

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

ANANTAPUR | MONDAY | 28 DECEMBER 2020

## WEATHER

Max: 26.0°C  
Min: 15°C  
RH: 68%  
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Cloudy sky.  
Misty morning. Max/Min  
temp. 26/15 °C

## COVID-19 COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+18,712)	(+248)
1,02,07,065	1,47,907
covid19india.org	
STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS	
(+472)	(+2)
TS: 2,84,863	1,531
(+349)	(+2)
AP: 8,81,061	7,094

## CASES AROUND THE WORLD

8,09,26,235
DEATHS
17,68,844
COUNTRIES AREAS WITH CASES 218 worldometers.info/ coronavirus

## ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari; Dakshinayana
Tithi: Margasira Shuddha Chaturdasi full day
Star: Rohini till 3.35 pm
Variyam: 6.49 am to 8.34 am; 9.38 pm to 11.21 pm
Durmuhratam: 12.39 pm to 1.23 pm; 2.51 pm to 3.34 pm
Rahukalam: 7.30 am to 9 am
HJRI CALENDAR
Jamadi-ul-Awwal 12, 1442 AH
PRAYERS
Fajr: 5.08 am
Zohar: 12.05 pm
Asar: 4.11 pm
Magrib: 5.47 pm
Isha: 7.02 pm
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.17 AM
SUNSET TODAY 5.49 PM
MOONSET 1.03 PM
MOONRISE 2.51 PM

## COUNTER POINT



Shh! They are political infiltrators!

## SHORT TAKES

### GST CASH RULE WON'T HIT SMALL BIZ, SAYS FINMIN

New Delhi: Small businesses and dealers will not be impacted by the new government rule of paying at least one per cent of GST liability in cash as only entities with annual turnover of ₹6 crore and above are required to follow the new rule, sources in the finance ministry said. After unearthing use of fake invoices to evade GST, the CBIC had last week amended rules to make it mandatory for businesses with monthly turnover of over ₹50 lakh to pay at least one per cent of their GST liability in cash.

### Nitish gives JD(U) chief post to aide

NAYAR AZAD | DC  
PATNA, DEC. 27  
Amid strains with alliance partner BJP, Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar resigned from the post of JD(U) national president on Sunday and handed over charge to one of his closest aides and a member of the Rajya Sabha, R.C.P. Singh. The decision was taken during the national executive meeting of the JD(U). Mr Singh's elevation was on

expected lines since he was actively involved in most of the party's policy decisions including advising Mr Kumar during Bihar Assembly elections. Mr Singh will now look after the party's affairs, including its dealings with the BJP. His appointment to the party's top post is also crucial from the perspective of upcoming Assembly elections in West Bengal and Assam.

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, DEC 27

The Union home ministry could approach the Election Commission as early as January for a discussion regarding the security arrangements and deployment of Central para-military forces for West Bengal Assembly election. The election in the state is likely to be held in April next year. Sources claim the home ministry feels that there

could be large-scale violence during the Bengal polls this time for which "unprecedented security arrangements are required." With the BJP making aggressive inroads into Bengal before the crucial elections, it is largely believed that there could be intense violence in the run-up to the Assembly polls for which adequate security deployment would have to be done. Already Bengal has witnessed clashes between the

SOURCES CLAIM the home ministry feels that there could be large-scale violence during the Bengal polls this time for which "unprecedented security arrangements are required."

BJP and the Trinamul Congress workers, with the latest incident of violence being the attack on the convoy of BJP president J.P. Nadda on the outskirts of Kolkata a few days

ago. Even though formal discussions are yet to begin between the home ministry and the EC for the security deployment, the Centre has already started making advance preparation for the same. Sources claim that according to the initial assessment, anything between 800 to 1000 companies of central para-military forces could be deployed during the Bengal elections. Each company of central forces comprises 100 to 135

personnel. This makes one of the deployments for Bengal elections by security forces, one of the biggest in recent time for any state elections. For the recently concluded Bihar Assembly elections, nearly 50,000 central security forces personnel were deputed. Sources claimed that Home Ministry could also request the Election Commission to divide the Bengal elections into more phases with some gap, as this would help facilitate quick and easy movement of security forces from one part of the State to the other. "The idea is to ensure free and fair elections in a violence-free atmosphere. And with Bengal election are showing keen interest by all major political parties and even the common people our job becomes even more tough and responsible. So we need to ensure adequate availability and deployment during the elections," an official added.



NATION | 5  
Rahul away for few weeks abroad: Cong



WORLD | 7  
Biden warns against delay in aid package

SPORTS | 8  
India ride on captain Ajinkya's century



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## Merit twist: AP students enter Gandhi

### Local students deprived chance to join top-ranked institutes

N. VAMSI SRINIVAS | DC  
HYDERABAD, DEC. 27

Several students from Andhra Pradesh have secured admission in government medical colleges in Telangana state, including the prestigious Gandhi and Osmania, allegedly in violation of rules, thereby depriving local students of an opportunity to join these top-ranked institutions.

The allotment process adopted by the Kaloji Narayana Rao University of Health Sciences (KNUHS) in Phase 2 counselling resulted in at least 40 students from AP, making it to govt colleges in TS

otherwise ineligible, making it to the government colleges in Telangana state and locals losing an equal number of seats. The process also virtually converted the "unreserved category", in which meritorious students compete for the seat irrespective of their local status, caste or religion, into a

"reserved" category for non-local students.

All the students in Gandhi and Osmania medical colleges who got admission in the unreserved category in the Phase 2 counselling belong to either Andhra University or Sri Venkateswara University regions and same is the case with many other government colleges in TS.

"Both universities cannot be right because the procedures they followed are completely opposite," said Dr Ala Venkateswarlu of Guntur, who complained against the faulty procedure in AP and got it rectified.

made fresh allotments in a different procedure.

What is intriguing is that the Kaloji University also cancelled Phase 2 counselling citing technical reasons. Except for including two students in Phase 2 counselling following High Court orders, it stuck to the old procedure.

"Significantly, the NTR University of Health Sciences (NTRUHS), AP, which initially followed the same procedure as KNUHS, cancelled allotments of Phase-2 counselling stating that it was faulty. It claimed to have rectified the error and

rectified the error and

Page 2: Kaloji varsity failed to follow sliding rule

## All set for trial run



Officials making arrangements for Covid-19 vaccination dry run at New Government General Hospital premises in Vijayawada on Sunday. — C. NARAYANA RAO

## Vaccine dry run to start in Krishna from today

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 27

With the Covid-19 dry run programme scheduled for Monday, Krishna district collector A. Md Imtiaz inspected the arrangements at the government general hospital (GGH) on Sunday.

He said that Krishna district

was selected as a pilot project for the dry run because of the official machinery's proven efficiency.

He said that three rooms were set up for the purpose at each centre.

The registration process will be in the first room.

primary healthcare centre, Poorna Heart Institute (private hospital) at Vijayawada, government school at Tadigadapa and Uppulur PHC.

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The registration process

will be in the first room.

vaccination in the second

and observation in the

third room. He mentioned

that a ten-bed separate

room is kept handy for

emergencies and medical

professionals are available

for emergencies.

Imtiaz said each centre

has five vaccination offi-

cers and 25 medical staff

for whom the required

training has been complet-

ed. He said they would not

administer any vaccine

during the programme.

December 25, and accord-

ing to law, the IO should

have intimated forthwith

the search and the seized

articles to the magistrate

concerned. He submitted

that, however, the same

was not done and there-

fore, he filed an applica-

tion in that regard. The

advocate further submit-

ted that the entire search

was videographed as per a

court order and that he

was entitled to a copy of

the video footage. — PTI

## STUDENTS CAN PICK OPTIONS IN AP EAMCET FROM TODAY

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 27

The long-awaited option entry for admissions into engineering courses through AP Eamcet 2020 will be conducted from Monday, December 28, to Wednesday, December 30. Aspirants can change their option on January 1 and allotments of colleges will be announced on January 3.

As many as 25 helpline centres have been started to help Eamcet qualifiers resolve the difficulties they may face during option registration.

Eamcet convener has said that eligible candidates, who have participated in web counselling process of Eamcet, comprising payment of processing fee and certificate verification from October 23 to November 3 for admission into BE / B Tech / Pharmacy courses will be able to exercise their options.

Further, the verification of certificates belonging to candidates, who got eligibility status in the web portal as "not eligible", will also be conducted along with option entry.

Page 2: Allotment results on January 3

## CM to give house site pattas today

Jagan to address public meet

DC CORRESPONDENT  
TIRUPATI, DEC. 27

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy will distribute house site pattas for eligible beneficiaries under the Pedandalari Illu scheme at Urandur village in Srikalahasti constituency on Monday.

According to officials, after distributing house site pattas to a few women beneficiaries, the Chief Minister will address a public meeting. Prior to that, he will interact with beneficiaries and inaugurate a pylon and a model house built under the scheme.

Meanwhile, Deputy Chief Minister K. Narayan Swamy, along with Pancayat Raj Minister Peddireddy Ramachandran Reddy, advisor of CM visit Thalaseela, Raghuram, Chittoor MP Reddappa and MLAs B. Madhusudhan Reddy and Nawaz Basha and Collector Narayan Bharat Gupta visited the public meeting venue

to oversee the arrangements on Sunday.

The ministers also held a review meeting with officials from police, health, electricity, rural water supply, roads and buildings, MEPMA, transport, panchayat and other line departments on the arrangements for the CM's visit. They directed officials to make foolproof arrangements for the people and ensuring drinking water supply and good sanitation facilities.

