



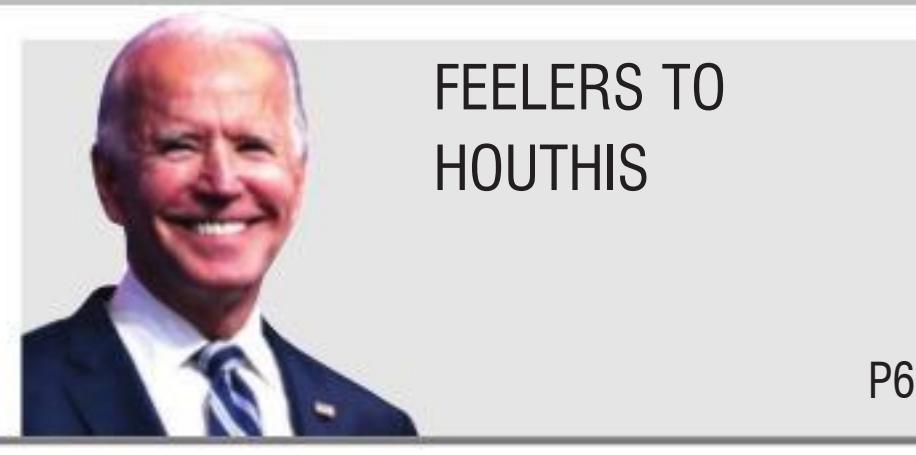
Pages 12 | ₹5 | L

KOLKATA | NEW DELHI | SILIGURI | BHUBANESWAR



ROUSING WELCOME
IN TAMIL NADU AS
SASIKALA RETURNS

P5



FEELERS TO
HOUTHIS

P6



NETANYAHU PLEADS
NOT GUILTY AS GRAFT
TRIAL RESUMES

P9



ISHANT REACHES
300 TEST WICKETS
LANDMARK

P12

WEATHER

Partly cloudy sky. Shallow to moderate fog in the morning. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 25 and 09 degrees Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: Nil

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 100% Min: 50%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 24.6°C (1) Min: 07.6°C (-2)

SUN RISES SUN SETS

07:04 hrs 18:07 hrs

MOON RISES MOON SETS

06:05 hrs 15:39 hrs

THUMBNAILS



Bangladeshi soldiers learn White Water Rafting Node from Indian Army in Aqua Nodal Centre in Arunachal Pradesh. IANS

Sensex closes above 51K: The Sensex closed above 51,000 points for the first time while the Nifty smashed past the 15,100-mark on Monday as the post-Budget rally continued for the sixth session amid strong corporate results and robust foreign fund inflows. A persistently bullish trend in global markets further bolstered risk appetite, traders said. After touching a lifetime high of 51,523.38 points during the day, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended 617.14 points or 1.22 per cent higher at its record closing peak of 51,348.77 points.

P8

2 coaches of train derail near Chapra: Two coaches of the Lokmanya Tilak Express passenger train derailed near Chapra junction railway station in Bihar on Monday evening. No casualties or injuries were reported as the coaches were vacant. Special Chapra-Lokmanya Tilak Express train was going from Chapra Court station to Chapra junction in Bihar. Senior railway officials have reached the location to take stock of the situation.

P9

Modi extends olive branch to farmers

PM slams those abusing Sikhs; assures MSP will remain; plea to call off stir

DEEPAK RAZDAN
NEW DELHI, 8 FEBRUARY

Accusing the Opposition of taking a U-turn on the farm reforms, Prime Minister Narendra Modi today invited agitating farmers for talks on the farm laws and said the Government was ready to exchange views and resolve their apprehensions.

In the same vein, he also hit out at deleterious influences from abroad, referring to them as 'foreign destructive ideology', as well as a new 'breed' of agitators - 'Andolanji' - in the country who cannot live without a tumult.

