01.03.2021 at 11.00 A.M. to 08.03.2021 up to 5.00 P.M. instead of 26.02.2021 at 11.00 A.M. to 04.03.2021 upto 5.00 P.M.  
2. Due to unavoidable circumstances the Sl. No. 1 PWS to village Madarangapalli in Polosara Block is hereby cancelled. All other terms and conditions remain unaltered.  
Sd/- Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Bhanjanagar  
OIPR-25021/11/0047/2021

**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA**  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER RURAL WORKS DIVISION, KUCHINDA**  
E-mail: eerw\_kuchinda@yahoo.com  
**"e" Procurement Notice for Roads Works**  
**Identification No. Online Tender/05/RWD, Kuchinda/2020-21**  
No. O- 1180:-  
1. Name of the work : Road Works  
2. Total Number of Works : 2 Nos.  
3. Estimated Cost : Rs.35.40 Lakhs, Rs.26.55 Lakhs,  
4. Class of Contractor : Roads Work (C & B Class of Contractor)  
5. Period of Completion : 25 Days  
6. Availability of Tender : 25.02.2021 at 11.00 A.M. to 03.03.2021 upto 5.00 P.M.  
7. Last date & time of seeking : 04.03.2021 upto 5.00 P.M.  
8. Date & time of opening of tender : 05.03.2021 (11.00 A.M.)  
Further details can be seen from the website [www.tendersodisha.gov.in](http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in).  
Executive Engineer, OIPR-25151/11/0006/2021 Rural Works Division, Kuchinda

**OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER, BERHAMPUR DIVISION**  
AT-COURT PETA, BRAHMAPUR-760004  
Phone/Fax: 0680-2281354, Mob- +91 7653908594, Email: dfobhmp@yahoocoin  
**No.107/IF- MGNREGS CELL- 1/2021 Dated Brahmapur the 1st March 2021**  
**TENDER CALL NOTICE**  
No. MM-176:- Sealed tenders under two bid system are hereby invited by the undersigned from OEM/ Authorized dealers having required statutory clearance for supply of following items, so as to reach this office on or before 23.03.2021 by 5 PM. The details regarding tender documents/ BOM/ Specifications are available in the tender section of website [www.odishaforest.in](http://www.odishaforest.in)  
**ITEMS**  
i. Desktop Computer with UPS  
ii. All in One Printer  
iii. Xerox machine  
iv. Mini Projector  
OIPR-08038/11/0014/2021  
DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER  
BERHAMPUR FOREST DIVISION

## Fearing kidnap bid, woman jumps off ambulance

THE DRIVER AND OTHER STAFF WERE NABBED AND HANDED OVER TO THE POLICE

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhadrak, March 1:** A patient's mother jumped off an ambulance fearing they were being kidnapped after noticing that the van was heading somewhere else instead of the original destination in Cuttack. The incident occurred on NH-16 near Charampa in Bhadrak district late Sunday night.

Geetanjali Barik's son fell from a tree and suffered injuries at Rambhila under Bhadrak rural police limits Sunday. He was first admitted at Bhadrak district headquarters hospital (DHH). After preliminary treatment, he was asked to shift to the SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack in a 108 ambulance for bet-



ter treatment. Geetanjali was accompanying her son.

On the way, she found the ambu-

lance was heading towards Balasore instead of Cuttack. She objected and asked the driver the stop the van. But

GEETANJALI WITH HER INJURED SON WAS TO GO TO THE SCB MEDICAL COLLEGE AND HOSPITAL IN CUTTACK IN A 108 AMBULANCE FOR BETTER TREATMENT

WHEN SHE NOTICED THAT THE VEHICLE WASN'T HEADING TOWARDS CUTTACK, SHE SMELLED SOMETHING FISHY AND ENQUIRED WITH THE DRIVER AND OTHER MEDICAL STAFF INSIDE THE VAN BUT IN VAIN

SHE YELLED FOR HELP AND JUMPED OFF THE VAN

the driver kept on driving, without paying attention to her cries, she alleged. There were two other staff as well. They too chose to remain just mute spectators, she alleged.

With no option left, she opened the window pane and cried for help. Hearing her distressed cries, people gave a chase to the van and waylaid it near Canal Chowk in Charampa. Just then, a terribly frightened Geetanjali jumped off the vehicle.

Soon locals gathered at the spot and caught hold of the driver and two others. Later, they handed the trio over to Bhadrak town police. Geetanjali has lodged a report at the police station accusing the trio of kidnapping them. The police arranged another ambulance and sent Geetanjali and her son to SCB Medical College and Hospital in it.

A detailed investigation was underway.





# Lamenting Cylinder

LPG cylinder price has shot up by Rs 100 within a month, touching Rs 845 in the East Zone, with the last hike of Rs 25 taking effect on March 1. This increase, if considered from December 2020 has been to the tune of Rs 225. This has been one of the steepest increases in any essential commodity that virtually touches the very existence of every family. Those who care to remember will remember that many households in this country were used to depending on different kinds of cooking fuel earlier. From coal and wood to dried cow dung, Indian homes had a variety of sources of fuel for their kitchens. This government went on an overdrive with its Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Scheme prior to the 2019 general elections. Billboards and television promos, meant to promote this scheme, projected the multiple ill effects of conventional fuels on the health of women in the kitchens. The drive to draw in households of every economic bracket into this scheme was a great success and it also resulted in a thumping electoral victory for the party in power. In retrospect, this scheme became the flag bearer of all other schemes of the time. Pictures of a Moslem woman accepting a cylinder from the Prime Minister was plastered across the country. There is no doubt the older fuels used earlier were, indeed, damaging the health of women cooking at home. That part of the publicity blitz cannot be faulted. However, the convenience and cleanliness of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) was too attractive to pass up. Although the subsequent cylinders had to be paid for, most families retained the connections because they did not have to gather wood or source coal on a daily basis.

The criticism at that time was that the government's huge spend on building up an imported source of conventional energy was unjustified. The critics had said the same energy and resources should have been utilized for promoting indigenous and renewable energy sources that households could acquire at reasonable costs. Most of us had ignored this point of view since all of us use LPG for cooking at home. On hindsight, the critics sound realistic. The scheme had successfully mopped up the poorest of families who would be the hardest hit today with the current price surge. Convenience of LPG has also made people incapable of sourcing their old energy elements. Also, overdependence on these imported conventional fuels is a major reason for the increase in prices. While the world was going green, the Government of India was consciously encouraging further dependence on conventional energy sources.

The hike in prices is not limited to cooking gas alone. Costs of petrol and diesel have skyrocketed in the recent past. Government spokespersons claim that these fuels are being heavily taxed because the coffers need re-filling. Now, why have the coffers been emptied? The citizen is being told the coffers became empty since government had to invest heavily to reenergize industries and the market which have been badly affected by the Coronavirus lockdowns. There is probably no individual citizen of this country, be it a student, self employed person, entrepreneur or even a retired employee or a factory worker who can claim to have received a single rupee out of the billions spent as impetus funds. The multiple announcements of mind boggling amounts getting injected into the nation's economy seem to be like the morning mist. When the light of reality rose, every pie seems to have vanished.

According to some political observers, the government may play smart and decrease prices of fuel and cooking gas just before the state elections that are to take place next month. They also forecast that the lowering of prices will be for a short while and increase will re-start once polling is complete. Bihar can be considered as déjà vu for this school of thinking.

## WISDOM CORNER

- In the midst of movement and chaos, keep stillness inside of you. **DEEPAK CHOPRA**
- Whatever the mind of man can conceive and believe, it can achieve. **NAPOLEON HILL**
- Take the attitude of a student, never be too big to ask questions, never know too much to learn something new. **OG MANDINO**

## WORDSWORTH

### Mathom

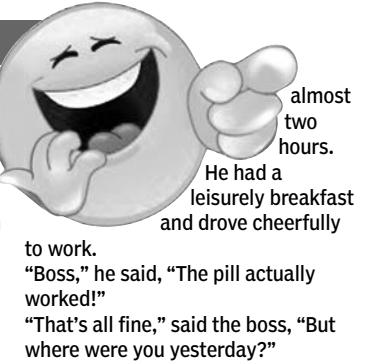
This word is hardly new, since it was used by JRR Tolkien at the beginning of the first volume of the Lord of the Rings, published in 1954. As with so many unfamiliar words in his works, he derived it from Old English, in this case the one usually written maðm, "a precious thing, treasure, valuable gift," that was current in about the year 1000. Following Tolkien, it has gained significant currency online and in a few printed sources. To define the modern meaning, one may quote Professor Tolkien's own words: "Anything that Hobbits had no immediate use for, but were unwilling to throw away, they called a mathom. Their dwellings were apt to become rather crowded with mathoms, and many of the presents that passed from hand to hand were of that sort." It's a useful little word for which there seems no simple alternative and now that we have come across it, mathom will no doubt become part of our family's standard vocabulary, since we have an attic full of the stuff.

### Mattoid

The definition given this word by its inventor, the nineteenth-century Italian criminologist Cesare Lombroso was "semi-insane". He believed that criminality was inherited and that a criminal was born with physical defects identifying him as a degenerate human being, an atavism. He created mattoid from the Italian matto, insane, plus the ending -oid for some likeness or resemblance (from Greek eidos, form). He used it for what psychiatrists call "borderline dwellers," those who exist on the margins between reason and madness — in everyday speech we might call them cranks, eccentrics, or misfits. The word came into English in 1891 through a translation of his work Man of Genius and became popular for a while. HG Wells used it in several of his books, most notably in Mankind in the Making of 1903, in which he derides the theories of Lombroso and the Victorian phrenologists: "Among such theorists none at present are in quite such urgent need of polemical suppression as those who would persuade the heedless general reader that every social failure is necessarily a 'degenerate,' and who claim boldly that they can trace a distinctly evil and mischievous strain in that unfortunate miscellany which constitutes 'the criminal class'... These mattoid scientists make a direct and disastrous attack upon the latent self-respect of criminals."

## LOL Stop being late

Tom had this problem of getting up late in the morning and was always late for work. His boss was mad at him and threatened to fire him if he didn't do something about it. So Tom went to his doctor who gave him a pill and told him to take it before he went to bed. Tom slept well and in fact beat the alarm in the morning by



almost two hours. He had a leisurely breakfast and drove cheerfully

to work. "Boss," he said, "The pill actually worked!" "That's all fine," said the boss, "But where were you yesterday?"

## SPECTRUM COMMUNICATION

# FISCAL DEFICIT CHALLENGE



Ajit Ranade

ONE OF THE MAIN REASONS FOR THE GROWTH OPTIMISM OF NEXT YEAR COMES FROM THE FISCALLY EXPANSIONARY STANCE ADOPTED BY THE FINANCE MINISTER

The third-quarter data on India's GDP showed that it has come out of the recession. The data shows a substantial increase in consumer spending by nearly 18 per cent as compared to the previous quarter. This shows positive consumer sentiment. GDP growth has turned positive and the signs are for continued upward momentum during the fourth quarter as well. As we look at the next year there is understandable optimism about a sharp V-shaped recovery and growth of nearly 11 per cent. But much of the high growth next year is a matter of the economy simply recovering ground lost during the pandemic year. As a result, after two years the economic size of India will be barely 2 or 3 per cent above what it was in 2019. The presentation of the Union Budget proposals in February has contributed greatly to reviving both consumer optimism as well as business confidence.

The high growth expected will depend quite a bit on the lead to be taken by the private sector, in strong consumer spending as well in industrial investment. The ratio of investment to GDP has to rise from the current 28 per cent to nearly 36 per cent for the economy to show a sustained growth rate of 8 per cent. Fortunately, agriculture production is at a record level of 303 million tonnes this year. This is almost 10 per cent more than the average for the previous five years. Some resolution to the impasse in the negotiations between the Central government and farmers agitating against the new farm laws for more than four months now will go a long way in reviving growth optimism. It will also address the shortages that have arisen due to the blockade, and disruption in delivery of crucial inputs like coal, fertilizer and even transportation fuel to Punjab and adjoining States.

One of the main reasons for the growth optimism of next year comes from the fiscally expansionary stance adopted by the Finance Minister. Even though



This large fiscal deficit of 6.8 per cent for next year, not only is far in excess of what was specified by India's own fiscal responsibility law, but also cocks a snook at international rating agencies

the overall spending is budgeted to go up only by 1 per cent, the expenditure on infrastructure will go on by nearly 25 per cent. And the expenditure on healthcare including vaccinations and sanitation is up by nearly hundred per cent.