District Collector Narayan Bharat Gupta informed that around 3,760.37 acres of land, including 1,903.90 acres of government land and 1,856.47 acres of DKT/patta land, was procured across to form 1,267 housing layouts under YSR free house sites distribution scheme. A total of 2.46 lakh people will benefit from the scheme. Elaborate security arrangements were in place at the venue by the urban police wing led by SP Avula Ramesh Reddy.

## Motor vehicle papers will remain valid till March 31

New

## SHORT TAKES

## LAND GRABBING ROW BETWEEN TD, YSRC HEATS UP

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VISAKHAPATNAM, DEC. 27

High drama prevailed at the well-known Saibaba Temple on Beach Road in Visakhapatnam on Sunday morning when Anakapalle MLA Gudivada Amarnath and a large number of YSRC workers waited for TD MLA Velagapudi Ramakrishna Babu to swear on Baba and announce that he never grabbed an inch of government land.

After waiting for an hour, Amarnath and his followers left the temple premises declaring that by not presenting himself, the TD MLA has accepted his guilt of grabbing government land.

Allegations and counter allegations have been exchanged after revenue and GVMC personnel got vacated the 290 square yard government land at a prime locality near Rushikonda and 40 acres of land in Mudasalova, opposite to Central Jail and abutting BRTS road.

The day Rushikonda land was freed, Rajya Sabha member V. Vijay Sai Reddy released a list of government lands grabbed by TD MLA Velagapudi Ramakrishna and named his benamis. Reacting to this list, Velagapudi said he was ready to swear on God that he did not grab any government land and challenged Vijay Sai Reddy to do same.

"Vijay Sai Reddy is too big a man for Velagapudi. Hence, we have come to Saibaba Temple and waited for him for hours with all evidence of his land grabbing," Mr Amarnath told reporters. He maintained that government has enough evidence to nail the TD Urban MLA. The SIT report would further strengthen the case against Velagapudi, sufficient enough for sending him to jail.

"Velagapudi will go to jail. It is a certainty," Anakapalle MLA declared before reporters.

Earlier, a huge rally was taken out from YSR statue at Park Hotel junction to Saibaba Temple in East Point Colony led by Amarnath. Ruling party workers raised slogans against Velagapudi Ramakrishna Babu.

Police personnel were deployed to prevent any untoward incident.

## PATRUDU: JAGAN IS BETRAYING PENSIONERS

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 27

Senior Telugu Desam leader Ch. Ayyana Patrudu on Sunday wondered how the YSR Congress government could claim credit over people's welfare when it could not fulfil its avowed ₹3,000 pension promise.

He accused Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy of betraying even grannies and granddads by not increasing their pensions, which was an electoral promise he had made last year. He pointed out that the Chief Minister made the people believe in his promises by saying that they were as sacred as the Bible, Quran, and Bhagavad Gita.

## YSRC CHEATING FARMERS, SAYS BJP AP CHIEF

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 27

BJP AP president Somu Veeraju, who has been addressing meetings in support of the three farm laws passed by the Centre, said many people are turning to agriculture and are taking up organic farming.

Addressing a Farmers' Empowerment Meet organised by the BJP at Pedavallapudi in Guntur district on Sunday in support of the new agricultural laws, Mr Veeraju maintained that both YSRC and TD had supported these legislations but have now joined hands with Congress and Communists against the laws.

The BJP state chief pointed out that the central Act clearly mentions that there will be agreements with farmers on crops to be grown and harvested. While the farmer's land will remain safe, payments will be made as per the agreement, which will be helpful for the farming community. He said the debate over these laws had been going on for two decades. Only after many discussions and exchange of ideas, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has brought in these laws. He suggested that farmers should make themselves aware about organic farming practices.

## God promise



Anakapalle MLA Gudivada Amarnath along with YSRC leaders and party activists offer prayers at East Point Shirdi Sai Baba Temple while they protest against Vizag-east MLA Velagapudi Ramakrishna Babu at East Point Colony in Visakhapatnam on Sunday. — K. MURALIKRISHNA

## Revamped AP state schools pose a threat to pvt schools

Jagan saw first-hand the sorry plight of students studying in govt schools

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 27

The year 2020 was boon for government schools across all in 13 districts in the State as they were able to get a vibrant new-look.

There was a near-complete revamp of schools with all necessary infrastructure and ambience put in place and making them on par or even better than private institutions.

In the first phase, 15,715 government schools were refurbished with all basic amenities like fans, blackboards, water purifiers, cupboards and other infrastructure under Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu programme and is drawing the attention of parents, who are keen on enrolling their children.

In the first phase, 15,715 government schools were renovated and they bear the appearance of corporate schools. The remaining 31,073 will be taken up for revamp in the second and third phases and schools will be decked up by March 2022. Anganwadi centres doubling up as pre-primary 1 and 2 will also get a facelift.

Two parents D. Syam and T. Sudarshan said that corona had thrown life asunder by creating a huge financial crisis. They said that they were worried about the expenditure they had to incur on their children due to corona impact but modernisation of government schools has come as a ray of hope and now they were enthusiastic about sending their wards to a government school as they were assured of quality education free of cost.

Minister for education, Audimulapu Suresh said that the government is providing amenities and modern equipment in the State schools that are on

## 2020, a shot in the arm for education, welfare

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 27

The academic year in 2020 was impacted adversely by corona, but that did not stop rolling out education-related welfare schemes as originally scheduled.

Introducing English medium right from the primary level has been overwhelmingly welcomed by parents' committees putting to shade the disgruntled elements.

This step will provide a level-playing field for students across the spectrum.

Under Jagananna Vidya Kanuka, school kits were provided to children up to Class X. The kits containing uniforms, books, shoes, socks, belt and a school bag were given to 42.3 lakh students at a cost of ₹650 crore.

As education is the only asset that can be offered to lakhs of students from down-trodden families, Jagananna Vidya Deevena was launched so that the total fees reimbursement move would benefit 14 lakh college-going students and overall ₹4,000 crore was credited into the bank accounts of the students' mothers besides ₹1,880 crore towards pending dues.

"Jagananna Vasathi

The one-year reading fluency campaign takes place in four phases, preparatory, foundation, advanced and valedictory, to develop the reading habits of children from Standard three to nine.

Deevena" takes care of hostel and mess charges payable up to ₹20,000 per student annually. The scheme costs ₹2,300 crore and benefits 11 lakh students, approximately.

Under Jagananna Vidya Gorumudda, nutritious food will be given to 40 lakh students in 45,484 government and aided schools. Wages for those cooking and providing midday meals were increased from ₹1,000 to ₹3,000 to garnish the meal for a spiced up taste.

The State is to start 30 skill development centres along with a high-end IT Skill University in Visakhapatnam. Each parliamentary constituency will have one such centre and four units will be set up in collaboration with the four IIITs while one will be attached to Pulivendula JNTU.

The IT Skill University will cater to Artificial Intelligence (AI), robotics

and other modern courses with a thrust on job-oriented. With regard to developing and designing the curriculum, the State government has partnered four international institutes-Singapore Polytechnic, Van Hall Larenstein (University of Applied Studies), GIZ and Department for International Development-for setting up lab infrastructure in skill development in all centres.

Towards this end, 23 reputed organisations, including Dell, Tata, HP, IBM and Biocon, have come forward for signing MoUs with the government and discussions are on with 35 other companies.

On multiple occasions, Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has emphasised on stress-free education and focus on building a healthy learning environment. He also laid focus on inculcating the habit of reading towards which a 'We Love Reading' campaign was launched.

The one-year reading fluency campaign takes place in four phases, preparatory, foundation, advanced and valedictory, to develop the reading habits of children from Standard three to nine.

## Kaloji university failed to follow sliding rule

FROM PAGE 1

As per the admission rules, 15 per cent seats in each college are declared "unreserved" and the remaining 85 per cent are reserved exclusively for local students. The Phase 1 counselling was held strictly by this procedure in both states.

Earlier, he filed a public interest litigation (PIL) and succeeded in getting in the AP government to implement the rule of reservation in sliding as per Supreme Court judgments.

As per the admission rules, 15 per cent seats in each college are declared "unreserved" and the remaining 85 per cent are reserved exclusively for local students. As a result, not only could ineligible non-local students secure admission in the "unreserved" quota but also local students were deprived of the seats.

When contacted, KNRUHS registrar Dr Praveen initially tried to justify the decision saying that students from other states did not join and hence those vacancies would be filled by local students in the Phase 3 counselling.

Asked what if they did join the college, he said that the admission committee members would be able to better explain the procedure followed by the university. He assured this reporter that a member of the admission committee would call and clarify but none approached till the report was filed.

## Eamcet allotment results on January 3

FROM PAGE 1

Candidates can change their option already exercised on January 1, with options being frozen at 6 p.m. on the same day. Allotments will be placed on the website on January 3 after 6 p.m. In case of One-Time Password (OTP) problems, candidates can change their mobile numbers by visiting the nearest helpline centre by producing proof of their identity. After changing the mobile number, candidates can exercise options as per schedule. Detailed instructions for options entry - Instructions to Candidates - are available on <https://apeamcet.nic.in>.

List of Helpline Centres include:

1. Government Polytechnic, Srikakulam

2. MRAGR Government Polytechnic, Vizianagaram

3. Government Polytechnic, Parvathipuram, Vizianagaram district

4. Government Polytechnic, Kancharapalem, Visakhapatnam

5. Government Institute of Chemical Engineering, Visakhapatnam

6. Government Model Residential Polytechnic, Padur, Visakhapatnam

7. Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University, Kakinada

**Helpline numbers:**  
8106876345, 8106575234,  
7995865456, 7995681678.

## Commissioner suspended for garbage act

DC CORRESPONDENT  
VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 27

The state government on Sunday suspended Vuvaru municipal commissioner N. Prakash Rao following the incident of dumping garbage in front of four banks in the town on December 24.