In an apparent reference to tweets by pop star Rihan and Swedish climate-activist Greta Thunberg favouring the agitating farmers, Modi played on the term 'Foreign Direct Investment' or FDI' to warn against deleterious influences from abroad.

Replying to the Rajya Sabha debate on the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address, he said "options" were still open, and there were no tensions in the talks, even after several rounds of discussions. The Prime Minister said the Opposition, including the Congress Party, had from time to time, called for reforms in agriculture, and it was not clear why they were opposed to them now.

India was not a static society, he said, and legislative changes were brought gradually, he said. Time had come to bring



LS RESUMES DEBATE ON PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

The Lok Sabha on Monday conducted its proceedings properly by resuming discussion on the motion of thanks on the President's address for the first time after the Budget was presented in the House on 1 February, breaking the deadlock created by the Opposition on the three contentious farm laws.

CENTRE ASKS TWITTER TO BLOCK 1,178 ACCOUNTS

The Centre has directed Twitter to block nearly 1,200 accounts with suspected links to Khalistan sympathisers or Pakistan. The government said these accounts were causing a threat to public order amid the farmers' protest against agricultural laws.

reforms in the agriculture sector. The proposed reforms should be given a chance, and if shortcomings were found, they would be corrected, he said.

The Prime Minister said the MSP (Minimum Support Price) was there and it would continue, as it was now. The sanctity of the place where he was giving this assurance should be respected, he said.

Modi said reforms were opposed even on earlier occasions, but they were pursued with good results. Even former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had referred to the rigidities in the marketing system which

prevented the farmers from getting good returns, and offered to remove the handicaps, the PM said.

He said the Opposition had made several speeches on the farmers' agitation but concentrated on the manner it was being conducted; there was no attempt to refer to the spirit of the laws. The farmers would only land in darkness, if there was politics on the reforms, he said.

Modi said the farm laws would benefit the small farmers particularly, whose number had risen to 86 per cent. The number of those owning up to half a hectare of land had risen from 51 per cent to 68 per cent.

As the Prime Minister rose to give his 80 minute reply, the Trinamool Congress members staged a walk-out. The Motion of Thanks to the President's address was adopted by the House after rejecting all amendments moved by the Opposition.

He said by increasing the ambit of Fasal Bima Yojana in 2014, claims worth ₹90,000 crore have been settled benefiting small farmers in the country. He said nearly ₹1.15 lakh crore rupees were directly transferred into the accounts of the farmers under the PM-KISAN scheme.

'Sent names of 2.5L farmers under PM Kisan scheme'

KOLKATA, 8 FEBRUARY

A day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi slammed the TMC dispensation for not implementing Central schemes in Bengal, chief minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday told the Assembly that her government has sent to the Centre names of 2.5 lakh farmers who are eligible for benefits under the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana.

She sought to know why the Union government has not disbursed any cash benefit to the beneficiaries as yet.

Details on page 4

per cent to 68 per cent.

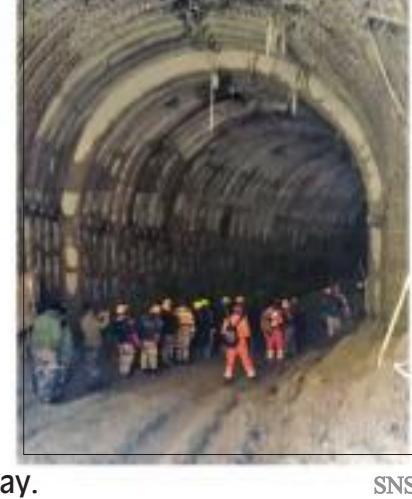
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Massive rescue operation launched to evacuate trapped workers from Tapovan tunnel



Rescue team inside the Tapovan tunnel in Chamoli on Monday.



SNS

RAJU GUSAIN
DEHRADUN, 8 FEBRUARY

Massive search and rescue operation was launched to save trapped workers from the Tapovan tunnel in Chamoli on Monday. The Uttarakhand government has officially confirmed that 197 workers remain missing in the flash flood.