Two noteworthy features of the Union Budget were, firstly the transparency in disclosing all liabilities, and secondly, admitting a very large fiscal deficit. This large fiscal deficit of 6.8 per cent for next year, not only is far in excess of what was specified by India's own fiscal responsibility law, but also cocks a snook at international rating agencies. There is an irreverent disdain towards the fear of a rating downgrade. A full chapter in the economic survey explains how international rating agencies have always been unfair to India despite the country's track record of zero default and currently a high stock of foreign exchange.

But this high-risk deficit, while bold and ambitious should not make us complacent about the challenge of financing it. The gross borrowing requirement by the Centre alone is more than Rs 12 trillion which is Rs 1 trillion every month. That is just about equal to the monthly GST collec-

tion. The total borrowing requirement will eat up the entire incremental deposit in the banking system, assuming an eight per cent growth next year. If the private sector capacity expansion and investment requires another Rs 12 trillion, it will put pressure on interest rates, since there is not enough funding available to accommodate this huge borrowing requirement. Actually, if the borrowing requirements of state governments are factored in, as well as those of public sector enterprises, that number is above Rs 23 trillion. This huge borrowing cannot simply be met by the available pool of household savings in the country.

It is here that the Reserve Bank of India has to step in. Of course, it cannot simply print money, because that would be tantamount to monetisation which is explicitly prohibited by a 1997 agreement between the RBI and the Centre. Besides, direct monetisation could be inflationary. The RBI can do an indirect monetisation by buying all the bonds issued by the government of India in the secondary market. Indeed, it has been doing so for the last two years. When it buys the bonds against money that it has created, the

RBI's balance sheet expands. That balance sheet has grown by 50 per cent in the past two years. And it will grow even further. But a huge volume of borrowing through the market process, i.e. sale of bonds can put upward pressure on interest rates, as well as crowd out private investments, which too are seeking to borrow from the same banking system, and from capital markets.

One way to ease this pressure is for the RBI to do a direct deal with the Centre, and give a fixed term five-year loan at a low interest rate against a pledged asset. That pledged asset could be all the shares that the government of India owns in public sector enterprises. The combined value of all the shares owned by GOI today is more than Rs 20 trillion thanks to the exuberant stock market. Such a bilateral sweetheart deal is technically not monetisation, outlawed by the 1997 agreement, nor does it disrupt the credit markets, and hopefully takes off the pressure on interest rates too. Another source of financing for GOI is of course foreign funds. Thankfully, the inflow into the rupee denominated government debt market has been quite strong and is expected to remain so next year. The government may also consider floating an international dollar denominated semi-sovereign bond through a proxy such as the State Bank of India. This too can garner funds equivalent to Rs 1 or 2 trillion.

It is obvious that none of the required financing can depend on increasing the level of taxation at the time when the economy is coming out of recession. Thus, next year is going to be a difficult balancing task for the RBI. On one hand, to ensure adequate financing for the government, and on the other not letting inflation or interest-rates get out of hand, while also keeping the currency stable. Not an enviable job at all!

The writer is an economist and Senior Fellow, Takshashila Institution.

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## SPECTRUM COMMUNICATION

# Digital language & relationship in workspace



Shivaji Mohinta

THERE IS A STRONG CONNECT BETWEEN THE DIGITAL LANGUAGE WE ADOPT AND THE RESULTANT RELATIONSHIP THAT WE MAKE (OR BREAK) WITH ONE ANOTHER

As an employee or manager it is becoming increasingly difficult to express correctly what you mean without being misunderstood. In today's workplace more than 70 per cent of communication is virtual - emails, WhatsApp chats, messaging. With such high percentage of digital communication there is a seemingly empathy-deficit at work.

So how to build trust and engage in a healthier relationship in the digital world? What are the new signals or interpretations of digital language? How we can be understood better through our digital communication? These are the several challenges that we encounter in the work environment be it with our peers, customers or bosses.

On an average a managerial level employee receives more than 75 emails a day and in the quest of responding quickly, we take shortcuts or ignore the context completely. These brief messages can cause confusion or ambiguity leading to a tense working relationship. To seek brevity and speed we compromise on clarity.

In one of my email exchanges with my ex-boss I enquired "Can I go upto 15% discount against advance payment or limit to 10% with 30 days credit" for a large in-

stitutional buyer. His response was just "Ok"! Now what do I understand from this reply? Which option he is ok with?

One colleague of mine told me that she received a WhatsApp message from her CEO seeking a report in bold capital red letters stating "CAN YOU SEND THIS TODAY?" She was so tensed trying to figure out whether it was a threatening demand or anger or just an oversight of mobile settings. The choice of words, size, punctuations and emoji we use including the recipients, has an inflated meaning with much deeper ramifications in today's virtual workplace. I remember once I had sent an in-depth market report to my senior product manager in an earlier company, working late night, to receive a one-liner reply the next day "What does this mean???" Is it an enquiry, frustration or sarcasm?

A batch mate of mine had narrated a similar experience while we were discussing on this subject. He said that how his name was missing from the email recipient list for a very important policy decision meeting conducted by the leadership team. He was later forwarded that mail by one of his junior colleagues. He failed to understand whether it was intentional or

a lapse or he was being shown the door. This incident prompted him to leave the organisation and join a competitor in a hurry. Just imagine how big a loss this is when your seasoned employee quits for a flimsy reason with such heart burns which might have happened purely due to negligence.

To get the best response coupled with the desired action from digital communication the simple rule to follow is "first understand & then seek to be understood." Elaborating this further the acronym IRCTC should serve as an effective reminder to evoke understanding & empathy in our virtual communication:

**Intent:** Read the contents thoroughly to decide on the intent behind the communication prior to acting on it. Similarly, proofread your mails before sending out to get best results.

**Response:** What is the best response you are seeking? Is it an approval, opinion or advice? Can the receiver understand that clearly from the language of your mails?

**Context:** Set enough context or background for the other person to comprehend. There should be minimum room for ambiguity otherwise some undesirable action might follow.

**Tone:** Use the right emotional tone in your communication by using appropriate words, punctuation or font size/colour. Mention clearly if you are displaying gratitude, respect, appreciation, disappointment or call to action in your messages. Be aware of the usage and implications of various punctuations like Q-marks (?), exclamation marks (!) extended dots (.....) etc.

**Compassion:** Show enough compassion and grace in your communication, as much as possible, to see improved collaboration and mutual understanding from the recipients or your team members.

During and post-Covid, workplaces have witnessed an exponential increase in virtual communication which necessitates a proper understanding on the nuances of such interactions with the likely outcomes and the impending impact on the morale of team members. Without doubt, there is a strong connect between the digital language we adopt and the resultant relationship that we make (or break) with one another!

The writer is Country Head of Greenlam Industries Ltd & a Master NLP coach. Views are personal.

## Letters TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST  
B-15, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Sir, When cricket matches like T-20s and ODIs are making life hell for bowlers with batting friendly surfaces, Test matches of late, especially Pink Ball D/N Test matches have come like a whiff of fresh air for bowlers. We have seen bowlers toil on flat batting pitches and batsmen making merry on these surfaces. However, in case of Pink ball pitches batsmen not having sound technique appear like deer in front of head lights. To emerge champions on such surfaces batsmen have to use techniques like taking off-stump guard, and trying to play off-breaks outside the line of off-stump in order to take LBW out of equation against spinning balls and have to use their feet to smother the spinning ball and also use back foot game allowing a bit of extra time to adjust to the turn and bounce. In Pink ball D/N Test twilight is the crucial period for the batsmen to bat on.

V Nagendra Kumar, HYDERABAD

### Ban cola-drinks

Sir, Superstar Amitabh Bachchan once disclosed at IIM Ahmadabad about his not advertising for cola-drinks after a school-student at Jaipur drew his attention about harmful ingredients in cola-drinks. Even cola-companies voluntarily stopped selling cola-drinks in schools worldwide in view of increasing obesity in children. The Indian government should not only ban advertisements but even sale of cola-drinks in the country. Earlier also, soft-drink manufacturers were asked to remove an oil from their products which was found to be harmful for health. It is noteworthy that cola-drinks are prohibited even in Parliamentary canteens. It is time that Union government, Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) and soft-drink manufacturers should revive drinks like old and famous rose-flavoured ones, which can not only replace cola-drinks in India but even dominate global markets by breaking the monopoly of harmful cola-drinks in tune with ambitious - Make in India - concept of Prime Minister Modi. It will rather earn foreign exchange for the country rather than Indian money being drained out to multinational cola-manufacturers. It may be recalled that almost half-a-century back, a famous rose-drink manufactured by a famous private confectionary company registered at Gwalior was a popular drink for persons of all ages.

Madhu Agrawal, DELHI



# TN should show the way in keeping out BJP: Rahul

AGENCIES

**Kanyakumari (TN), March 1:** Tamil Nadu should show the way to India in keeping away forces that are inimical to language and culture and those projecting “one culture, one nation and one history” concept, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said Monday.

The Lok Sabha MP participated in multiple engagements in this district as part of his three-day tour of Tamil Nadu, ahead of the April 6 Assembly polls in the state which his party is facing in alliance with the MK Stalin-led DMK.

**Modi talks about one culture, one nation, one history and one leader...Is Tamil not an Indian language? Is Bengali not an Indian language? Is Tamil culture not Indian culture? This is the battle that is being fought in this election**

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

If he were to interview Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Gandhi said he would ask “why are you convinced that all answers should come from you.”

He also said the NEET, strongly opposed to by Tamil Nadu political parties, was a “big issue” and “not beneficial” for students.

The Wayanad MP displayed his



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi during his election campaign for the upcoming Tamil Nadu Assembly polls, at Church Road in Kanyakumari district, Monday.

PTI PHOTO

fitness when he effortlessly did multiple pushups, including one-handed, while he shook a leg with the students he interacted with, as accompanying Congress leaders Dinesh Gundu Rao and KS Alagiri joined him.

At a public address in Nagercoil in the district, Gandhi said history has shown nobody can rule Tamil Nadu other than the Tamil people.

“This election will show the same thing that only a person who truly

represents the Tamil people can be a Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu,” he said.

“Tamil Nadu chief minister (K Palaniswami) who bows to Prime Minister Narendra Modi will never be able to do this. The chief minister should bow to the people of the state,” he said.

The RSS and Modi “insult Tamil language and culture,” he said, adding the people should not to allow them to gain a foothold in

the state. Gandhi further said “Modi talks about one culture, one nation, one history and one leader.”

“Is Tamil not an Indian language? Is Bengali not an Indian language? Is Tamil culture not Indian culture? This is the battle that is being fought in this election,” he said as the crowd cheered.

He accused the BJP-led government at the Centre as well as the Palaniswami government of not respecting Tamil language, culture

or tradition. Recalling the yeoman service of late Congress MP H Vasantha Kumar, Gandhi said he always stood by the party values. He laid a wreath at Kumar’s memorial at Kanyakumari.

During his interaction with students of St. Joseph’s Matric Higher Secondary School, Mulagumoodu in the district, he said NEET is a ‘big’ issue in the state. “NEET is a big issue here. It is stopping many youngsters from pursuing their dreams. It is not beneficial,” he claimed.

Asked why youngsters don’t want to make politics a career, Gandhi said it could be so because “there are some politicians who steal from people.” “There are good political leaders who work for the people, try to understand people and empower them. Draw inspiration from such leaders who help people,” he said. Asked what he would ask Prime Minister Narendra Modi, if he were to interview him, he shot back, “you have asked me a tricky question,” evoking laughter from the audience.

“I would ask, why are you convinced that all answers should come from you. Why don’t you listen to what the people of the country feel or want to say,” he said.

Later, at a roadshow, he lashed out at the Centre over demonetisation and Goods and Services Tax (GST), saying they “destroyed” many small and medium businesses.

“The new farm laws are going to destroy the lives of our farmers,” he said.

# ‘Sticky bombs’ indicate new phase of terrorism



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Jammu, March 1:** The recovery of ‘sticky bombs’ from Samba sector in this region last month has set alarm bells ringing within the security establishment in Jammu and Kashmir as this indicates initiation of a new phase of terrorism in the union territory, officials said Monday.

The BSF had recovered the bombs dropped by a drone along the international border in the Samba sector of Jammu region February 14, putting security agencies on high alert with an assumption that some of the IEDs could have already found their way to the Kashmir valley, the officials said.

According to the officials, the drone-dropped consignment had six pistols and 14 Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) with in-built magnets, which could be used as ‘sticky bombs’ by sticking them on vehicles and controlling them using a timer and a remotely-held device.