The suspension orders were issued by commissioner and director (Municipal Administration) G. Vijay Kumar. The order held Prakash Rao responsible for dumping of garbage in front of banks to protest against indifferent attitude of bankers in sanc-

## Untested water being sold in Kadapa

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KADAPA, DEC. 27

Water is an important part of our life. But with water pollution rising, it is difficult to trust the water available for drinking today.

With rising health awareness among people, most choose only filtered water, which is supplied by water plants. But they don't know how safe it is. There are more than 1,600 water purifying plants in Kadapa district. In Kadapa town itself, there are 150 to 200 plants supplying drinking water to its 4.10 lakh population.

Interestingly there is no supervision of these plants and 99 per cent of these plants do not have

any certification from authorised agencies.

As per BIS standards, packaged drinking water means packaged water derived from any source of potable water, which may be subjected to treatments, such as, decantation, filtration, combination of filtrations, aeration, filtration with membrane filter, depth filter, cartridge filter, activated carbon filtration, water demineralisation, reverse osmosis or any other method that meets the prescribed standards.

However, most of the water plants in Kadapa district do not have required machinery for filtration. Nearly 99 per cent of water plant operators do not follow any regulations. Water taken from boreholes is being supplied to the people without filtering it. Owners of water plants in Kadapa charge ₹10 for a 25-litre can.

During the Telugu Desam regime, it had been decided to provide free filtered water to people under the NTR Sulja Sravanti scheme. For the purpose, permission was given to start plants everywhere. Several water plants got started under the name of various foundations. Most of these plants operated without any filtering equipment. Interestingly, even the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) officials do not bother about quality maintenance at these water plants.

Homeo Hospital at old RIMS in Kadapa has a water testing laboratory. Water plant owners are expected to get their water tested in this laboratory and keep that certificate with them. The laboratory personnel do not have the authority to certify that the water is fit for drinking purposes. But owners of water plants "manage" to get eligibility certificates from the lab to prove that they are supplying government-certified drinking water.

State-run food control officials told DC that they only issue permits to those who store and sell water in packets or sealed bottles. An official said that as per

the BIS regulations, they can only give permission for maintenance of plants, which are licensed with them. Kadapa Corporation health department officials say inspection of water plants is not within their purview. They only check whether or not the owner concerned is paying taxes, as the business is going on within the corporation area.

One of the water plant owners, speaking to DC said that if they have to get ISI or BIS certification, they will have to sell a can of water for ₹30. Otherwise, they would not be able to run their plant, he said.

However, there is clearly no supervisory authority that checks these water plants.



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Hyderabad - Darbhanga	07:35	09:40	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri & Sun	18 <sup>th</sup> Jan, 2021
Hyderabad - Nashik	09:20	11:00	Mon, Sat & Sun	Operational
Hyderabad - Shirdi	14:40	16:20	Daily	Operational
Hyderabad - Jharsuguda	15:25	17:10	Daily	Operational

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## SHORT TAKES

**SHOPIAN FAKE ENCOUNTER: CASE ON ARMY OFFICER**

Srinagar, Dec 27: Police have filed a chargesheet against three men, including an Army officer, in the Shopian "fake" encounter case of three civilians in July, officials said on Sunday.

The 1,400-page chargesheet was filed in the court of principal district and sessions judge, Shopian on Saturday by the head of the Special Investigation Team (SIT), the officials said. Captain Bhupinder of the Army's 62 Rashtriya Rifles, Bilal Ahmed Lone and Tabish Nazir were named as accused in the chargesheet for their role in the alleged fake encounter killing of the three men hailing from Rajouri District, they added.

A police spokesperson said the court has issued an order, giving an option to the Army under the relevant sections of law for a trial of Captain Bhupinder Khan in a criminal court of ordinary jurisdiction or court martial. The spokesperson said during investigation, it came to light that a conspiracy was hatched by the accused captain and civilians Nazir and Lone to abduct the three civilians and stage the encounter.

"They deliberately and purposefully chose not to follow SOPs, planted illegally-acquired weapons and material on their bodies after stripping them of their identities and tagged them as hardcore terrorists in possession of war-like stores, deliberately providing false information to colleagues and seniors," he said.

The information obtained from the accused led the SIT to recreate the scenes of the crime, including the routes used after meeting the victims and the place where they were killed, the spokesperson said.

**FALL IN LINE OR LEAVE, AIADMK TELLS BJP, ALLIES**

**A. ARUL PALANI | DC**  
CHENNAI, DEC. 27

The leaders and cadre of ruling party AIADMK rallied behind Chief Minister Edappadi K Palanisamy as the CM candidate for the forthcoming Assembly election of 2021.

In a veiled attack on the BJP at its maiden election rally in the city on Sunday, the party's deputy coordinator K. P. Munusamy said - "The government will be led by the AIADMK. There is no necessity for a coalition government. If any political party comes forward for an alliance arrangement with an idea of a coalition government, let them please think about it again." This was tantamount to telling the BJP to fall in line or rework its poll options for Tamil Nadu.

The demise of AIADMK supremo Jayalalithaa and DMK's M Karunanidhi, who opposed her, may have emboldened "many national parties" to try and make a political entry into Tamil Nadu. Boldly terming them as "opportunist and betrayers" who were blaming the Dravidian outfits in alleging that they had ruined Tamil Nadu in their five-decade rule, Munusamy wondered how accusations of inefficiency could be hurled against the AIADMK government when the Centre had given so many awards to Tamil Nadu for its meritorious performance in many sectors. The State had superior infrastructure and facilities, be it education or health care amenities, he pointed out.



Women and children shout slogans as they take part in farmers ongoing agitation over new farm laws, at Tikri border in New Delhi on Sunday

**INDIA RECORDS LOWEST COVID CASES IN SIX MONTHS**

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI, DEC. 27

India on Sunday recorded the lowest daily rise in the Covid-19 cases in the last six months as fresh detections dropped to 18,732. The last time fresh cases were around this figure was on July 1. The active cases too have slipped to 2.78 lakh after 170 days. The total active cases were 2.76 lakh on July 10. India's present active caseload consists of 2.74 per cent of the country's total positive cases.

Union health ministry said the country has reported a trend of sustained decrease in the number of active cases and there has been a sharp rise in recoveries, taking the Recovery rate to 95.82 per cent. Officials said 72.37 per cent of the new recovered cases are observed to be concentrated in 10 states and union territories. Kerala has reported the maximum number of single day recoveries with 3,782 newly recovered cases followed by West Bengal (1,861) and Chhattisgarh (1,764).

India's Covid-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 30 lakh on August 23 and 40 lakh on September 5. It went past 50 lakh on September 16, 60 lakh on September 28, 70 lakh on October 11 and crossed 80 lakh on October 29 and 90 lakh on November 20.

Among the new cases 76.52 per cent are concentrated in 10 states and UTs. Kerala reported the highest daily new cases at 3,527, followed by Maharashtra (2,854). Delhi, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana that were reporting a very high number of daily cases are now witnessing a low tide with a sharp drop in Covid-19 daily cases.

**RAHUL GOES ON FOREIGN TOUR FOR SHORT PERSONAL VISIT**

New Delhi, Dec. 27: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi left for abroad on Sunday for a short personal visit, the party said.

Though the Congress did not disclose Gandhi's destination, the chief spokesperson of the party, Randeep Surjewala, confirmed that he will be away for a few days.

"Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has left for abroad for a short personal visit and will be away for a few days," he told PTI.

Asked where was the former Congress chief headed, Surjewala did not disclose the details.

Sources said Gandhi left for Milan in Italy on a Qatar Airways flight in the morning.

His grandmother stays in Italy and he visited her earlier too.

Gandhi's travel abroad comes a day ahead of the Congress's 136th Foundation Day celebrations on Monday. The flag of the party will be hoisted at the All India Congress Committee (AICC) headquarters on the occasion.

— PTI

**Pick 'Made in India' goods, urges PM**

**Farmers beat thalis, raise slogans against farm laws during Modi's Mann Ki Baat radio address**

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI, DEC. 27

In his last Mann Ki Baat radio broadcast of the year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday urged people to substitute foreign-made products they use with items produced in India, and said they should make this resolution for the country in the new year.

During his address, the Prime Minister touched on various issues, including wildlife conservation, ridding the country of single-use plastic, and paid tributes to several revered Sikh personalities, including sons of Guru Gobind Singh. He, however, did not mention farmers' protest.

"What is this magic happening, Rahulji? You are opposing now what you had advocated earlier. You have nothing to do with the country's or farmers' interests. You have to play politics only. But this is your bad luck that your hypocrisy will not work. People of the country and farmers have recognised your double standards," the BJP president tweeted in Hindi along with the video clip.

The "thali bajao (clang plates)" protest was decided upon by the farmers last week.

Making the announcement, Swaraj India chief Yogendra Yadav had said that "on December 27 when the Prime Minister gives his Mann Ki Baat radio address, farmers will say, 'We are tired of listening to your Mann Ki Baat; when will you listen to our Mann Ki Baat?' So we will bang utensils to our protest site at Tikri border."

The idea of clanging plates and clapping was floated by the Prime Minister earlier this year to felicitate frontline workers battling coronavirus as the lockdown started. In Sunday's Mann ki Baat, PM Modi referred to it.