The rescue team has so far recovered 20 bodies and was successful in evacuating 12 persons trapped in a tunnel.

A big rescue team, involving Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), Army, SSB, State Disaster Response Force and National Disaster Response Force, are working day and night to find trapped workers.

A flash flood in the Rishiganga river created havoc near Reni village in district Chamoli on Sunday. The Rishiganga and Tapovan power projects were badly affected by the disaster. Providing a new theory on the flash flood, the Indian Institute of Remote Sensing (IIRS) (a constituent unit of Indian Space Research Organisation) claims that the flash flood took place after a landslide triggered a snow avalanche. The institute rejects the earlier theory of the disaster taking place due to glacier burst.

An ITBP team saved the lives of a dozen workers, who were stuck in a tunnel. Excavators were used to clear the slush and debris inside the other tunnel and the operation continued for the second successive day.

Uttarakhand chief minister Trivendra Singh Rawat said, "I am leaving for Joshimath and will spend the night there. Tomorrow I plan to visit the affected areas and will also meet people. Our relief and rescue operations are continuing in full swing and we are doing best to save lives."

A joint team of the ITBP, Army, SDRF, SSB and NDRF were involved in clearing debris from the Tapovan tunnel. The team has cleared debris from 90 Mts patch and the target is to remove the remaining 50 Mts stretch to reach a junction of the



Feb 6, 2021



197 PEOPLE MISSING | 26 BODIES RECOVERED

Feb 7, 2021

An ITBP team saved the lives of a dozen workers, who were stuck in a tunnel. Excavators were used to clear the slush and debris inside the other tunnel and the operation continued for the second successive day.

Uttarakhand Police's DGP Ashok Kumar, "We are involved in the search and rescue work and presently operation to clear debris from the Tapovan tunnel is underway. We are supplying relief material to affected villages - which lost their connecting road as their bridges were swept away in the flash flood."

About a dozen villages' remains cut off from the rest of the world after losing the bridges. The Uttarakhand government used choppers to supply rations in the affected areas. Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Raj Kumar Singh and Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhrayal Nishank toured the affected area on Monday.

Daily Covid-19 fatalities below 150 for last 10 days

SNS & PTI

NEW DELHI, 8 FEBRUARY

India on Monday reported 84 fatalities as it continued to register less than 150 daily Covid-19 deaths for the last 10 days, while the tally of active cases shrunk to 1,48,609 which is 1.37 percent of the total infections. Seventeen states and Union Territories did not report any Covid-19 deaths in the 24 hour period till Monday, the Health Ministry said.

These are the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Daman and Diu and Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Mizoram, Nagaland, Lakshadweep, Ladakh, Sikkim, Rajasthan, Meghalaya, Madhya Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Puducherry, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and Assam.