The consignment was meant for The Resistance Force (TRF), believed to be a shadow outfit of banned Lashkar-e-Taiba terror group, they said.

This definitely was the first such recovery of ‘sticky bombs’ which have found much use in Afghanistan and Iraq. In India, it was used by suspected Iranian terrorists in February 2012 by sticking a bomb on the car of an Israeli diplomat resulting in injury to his wife.

The recovery is a cause of concern in Kashmir and the standard operating procedures for the movement of security forces’ convoys need to be revised to eliminate this kind of a threat, a senior official said.

The development comes two years after a Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist carried out a sensational attack when he rammed an explosive-laden vehicle into a bus carrying security forces that left 40 CRPF personnel dead in 2019.

In response, India had carried out

## ALARMING SITUATION

**STICKY BOMBS, WHICH WERE ALSO USED BY THE BRITISH FORCES DURING WORLD WAR II, CAN BE PUT ON ANY VEHICLE AND DETONATED THROUGH A REMOTE CONTROL OR AN IN-BUILT TIMER**

**THE EXPLOSIVES HAVE FOUND MUCH USE IN AFGHANISTAN AND IRAQ. IN INDIA, SUSPECTED IRANIAN TERRORISTS IN FEBRUARY 2012 STUCK A BOMB ON THE CAR OF AN ISRAELI DIPLOMAT RESULTING IN INJURY TO HIS WIFE**

an air strike on terror camps located across the border.

Sticky bombs, which were also used by the British forces during World War II, can be put on any vehicle and detonated through a remote control or an in-built timer, the officials said.

This is yet another significant recovery after security forces had found three Point Detonating (PD) fuzes, used by the Pakistani army in their 82 mm mortar shells, from a terrorist in North Kashmir.

The three PDs were recovered by the Baramulla Police on the eve of New Year when the force intercepted a vehicle. Unaware of the material recovered, the police had declared it “unique grenade” which was later found to be the PD, used by the Pakistani army for the 82 MM mortar shells, they said.

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

The December seizure of PDs was also meant for the TRF group and one terrorist, identified as Asif Gul, was arrested.

# AIADMK banks on Vanniyar community to romp home



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, March 1:** The ruling AIADMK which is aiming to retain Tamil Nadu in the Assembly elections on April 6, is playing all the cards up its sleeve.

The AIADMK-led government had signed an order providing 10 percent reservation under extreme backward class category to the Vanniyar community following the recommendation from Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK), the political arm of the Vanniyars, half an hour before the election notification was announced by the Chief Election Commissioner in New Delhi. This is significant as the Vanniyar community and its political party, PMK is highly cadre based and generally vote in totality for the party or front it supports.

In the 2016 assembly elections, the PMK had contested alone and had garnered close to 25 percent votes in constituencies of North Tamil Nadu where it has a sizeable presence. This includes Edappadi, the home constituency of Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami. The PMK got 5.3% votes in total across the state in the 2016 elections.

In the by-elections held in 22 assembly constituencies along with the 2019 general elections, the AIADMK and specifically Chief Minister Edappadi Palaniswami were fighting with their back to the wall and had to win at least 9 seats to retain power. While the

AIADMK faced a drubbing in the Lok Sabha polls with the DMK winning 38 out of the 39 seats, in the by-elections the party could win 9 seats and retain power. Palaniswami had owed this success to the PMK and the Vanniyar community.

In addition to its traditional voter base of North Tamil Nadu, the Vanniyar community has strong presence in certain places in Western Tamil Nadu including Salem district.

In Tamil Nadu politics, Northern Tamil Nadu has a strong presence of DMK and if the AIADMK wants to upset that equation it will have to have a proper political alliance with the PMK and the Vanniyar community.

Political observer C Rajeev from the Centre for Policy and Development Studies, a Think Tank based in Chennai, told IANS that “AIADMK is forced to have an alliance with the PMK and the Vanniyars and this community has a track record of properly transferring its votes to the party with which it is in alliance and hence the Edappadi Palaniswami government has extended 10% reservation to the community as Extremely Backward which will help them to be included under Special reservation category”. He added that with the solid alliance with the PMK and the Vanniyars, the AIADMK front has gone one step ahead in several constituencies of Northern and Western Tamil Nadu.

# NDA’s seat-sharing talks not dragging: TN BJP chief

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chennai, March 1:** The BJP in Tamil Nadu Monday asserted that seat-sharing talks with lead alliance partner AIADMK for the April 6 assembly elections were not ‘dragging’ and their aim was to ensure the victory of the combine.

State BJP President L Murugan refused to divulge how many seats the party has sought from AIADMK and said a clarity on seat allocation might emerge in a day or two.

He, however, maintained the BJP return MLAs in “double digit” in the elections to the 234-member assembly, to be held in a single phase.

“Our aim is to ensure the AIADMK-led NDA should come to power. For that BJP’s Tamil Nadu workers will work hard,” he told reporters here, a day after senior leader and Union Home Minister Amit Shah held parleys with AIADMK top leaders, Chief Minister K Palaniswami and his deputy O Panneerselvam on seat sharing.

Asked if seat-sharing was firmed



**Our aim is to ensure the AIADMK-led NDA should come to power. For that BJP's Tamil Nadu workers will work hard**

L MURUGAN | TN BJP CHIEF

up during the late night talks on Sunday, he shot back asking “who said so? Yesterday, only talks were held,” he said. Murugan denied the talks were ‘dragging’.

When reporters sought to know how many seats the party has sought from the AIADMK, Murugan

merely said “our MLAs will be in two digits... I have been saying this for the last many days,” he added.

On the possible merger of AIADMK and TTV Dhinakaran-led Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam in the wake of release of his aunt VK Sasikala from prison after serving a four-year term in an assets case, Murugan said it has to be decided by the two respective parties.

He replied in the negative, when a scribe asked if the daily hike of petroleum products will affect the party’s poll prospects, saying the rates are not permanent and they might come down.



## NEW NORMAL

Students wearing masks attend a class after schools resumed for classes 9th to 12th, with COVID-19 safety guidelines, in Srinagar, Monday.

PTI PHOTO

# ‘VALLEY PEACEFUL AS PEOPLE WANT IT TO BE SO’

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Srinagar, March 1:** The past year has been one of the most peaceful in Kashmir with all parameters of violence on a decline as people want it to be so, a top army officer said Monday, rejecting suggestions that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to the ‘quiet’ situation.

General Officer Commanding (GoC) of the Srinagar-based XV Corps, Lt Gen BS Raju also said the ceasefire agreement on the LoC with Pakistan is a conscious call by both the countries and the task at hand is to make it successful.

“The year 2020 has been one of the most peaceful times. The situation in the valley remains fairly normal. All the parameters of violence – be it stone-pelting, agitations or

bandhs – have shown a dip,” Lt Gen Raju told reporters here.

Raju, who will take charge as the new Director General of Military Operations (DGMO), said while many people would want to believe that the situation in the valley was “quiet” due to the COVID pandemic, “it is not (the case)”.

“It is quiet because people want it to be quiet. If something good is happening, it is because the people want it to be,” he said, adding, “We have lots of hopes from the year 2021”.

Acknowledging that there have been isolated incidents, the GoC said there were elements who want to generate violence.

“They get directions from within and across (the LoC) to attack. There was this Krishna Dhaba attack re-

cently. It was only done to convey a message to the arriving EU delegation that the situation is not peaceful and that things are not normal. It was terrorism in a classic manner,” he said.

The Army officer was referring to the February 17 attack on Akash Mehra – son of the owner of ‘Krishna Dhaba’ which is a popular eatery in the high-security Durganag area. The attack took place on the day a 24-member delegation of envoys had arrived on a two-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir. Mehra succumbed to injuries at a hospital here Sunday.

Lt Gen Raju welcomed the reiteration of the ceasefire agreement between India and Pakistan, terming it a positive step and a conscious call by the two nations.

“The ceasefire agreement is a



positive step and a conscious call by both the countries. The task at hand is to make it successful,” he said. He, however, said that infiltration by militants from across the LoC was still a challenge. “Infiltration is still a challenge, but we are up to it. We will

try to keep things under control and keep the population safe. We hope the situation along the borders remains calm,” he said.

The GoC of the strategically located XV Corps added that the ceasefire helps to check infiltration. “Our

ability to check and control infiltration improves when there is a ceasefire,” he said.

Asked as to how the Indian Army would respond to any ceasefire violation from the Pakistani side, the Lt Gen said the Army was not trigger happy and would raise the issue through a proper mechanism.

“We have an established mechanism both at the local level as well as in Delhi.

“Definitely, we will give it the best shot. We will not be trigger happy. In case there is some problem, in case there is an incident, we will tell the other side, we will speak to them,” he said.

He said the ceasefire would have no major implication in the hinterland other than by helping check the infiltration.

# NIA BUSTS NARCO-TERROR RACKET IN JK

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Srinagar, March 1:** The NIA Monday arrested four drug traffickers in Kashmir for their alleged involvement in smuggling heroin in huge quantities from Pakistan and supplying it in Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of the country, an official said.

Altaf Ahmed Shah of Ganderbal, Showkat Ahmad Parray of Bandipora, Mudasir Ahmad Dar of Shopian and Amin Allaie of Anantnag have been arrested from Srinagar, he said.

They have been arrested in connection with the case pertaining to the seizure of 21 kg heroin and Rs 1,35,89,850 cash from the members of a drug syndicate operating in Jammu and Kashmir.

The case was registered in June last year in Kupwara. During the checking of vehicles in Kupwara, accused Abdul Momin Peer’s Hyundai Creta was intercepted by the police. During a search of the vehicle, Rs 20 lakh and two kg heroin were seized. After the NIA took over the investigation, it filed a charge sheet against the six accused in the special NIA court in Jammu in December last year. Besides cross-border smuggling of heroin, the accused were in regular contact with operatives of proscribed terrorist organisations Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Hizb-ul-Mujahideen through encrypted chat platforms, the NIA official said. The proceeds of sales were being used to finance the activities of LeT in the Kashmir Valley, he said.





**The BJP makes tall promises before elections but during the next five years, they do nothing to fulfil them and people have realised it**  
**PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA | CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY**

## BEAUTY PAGEANT WINNER MANSI SEHGAL JOINS AAP

Mansi Sehgal, who won the title of Miss India Delhi 2019, joined the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Monday. Besides being a pageant winner, Mansi is a trained engineer, TEDx speaker and an entrepreneur who has set up her own startup. While giving her introduction at the Miss India Delhi competition, she revealed herself to be a philanthropist and showed a keen interest in organ donation



## of the day quote

By taking the indigenously developed Covaxin by Bharat Biotech, the Prime Minister has effectively ended any spread of misinformation and it would also eliminate hesitancy from the minds of people about the vaccine



The country's largest state had only two international airports earlier – Lucknow and Varanasi. But it will soon have five international airports, including the upcoming ones in Jewar, Ayodhya and Kushinagar near Gorakhpur



**YOGI ADITYANATH | UTTAR PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER**

The Congress government has hiked power tariff by more than 30 per cent and even increased state share of VAT on petroleum products phenomenally



**SUKHBIR BADAL | SHIROMANI AKALI DAL (SAD) PRESIDENT**

## SHORT TAKES

### Nikita seeks anticipatory bail

**New Delhi:** Mumbai-based activist lawyer Nikita Jacob has moved a Delhi Court seeking anticipatory bail in the 'Toolkit' case. The bail plea will come up for hearing before Additional Sessions Judge Dharmender Rana on Tuesday. Jacob, along with climate activist Disha Ravi and Shantanu Muluk, face charges of conspiracy and sedition in the 'Toolkit' conspiracy case related to the farmers' agitation. Jacob's house was raided by the Delhi Police on February 11, after which a non-bailable warrant was issued against her. On February 17, the Bombay High Court granted three weeks transit anticipatory bail to Jacob.

### Lalrinenga Sailo new Aizawl mayor

**Aizawl:** The 19 newly-elected councilors of the Aizawl Municipal Corporation (AMC) were sworn in on Monday. Aizawl district magistrate R Lalramnghaka administered the oath to the newly elected councilors at a function held at the municipal office. Lalrinenga Sailo, a Mizo National Front (MNF) nominee from ward-I, was elected the mayor, while ward XII councillor R Thanglura of MNF was elected the deputy mayor. Four councillors -- Lalringliana, Lalitanzova Khiantge, B Lalawmpuii and H Zonunsanga, all from MNF, were nominated as executive councillors by the mayor.