Citing letters written to him by people as the year moves to a close, Mr Modi said, "In most of the letters people have commended the country's capabilities and the collective strength of the countrymen. When a novel experiment such as 'Janata cur-

**Nadda shares Rahul video to slam Cong on farm laws**

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI, DEC. 27

Sharing an old video of Rahul Gandhi's speech in Lok Sabha in which he seems to be advocating the need for farmers to get rid of middlemen and sell their produce directly to industry.

**MR GANDHI** charged that farmers and labourers of Amethi and 10-12 districts of Uttar Pradesh have been fighting for a food park, which the government had denied saying the park never had land.

The Congress and some other Opposition parties are backing the protest against the three agriculture-marketing laws which give cultivators an option to sell their produce directly to private players.

Farmer unions are alleging that these laws will weaken the existing government's support for the

farm sector which has been vehemently denied by the Centre.

In the video, Mr Gandhi, then an MP representing Amethi parliamentary seat in Uttar Pradesh, can be heard saying that a farmer in UP had asked him to explain the "magic" behind a packet of potato chips costing ₹10 while farmers sell potato for ₹2 per kg. When he asked what they thought was the reason for this, the farmer said factories are located very far from them and if they could sell their produce directly there, they will get all the money without middlemen earning any cut.

Mr Gandhi charged that farmers and labourers of Amethi and 10-12 districts of Uttar Pradesh have been fighting for a food park, which the government had denied saying the park never had land.

**SHIMLA, Dec. 27:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh Sunday said that attempts to "mislead" farmers on the recent agriculture laws will not succeed.

"Similarly, if we can't wait for four-five years, we can wait for at least two years to witness positive results of the agriculture reforms carried out by the Narendra Modi government," the defence minister added.

Addressing a state-level function to mark the third anniversary of the Jai Ram Thakur-led BJP government in Himachal Pradesh, he said the new laws will raise the income of farmers, but the Congress was misleading them.

Whenever a reform is effected it takes a few years before it starts showing positive results, Singh said in his virtual address.

Be it the 1991 economic reforms brought in by the then finance minister Manmohan Singh or other ones enacted during the

Vajpayee government, it took four-five years to see their positive results, he added.

"Similarly, if we can't wait for four-five years, we can wait for at least two years to witness positive results of the agriculture reforms carried out by the Narendra Modi government," the defence minister added.

Thousands of farmers have been protesting at different border points of Delhi against the three laws enacted in September.

They have been claiming that new legislations will destroy the mandi system and end the Minimum Support Price mechanism, apprehensions the government has insisted are misplaced.

— PTI

**Lawyer from Punjab commits suicide**

**Jhajjar (Haryana), Dec. 27:** A lawyer from Punjab allegedly committed suicide by consuming poison on Sunday a few kilometres from the site of a farmers' protest at Tikri border.

Amarjeet Singh from Jalabad in Punjab's Fazilka district was taken to the Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences (PGIMS) in Rohtak where doctors declared him dead on arrival, police said.

"We have informed the relatives of the deceased and once they reach here their statements will be recorded and further proceedings will be conducted," a police officer from Haryana's Jhajjar district

government is compelled to listen to the voice of the people.

Singh wrote that the common people like farmers and labourers are feeling "defrauded" due to the three "black" agriculture laws and "the worst life is inevitable".

The police said they are verifying the authenticity of the suicide note, dated December 18.

"We have informed the relatives of the deceased and once they reach here their statements will be recorded and further proceedings will be conducted," a police officer from Haryana's Jhajjar district

said, adding that they were informed about the suicide by the hospital authorities.

Earlier, at least two suicides have been linked to the farmers' stir, underway at various border points of Delhi for over a month now.

A Sikh preacher, Sant Ram Singh, allegedly committed suicide near the Singhu border protest site

earlier this month claiming that he was "unable to bear the pain of the farmers".

A 22-year-old farmer had allegedly committed suicide in Punjab's Bathinda after returning from a

protest site near the Delhi border.

A week ago, a 65-year-old farmer from Punjab had attempted suicide by consuming some poisonous substance near the Singhu border.

Thousands of farmers from Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and some other states have been protesting at various border points of Delhi against the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, Farmers Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, and

the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act.

Enacted in September, the three farm laws have been projected by the central government as major reforms in the agriculture sector that will remove the middlemen and allow farmers to sell anywhere in the country.

However, the protesting farmers have expressed apprehension that the new laws would pave the way for eliminating the safety cushion of Minimum Support Price and do away with the mandi system, leaving them at the mercy of big corporates.

— PTI

few' became an inspiration for the whole world, when the country felicitated our corona warrior

unitedly with thali-taali, the applause and the reverberating chime of plates... people have sent in remi-

niscences of that too."

The "Delhi Chalo"

protest by farmers, mostly from Punjab and Haryana, has been continuing for more than a month. Thousands of farmers have been camping at the

borders of Delhi, demanding that the farm laws, passed in September, be scrapped.

— PTI

**Yadav accuses govt of hurting democracy**

**BIG HURDLES**

**Disparity in income limits for open category, tribal category biggest hurdle****Tribal girl struggles to get overseas scholarship**

**SONU SHRIVASTAVA | DC**  
MUMBAI, DEC. 27

A 21-year-old tribal girl Annie Atram, who wants to pursue higher education abroad through a government scholarship scheme, namely 'National Overseas Scholarship for higher studies', is running from pillar to post of Maharashtra's secretariat (Mantralaya) to prove her eligibility for the scheme from last three months.

According to her father, who is a senior official in Mantralaya, the disparity between the income limits of open category and trib-

al category is the biggest hurdle for getting the benefit of the scheme for tribal community. State agriculture minister Dada Bhuse has recommended her name to the tribal minister for the scheme in October 2020, but even that has not helped her.

As per the government resolution (GR) issued by the tribal development department, the income of the candidate's family should be less than ₹6,00,000 (Rupees six lakhs) for the overseas education. But as per the GR issued by the higher and technical education

department, the income limit for open category is ₹20 lakh (₹ 20 Lakh). The disparity between the income limits for open category and tribal community caused a hurdle for the tribal girl in pursuing of higher education in abroad. The girl's family hails from Gadchiroli district which is a remote and naxal affected area. I have completed my BTech (four years of Bachelor of Technology) in Textile. I have applied to North Carolina State University (NCSU) for Master of Science in Textile.

I have secured a preliminary offer of admission, and I have passed my BTech with first class distinction, which makes me an exemplary student. But

*Deccan Chronicle* is in possession of her letter in which she has stated, "I have fulfilled the main criteria of the said GR but the income criteria is the hurdle in my overseas education. My family is native from Gadchiroli district which is a remote and naxal affected area. I have completed my BTech (four years of Bachelor of Technology) in Textile. I have applied to North Carolina State University (NCSU) for Master of Science in Textile, and this field comes under Engineering (STEM-Science, Technology, Engineering and Math). The University has approved my admission for fall 2021 (August 2021) in Master of Science in Textile."

"Since I come under ST category, there is a National Overseas Scholarship, in which I am interested. For this, I have appeared for GRE and TOEFL. I have secured a preliminary offer of admission, and I have passed my BTech with first class distinction, which makes me an exemplary student. But

I am an independent student and I can't afford the expenditure in the said university. With all due respect, my father too cannot afford the expenditure stated by NCSU for a year is approximately \$ 50,000 USD," she said in the letter.

The student also requested the tribal development minister to remove the barrier of income and consider her for this scholarship on basis merit.

Ms Atram also questioned the rationality behind the different yardstick of income for overseas studies for students of open categories and ST categories.

# DECCAN Chronicle

28 DECEMBER 2020

## Challenge to Vodafone ill-advised, withdraw it

**J**ust a day after India lost its case against the UK-based oil major Cairn Energy Plc at an arbitration court at The Hague over nearly ₹9,000 crore in past taxes, the Indian government announced its decision to challenge the tribunal's verdict in nearly ₹22,000-crore worth retrospective tax case against Vodafone Plc.

In both cases, the central government's tax demands emerge from an amendment introduced by then finance minister Pranab Mukherjee to the Income Tax Act. The legislation was aimed at plugging a loophole in the Income Tax Act, which allowed Hutchison Whampoa to avoid paying ₹ 7,990 crore in capital gains tax while transferring its Indian telecom business to Vodafone in May 2007.

Months later, the government held Vodafone liable for its failure to deduct tax at source from the payment that it had made to Hutchison. The Bombay high court favoured the government, while the Supreme Court upheld Vodafone's interpretation. However, the United Progressive Alliance government amended the law, empowering officials to levy tax with retrospective effect on any foreign transaction that resulted in direct or indirect transfer of an asset located in India.

The result of the amendment was that Vodafone had overnight become one of the biggest tax defaulters in the country. The legislation attracted harsh criticism inside and outside the country. The Bharatiya Janata Party, the prime Opposition of the day, was the harshest critic of the retrospective taxation, though it did not vote against the amendment in Parliament. In 2018, Arun Jaitley, the finance minister of the day, categorised the retrospective taxation as an erroneous decision.

In 2018, Arun Jaitley, the finance minister of the day, categorised the retrospective taxation as an erroneous decision.

Given Jaitley's official stand, it was expected that the BJP government would graciously accept the awards of the arbitration court and consider the matter to be closed. However, the government — despite its claims of being investor-friendly — continued to keep the issue alive by opting for an appeal, which does no good for the country's image.