The number of people who

FACT FILE

TOTAL CASES

1,08,38,194

ACTIVE CASES

1,48,609

NEW CASES

11,831

NEW RECOVERIES

11,904

TOTAL DEATHS

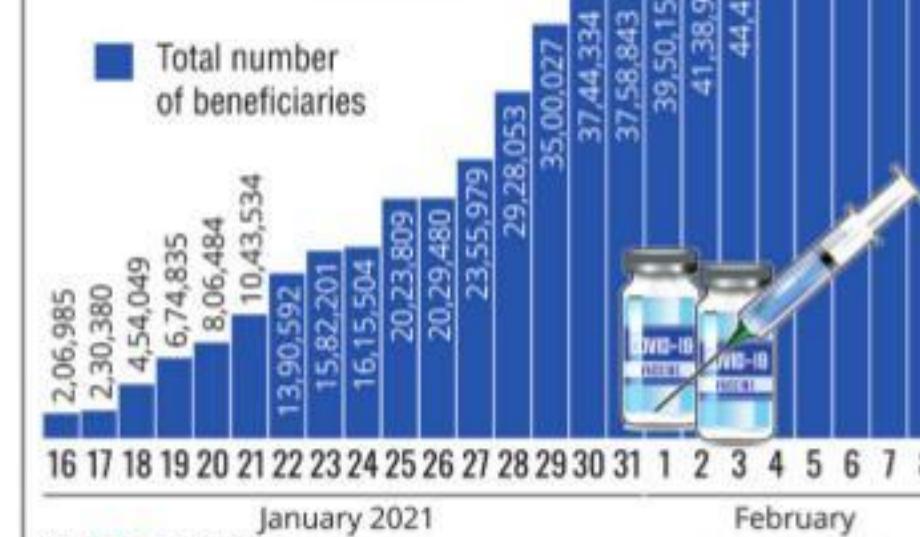
1,55,080

UNION HEALTH MINISTRY FIGURES AS OF 8.00 A.M.
MONDAY 08 FEBRUARY 2021

(SEE P2)

COVID-19 Vaccination in India

Total number of beneficiaries



Infiltrator shot dead by BSF in Jammu

JAMMU, 8 FEBRUARY

A Pakistani infiltrator was on Monday shot dead by BSF troops near the international border fence in the Samba Sector of Jammu.

The intruder was shot about 40 metres inside the Indian territory and near the spot where the BSF had recently detected a cross-border tunnel dug by Pakistani agencies to push in terrorists. A Pakistani intruder was earlier killed near the spot in November.

On 8 Feb at 0945 hrs, BSF troops observed a Pak intruder heading towards BS fence near in BOP Chak Faqira, Samba, Jammu. Despite repeated warnings, intruder kept moving and approached fencing in an aggressive manner and was fired upon by BSF troops.

MLAs to display 'honesty boards' outside homes, says Bihar Speaker

MANOJ CHAURASIA
PATNA, 8 FEBRUARY

All legislators of Bihar Assembly have been asked to declare in writing that they have nothing to do with crime. They have been advised to write such messages on boards outside their homes.

The advice has come from none other than Assembly Speaker Vijay Kumar Sinha.

"We have nothing to do with crime, our families are free of any addiction, we do not support child marriages, do not support dowry system and child labour



Even if it (the vote-on-account) is what the opposition is saying, where is the problem? It is for the welfare of the people. Some are saying we are there for a few days. We will be back with a huge mandate

MAMATA BANERJEE
WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

Minimum temp dips to 7.6 degC in Delhi

PTI
NEW DELHI, 8 FEBRUARY

Delhiites woke up to a cold morning on Monday, with the minimum temperature settling at 7.6 degrees Celsius, the Meteorological department said.

On Sunday, the minimum temperature had settled at 8.3 degrees Celsius.

The minimum temperature was one notch below the season's average on Monday, Met department officials said.

The maximum temperature was recorded at 24.6 degrees Celsius.

The weatherman forecasted a partly cloudy sky for Tuesday with shallow to moderate fog in the morning.

"The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 25 and 9 degrees Celsius respectively," the Met department said.

The minimum temperature recorded at Safdarjung Observatory, which provides representative data for the city, was

7.6 degrees Celsius in the early hours of Monday, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

The Palam Observation station recorded a low of 9.5 degrees Celsius, the IMD said.

Air quality index (AQI) in the capital was recorded in the 'very poor' category at 316, as per Central Pollution Control Board's mobile application SAMER.

Government agencies said the AQI is likely to marginally deteriorate but predicted to remain within the 'very poor' category for the next two days.

"The overall air quality is in the 'very poor' category as forecasted. Surface winds are calm and forecasted to decrease gradually. The dip in ventilation is likely to influence air quality negatively. AQI is likely to marginally deteriorate but predicted to remain within the 'very poor' category for the next two days," said the Ministry of Earth Sciences' air quality monitor, SAFAR.