### 13 spas sealed

**Gurugram:** Thirteen spa centres operating in zone-4 of the Municipal Corporation of Gurugram (MCG) jurisdiction were sealed by a team led by the MCG Zonal Taxation Officer Monday. They were allegedly found to be operating without a valid trade licence, said the MCG official. The centres were located at the Omex City Centre mall on Sohna Road.

### Elephant dies

**Udhagamandalam:** A 13-year-old male elephant was killed in a fight with another jumbo at Nilakottai near Gudalur, about 80 km from here in the Nilgiris District. Some workers noticed two elephants fighting with each other in a private tea estate and informed forest department officials who rushed to the spot. The officials found the elephant dead with serious injuries all over the body, forest department sources said.

# NOT AFRAID OF COVID-19, WON'T TAKE JABS: FARMER LEADERS



AGENCIES

**New Delhi, March 1:** Protesting farmer leaders in the vulnerable age group Monday said they are not afraid of coronavirus and won't take vaccine jabs, even as the second phase of vaccination drive got underway to inoculate senior citizens and those above 45 with underlying medical conditions.

However, they also said they will not stop any farmer camping at several Delhi borders from getting vaccinated as it is an individual choice.

Thousands of farmers, mostly from Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh, have been camping at three Delhi border points -- Singhu, Tikri and Ghazipur -- for over three months, demanding a repeal of the three agri reform laws enacted by the Centre in September last year.

The 80-year-old armer leader

Balbir Singh Rajewal, a senior member of the Samyukta Kisan Morcha which is spearheading the agitation, said he will not go to vaccination centres to receive the jabs.

"I don't need vaccine jabs. We have killed corona. Farmers' immunity level is strong because they work hard on their fields. Farmers are not afraid of coronavirus," Rajewal told PTI. Another senior leader Joginder Singh Ugrahan (75) said the fear of contracting the disease is "not enough" to distract them from their fight.

"There is no corona for farmers. I will not get vaccine shots, but we will not ask anyone to not get the shot," said the president of Bharatiya Kisan Union (Ekta Ugrahan), which is leading the protest at Delhi's Tikri border. However, Dharmendra Malik, the media in-charge of Bharatiya Kisan Union leader Rakesh Tikait who is leading the protest at the

## Govt's silence hints at plan against farmers' stir: Tikait

**BIJNOR:** BKU leader Rakesh Tikait has claimed that the Centre's "silence" for the past few days indicates that it is planning some steps against the farmers' agitation over newly enacted agriculture laws. He also stressed that it is the government that will have to come forward with a proposal for talks to resume with the protesting farmers. Before leaving for Uttarakhand's Udhampur Singh Nagar on Sunday night, the Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) leader told reporters in Bijnor's Afzalgarh, "The government's silence for the past 15-20 days is indicating that something is going to happen. The government is planning some steps against the agitation."

Ghazipur border, said if the local administration makes arrangements for protesting farmers, Tikait will not have any problem getting vaccinated.

The 70-year-old Kulwant Singh Sandhu, a member of Samyukta Kisan Morcha, said he will not receive the vaccine shot. "We are not afraid of coronavirus. Thousands of farmers are staging sit-in protests at Delhi borders, but not a single case of coronavirus has been detected there," Sandhu said.

# Tejashwi tells Biharis to vote for Mamata

THE WEST BENGAL ASSEMBLY ELECTION WILL BE HELD IN 8 PHASES FROM MARCH 27 TO APRIL 29

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Patna, March 1:** TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee and RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav Monday discussed the evolving political scenario in poll-bound West Bengal but there was no clarity yet about seat sharing.

Emerging from a meeting with Banerjee, Tejashwi, the Leader of the Opposition in the Bihar assembly, said his first priority was to prevent the BJP's forward march in West Bengal.

He appealed to Biharis domiciled in the state to rally behind the West Bengal chief minister in the elections.

He parried questions by journalists after the meeting at the state secretariat about whether the RJD will be contesting a few seats in West Bengal in alliance with the ruling TMC, merely saying "when Mamataji is fighting, it is we who are fighting. We will put in all efforts to ensure that she wins. Our full support is with her and her party." Tejashwi urged the people from Bihar living in West Bengal

to stand with the ruling TMC, which is facing a stiff challenge from the BJP in its bid for a third straight term in office. Banerjee, on her part, referred to Lalu Prasad, the jailed RJD supremo and Tejashwi's father, as a "father figure" to her with whom she shared "mutual respect".

She claimed Prasad, in jail following his conviction in fodder

scam cases, was "deliberately" held behind bars as his freedom would have meant defeat for his rivals in Bihar, where assembly

elections were held late last year. She asserted the NDA government in Bihar will not last long and that the BJP's "dream" of clinching power in West Bengal will not come true. The Left Front and the Congress have forged an alliance in West Bengal, while they are vying for power in Kerala.

Tejashwi Yadav criticised the Centre for "selling off" public sector undertakings, including the railways and enterprises in the oil and steel sectors.



## TOGETHER IN JOY



Ducks swim in a pond after reopening of Naxatra Van in Ranchi

UNI PHOTO

# Above normal summer temp likely across country: IMD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, March 1:** Day temperatures are likely to be above normal in north, northeast, parts of east and west India, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said Monday in its summer forecast for March to May.

However, it has forecast a likelihood of below normal temperatures in south and adjoining central India. "During the upcoming hot weather season (March to May), above normal seasonal maximum (day) temperatures are likely over most of the subdivisions of north, northwest and northeast India, few subdivisions from eastern and western parts of central India and few coastal subdivisions of north penin-



sular India," the forecast said.

There is a probability forecast for above maximum temperatures in Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Gujarat, coastal Maharashtra, Goa and coastal Andhra Pradesh.

"However, below normal seasonal maximum temperatures are likely over most of the subdivi-

sions of south peninsula and adjoining central India," it added.

It said above normal seasonal minimum (night) temperatures are likely over most of the of north India along the foot hills of Himalayas, northeast India, western part of central India and southern part of peninsular India.

"However, below normal season minimum temperatures are likely over most of the subdivisions of eastern part of the central India and few subdivisions of extreme northern part of the country," the IMD added. The IMD added that moderate La Nina conditions are prevailing over the equatorial Pacific and sea surface temperatures (SSTs) are below normal over the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean.

# SC: Can intercourse between a live-in couple be called rape?

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, March 1:** While examining the issue of consent for sexual relationship between a couple living together, the Supreme Court Monday queried whether sexual intercourse between them can be termed as rape.

A bench headed by Chief Justice SA Bobde and comprising Justices AS Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian said: "If a couple is living together as man and wife the husband may be brutal, but could the sexual intercourse between the couple, who are living together, can be termed as rape?"

The observations from the top court came while hearing a plea of a person accused of rape by a woman, who had been in a live-in relationship with him for over two years. The woman had filed an FIR for rape after the man married another woman.

According to the complainant, who was represented by advo-

cate Aditya Vashisth, the couple was in a romantic relationship, but she had clearly refused getting into a sexual intimacy before marriage. Vashisth argued that his client's consent was obtained by fraud.

In 2019, the Allahabad High Court had declined to entertain a plea by the petitioner to quash the FIR against him. The petitioner, through advocate Fuzail Ahmad Ayyubi, moved the top court challenging this order. The woman's counsel highlighted that the petitioner had also beaten up his client when they were living together and emphasised consent for the sexual act was obtained by fraud, after she was made to believe that the marriage was real.

The bench observed, "No one should falsely promise marriage and break off. But that is different from saying the act of sexual intercourse is rape." The bench noted that it had settled this matter in its earlier verdicts.



# SC asks rape accused if he is willing to marry victim

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, March 1:** The Supreme Court Monday asked a 23-year-old man, who has been accused of raping a minor girl, whether he will marry the victim.

A bench headed by Chief Justice S.A. Bobde and comprising Justices A.S. Bopanna and V. Ramasubramanian asked advocate Anand Dilip Langde, representing the petitioner, "Will you marry her?"

To this, Langde replied that he would need to take instructions from his client and asked for a pass over, but the court was not inclined to it. During the course of the arguments, Langde submitted before

the bench that his client is a government servant, and he will face suspension due to his arrest in the matter.

The Chief Justice replied: "You should have thought before seducing and raping the young girl."

He added that being a government servant, the petitioner should have thought about the consequences.

However, the Chief Justice stressed that the court is not forcing the petitioner to marry the girl. "We are not forcing you to marry, otherwise you will say we are forcing you to marry," the bench observed.

After a brief hearing in the matter, the bench declined to entertain



the petitioner's plea seeking bail and gave him the liberty to seek regular bail. The top court also granted protection from arrest to the

petitioner for four weeks.

The girl had alleged that when she was 16 years old, the petitioner, who was her distant relative, had

**The girl lodged an FIR against the petitioner in 2019 under Sections 376, 417, 506 of the IPC and under various sections of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012**

raped her. The girl alleged that initially the petitioner's mother had agreed for the marriage after she turns major and also executed a notarised undertaking for it. But the petitioner's mother later refused, she

## CICSE announces board exams: Class 10 exams from May 5

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, March 1:** The Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CICSE) will conduct board exams for classes 10 and 12 from May 5 and April 8 respectively, officials said Monday.

"The Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE), which is class 10 exam, will be conducted from May 5 to June 7. The Indian School Certificate Examination (ISC), which is class 12 exam, will be conducted from April 8 to June 16," said Gerry Arathoon, the CICSE Chief Executive and Secretary.

The board said the class 12 exams will begin on April 8 with Computer Science (Practical)-Planning Session, which will be a 90-minutes paper, instead of three hours scheduled for other subjects starting April 9. "The results will be issued through the convenors to the heads of schools by July." The results will not be available from office of council in New Delhi and no queries will be entertained from candidates, parents or guardians," Arathoon added.

Usually, the CICSE board exams are conducted in February-March. However, the exams have been delayed this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Central board of Secondary Education (CBSE), which conducts board exams around the same time every year, has also deferred its exams to May-June this year.

Last year, the CICSE had to cancel its pending exams because of the spike in COVID-19 cases and the result was declared on the basis of an alternative assessment scheme decided by the board.

## RACE IN SPACE

# BRAZIL SEEKS INDIA'S SUPPORT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, March 1:** Union minister Jitendra Singh Monday discussed with Brazilian Science, Technology and Innovation minister Marcos Pontes ways to further explore space cooperation between the two countries, including India's support in procurement of material and systems for Brazil's launch vehicle programme, a statement said.

Cooperation possibilities in future space science missions, utilising ISRO's PSLV orbital platform, space weather studies were also discussed in the virtual meeting, it added.

The meeting took place a day after the successful launch of Amazonia-1 satellite of Brazil by Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on Sunday.

"The collaboration between the two countries mark a beginning of robust bonding and is a role model for other countries to follow," Singh said, adding that the launch also marked the first dedicated mission of ISRO's commercial arm NewSpace India Ltd. (NSIL).

"Brazil has also requested for India's support in procurement of material and systems for its launch vehicle programme," the statement said.

Since early 2000s, India and Brazil have signed cooperative instruments for exploration and peaceful uses of outer space, both at the government level (2004) and space agency level (between ISRO and Brazilian Space Agency AEB in 2002).

alleged. On February 5, the Bombay High Court had allowed the girl's application, cancelling the anticipatory bail granted to the petitioner. Challenging this order, the petitioner had moved the top court.

"The petitioner's advocate informed the top court that his client was already married. It is further alleged that after the execution of the notarised undertaking June 2, 2018, when the informant turned 18, her mother requested the mother of the petitioner to perform the said promised marriage, but she refused the same and therefore the informant lodged the present complaint against the petitioner," said the petitioner's plea.





**Good conversation with FM of Madagascar @Tehindrazanari1. Informed him that Indian humanitarian assistance would be delivered in the coming days. Will include food & medical supplies**  
S JAISHANKAR | EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER

## JAIDEEP BHATNAGAR TAKES OVER AS PRINCIPAL DIRECTOR GENERAL OF PIB

Former head of the News Services Division of All India Radio, Jaideep Bhatnagar, Monday took over as Principal Director General of the Press Information Bureau. He will take over from Kuldeep Singh Dhatwalia, who superannuated February 28, 2021



## of the day quote

The massive power outage in Mumbai in October last year was caused by a cyber attack and it was an act of sabotage



NITIN RAUTE | MAHA ENERGY MINISTER

In comparison to other states, Gujarat was able to control the spread of the coronavirus in a much better way



ACHARYA DEVVRAT | GUJARAT GOVERNOR

Opposition should not misguide farmers (on farm laws)



PIYUSH GOYAL | RAILWAYS MINISTER

## SHORT TAKES

### JeM associate held in Pulwama

**Srinagar:** Security forces Monday arrested a terrorist associate of proscribed outfit Jaish-e-Mohammad from Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said. "Based on specific information regarding the presence of terrorists of JeM in Larow Jagir village in Tral area (of Pulwama), police along with 42 Rashtriya Rifles and 180 Bn CRPF launched a search operation there. During the search, a terrorist associate identified as Muzamil Qadir Bhat was arrested," a police spokesperson said.