A stable and predictable policy framework is the bedrock of a good investment climate. While it was obvious that Hutchison and Vodafone had attempted to avoid paying tax by effecting their deal in a foreign country, the government must recognise the difference between tax avoidance and tax evasion. Tax avoidance using loopholes in the law is legal, while tax evasion is not.

The Vodafone case is clearly an issue of tax avoidance that emerged from poor drafting of the income tax law 50 years ago. The country should, therefore, not seek to penalise investors for the follies of our past administrators. As a country that is governed by the law, India cannot be seen overriding the judgement of its own apex court, regardless of the reason and provocation. More importantly, India should stop living in the past and look ahead to the future, especially when the country is seeking to position itself as the world's factory.

## A step forward, two back

**T**wo young women, both second year degree students, represent two faces of Kerala today. Arya Rajendran, the 21-year-old daughter of an electrician and an LIC agent, will be anointed the mayor of the capital city today. Her election is a foregone conclusion as the CPI(M), her party which leads the Left Democratic Front, has a comfortable majority in the council. It's not for want of others that the LDF chose a student; the LDF has 25 other women councillors there. In so doing, the party was acknowledging the role of the youth brigade that it fielded in the local bodies' election in weathering the anti-incumbency factor and the impact of the incessant, and often one-sided, media scrutiny. Ms Rajendran is a dyed-in-the-wool Communist, having joined Balasangham, the children's organisation of the CPI(M), at five. At present, she heads it, and is sure to bring that experience to address the issues that plague the city.

Contrast her experience with that of Haritha, wife of Aneesh. Aneesh was hacked to death by Haritha's father and uncle on Friday. Unable to stand the "horror" of their daughter becoming the wife of a man whose caste and economic status came a notch below theirs, the patriarchs, in their early forties, did away with the young man even before his marriage had lasted 90 days. It is not the first time that honour killing had claimed the life of a young person in the state: it was in 2018 that a dalit boy, Kevin, was killed by his wife's relatives for similar reasons.

Kerala has a history of more than a century of fighting social and economic oppression. The young mayor represents its success and the young widow the work left unfinished. The state must take it forward aggressively now, lest it slips back into the madhouse that it once was.

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Faizan  
Mustafa

**B**y not letting Assembly meet, did Arif fulfil governor's role?

Subhani



## Kashmir looks ahead at a winter of discontent



A.S. Dulat

**Dr Farooq Abdullah remains the key to peace in Kashmir. The Sphinx must solve his own riddle.**

**J**ames Baldwin once wrote: "It comes as a great shock to discover that the country which is your birthplace and to which you owe your life and identity has not in its whole system of reality evolved any place for you."

Such is the plight the Kashmiri considers himself in.

Kashmir has been frozen for some time and desperately needs thawing. Chillai Kalan, the harshest part of winter, has just begun, but Kashmir has been freezing since late November. An old friend who called from Srinagar a month ago said Kashmir was frozen not only on the ground but emotionally as well. Kashmiris, he said, were in deep contemplation but no one knew, or no one could tell, what they were thinking. Sounding defeated, he said Kashmir may now remain in perpetual winter bereft of its seasons.

Another Kashmiri friend, a liberal businessman who spends more time out of the Valley than in Srinagar, said in frustration the Kashmiris could not easily get over the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution.

The recently concluded District Development Council elections may provide a silver lining. Kashmir can always change overnight. Election results rarely, if ever, satisfy everybody in J&K; such is its arithmetic, but the recent results have been almost perfect providing an opportunity for peace, reconciliation, and resolution. Predictably, the BJP dominated Jammu, and the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration

(PAGD) the Kashmir Valley. The BJP's three seats in the Valley are significant, but the PAGD's 35 in Jammu even more so. The National Conference again demonstrated that it was the only party with a significant following in both the Jammu and Kashmir divisions of the erstwhile state. The polarisation of Jammu and Kashmir on a religious basis was dangerous as the scholarly Balraj Puri had warned in his relentless pleading for regional autonomy.

Democracy has, in a sense, as Union home minister Amit Shah said, "been revived in J&K", but democracy can only flourish, as Mufti Mohammed Sayeed was wont to say, with a level playing field, without buying and selling, bullying and locking up. The leprechaun cannot easily replace the towering Sher-e-Kashmir in the Kashmiri psyche. New Delhi must demonstrate accommodation, grab the opportunity, and break the lockjam in Kashmir.

Notwithstanding the political rhetoric across the board, Article 370 is not the issue, done and dusted on August 5, 2019, and left only for the Supreme Court to sanctify its burial. It was, in any event, a hollow provision at best, a fig leaf to assuage Kashmiri pride whose erosion had begun as far back as August 9, 1953 with the arrest of Sheikh Abdullah. Sheikh Sahib, who had steadfastly stood for peace and reconciliation, had himself endorsed the mainstreaming of Kashmir with the 1975 Accord. When the Hurriyat Conference leaders agreed for talks with then deputy prime minister

Lal Krishna Advani, in early 2004, it was virtually the beginning of the end of separatism. What Kashmir needs is peace, justice, honour and dignity.

Former Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpeyi, whose birth anniversary was celebrated last Friday, believed that we needed to move forward in Kashmir and end the permanent confrontation with Pakistan.

Force has never worked in Kashmir, nor has our muscular policy since the abrogation of Article 370. Terrorism has increased; almost 200 local boys mainly from South Kashmir have joined militancy in the last one year, not for *azadi* or Pakistan but in the name of Allah. These figures are higher than any time since 2007. Pakistan too is back fishing once again in the troubled waters of Kashmir.

The security forces have suffered substantial losses. Suicide and fratricide among the forces, particularly the CRPF, who are in the thick of the anti-terror war, has grown due to stress, duress and trauma due to long-term duties in unfamiliar surroundings.

There is no other way but dialogue and a revival of the political process. Getting the mainstream political parties on board is the primary requirement for achieving peace in J&K today. The establishment of the PAGD makes political sense for Kashmir and also provides an opening for the Centre. How long the three main parties — National Conference, People's Democratic Party and People's Conference — stick together, only time will tell. Kashmiris normally do not, and a crack

## LETTERS

### JANA SENA'S FATE

The Jana Sena is likely to meet the fate of Praja Rajayam in the next elections with the BJP. The Praja Rajayam at least got some seats of some reckoning which may not be true with the Jana Sena. The enticement of Pawan Kalyan becoming the prospective CM is only a bait to grab his vote bank who will finally be left in the lurch.

D.S.P. Rao  
Kakinada

### JUDGES AT TEMPLES

Nowadays, it has become a status symbol to have a darshan of Lord Venkateswara and get a group photo with the temple in the background. Even honorable judges are encouraging this. With due respect to judges, one expects that they keep away from personal publicity. It is hoped the judicial community will take this suggestion in the right spirit.

P. Ramakrishna  
Rajahmundry

### FARMERS' PROTEST

Finally, the farmers' body agreed to meet the Centre on December 29 after they received a conciliatory letter, ready to discuss threadbare all contentious issues. But the very first point for the agenda is: modalities to repeal the 3 Farm Laws and three more points. Let's hope this shall end the impasse and the people revert to their business at their home.

K. Nehru Patnaik  
Visakhapatnam

### 50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

#### LS dissolved, polls in Lower House

NEW DELHI, DEC. 27. The fourth Lok Sabha has been dissolved. The nation will elect a new House early in March in all probability.

The President, Mr. V.V. Giri, signed the momentous order dissolving the House a year ahead of schedule.

He signed the order around 9 tonight accepting the advice tendered by the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi.

month itself, he himself assented to a controversial ordinance without even exercising his right to seek reconsideration. Clearly, he was more concerned about the possibility of the Assembly passing a resolution against central farm laws rather than people's rights.

The Constitution gives no discretion to the governors in the matter of convening the session of the Assembly. Parliamentary democracy being the basic structure of our Constitution, this is the prerogative of the Cabinet though Article 174 does say that the governor from time to time summon the Assembly to meet at such time and place 'he thinks fit'. A few months back, Rajasthan governor Kalraj Mishra, too, behaved in a similar way and delayed the convening of the Assembly session as was recommended by the Ashok Gehlot government. Here, the governor doubted the 'purpose' of convening the session. The governor was strangely coming in the way of the chief minister proving his majority.

Even in the context of the state of Kerala's filing of petition challenging the constitutionality of Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019, Khan had asserted that he is not a rubber stamp and was unhappy

that he was not kept in loop before filing the case. A five-judge bench of the Supreme Court in *Nabam Rebia* (2016) had explicitly observed that the governor of Arunachal Pradesh, Rajkhowa, who had advanced the session of Assembly without the advice of chief minister, had exceeded his jurisdiction as he had no discretion in convening the Assembly session.

Article 163(1) does permit governor to act 'in discretion' wherever constitution requires him to act in his discretion. According to Edward Cook, "discretion" is a science or understanding to discern between falsity and truth, between right and wrong, and not to do according to will and private affection. Justice Douglas in *United States v. Wenderick* (1951) said that absolute discretion is a ruthless master. It is in fact constitutional blasphemy and is more destructive for freedom than any of man's inventions.

The Kerala governor is certainly aware that there are established rules for the exercise of discretion. First, discretion should always be exercised with caution and in a reasonable manner. Second, discretion cannot be exercised under dictation. Thus, in convening

Assembly sessions, the Kerala governor should have ignored it if at all any directive came from Delhi. The Kerala governor has not acted as an independent and impartial constitutional functionary. Third, discretion is to be exercised after proper application of mind. It cannot be exercised for an improper purpose or with bad faith or by taking into account irrelevant considerations. Fourth, discretion cannot be exercised in an arbitrary or whimsical manner. Any action of governor is arbitrary if he has acted on the basis of prejudice or preference rather than on reason or fact. As per the constitution bench judgment in *Nabam Rebia* (2016), the expression "as he thinks fit" in Article 174(1) gives no "discretion" to the governor in convening the Assembly session.