9,740 more get Covid shots in city; 11 'adverse' cases logged

Delhi records 125 fresh coronavirus cases and 3 fatalities; positivity rate stands at 0.23 pc

SNS & PTI
NEW DELHI, 8 FEBRUARY

More than 9,700 people received the Covid-19 vaccine in Delhi today with a turnout of over 54 per cent in the fourth week of the nationwide inoculation drive.

The healthcare workers

have been getting the Covid shots since the opening day, 16 January, but now the frontline workers — who include police, civil defence staff, DJB and electricity department employees among others — are also receiving the jabs in the national capital for the past few days.

Also, the number of scheduled inoculation days in Delhi has been extended from four days to six days a week — from Monday to Saturday.



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

The targeted number for vaccination today was 18,000, officials said. "Today, 9,740 people were administered coronavirus vaccine, and AEFI (adverse events following immunisation) was reported in 11 persons," a senior official of the Delhi health department said.

On the previous day of the vaccination drive, 9,510 people had got the jabs, with a turnout of about 50 per cent.

The number of people vaccinated against Covid till date in Delhi, majority of them being healthcare workers, has crossed the one lakh mark a couple of days ago.

The Delhi government had taken measures like counselling and formal phone calls to raise the percentage of

healthcare workers turning up for being administered the Covid vaccine.

The district-wise distribution of total 11 AEFI cases today was: Central Delhi (3), East Delhi (1), New Delhi (1), North Delhi (0), North East Delhi (0), North West Delhi (2), Shahdara (1), South Delhi (0), South East Delhi (1), South West Delhi (0) and West Delhi (2).

Meanwhile, Delhi today recorded 125 fresh Covid cases and 3 more coronavirus-linked fatalities, even as the positivity rate stood at 0.23 per cent. The recovery rate was 98.11 per cent, the bulletin said.

On 6 February, Delhi had recorded 123 Covid cases and 4 coronavirus-linked fatalities, while its positivity rate had slumped to 0.19 per

cent. Its Covid recovery rate had then stood at 98.10 per cent.

The Covid tally in the city rose to 6,36,160 while its toll mounted to 10,882, the bulletin stated.

The active cases tally

dropped to 1,096 from 1,112

the previous day, according to the bulletin.

The national capital had

on 27 January recorded 96 coronavirus cases, lowest in

more than nine months.

On 1 February, Delhi had

recorded 3 Covid deaths, which Delhi health minister Satyendar Jain had then termed the "lowest in the city in the last 10 months". On 2 February, this figure dropped to 2. On 3 and 4 February, the Covid death count in the city was 6 and 7 respectively.

Nursery school admissions in Delhi to be conducted online

IANS
NEW DELHI, 8 FEBRUARY



The admission process for nursery and other classes across the national capital will start soon. Nursery admissions in private schools in Delhi this year will be held completely online. All schools in Delhi have been closed for primary classes since the last 11 months. The Education Ministry of the Delhi government will now work out a process for the admissions.

The school forms will be downloaded and applications will also be submitted online for admissions. The list of the successful applicants will be displayed online and the parents of these students can pay the fees online.

However, in government schools the admission process would be conducted both via online and offline modes. Apart from nursery admission, admissions for other classes in government and private schools would also be

started soon.

A meeting has also been held between Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and the principals and management committees of various private schools.

The Delhi government wants that when the process of nursery admissions starts in private schools, admissions could also be started in government schools nearby. According to the state government, there would not be much time gap in the admission schedule of private and government schools.

However, no decision has been taken yet on when nursery, including primary classes, will start.

Kejriwal and Delhi Deputy Chief Minister and Education Minister Manish Sisodia have also held meetings with the 'Action Committee Unaided Private Accredited Schools' at the Delhi Secretariat. The

Action Committee is a large organisation and comprises nearly 1,000 recognised private schools in Delhi as its members.

The Delhi government wants that when the process of nursery admissions starts in private schools, admissions could also be started in government schools nearby. According to the state government, there would not be much time gap in the admission schedule of private and government schools.