### Wild elephants destroy crops

**Koderma:** A herd of wild elephants destroyed standing crops in several villages in Jharkhand's Koderma district, Forest Department officials said. The herd of wild elephants destroyed standing crops in several villages including Kharpoka under Jayanagar block in the border area of Hazaribagh and Koderma district in the last two days, the officials said. The Forest department is assessing the damaged caused to the crops by the elephants, they said.

### Fire in residential building, mill

**Surat:** Fires broke out in a residential building and a textile mill in a span of less than 24 hours in Gujarat's Surat city, leaving two firemen injured, officials said Monday. An electric meter board on the ground floor of the five-storey residential building in Sagrapura locality caught fire due to a short-circuit around Monday noon following which smoke spread to its upper floors, causing panic among residents.

## Prashant Kishor joins Punjab Chief Minister as key advisor

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chandigarh, March 1:** Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh Monday said poll strategist Prashant Kishor has joined him as his principal advisor.

"Happy to share that @PrashantKishor has joined me as my Principal Advisor. Look forward to working together for the betterment of the people of Punjab!," said Amarinder Singh in a tweet. The development assumes significance as the Punjab Assembly elections are due early next year.

Currently, Kishor's company, Indian Political Action Committee (I-PAC), is assisting Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress (TMC) in the West Bengal elections.

Kishor had handled the Congress poll campaign in the 2017 Punjab Assembly elections. The Congress in 2017 had stormed to power by bag-

## BSF ADOPTS NEW TRAINING REGIME

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, March 1:** Amid the on-going terrorist influx from Pakistan along the International Border (IB), the BSF, India's first line of control, has changed its commando training mode.

The Border Security Force (BSF) has adopted a new training regime as Pakistan's premier intelligence agency Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) has now started sending terrorists through the IB in the Jammu and Rajasthan sectors.

It is happening after the Indian Army strengthened its security grid along the Line of Control (LoC). Pakistan is not just pushing terrorists but also arms and drugs in these regions, said a senior IPS officer looking after the security apparatus along the Western Border.

Considering ISI's role in pushing terrorists as well as smuggling of arms and drugs in the Valley through different ways such as underground tunnels and drones, the BSF has updated

its Battle Obstacle Assault Course (BOAC) to boost the training quality of its commandos to the next level.

The commandos will now have to go through the modified BOAC training regime that includes 26 different battle filed obstacles, which our soldiers may have to negotiate in battle conditions.

Rangers Swing, Spider Web, Parallel Rope, Petroleum Towers, Tiger Leap, Burma Bridge, Tarzan Swing and Successive Drop are among the 26 BOACs that the BSF will provide to all its commandos. Artificial Wall Climbing; Free Fix Knotted Jhumar climbing; Seat Rappelling, Free Rappelling, Casualty Evacuation Rappelling and Team Slithering are among the other obstacle courses which are designed to enhance the strength of BSF commandos, equipping them to deal with extraordinary circumstances during field duty.

The centre also attracts batches from neighbouring countries seeking advance training for new recruits as well as senior officers.

## Hackers hit SBI users with text phishing scam

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, March 1:** Several users of the State Bank of India (SBI) have been targeted with a phishing scam where hackers have flooded them with suspicious text messages, requesting them to redeem their SBI credit points worth Rs 9,870.

The link associated with the text messages redirects the user to a fake website and on the landing page, the user is asked to submit personal information along with sensitive financial details like card number, expiry date, CVV and Mpin in a 'State Bank of India Fill Your Details' form.

According to the investigation by New Delhi-based think tank CyberPeace Foundation along with Autobot Infosec Private Ltd, the website collects data directly without any verification and is registered by a third party instead of having the registrant organisation name of State Bank of India, making it all the more suspicious.

"Moreover, according to SBI,



they never communicate with their customers via SMS or emails containing links with regard to the user's account. Any reputed banking entity also does not use Wordpress like CMS technologies on their official website for security reasons," the foundation said. The personal information sought on the malicious website is name, registered mobile number, email, email password and date of birth. After the form is submitted, the user is directed to a "thank you" page.

## PROTEST TURNS UGLY



Police baton charge a protestor during the Vidhan Sabha march, organised by the mebers of Inqilab Naujawan Sabha & All India Students Association (AISA), against the state government on the issues of education and health, in Patna

## 'MP records 93 tiger deaths in last 3 yrs'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhopal, March 1:** Madhya Pradesh, popularly known as the 'tiger state' of India, has lost 93 of the big cats due to poaching and other causes in the past three years, state forest minister Vijay Shah told the Assembly Monday.

In a written reply to a query by Congress MLA Satish Sikarwar, the minister said the 93 deaths occurred from January 1, 2018 to January 1, 2021, with 25 of them taking place due to poaching, for which 77 people had been held, and the rest due to natural causes, diseases, mutual conflict, old age etc.

As per the 2018 tiger population



estimation, Madhya Pradesh has 526 tigers, the highest in the country, with Bandhavgarh with 104 big cats leading the state's tally. According to the forest department, 88 tigers were found in Kanha Reserve, 61 in Panch Reserve, 25 in Panna Reserve, 40 in Satpura Reserve and five each in Sanjay Reserve and Nauradehi sanctuary. Besides, 45 tigers are found in Ratapani, Singhori and Khivani sanctuaries, which are part of one landscape.

In the same reply, the minister said lions are not found naturally in the state and the Kuno National Park has been developed for re-introduction of the Asiatic lion.

REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE

## High-altitude expeditions to keep an eye on China

Those taking part in the skiing expedition will negotiate forbidding mountain ridges, glaciers and multiple passes ranging from a height of 14,000 feet to 19,000 feet

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, March 1:** To counter expansionist China's habit of creeping forward by making small incremental moves, the Indian Army has planned mountaineering expeditions and research studies at high-altitude areas in the northern borders of the country.

The Army is also coming up with a skiing expedition - ARMEX-21 - covering the distance from the Karakoram Pass to Lipulekh Pass. It will cover areas of Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Garhwal and Kumaon sectors. The skiing expedition will also be carried out at

the high-altitude areas in Jammu and Kashmir.

"Army, civilians and foreign persons will also take part in various upcoming skiing expeditions," said a senior Indian Army officer.

The Army planned the skiing expedition after India and China agreed for disengagement at the disputed Pangong Lake in eastern Ladakh. India and China are engaged in a 10-month-long standoff along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). The confrontations began on the north bank of Pangong Lake, both in the waters and on the banks as Chinese incursions increased



in early May last year.

About the 'salami-slicing' tactics of China, Indian Army Chief General Manoj Mukund Naravane had on 24 had stated that China has the habit of creeping forward by making very small incremental moves to achieve its objective but this strategy will not work with India.

General Naravane, while speaking in a webinar organised by the

## Flash droughts set to increase in India

EXTREME HOT AND DRY CONDITIONS THAT LEAD TO FLASH DROUGHTS CAN OCCUR MORE FREQUENTLY UNDER CLIMATE CHANGE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, March 1:** Climate change will increase the frequency of flash droughts in India in the future, which will have a negative impact on crop production, irrigation demands, and groundwater abstraction, says a study by researchers at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Gandhinagar.

According to the researchers, flash droughts occur due to rapid depletion of soil moisture.

In contrast to the conventional droughts, they said, flash droughts can impact a large region within two-three weeks, severely affecting crop health and irrigation water demands.

However, the occurrence and impacts of flash droughts in the current and future climate in India are not well known.

The study, published in the journal npj Climate and Atmospheric Science, examined the role of human-caused climate warming and intra-sea-

sonal variability during the summer monsoon season on the flash drought occurrence over India.

The researchers used soil moisture simulations, observations from India Meteorological Department (IMD), and climate projections to examine the frequency of flash droughts in the country under the observed and future climate scenarios.

The team noted that the worst flash drought in the observed timeframe from 1951-2016 occurred in 1979, when more than 40 per cent of the country was affected.

The frequency of concurrent hot and dry extremes, the researchers explained, is projected to rise by about five-fold, causing approximately seven-fold increase in flash droughts like 1979 by the end of the 21st century.

The researchers - including Saran Aadhar and Shanti Shwarup Mahto - both from IIT Gandhinagar, noted that India is projected to witness extreme climatic conditions in the future.



REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE

He had also cited China's expansionist strategy in the South China Sea and asserted that India will not allow this to happen.

Referring to India's resolve in Ladakh, he said, "I think more than anything else, what we have achieved is to show that this strategy will not work with us and every move will be met resolutely."

Despite the initial disengagement, the Army Chief had sounded a warning while dealing with China citing trust deficit.

"In whatever we are doing, we also keep in mind that we have to be wary. We will be very cautious and I mentioned in my talk also that there is a trust deficit. Unless that trust deficit is removed, we will of course continue to be very wary and watch whatever movement happens on either side of the LAC. But I think at the end of day, we have achieved a lot," the Indian Army chief had said.





**We have the cleanest air and cleanest water... and what good does it do when we're clean, but China is not and Russia is not and India is not, so they are pouring fumes... You know the world is a small piece of the universe and we're trying to protect everything**  
**DONALD TRUMP | FORMER US PRESIDENT**

## VIRTUAL SHIVRATRI IN DUBAI TEMPLE

The Gurudarbar Sindhi Temple in Dubai will virtually celebrate the upcoming Maha Shivratri festival in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic



## of the day quote

There have been times where issues of the past weren't separated from those of the future and became intermingled with each other. This has impeded forward-looking development. The Korean government is always ready to sit down and have talks with the Japanese government



**MOON JAE-IN | SOUTH KOREAN PRESIDENT**

I am coming into one of the most important institutions in the world and we have a lot of work to do. I feel ready to go



**NGOZI OKONJO-IWEALA | WTO DIRECTOR-GENERAL**

Iran is the greatest enemy of Israel; I am determined to halt it. We are hitting it in the entire region



**BENJAMIN NETANYAHU | ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER**

## SHORT TAKES

### Philippines begins vax campaign

**Manila:** The Philippines launched a vaccination campaign Monday to contain one of Southeast Asia's worst coronavirus outbreaks but faces supply problems and public resistance, which it hopes to ease by inoculating top officials. Cabinet officials, along with health workers and military and police personnel, were among the first to be vaccinated in six hospitals in Metropolitan Manila, after President Rodrigo Duterte and other top officials received 600,000 doses Sunday of COVID-19 vaccine donated by China.

### Europeans get 'right to repair'

**Berlin:** Companies that sell refrigerators, washers, hairdryers or TVs in the European Union will need to ensure those appliances can be repaired for up to 10 years, to help reduce the vast mountain of electrical waste that piles up each year on the continent. The "right to repair," as it is sometimes called, comes into force across the 27-nation bloc Monday. It is part of a broader effort to cut the environmental footprint of manufactured goods by making them more durable and energy efficient.

### UK finds Brazilian virus variants

**London:** Health officials in Britain have identified six cases of a highly contagious coronavirus strain first identified in the Brazilian city of Manaus - including one in a person who has not been traced. Scientists say the variant is more transmissible and may be more resistant to existing vaccines than the original virus, and may be able to infect people who have previously had Covid-19. Direct flights from Brazil to the UK have been halted.

### Biden to meet Mexican Prez

**Wilmington:** President Joe Biden is planning a virtual meeting Monday with Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador - a chance for the pair to talk more fully about migration, confronting the coronavirus and cooperating on economic and national security issues. Mexico's president has said he intends during the meeting to propose to Biden a new Bracero-style immigrant labor program that could bring 600,000 to 800,000 Mexican and Central American immigrants a year to work legally in the United States.

# Drug companies asked to share vax know-how

**WHO CALLED FOR VACCINE MANUFACTURERS TO SHARE THEIR KNOW-HOW TO "DRAMATICALLY INCREASE THE GLOBAL SUPPLY"**

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Paris, March 1:** In an industrial neighborhood on the outskirts of Bangladesh's largest city lies a factory with gleaming new equipment imported from Germany, its immaculate hallways lined with hermetically sealed rooms. It is operating at just a quarter of its capacity. It is one of three factories that The Associated Press found on three continents whose owners say they could start producing hundreds of millions of Covid-19 vaccines on short notice if only they had the blueprints and technical know-how. But that knowledge belongs to the large pharmaceutical companies who produce the first three vaccines authorized by countries including Britain, the European Union and the US — Pfizer, Moderna and AstraZeneca. The factories are all still awaiting responses.