The moot question is why our governors behave like this. The worst thing which happened to this office is that the governor is the only constitutional authority who has no security of tenure like the President, judges, CAG, chairman, UPSC, Election Commissioner, CIC, etc. He is worse than an IAS officer who under Article 311 is entitled to a proper inquiry and cannot be terminated without a def-

inite finding of 'misconduct'. But the governor remains in office only so long he enjoys the "pleasure of the President" which, in reality, means the pleasure of the political dispensation in Delhi and he can be removed on the whims and fancies of Prime Minister.

This is in spite of the Supreme Court's decision in *Hargovind Pant v. Raghubul Tilak* (1979) where the court held that governor is not an "employee of the central government". He is neither under its control nor accountable to it and is an independent constitutional office".

Mr Khan is clearly aware that the Kerala Assembly resolution against the controversial farm laws would be far more serious than the resolution against CAA as unlike citizenship on which the Parliament has exclusive jurisdiction, agricultural market is state subject in respect of which Parliament lacks legislative competence. One hopes better sense will prevail and the governor would accept a fresh request for the session.

The writer is a constitutional law expert and currently vice-chancellor of NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad

**SHORT TAKES**  
**TURKEY HIT BY  
5.5 MAGNITUDE  
EARTHQUAKE**

Istanbul, Dec. 27: A 5.5 magnitude earthquake struck eastern Turkey on Sunday, the US Geological Survey said, with initial reports indicating no immediate casualties.

Interior Minister Suleyman Soylu said there were no reports of material damage or casualties so far.

The USGS said the quake was registered in the Sivrice district in Elazig province at 0637 GMT and struck at a depth of 10 kilometres.

The Turkish government's disaster agency AFAD reported a lower magnitude of 5.3 for the quake.

Turkey is situated in one of the world's most active earthquake zones.

A magnitude 6.8 quake hit Elazig in January, killing more than 40 people.

**EIGHT KILLED IN  
AVALANCHES  
NORTH OF TEHRAN**

Tehran, Dec. 27: Eight climbers have died and at least seven others are missing after a blizzard and avalanches hit the mountains north of Tehran, Iranian media reported on Saturday.

"The bodies of eight missing climbers were recovered in the mountains above Tehran thanks to the efforts of Red Crescent rescue teams and operations," said Iranian Red Crescent deputy head, Mohammad Bagher Mohammadi, according to the official IRNA news agency.

A group of mountaineers had gone missing on Friday due to avalanches and a blizzard in the mountains north of Tehran, IRNA reported.

State TV reported seven climbers were missing.

It broadcast footage of a helicopter rescue operation on the Tochal and Kolakchak peaks of the Alborz mountain chain overlooking Tehran showing Red Crescent personnel carrying a body on a stretcher along a snowy mountainside.

**THREE KILLED, 3  
WOUNDED IN  
ILLINOIS SHOOTING**

Washington, Dec. 27: Three people were killed and another three wounded on Saturday in the US state of Illinois when a shooter opened fire at a bowling alley, police said.

A suspect in his 30s was in police custody.

Rockford city police urged people on Twitter to stay away from the area near the Don Carter Lanes bowling alley, as it was an "active situation" and officers were clearing the site.

The force posted on Twitter shortly after midnight: "37-year-old white male suspect is in custody. There are no others being sought at this time." It's still an ongoing investigation. We do have three individuals that are confirmed deceased," police chief Dan O'Shea earlier told a press conference near the scene of the shooting.

He said three other people had been wounded from the gunfire and were being treated at local hospitals.

He did not specify whether the shooter had a motive.

Don Carter Lanes posted a simple message on Facebook after the shooting asking people to "pray please."

**2 WOMEN, 3 GIRLS  
FOUND DEAD IN  
ARKANSAS HOME**

Atkins (US), Dec. 27: Two women and three girls have been found dead in a home in northwest Arkansas in what authorities said are being investigated as suspected homicides.

Deputies responded to a call around 5 pm on Friday and found the five people dead in a home in Atkins, a city about 65 miles (105 kilometers) northwest of Little Rock, Pope County Sheriff Shane Jones said in a statement.

The dead were between 8 and 50 years old and are all believed to have been related, he said. Jones said during a short news conference Saturday that authorities did not immediately have a suspect and that at least some of the people were shot. He did not provide further details. "At this time, we believe this to be an isolated incident, and do not feel that there is any continued danger to the local public," he said. "We do believe that this is domestic related, possibly." Deputies are investigating the deaths with the help of the Arkansas State Police. A spokesman for the sheriff's office did not immediately respond to questions.

# EU nations roll out vaccine campaign

Europeans unwilling to take vaccine, could impede its effectiveness as it takes months to vaccinate all

Paris, Dec. 27: EU countries on Sunday embarked on a vaccination campaign to defeat the "nightmare" of Covid-19, as the growing spread of a new Coronavirus variant intensified fears the pandemic could wreak further devastation.

The jab is a glimmer of hope for a continent yearning for a return to normal from a pandemic that has killed 1.76 million people worldwide since emerging in China late last year and caused at least 80 million confirmed cases, according to an AFP tally.

But polls have shown many Europeans are unwilling to take the vaccine, which could impede its effectiveness in beating the virus, while it will take months for large chunks of the population to be immunised.

"It is with deep pride and a deep sense of responsibility that I got the vaccine today. A small gesture but a fundamental gesture for all of us," said Claudia Alivernini, 29, an Italian nurse who was the first in her country to receive the Pfizer-BioNTech jab Sunday morning.

EU commission chief Ursula von der Leyen hailed the campaign start as a "touching moment of unity and a European success story", even if some European states started a day early on Saturday.

Countries are also showing different strategies in their vaccination targeting, with Italy focusing on health workers, France the elderly and in the Czech Republic the prime minister himself at the front of the queue.

In a sign of impatience, some EU countries began vaccinating on Saturday, a day before the official start, with a 101-year-old woman in a care home becoming the first person in Germany to be inoculated and Hungary and Slovakia also handing out their first shots.

Araceli Rosario Hidalgo Sanchez, a 96-year-old living in a care home in central Spain became the first person in the country to be vaccinated on Sunday, in an event broadcast by national television. She said smilingly she felt "nothing" from the shot.

France began its campaign in care homes for the elderly in the Paris suburb of Seine-Saint-Denis, a low-income area hard hit by Covid-19, with a 78-year-old woman named Mauricette the first to receive the jab to applause from staff. —AFP



84-year-old Karin Sievers becomes the first to be inoculated with a dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech Covid-19, virus vaccine by Doctor Dirk Heinrich at the 'Hospital zum Heiligen Geist' retirement home in the northern German city of Hamburg, on Sunday.

— AFP

**CANADA DETECTS  
FIRST COVID-19  
VARIANT CASES**

Montreal, Dec. 27: The first two cases of a particularly infectious Coronavirus variant that recently emerged in Britain have been confirmed in Canada, health authorities said on Saturday.

"The cases are a couple from Durham with no known travel history, exposure or high-risk contacts," Barbara Yaffe, acting chief medical officer for Ontario, said in a statement.

The couple have been placed in isolation, according to the statement, the same day that Ontario reimposed a lockdown for several weeks due to a spike in Covid-19 cases in the province since early December.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Wednesday his country would prolong its suspension of passenger flights from the UK until January 6 in light of the Coronavirus strain sweeping Britain.

The discovery of two cases in Ontario "further reinforces the need for Ontarians to stay home as much as possible and continue to follow all public health advice, including the province-wide shutdown measures beginning today," said Yaffe.

## 96-year-old is first Spaniard vaccinated for Coronavirus

Madrid, Dec. 27: A 96-year-old living in a care home in central Spain became the first person in the country to be vaccinated against Covid-19 on Sunday, in an event broadcast on national television.

She felt "nothing" from the shot, Araceli Rosario Hidalgo Sanchez said with a smile after being injected. With her short white hair, the pensioner living in the Los Olmos retirement home in Guadalajara got up

slowly after pulling on her black jacket and walked off using a frame for support.

Carer Monica Tapias followed as the second Spaniard to receive the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine. The Los Olmos home was picked to kick off the country's inoculation campaign because it sits near a Pfizer storage depot, where vaccines were delivered from Belgium Saturday ahead of nationwide distribution.

No cases of Covid-19 have

so far been detected among the staff or residents.

"It's a great source of pride and a great satisfaction for us, we're representing all the retirement homes in Spain," director Marina Vadillo said on Thursday. After the European Medicines Agency (EMA) approved the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine last Monday the way is open for injections across the 27-member bloc.

— AFP

## Covid-19 pandemic will not be the last, says WHO chief

Geneva, Dec. 27: The Coronavirus crisis will not be the last pandemic, and attempts to improve human health are "doomed" without tackling climate change and animal welfare, the World Health Organisation's chief said.

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus also condemned the "dangerously short-sighted" cycle of throwing cash at outbreaks but doing nothing

to prepare for the next one, in a video message marking Sunday's first International Day of Epidemic Preparedness.

The WHO director-general said it was time to learn the lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic. "For too long, the world has operated on a cycle of panic and neglect," he said.

"We throw money at an outbreak, and when it's over, we forget about it and

do nothing to prevent the next one. This is dangerously short-sighted, and frankly difficult to understand."

The Global Preparedness Monitoring Board's September 2019 first annual report on world readiness for health emergencies — published a few months before the Coronavirus broke out — said the planet was woefully unprepared for potentially devastating pandemics. — AFP

— AFP

**LEBANON SEIZES  
8 FOR BURNING  
REFUGEE CAMP**

Beirut, Dec. 27: Lebanon's army said Sunday it had arrested eight people after a dispute led a group of Lebanese nationals to set fire to an informal refugee settlement in the country's north.

The army said it "arrested two Lebanese nationals and six Syrians over a personal dispute... between a number of Lebanese men and Syrian workers," according to a statement.

"The Lebanese men fired bullets in the air and torched the tents of Syrian refugees," it added, without elaborating on the cause of the alteration.

The fire on Saturday night tore through the tented shelters of some 75 families near the town of Bahnine in the north Lebanon Miniyeh region, leaving only a charred wasteland.

The camp's more than 370 residents were forced to flee, according to the United Nations refugee agency, UNHCR, and at least four people were taken to hospital for injuries.

On Sunday, dozens of refugees returned to the remains of the camp to try to salvage anything that might have survived the blaze.

"I came back to check on belongings inside our small tent only to discover that we no longer own anything," said Amira Issa, a 45-year-old mother of five who fled Syria eight years ago. — AFP

## Investigators search home in Nashville bomb probe

Washington, Dec. 27: Authorities searched a house in the Nashville area on Saturday as they probed the large blast that ripped through the downtown of the southern US city on Christmas morning, injuring several people and damaging dozens of buildings.

The operation in Antioch came as US media reports said a 63-year-old "person of interest" had been identified in connection with the explosion, which came from a parked motorhome that blared a warning minutes before it blew up.

Authorities were examining tissue found at the blast site that they believe could be human remains.

Police say the blast was

an "intentional act" but the motive remained unclear, and FBI behavioral analysts were involved in the investigation.

"The damage is shocking and it is a miracle that no residents were killed," Tennessee Governor Bill Lee said on Twitter on Saturday.

Media reports said neighbors had previously spotted a motorhome outside the residence that was being searched Saturday by authorities, and that it appeared to be similar to the one that exploded in Nashville.

— AFP

from the Greek "thermos" for hot and "poleo" to sell — at what was a busy intersection of Silver Wedding Street and Alley of Balconies, was the Roman era equivalent of a fast-food snack stall.

The team found duck bone fragments as well as the remains of pigs, goats, fish and snails in earthenware pots. Some of the ingredients had been cooked together like a Roman era paella.

Crushed fava beans, used to modify the taste of wine, were found at the bottom of one jar.

The counter appears to

have been closed in a hurry and abandoned by its owners — perhaps as

the first rumblings of the eruption were felt — Massimo Osanna, director general at the Archaeological Park of Pompeii, told Ansa news agency.

Amphorae, a water tower and a fountain were found alongside human remains, including those of a man believed to have been aged around 50 and discovered near a child's bed.

"It is possible that someone, perhaps the oldest man, stayed behind and perished during the first phase of the eruption," Osanna told Ansa news agency.

In the latest stage of their work, archaeologists uncovered a number of still life scenes, including depictions of animals believed to have been on the menu, notably mallard ducks and also a rooster, for serving with wine or hot beverages.

## Troubled Central African Republic goes to elections

Bangui, Central African Republic, Dec. 27: Voting began in presidential and legislative elections in the Central African Republic on Sunday, in a key test for one of the world's most troubled nations.

The polls take place after a week of turbulence, marked by accusations of an attempted coup, the brief seizure of the CAR's fourth-largest town and the dispatch of military personnel by Russia and Rwanda to help its beleaguered government.

UN peacekeepers and local and Rwandan sol-

diers were patrolling the streets throughout the capital, with armoured vehicles posted outside voting places armed with machine guns, AFP journalists saw.

There was a delay of

around 50 minutes before some polling stations in Bangui opened as voting materials had not been delivered on time.

"It's very important for me to be here, as a citizen.

I think this vote will change our country, whoever the president will be," teacher Hortense Reine said outside a vot-

ing place in Boganda secondary school in the city's east, where around 30 people were queuing.

Senior officials at the election organising authority said that where polling stations had opened late, voting would continue for an additional 50 minutes.

The frontrunner for the presidency is incumbent Faustin Archange Touadera, who was elected in 2016. The mineral-rich but poverty-stricken country has been chronically unstable since independence 60 years ago. — AFP



Archaeologists uncovered a number of still life scenes, including depictions of animals believed to have been on the menu, notably mallard ducks and also a rooster, for serving with wine or hot beverages.

— AFP

## SHORT TAKES

## GM Harikrishna holds Carlsen

**Chennai:** Indian Grandmaster P. Harikrishna held world number one and world champion Magnus Carlsen in the fourth round of the preliminary stage of the Champions Chess Tour Airthings Masters online chess championship. Both Harikrishna and Carlsen drew all their four games on the opening day of the tournament as matches ended late on Saturday.

The game between Harikrishna and the Norwegian ended in 24 moves after the players repeated the moves.

India number two and former world champion Viswanathan

Anand had earlier drawn his games with Maxim Vachier-Lagrange, Daniil Dubov and Spaniard David Anton Guijarro.

He is in eighth place with two points. Harikrishna will take on Dutch GM Anish Giri in the fifth round followed by games against Alexander Grischuk,

Hikaru Nakamura, Ian

Nepomniachtchi, Lev Aronian,

Wesely So and Teimour

Radjabov subsequently. — PTI

## SA batsmen fight back on Day Two

**Centurion, South Africa:** South Africa's batsmen scored freely against a depleted Sri Lankan bowling attack as the host nation fought back on the second day of the first Test on Sunday. South Africa were 317 for four at the close in reply to Sri Lanka's first innings total of 396.

Dean Elgar (95) and Aiden Markram (68) put on 141 for the first wicket, while former captain Faf du Plessis (55 not out) and Temba Bayuma (41 not out) added an unbeaten 97 for the fifth wicket as the hosts scored at better than four runs an over.

Sri Lanka went into the match without leading fast bowler Suranga Lakmal because of a hamstring strain and suffered a major blow when opening bowler Kasun Rajitha limped off the field with what appeared to be a groin injury after bowling one ball in his third over. — AFP

Brief scores: Sri Lanka 396

(Chandimal 85, Shanaka 66\*, Sipama 4-76) vs South Africa 317/4

(Elgar 95, Markram 68, du Plessis 55 battoning).

## Sydney Test is a 50-50 bet

**Melbourne:** The possibility of Sydney hosting the third Test against India has now come down to 50 per cent in the wake of fresh outbreak of Covid-19 cases there and a final decision will be arrived at in two days.

Melbourne Cricket Club's chief executive officer Stuart Fox on Sunday said though he wants Sydney to retain the hosting rights of the third Test, the situation is "extremely complicated".

"He (Hockley) is working feverishly with the Department of Health in NSW and I believe it is extremely complicated. Everything he is telling me is it's really a 50-50 situation," Fox was quoted as saying by Sydney Morning Herald. — PTI

## Kerala grab first win of season

**Goa:** Kerala Blasters dished out a complete performance as they edged Hyderabad 2-0 to secure their first win of the Indian Super League season here on Sunday.

Abdul Hakk's header (29') put Kerala ahead in the first half before Jordan Murray (88') sealed three points for Kibu Vicuna's side.

Vicuna rang in five changes to the side that drew against SC East Bengal while Hyderabad made two changes with Liston Colaco returning to the starting eleven. Both sides created chances in the first half but it was Kerala who headed into the break with a lead.

## Live on TV

**CRICKET**  
India vs Australia: Second Test — Day 3 from 5 am on Sony Ten 1, 3, Sony Six, HD

**Sri Lanka vs South Africa:** First Test — Day 3 from 1.30 pm on Star Sports 1, HD

**FOOTBALL**  
English Premier League: Crystal Palace vs Leicester City from 8.30 pm, Chelsea vs Aston Villa from 11 pm on Star Sports 2, 3

**Indian Super League:** Bengaluru FC vs Jamshedpur FC from 7.20 pm on Star Sports 2, 3  
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## JINKLE BELLS!

Ajinkya punches ton, India land second blow in Boxing Day Test

**Melbourne, Dec. 27:** Ajinkya Rahane played a captain's knock, a workmanlike century that steered India into a dominant position and took the sting out of Australia's potent bowling attack in the second Test here on Sunday.

Trailing 0-1 in the four-match series, India ended the second day at 277 for five for a handy 82-run lead after bowling out Australia for 195.

At stumps, which was brought early owing to rain, Rahane was going strong on 104 and giving him company was Ravindra Jadeja on 40, the two having added what might prove to be a game-changing 104-run partnership for the sixth wicket.

This was Rahane's 12th Test hundred and his second at the iconic venue, after a fine 147 during the 2014 tour.

A day after earning rich praise for his tactical acumen while marshalling the bowlers, Rahane shone bright with the bat and was spot on with his reading of match situations during his stay in the middle.

Rahane got a life when Steve Smith dropped him at 73 as second slip in Australia's first over with the second new ball, the unlucky bowler being Mitchell Starc, who was taken off the attack after just two overs with the shining red cherry.

That particular phase was crucial from both the team's point of view and by not losing a wicket to the second new ball, India ensured they finished the day ahead of Australia, in terms of runs as well as psychologically.

Rahane got another reprieve when substitute fielder Travis Head put one down after diving forward from gully, but that was after he had got to the three-figure mark.