Across Africa and Southeast Asia, governments and aid groups, as well as the World Health Organisation, are calling on pharmaceutical companies to share their patent information more broadly to meet a yawning global shortfall in a pandemic that already has claimed over 2.5 million lives. Pharmaceutical companies that took taxpayer money from the US or Europe to develop inoculations at unprecedented speed say they are negotiating contracts and exclusive licensing deals with producers on a case-by-case basis because they need to protect their intellectual property and ensure safety.



Nearly 80% of the vaccines so far have been administered in just 10 countries

More than 210 countries and territories with a collective population of 2.5 billion hadn't received a single shot as of last week



**What we see today is a stampede, a survival of the fittest approach, where those with the deepest pockets, with the sharpest elbows are grabbing what is there and leaving others to die**

**WINNIE BYANYIMA | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF UNAIDS**

Critics say this piecemeal approach is just too slow at a time of urgent need to stop the virus before it mutates into even deadlier forms. WHO called for vaccine manufacturers to share their know-how to "dramatically increase the global supply."

"If that can be done, then immediately overnight every continent will have dozens of companies who would be able to produce these vaccines," said Abdul Mukhtadir, whose Incepta plant in Bangladesh already makes vaccines against hepatitis, flu, meningitis, rabies, tetanus and measles.

All over the world, the supply of coronavirus vaccines is falling far short of demand, and the limited amount available is going to rich countries. Nearly 80% of the vaccines so far have been administered in just 10 countries, according to WHO. More than 210 countries and territories with a collective

population of 2.5 billion hadn't received a single shot as of last week.

The deal-by-deal approach also means that some poorer countries end up paying more for the same vaccine than richer countries. South Africa, Mexico, Brazil and Uganda all pay different amounts per dose for the AstraZeneca vaccine — more than governments in the European Union, according to studies and publicly available documents. AstraZeneca said the price of the vaccine will differ depending on factors such as production costs, where the shots are made and how much countries order.

"What we see today is a stampede, a survival of the fittest approach, where those with the deepest pockets, with the sharpest elbows are grabbing what is there and leaving others to die," said Winnie Byanyima, executive director of UNAIDS.

# Activists rally in B'desh to protest prison death

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Dhaka, March 1:** About 300 student activists rallied in Bangladesh's capital Monday to denounce the death in prison of a writer and commentator who was arrested last year on charges of violating a sweeping digital security law that critics say chokes freedom of expression.

The protesters marched through the Dhaka University campus and Dhaka's streets toward the country's Home Ministry to also demand the annulment of the digital security law and the release of seven student activists arrested during recent protests denouncing the death of 53-year-old Mushtaq Ahmed. They broke a barricade by removing barbed wire fences on the way to the ministry, but were intercepted by a few hundred police officers outside the ministry in downtown Dhaka.

"The state must take responsibility. He has been killed; it was not a natural death. How come he was held for nine months in jail without any justice" said one protester, Mahfuza Akhter.

"We want justice," she said. There were no immediate reports of any violence.

Ahmed's death Thursday night sparked protests on streets and on social media, and prompted global human rights groups, including Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, to urge Bangladesh's government to conduct a thorough investigation. The New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists, or CPJ, demanded that the government cancel the security act.

Ahmed was arrested in Dhaka May last year for making comments on social media that criticised the government's handling of the coronavirus pandemic. He was denied bail at least six times. At least 10 other people were charged with sedition under the digital security law in the same case Ahmed faced.

The CPJ has demanded the release from prison of political cartoonist Kabir Kishore, who was arrested in the case last year. Kishore's lawyers said during previous court proceedings that he was "mercilessly tortured" in custody.



## FROZEN FALLS



**Ice sits at the base of the American Falls due to cold temperatures in Niagara Falls, New York**

REUTERS

# More charges against Suu Kyi, protests continue

REUTERS

**Yangon, March 1:** Myanmar's ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi appeared at a court hearing via video conferencing Monday as supporters marched in several towns and cities in defiance of a crackdown after the bloodiest day since the Feb 1 military coup.

Police fired tear gas and stun grenades to disperse hundreds of protesters in the main city of Yangon Monday, witnesses said. They later combed through side streets firing rubber bullets and at least one person was hurt, media reported.

Suu Kyi, aged 75, looked in good



health during her appearance before a court in the capital Naypyidaw, one of her lawyers said. Two more charges were added to those filed against her after the coup, she said. "I saw Amay on the video, she looks healthy," lawyer Min Min Soe told Reuters, using an affectionate term meaning "mother" to refer to Suu Kyi. The Nobel Peace laureate, who leads the National League for Democracy (NLD), has not been seen in public since her government was ousted and she was detained along with other party leaders.

She was initially charged with illegally importing six walkie-talkie radios. Later, a charge of violating a natural disaster law by breaching coronavirus protocols was added.

Two more charges were added Monday, one under a section of a colonial-era penal code prohibiting publication of information that may "cause fear or alarm", and the other under a telecommunications law stipulating licences for equipment, the lawyer said.

The next hearing will be on March 15. Critics of the coup say the charges were trumped up.

Sunday, police fired on crowds in several places killing 18 people, the United Nations human rights office said. A committee representing lawmakers elected last year said 26 people were killed but Reuters was unable to verify that.

The military has not commented on Sunday's violence and police and military spokesmen did not answer calls. The state-run Global New Light of Myanmar newspaper warned that "severe action will be inevitably taken" against "archaic mobs".

# 'Perseverance rover's exciting work to happen in weeks to come'

**THE ROVER, THE SUPERCAM AND ITS OTHER DEVICES TOGETHER WILL HELP SCIENTISTS SEARCH FOR CLUES OF PAST LIFE ON MARS**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

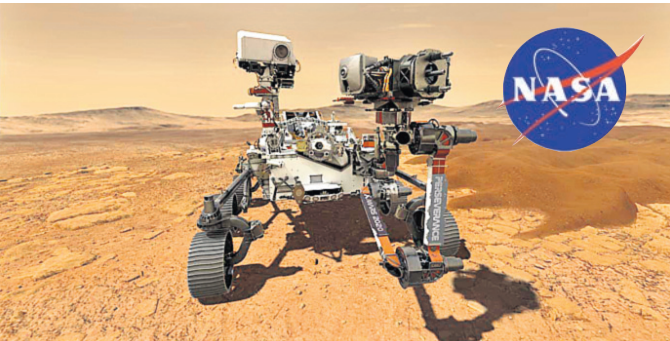
**Houston, March 1:** Vishnu Sridhar, a 27-year-old Indian-American lead system engineer with NASA's Perseverance rover, has said that the most exciting work on the awe-inspiring Mars mission will happen in the coming weeks.

"We're going to be taking more images of Mars, we're going to be shooting lasers with the SuperCam instrument, we're going to be recording audio with our microphone, and eventually, soon in near future, we are going to deploy our helicopter, and do the first powered flight on

Mars," Sridhar told ABC7 channel.

SuperCam is a remote-sensing instrument that will use laser spectroscopy to analyse the chemical composition of rocks on the Martian surface. It analyses terrain that the rover cannot reach. It is an instrument designed to scan rocks and minerals—from up to 20 feet away—to determine their chemical makeup.

The Perseverance rover was launched July 30 last year and successfully landed on Mars February 18 this year. The rover, the SuperCam, and its other devices together will help scientists search for clues of past life on Mars. Its predecessor Curiosity is still functioning eight years after landing on Mars. The two-year Perseverance



mission is NASA's latest and most advanced mission to find evidence of past life on Mars. Sridhar said it

was important that the mission was happening despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

"NASA missions are clearly trying to explore and answer the basic question. Perseverance is also trying to seek that, and eventually answer the question that was there life on Mars, was there life outside Earth, and it was definitely a tough period for us during Covid-19 and for everyone else around the globe," he said.

"And that's why I love the name of Perseverance because we persevered through the pandemic and there was a paradigm shift, we learned a lot about how to do engineering remotely. And we went through all that we learned and now we are successful on Mars and it's a great achievement for humankind," he said.

The US space agency Monday released the first audio from Mars, a faint recording of a gust of wind captured by the Perseverance rover. Perseverance will attempt to collect 30 rock and soil samples in sealed tubes to be sent back to Earth sometime in the 2030s for lab analysis.

The rover is only the fifth to set its wheels down on Mars. The feat was first accomplished in 1997, and all of them have been American.



# business

## of the day quote

**Making FASTags mandatory for highway users for collection of electronic toll has significantly reduced delays at toll plazas. This will result in a significant saving to the tune of ₹20,000 crore per annum on fuel cost**

**NITIN GADKARI** | UNION MINISTER

**A large percentage of our users have now adopted & embraced our financial services. By incorporating technological advancements, we have now brought in the next wave of digital payments revolution with our Paytm All-in-One Android POS devices & Soundbox**

**NARENDRA YADAV** | VICE-PRESIDENT, PAYTM

**The hospitality industry came forward to assist the government in its hour of need and hoteliers, restaurateurs and the people working in hotels and restaurants continued to serve the public during the worst phase of the pandemic**

**GURBAXISH SINGH KOHLI** | VICE-PRESIDENT, FHRAI

## SHORT TAKES

### Siemens' major acquisition

**New Delhi:** Siemens Ltd Monday said it has completed the acquisition of 99.22% equity shares in C&S Electric Ltd from the company's promoters for ₹2,100 crore. The Competition Commission of India (CCI) had given its approval for the deal August 20, 2020, Siemens Ltd said in a BSE filing. According to the company, it has "acquired 99.22% (approximately) equity shares of C&S Electric Ltd from its promoters, for an aggregate consideration of INR 21,000,000,000 on a cash-free/ debt-free basis."

### Royal Enfield sales up 10% in February

**New Delhi:** Motorcycle maker Royal Enfield Monday reported a 10 per cent increase in total sales at 69,659 units in February. The company had sold 63,536 units in the same month last year, Royal Enfield said in a statement. Domestic sales last month were at 65,114 units as against 61,188 units in February 2020, a growth of 6 per cent, it added. Exports witnessed a jump of 94 per cent last month at 4,545 units as compared to 2,348 units in the year-ago month, the company said.

### BPCL to sell Refinery stake

**New Delhi:** Privatisation-bound Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) Monday said it will exit Numaligarh refinery in Assam by selling its entire stake to a consortium of Oil India Ltd and Engineers India Ltd for ₹9,876 crore. The sale of Numaligarh Refinery Ltd clears the way for privatisation of India's second-largest fuel retailer. In keeping with the Assam Peace Accord, the government had decided to keep Numaligarh Refinery Ltd (NRL) in the public sector.

### Maruti Suzuki's Feb sales up 11.8%

**New Delhi:** Automobile major Maruti Suzuki Monday reported a growth of 11.8% in its overall sales during February 2021 on a y-o-y basis. The company sold 1,64,469 units of vehicles last month, against 1,47,110 units sold in February 2020. On a sequential basis, the company sold 1,60,752 units of vehicles in January 2021.



**There is a need for post harvest revolution or food processing revolution, and value additions. It would have been better if food processing was given attention 2-3 decades earlier**

**NARENDRA MODI** | PRIME MINISTER

## GOLD PRICE RISES BY ₹241

Gold prices Monday rose by ₹241 to ₹45,520 per 10 grams in New Delhi in line with the strong global bullion market trend, according to HDFC Securities. The precious metal had closed at ₹45,279 per 10 grams in the previous trading session



## FEBRUARY GST COLLECTION STANDS AT ₹1.13 LAKH CR



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, March 1:** The gross GST revenue collected in February 2021 increased 7 per cent on a year-on-year basis to over ₹1.13 lakh crore.

Out of the total good and service tax collection of ₹1,13,143 crore, CGST was ₹21,092 crore, SGST was ₹27,273 crore, IGST was ₹55,253 crore, including ₹24,382 crore collected on import of goods and cess was ₹9,525 crore, including ₹660 crore collected on import of goods, said an official statement.

The government has settled ₹22,398 crore to CGST and ₹17,534 crore to SGST from IGST as regular settlement.

In addition, the central government has also settled ₹48,000 crore as IGST ad-hoc settlement in the ratio of 50:50 between Centre and States or Union Territories.

The total revenue of Centre and the states after regular settlement and ad-hoc settlement in the month of February 2021 is ₹67,490 crore for CGST and ₹68,807 crore for the SGST. The GST revenues crossed ₹1 lakh fifth time in a row and crossed ₹1.1 lakh crore third time in a row post pandemic despite this being revenue collection of the month of February.