To start with, Rahane was more watchful that he had ever been but as the day progressed, he went on to play some sumptuous shots and one of his day's best was the classic off-drive against Pat Cummins.

Earlier, Rishabh Pant (29) and Hanuma Vihari (21) frittered away promising starts after doing all the hard work, but Jadeja was determined not to do anything of that sort.

## SCORECARD

**Australia 1st innings: 195**  
**India 1st innings (Overnight 36/1):** Mayank Agarwal lbw b Starc 0, Shubman Gill c Paine b Cummins 45, Cheteshwar Pujara c Paine b Cummins 17, Ajinkya Rahane (batting) 104, Hanuma Vihari c Smith b Lyon 21, Rishabh Pant c Paine b Starc 29, Ravindra Jadeja (batting) 40. Extras (b-12, lb-6, nb-2, wd-1) 21. Total (for 5 wickets in 91.3 overs) 277.

FoW: 1-0, 2-61, 3-64, 4-116, 5-173.

**Bowling:** Mitchell Starc 18.3-3-61-2, Pat Cummins 22-7-71-2, Josh Hazlewood 21-6-44-0, Nathan Lyon 18-2-52-1, Cameron Green 12-1-31-0.



Indian captain Ajinkya Rahane celebrates after scoring a century as teammate Ravindra Jadeja applauds during the second day of the second Test against Australia at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Sunday.

## GILL CREDITS RAHANE FOR HIS INNINGS

**Melbourne, Dec. 27:** Young India batsman Shubman Gill says watching Ajinkya Rahane's "magnificent" hundred from the sidelines was immensely educational for him and he learnt how not to get into a shell while facing a lethal bowling attack.

Stand-in skipper Rahane scored an unbeaten 104 in tough conditions to steer India to 277 for five against Australia on the second day of the second Test here.

"This knock was all about patience, more importantly when you are playing such a high quality pace attack, sometimes you get into shell and not able to score runs, and the way Ajinkya bhai played, it was such a magnificent knock to watch from outside," Gill said during a virtual press conference.

"How to see off those tough periods, he made it sure that he put the loose balls away."

With Rahane going strong, India took a lead of 82 runs and Gill said the team will look to capitalise on it as batting will get more challenging from day three.

"On the first day, there was a bit turn for (Ravichandran Ashwin) Ash bhai and (Ravindra Jadeja) Jaddu bhai and even today we saw there was turn for Nathan (Lyon) and as the time goes on there will be more cracks and it will be more challenging for the batsmen."

Opening the innings, Gill scored a 65-ball 45 on debut before he nicked an outswinger from Pat Cummins. "When I came into bat, there was something in the pitch, it was lively but the only thing I told myself was that no matter what was in pitch, I should be able to play my game."

— PTI

## Starc rues missed chances for Oz

## WARNER NOT SURE OF PLAYING THIRD TEST

**Melbourne, Dec. 27:** Star Australian opener David Warner is still struggling with his groin injury, coach Justin Langer said on Sunday, rendering him doubtful for the third Test against India starting January 7. He had missed the last ODI, three T20Is and the first two Tests against India due to the injury that he sustained during the second ODI.

Warner, whose absence was felt by Australia as they folded for 195 on the opening day of the ongoing Boxing Day Test, will hit the MCG nets on Sunday.

"We saw him bat the day before the game, he's batting again this afternoon at the MCG, so in terms of his batting he's flying, it's just trying to ... he's still having some trouble with his groin and we know how dynamic he is," Langer told Ricky Ponting during an interview on Seven.

2/61.  
Starc admitted Australia endured a tough day.

"Pretty much that (frustrating day for the bowlers). The last ball pretty much summed up the day, so again not our best day, not our worst, we created a fair few chances and unfortunately could not hang onto those half ones or those changes we created," he said.

"So Jinx (Rahane) batted pretty well throughout the day, (there were a) couple of really good partnerships. I thought there was really good stuff from us as well, we couldn't capitalise on some of the chances we created, to finish in a better position. So, just got to back up tomorrow and take five wickets as quick as we can," added Starc, summing up the day's play.

— PTI

really well there, he took his chances and we probably could have got him out three or four or maybe five times before he got a

hundred, but he's run his luck there and scored a good hundred. Well done to him, added the left-arm pacer, who had figures of

## Momota comes back with a bang

**● The win gave Momota his third straight national title, and he immediately turned his thoughts towards making his international comeback at the Thailand Open in January.**

the first game but then I started to lose my cool once I had the lead," said Momota.

"I think that's because I'm still not used to playing matches. In the second and third games, I wanted to put all my feeling into it regardless of technique or tactics, and I think I willed myself to the win."

The win gave Momota his third straight national title, and he immediately turned his thoughts towards making his international comeback at the Thailand Open in January.

"I had the initiative in

Momota was badly hurt in January when the vehicle taking him to the airport after he won the Malaysia Masters crashed, killing the driver. He admitted to feeling nervous as he returned to competition this week in Tokyo, and he was pushed to the limit by Tsuneyama, who took him to 16-16 in the final game only to crumble with victory in sight.

"Before, my game was about using everything I'd built up over time, and my results gave me the confidence to do that. This week, I hadn't

played for a long time so I was very anxious going into each match. But I think my game will start to return now that I've won this title," he added.

Momota was badly hurt for a gold medal on home soil at the Coronavirus-postponed Tokyo Games next year. He won a record-breaking 11 titles last year, and he is confident of adding more after tasting success this week in Tokyo.

"I'm 70 percent relieved and 30 percent happy," said Momota.

"I'm known as world number one Momota, so I feel that I'm not allowed to lose. It wasn't easy for me to get the number one ranking. It's because of my experience and ability, and I really hate to lose," he added. — AFP

## Furious Bedi attacks DDCA

## ■ Demands removal of his name from Kotla stand

**New Delhi, Dec. 27:** Spin legend Bishan Singh Bedi has threatened to take legal action against the DDCA if his name is not removed from a spectators' stand at the Feroz Shah Kotla ground with immediate effect.

On Wednesday, Bedi had shot a letter to the Delhi and District Cricket Association, lambasting it for installing a statue of its late former president Arun Jaitley at the Kotla.

"Your inexplicable silence also underlines guilt of occupying a position of power solely because of your family name, which, you obviously wish to promote, come what may."

"Finally, I hope you will have the basic courtesy to reply to a former cricketer who is not asking for a favour, but wants his cricketing integrity not to be bartered away."

The statue of Jaitley will be unveiled by BCCI president Sourav Ganguly at Kotla on Monday in the presence of union home minister Amit Shah and former BCCI chief Anurag Thakur, among others.

Bedi said he did not wish to be associated with the cricket stadium which has a statue of the late politician, who was a minister in the BJP-led NDA government and died last year owing to multiple health issues.

"I've been around long to know DDCA has a tradition of ignoring cricketers' voice, hence this reminder. There's a reason for my urgent request," the 74-year-old said. — PTI

## MSD is ODI team of decade captain

**Dubai, Dec. 27:** The legendary Mahendra Singh Dhoni was on Sunday named captain of ICC's ODI and T20 International teams of the decade while Virat Kohli stamped his pre-eminence in world cricket after being voted the skipper of the Test team.

Indians dominated the limited-over teams by having three and four players in the ODI and T20I respectively while England have maximum number of players — four — in the Test side.

The 39-year-old Dhoni, who retired from international cricket earlier this year, was one of the three Indians in the ODI team of the decade, the others being Rohit Sharma and skipper Virat Kohli.

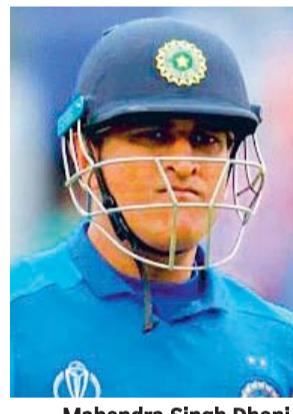
Dhoni has three other compatriots in the T20I team — Rohit, Kohli and Jasprit Bumrah.

Besides being named captain of Test team, Kohli is the only player in the world to have been voted in the teams of the decade in all formats.

The teams of the decades were announced by the ICC ahead of the Awards of the Decade ceremony, to be held in virtual mode on Monday.

The top awards, including ICC male cricketer as

— PTI



Mahendra Singh Dhoni

well as female cricketer of the decade, men's Test, ODI and T20I cricketers of the decade, women's ODI and T20I cricketers of the decade, will also be announced on Monday.

Kohli is also in the running for four awards — ICC male cricketer of the decade, men's Test cricketer, men's ODI cricketer and men's T20I cricketer of the decade.

In the Test team of the decade, senior spinner Ravichandran Ashwin is the other Indian while the four Englishmen are Alastair Cook, Ben Stokes, Stuart Broad and James Anderson. Australia are represented by Steve Smith and David Warner.

The top awards, including ICC male cricketer as

— PTI

# Happy Birthday

LIFE IS VERY SHORT, ENJOY EVERY MOMENT,  
BE HAPPY ALWAYS,  
DON'T LOSE YOUR CONFIDENCE  
GO ALWAYS AHEAD.  
WISHING YOU A LOVELY  
"HAPPY BIRTHDAY" ANNA

Y.PRAKASH REDDY

Y.V.K.REDDY

P.JANARDAN

JANSON

MAHESH REDDY

ARAVIND

M.MALLIKARJUNA REDDY

VAJRHRUVA AUTO SERVICE

Jammalamadugu, Kadapah

K.GHOUS BASHA

MABASH