This is a clear indication of the economic recovery and the impact of various measures taken by tax administration to improve compliance, said the Finance Ministry statement.

# Automakers report double digit sales growth in Feb

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, March 1:** Leading car makers Maruti Suzuki, Hyundai and Tata Motors reported robust sales growth in the domestic market in February as the demand for personal mobility amid Covid-19 pandemic continues to drive the market.

Others, including Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM), Mahindra & Mahindra, and Honda Cars India, also reported strong wholesale dispatches to dealers last month.

The country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) said its domestic sales increased 11.8 per cent to 1,52,983 units last month, as against 1,36,849 units in February 2020. The company's sales during the

month were driven by compact and utility vehicle segments.

Last month, sales company's compact segment models, including Swift, Celerio, Ignis, Baleno and Dzire, increased by 15.3 per cent to 80,517 units, as against 69,828 cars in February last year.

Similarly, utility vehicle dispatches to dealers, including Vitara Brezza, S-Cross and Ertiga, rose 18.9 per cent to 26,884 units, as compared to 22,604 units in the year-ago month. Sales of mini cars, comprising Alto and S-Presso, however declined by 12.9 per cent to 23,959 units, as compared to 27,499 in the same month last year.

Rival Hyundai Motor India reported a 29 per cent increase in its domestic sales at 51,600 units as



against 40,010 units in February 2020. "The company has been consistently striving to drive a resurgence in sales, thereby contributing towards economic recovery and bringing the industry closer to pre-Covid level sales," HMI Director (Sales, Marketing & Service) Tarun Garg said. Both domestic and export demand have recorded healthy dou-

**Both domestic and export demand have recorded healthy double digit growth last month, reflecting an all-round improvement in buyer sentiment**

ble digit growth last month, reflecting an all-round improvement in buyer sentiment, he added.

Tata Motors saw its passenger vehicle sales surging over two-folds to 27,225 units in the domestic market last month. Similarly, Mahindra & Mahindra reported a 41 per cent increase in its passenger vehicle dispatches to dealers last month. The

# BIDS WORTH ₹77,146 CR MADE ON DAY 1: PRASAD

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, March 1:** The first day of the much anticipated telecom auctions attracted ₹77,146 crore of bids, said Telecom Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad. Bidding took place for spectrum in 800 MHz, 900 Mhz, 1,800 MHz, 2,100 MHz and 2,300 MHz bands. However, the participants did not bid in 700 MHz abd 2,500 MHz bands.

Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea were the bidders in the latest auction against seven bidders in the previous auctions in 2016.

Reliance Jio had submitted an earnest money deposit (EMD) of ₹10,000 crore for the auctions, the highest among the three private telecom operators. Bharti Airtel,

## SPECTRUM AUCTION



on the other hand submitted an EMD of ₹3,000 crore and Vodafone Idea submitted EMD of ₹475 crore. A statement said that bidder-

wise details of quantity won and amount payable will be available only after conclusion of the auction.

A total of 2,308.80 MHz spectrum is being put to auction, out of which there have been bids for 849.20 MHz so far. According to the government, excluding spectrum in 700 MHz and 2,500 MHz bands, bids have been received for almost 60 per cent of the spectrum. The auction is likely to conclude Tuesday.

Four rounds of bidding took place till 6 p.m. Monday, another two rounds are expected on Tuesday. The auction is based on Simultaneous Multiple Round Ascending Auction (SMRA) methodology.

The ongoing auction does not include frequencies in 3,300-3,600 MHz bands that were identified for 5G services.

# 'Credit demand may almost double to 9-10% in FY22'

AGENCIES

**Mumbai, March 1:** On the back of timely government and regulatory measures this fiscal, which helped the economy to recover faster than expected, bank credit is seen growing 400-500 bps to 9-10 per cent in the next financial year, according to a report.

In the current fiscal, bank credit is expected to rise 4-5 per cent despite the sharpest contraction in the economy since Independence.

As per the Crisil report, the economy is likely to grow at 11 per cent in FY22.

While bank credit growth had contracted 0.8 per cent in the first half of this fiscal, it recovered sharply in the third quarter by growing 3 per cent sequentially. In the fourth quarter, too, it should clock 3 per cent sequential growth, Krishnan Sitaraman, a senior director at Crisil said Monday.

In June 2020, Crisil had pegged bank credit growth to be at 0-1 per cent this fiscal.

The government measures, including the ₹3 lakh crore emergency credit line guarantee scheme (ECLGS), have been supportive, he added.

In the first half of this fiscal, the pandemic forced borrowers and lenders to tread cautiously, leading to a contraction in credit



**While bank credit growth had contracted 0.8% in the first half of this fiscal, it recovered sharply in the third quarter by growing 3% sequentially. In the fourth quarter, too, it should clock 3% sequential growth**

**KRISHNAN SITARAMAN** | SENIOR DIRECTOR, CRISIL

pick up. But a faster-than-expected uptick in economic activity since the relaxation of lockdowns, and pent-up and festive season demand helped thereafter.

In absolute terms, net credit rose to ₹2.3 lakh crore in the first nine months of FY21, of which disbursements under ECLGS was ₹1.6 lakh crore in this period.

Banks also deployed ₹1.4 lakh crore via targeted long-term repo operation and partial credit guar-

antee scheme, serving as credit substitutes.

Growth in corporate credit, which is 49 per cent of overall bank credit, is expected to contract this fiscal as companies have put Capex on the backburner but will change next fiscal when corporate credit is expected to grow 5-6% on a likely revival in demand.

But the share of corporate loans in the overall credit pie will continue to shrink with faster growth of other segments.

Retail lending is likely to slow down to 9-10% this fiscal before returning to the mid-teens growth of the past couple of years.

Banks are expected to benefit from the lower competition as non-banks see tepid growth. With deposit growth outstripping credit growth so far, banks would use the surplus liquidity to wrench credit market share," said, an agency director.

# 'Feb manufacturing growth remains flat'

AGENCIES

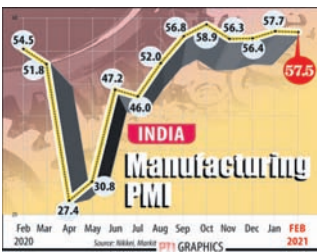
**New Delhi, March 1:** India's manufacturing sector growth remained flat-to-positive in February, as improving business environment pushed order flow. Accordingly, the headline seasonally adjusted IHS Markit India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) stood at 57.5 (index reading) in February easing a bit from 57.7 in January.

However, the index remained above its long-run average of 53.6. The PMI ranges between 0 and 100, with a reading above 50 indicating an overall increase compared to the previous month.

"Better demand conditions and successful marketing campaigns reportedly underpinned a further increase in new orders during February," said IHS Markit in the February PMI report. "Although easing from January, the pace of growth remained sharp in the context of historical data."

Besides, new export orders rose halfway through the final quarter of fiscal year 2020-21, albeit at a modest rate that was softer than in January. According to panel members, the Covid-19 pandemic restricted international demand for Indian goods.

"In response to another robust increase in total new orders, production was raised again in February. The pace of expansion eased from January, but was nevertheless sharp and among the quickest seen over the past nine years." "February data pointed to



**IHS Markit India Manufacturing PMI stood at 57.5 in February easing a bit from 57.7 in January**

**New export orders rose halfway through the final quarter of fiscal year 2020-21, albeit at a modest rate that was softer than in January**

the strongest increase in input inventories in the survey history as firms reacted to rising production needs by lifting purchasing activity. The expansion in input buying was the fastest in almost a decade."

Furthermore, survey members noted greater prices for a number of items such as chemicals, metals, plastics and textiles. As per the report, the overall rate of cost inflation hit a 32-month high.

Although factory gate charges increased in February, the rate of inflation was modest and eased from January's 13-month high.

"Indian goods producers reported a healthy inflow of new orders in February, that underpinned a further upturn in output and quantity of purchases," said Pollyanna De Lima, an economist.

## BIZ BUZZ

### Skechers launches Arch Fit collection

**Bhubaneswar:** Skechers India launched the Arch Fit Range which offers new and innovative technology to improve the comfort and support for the feet. The Arch Fit Insole is resilient, provides better foot guidance, and patented shape retention capabilities. By distributing arch pressure, Arch Fit offers more balance and stability and it comes in easy, washable styles so that one can look and feel great for a longer period of time. The collection, synonymous to comfort is developed using over 20 years of data, is certified to offer arch support for men and women and for everyone who's always on the move. When it comes to more comfort for your feet, take it from a podiatrist.



### Sonalika crosses 1 lakh domestic tractor sales

**Bhubaneswar:** Sonalika Tractors has created a new record of excellence by clocking its highest-ever cumulative domestic sales of 1,06,432 tractors in just 11 months, registering growth of 35.5% as compared to same period last year. With this, it has achieved a significant landmark for the fastest-ever 1 lakh domestic tractor sales by any tractor brand in the Indian market since its inception. The country's fastest growing tractor manufacturer, Sonalika has overall sold 11,821 tractors in February as compared to 9,650 during the same period last year. Raman Mittal, Executive Director, Sonalika Group, said, "We crossed our highest-ever cumulative domestic sales of 1,06,432 tractors in just 11 months (April'20-Feb'21), registering a growth of 35.5% as compared to same period last year. Notably, it is also the fastest-ever 1 lakh domestic tractor sales by any tractor brand in the Indian market."



# Analysis: Central banks will happily ignore inflation-mongers

*The argument behind the inflation warning is that once economies reopen, massive govt stimulus will combine with pent up consumer demand, unleashing spending-fuelled price pressures unseen for decades*

REUTERS

**Frankfurt, March 1:** The world's biggest central banks will happily live with higher inflation and investors now aggressively betting on a quicker end to monetary stim-



ulus are all but certain to be proved wrong. After a decade of underestimating inflation, central bankers in the United States, Europe and Japan have every reason keep money taps open and policymakers are

even rewriting their own rules so they can let price growth overshoot their targets.

If anything, central banks are more likely to nudge up stimulus, particularly in the euro zone, keeping

borrowing costs depressed and ignoring the inflation hawks at least until growth is back to pre-pandemic levels -- and not just fleetingly.

The Reserve Bank of Australia already launched a surprise bond buying operation while the European Central Bank has repeatedly warned investors not to push yields too high, unless they want to fight its 1 trillion euro war chest. The argument behind the inflation warning is that once economies reopen, massive government stimulus will combine with pent up consumer demand, unleashing spending-fuelled price pressures unseen for decades.

Although top economists are weighing in on both sides of the debate, the voices that really count all seem to be downplaying the

threat. "Inflation dynamics do change over time but they don't change on a dime," Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell said.

"We don't really see how a burst of fiscal support or spending ... that doesn't last for many years, would actually change those inflation dynamics." Even if inflation accelerates, a big if given that big central banks are all undershooting their 2% goal, tightening policy too hastily is seen as a bigger evil than moving too slowly.

First off, much of the inflation rise is temporary: driven by the rebound in oil, one-off stimulus measures and the base effect of tanking prices a year ago. So this is not the sort of sustained inflation policymakers are looking for.

Tighter policy could also choke

off growth - a costly blunder with tens of millions still out of work after the biggest peacetime economic crisis in a century. In the worst case, higher borrowing costs would even raise debt sustainability concerns, particularly in heavily indebted southern Europe and across emerging markets.

And lastly, the Fed and European Central Bank both tightened policy too quickly in the past decade, forcing them into the type of credibility-damaging reversal they are now keen to avoid.

The message from the Fed has been uniform and emphatic: its \$120 billion monthly bond purchases will not change until the economy has more fully recovered, and any actual interest rate increase is even further into the future.



# Atletico seal win to rebuild 5-point lead

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Madrid, March 1:** Atletico Madrid got back to winning, beating Villarreal 2-0 to halt their slump and restore a five-point lead at the top of the Spanish league.

An own-goal by Alfonso Pedraza in the first half Sunday and a goal by forward Joao Felix in the second helped Atlético end a three-game winless streak and rebuild their lead over second-place Barcelona, who won 2-0 at fourth-placed Sevilla Saturday. Atletico has a game in hand compared to the Catalan club. Third-place Real Madrid can get back to within three points of Atletico Monday with a win against fifth-place Real Sociedad at home. Madrid will have played one more game more than Atletico. Atletico will host Real Madrid in the city derby next Sunday.

Diego Simeone's team were coming off a 0-1 loss to Chelsea in the first leg of the round of 16 of the Champions League Tuesday. They also lost 0-2 to Levante at home in the Spanish league, and had previously drawn with Levante in a



Joao Felix reacts after scoring against Villarreal, Sunday

league match postponed from the second round because of the coronavirus pandemic.

It was Atletico's first clean sheet after eight matches, which had marked the team's worst streak conceding goals since Simeone arrived in late 2011. Unai Emery's Villarreal, winless in six consecutive Spanish league games, dropped to seventh place.

Atletico went ahead in the 25th minute after Savic's header was saved by Villarreal goalkeeper Sergio Asenjo but the ball ricocheted off Pedraza and went in. The goal was initially disallowed for offside but later confirmed by video review.

Felix, who recently was sidelined for testing positive for COVID-19, scored his first goal since January with a low shot from inside the area in the 69th. The Portugal forward, who came off the bench after halftime, celebrated profusely and put a finger to his mouth, as if asking someone to be quiet. It wasn't clear to whom he was sending a message.

# Bale turns back time

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**London, March 1:** Gareth Bale turned back time for Tottenham, while Chelsea and Manchester United seemed happy just to play out time.

Bale looked like the star player who left Tottenham for Real Madrid in 2013 as he scored twice in the club's 4-0 win over Burnley, prompting Spurs manager Jose Mourinho to pronounce him 'better than ever' though still not suitable to start week-in, week-out.

While Bale found his form, Harvey Barnes had his good run cut short by a knee injury in Leicester's 1-3 loss to Arsenal. He is likely to need an operation and miss six weeks.

Chelsea kept their unbeaten record under manager Thomas Tuchel in a 0-0 draw with Man United as both teams appeared reluctant to risk losing one point in the hope of getting three.

Liverpool put a stop to the run of four straight league defeats which effectively finished off its title chances, but a 2-0 win over last-place Sheffield United was still short of Liverpool's best.

Bale opened the scoring after 68 seconds and the Welsh forward added another early in the second half, both off assists from Son Heung-min. Back on loan from Spain, it was his first two-goal game since 2019. However, Mourinho warned that Bale would still have to rest for some upcoming games to manage his form and fitness.

Harry Kane and Lucas Moura also scored for the hosts, and it could have been more if not for some good saves from Nick Pope when Burnley was already four goals down.

Chelsea's new identity under Tuchel is taking shape. There's intense, German-style pressing, but also a newfound compactness and solidity in the defense at Stamford Bridge, compared to former manager Frank Lampard's open but defensively vulnerable style.

Against United's counterattacking specialists, both teams seemed risk-averse, even in the final minutes. The upshot was a ninth game unbeaten in all competitions for Tuchel at Chelsea, seven of them without conceding a goal, but it also meant that Chelsea missed an opportunity to overtake West Ham for fourth in the table.

The draw also highlighted United's inability to mount an unlikely challenge to cross-city rival Manchester City for the title. City leads by 12 points from second-place United.

United were left grumbling about the refereeing at Chelsea after not being awarded a penalty in the first half for what looked like handball by Callum Hudson-Odoi.

The first goal against Sheffield United was made in Liverpool's academy as Trent Alexander-Arnold hit a deflected cross for fellow academy graduate Curtis Jones to send past the otherwise impressive Sheffield goalkeeper Aaron Ramsdale.

In the 64th, Roberto Firmino thought he'd ended his run of six games without a goal in all competitions when his deflected shot went in but the Premier League ruled it was an own-goal for Sheffield's Kean Bryan.

Arsenal returned to form and the top half of the table with a 3-1 win over Leicester, with Nicolas

## Welsh forward scores brace in Spurs' 4-0 win over Burnley; Liverpool, Arsenal back to winning ways, while Chelsea, Manchester United play out goalless stalemate



Gareth Bale (R) celebrates one of his goals with a teammate during Spurs' win over Burnley, Sunday

Pepe scoring one goal and winning a penalty when Wilfred Ndidi blocked his shot with an arm.

However, the game was overshadowed by an injury likely to keep Leicester's in-form midfielder Barnes out until April. He had scored six goals and assisted three

more in his team's previous 10 league games. Manager Brendan Rodgers said Barnes will likely need an operation and will be on the sidelines for at least six weeks. It comes as Leicester is already without the injured James Maddison.

Fulham missed a chance for a

win in a 0-0 draw with a Crystal Palace team which rarely presented any sort of attacking threat. The draw left Scott Parker's team unbeaten in five league games, with only one goal conceded during that time, but still 18th and three points adrift of safety.

# Lukaku 32-second goal lifts Inter

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Milan, March 1:** Romelu Lukaku scored after just 32 seconds and helped to set up two goals as league leader Inter Milan beat Genoa 3-0 in Serie A.

Inter dominated but took until the 69th minute to double its lead, through Matteo Darmian. Substitute Alexis Sanchez sealed the win to ensure Antonio Conte's side remained four points above second-place AC Milan, who won 2-1 at Roma.

It was Genoa's first league defeat since early January and left it 13th, eight points above the drop zone. Inter were bidding for a fifth straight league win and it got off to the perfect start when Nicolo Barella sent a ball through to Lukaku, who played a quick one-two with Lautaro Martinez before drilling into the bottom left corner.

The Nerazzurri wasted a number of chances and Barella also hit a long-range stunner off the crossbar in the 17th. Inter finally doubled their lead when Lukaku drew defenders toward him before setting up an unmarked Darmian.

Sanchez was brought on in the 76th and the Inter forward immediately scored as he turned in the rebound after Genoa goalkeeper Mattia Perin parried Lukaku's effort. The goal was originally ruled



out for offside but was awarded on video review.

AC Milan kept up the pressure on city rival Inter despite having goals ruled out and hitting the woodwork. Fikayo Tomori and Zlatan Ibrahimovic both had goals ruled out for offside for Milan and Simon Kjær hit the crossbar before the visitors broke the deadlock three minutes from halftime

when Franck Kessie converted a penalty after Federico Fazio had fouled Davide Calabria.

Henrikh Mkhitaryan had a goal ruled out for Roma, which leveled five minutes after the break thanks to Jordan Veretout's curled effort. But Ante Rebic restored Milan's lead in the 58th with an impressive swiveling effort into the far bottom corner.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Madrid, March 1:** Spanish police detained several people after raiding Barcelona's stadium Monday in a search and seizure operation.

The operation was related to last year's 'Baragate,' in which club officials were accused of launching a smear campaign against current and former players who were critical of the club and then-president Josep Maria Bartomeu.

Police said detentions were made but did not say who or how many people were taken into custody. The club said authorities were at the team's headquarters but did not provide any more detail.

Spanish media said Bartomeu and other former club officials were among those detained. A text message sent to Bartomeu was not immediately answered.

The detentions come less than a week before presidential elections are to be held at the club. One of the three presidential candidates, Joan Laporta, told Lleida Radio that what happened Monday 'was a consequence of the bad management by the previous administration'.

He said the news of Bartomeu's reported detention was 'shocking' and 'not good' for the club, but noted that the former president deserved



the "presumption of innocence."

Court officials said a judge ordered the search and seizure operation but the detentions had been made at the discretion of the police agents involved. Authorities said the operation was being carried out by the police's financial crimes department.

Barcelona had denied accusations that it hired — and overpaid — a company to make negative comments about its own players and opponents on social media in order to boost the image of senior club officials.

The company was accused of

using fake social media accounts to discredit opposition figures when they expressed views that went against the club. Some of the figures supposedly included players such as Lionel Messi and Gerard Piqué, as well as former coach Pep Guardiola.

The club later released an independent audit report showing that there was no wrongdoing. Bartomeu and his board of directors resigned last year amid fallout from the controversy surrounding Messi. The club has been mired in political turmoil and debt prompted by the

coronavirus pandemic.

The club has been managed by a caretaker board since Bartomeu left in October while facing a no-confidence motion supported by thousands of club members furious at the team's poor performances and the club's financial situation.

The club's struggles began to surface after the team's embarrassing 2-8 loss to Bayern Munich in the quarterfinals of the Champions League last season, which was the first without a title for the Spanish club since 2007-08.

# Paddlers Desai, Batra off to winning starts



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Doha, March 1:** Ace Indian paddlers Manika Batra and Harmeet Desai made an impressive return to the international circuit by registering straight-game victories in their respective qualifying round-2 matches at the World Table Tennis (WTT) Contender series here Monday.

Batra, the 2018 Commonwealth Games gold-medallist, registered a 12-10, 14-12, 11-8 victory over Spain's Sofia-Xuan Zhang in women's singles, while World No.73 Desai notched up an easy 11-5 12-10 11-6 win over compatriot Anthony Amalraj to progress to the third round of the

men's singles qualifiers.

The season-opener is also the first international tournament Indian players are participating in after the long coronavirus-forced break.

However, Sutirtha Mukherjee, Mudrit Dani and Diya Chitale suffered defeats in their respective singles qualifying round matches.

Two-time national champion Mukherjee failed to get the better of Ukraine's Tetyana Bilenko 5-11, 3-11, 12-10, 9-11 while Dani, who is ranked 200, went down 8-11, 6-11 11-8, 6-11 against World No.85 Olah Benedek of Finland.

Chitale started off well against Romania's Irina Ciobanu with a game's lead, but she couldn't capitalise on the momentum and lost the match 11-8, 9-11, 3-11, 8-11 against the World No.98.

Achanta Sharath Kamal and Sathiyan Gnanasekaran have received direct entries into the men's singles main draw, while 10 other Indians are playing in the qualifiers at the event.

# Viv slams critics of Indian pitches

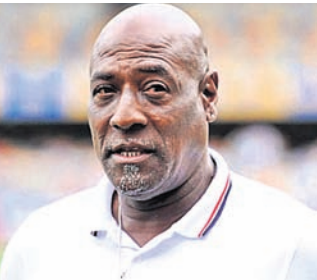
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, March 1:** West Indian batting legend Viv Richards is not amused with past and present English cricketers 'moaning and groaning' about the spin-friendly pitches in India and said the visitors did not prepare well for the challenge.

The newly-laid Motera track in Ahmedabad became a subject of debate after India crushed England inside two days in the third Test. The severe criticism came from former England captains like Michael Vaughan and a section of the British media.

"I've been asked questions recently about the Test match that was played in India, the second and third Test match against England. And I am a little confused about the question really because there seems to be a lot of moaning and groaning about the wicket that they were playing on," Richards said in a video posted on his Facebook page.

"Just felt that the ones who are moaning, in my opinion, should



realise that there are times that you're going to get a seaming track, a ball that is basically jumping off a good length and everyone thinks that's a problem for batters," he reasoned.

Weighing in on the debate, the batting great said, "But now you've seen the other side, and this is why I think it was given the name Test match cricket, because of the test of the mind and will and everything else that goes with it when you're competing.

"And the complaints have been that the wicket is spinning too much and all that sorts of stuff. This is another side of the coin guys. People seem to forget that if

you're going to India, you should expect that. You are going to spin land. You should basically prepare yourself to know what you're going to encounter."

Richards said that India have pushed England out of their comfort zone, weeks after the visitors started the series with a big win.

"Ever since that first Test match, England were in their comfort zone. They have now been taken out of their comfort zone at present and they have got to find ways and means to cope with what they are going to encounter.

"Spin is also a part of the game, this is what a Test match brings. The Indian pacers have been brilliant over the past few years in terms of substance, the wicket-taking ability and stuff like that."

The legend urged the English team to work harder and face the challenge resolutely. "Now that you're in India, you are going to encounter things and have got to find a way. You're going to get dirty. There is nothing in the rule book that says I've got to score my runs in pretty, classical ways," he said.

# Indian top guns go full throttle at nets

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ahmedabad, March 1:** Big guns Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma and Ajinkya Rahane went full throttle at the nets as the Indian cricket Monday trained in earnest for the upcoming fourth and final Test against England. The fourth Test starts here, Thursday.

Captain Kohli, his deputy Rahane and senior opener Rohit were seen batting at the nets in a video posted by the BCCI on Twitter. The three senior players drove, pulled and flicked against the fast bowlers and spinners at the Narendra Modi Stadium here.

Head coach Ravi Shastri was seen interacting with Rohit and Kohli before the two star batsmen sat together for a discussion. Left-arm spinner Axar Patel, who bagged 11 wickets in India's thumping win in the pink ball third Test at the same venue, was seen rolling his arms over at the nets against some



Virat Kohli at the nets

of the world's best batsmen.

They were also seen fielding with Rahane, standing next to Rohit in the second slip position, taking a one-handed diving catch to his right. The Indian team had a full-fledged practice session here Sunday as well.