Kejriwal and his wife sleeping in an adjoining room did not hear any commotion. Clothes were however lying strewn on the floor at the crime spot," DCP Central Jaspal Singh said.

Shiv Kumar worked as a manager at his relative's office and was a caretaker of the building where the crime took place.

A forensic team visited the spot to collect samples.

"Certain vital clues have been found. Our teams are developing those clues," the officer added.

Delhi resident found murdered, wife blames burglar

IANS
NEW DELHI, 8 FEBRUARY

A 50-year-old man was found dead with his throat slit with a sharp weapon early Monday morning even while his wife and children slept unaware at their house in central Delhi's Patel Nagar, police said.

Deceased Shiv Kumar's wife

claimed that a burglar broke into the house and stabbed her husband. Police is verifying her claim.

"A guard and his wife sleeping in an adjoining room did not hear any commotion.

Clothes were however lying strewn on the floor at the crime spot," DCP Central Jaspal Singh said.

Shiv Kumar worked as a manager at his relative's office and was a caretaker of the building where the crime took place.

A forensic team visited the spot to collect samples.

"Certain vital clues have been found. Our teams are developing those clues," the officer added.

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I am ordering a third party audit to be conducted for the construction work of a mini stadium in Tikona Park as I have received several complaints regarding irregularities

GOPAL RAI
AAP LEADER AND DELHI MINISTER

NEW DELHI, TUESDAY 09 FEBRUARY 2021

Farm unions' legal cell writes to UNHRC over farmers' detention

It has written to the India head of the UN human rights body over protesting farmers' 'illegal detention' and suspension of internet at Singhu, Ghazipur and Tikri protest sites on Delhi's borders

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 8 FEBRUARY

The farm unions' legal cell which is representing farmers facing legal challenges emerging out of the Republic Day violence, has written to the United Nations Human Rights Commission (UNHRC) on "illegal detention" and suspension of internet at protest sites on the borders of the national capital.

Internet has been snapped at Singhu, Ghazipur and Tikri protest sites to "maintain public safety and for averting public emergency". Besides this, 127 people have been arrested since the clash between protesting farmers and police during the tractor rally against the three farm laws on January 26.

The lawyer collective has now written to India head of the United Nations Human Rights Commission. Clear identification of the interrogation officers, memo of arrests, information to family members of those arrested, diary entries, and medical check-up are some of their demands.

The advocates said that the government is violating human rights by acting as an arbitrary power. "Since the initiation of the protest, farmers are getting arrested by police from the protest site unreasonably and inappropriately," it claimed.

The lawyers alluded the prominent D.K. Basu vs State



Farmers near barricades at Delhi-Ghazipur border on Monday.

of West Bengal judgement, in which the Supreme Court laid down a score of guidelines for the police and other agencies to follow during the arrest, detention and interrogation of any person.

"The guidelines were prescribed by the Highest Court of the Nation and the Legislative but executive branch of the Government through the police officials are committing a grave error by violating all the said guidelines," the five-page letter by Advocates Vasu Kukreja, Jayanthi Anbuselvam and Ravneet Kaur reads.

The lawyers further said that the internet suspension at

the bordersites have blocked access of information and have denied issuing many other basic rights, disrupting even the survival of the farmers at the protest sites.

On February 5, the UN human rights office had called on Indian authorities and farmers protesting against the new agriculture laws to exercise maximum restraint, emphasising that it is crucial to find "equitable solutions" with due respect to human rights for all.

"That your lordship, as the matter of Human Rights violations, we want your concern towards the situation of farmers in India and in the on-going agitation, kindly interfere in the matter and issue guidelines

to the state for violating the human rights," it requested the UNHRC India head.

On February 5, the UN human rights office had called on Indian authorities and farmers protesting against the new agriculture laws to exercise maximum restraint, emphasising that it is crucial to find "equitable solutions" with due respect to human rights for all.

A total of 160 lawyers, under the banner of 'Advocates for Farmers', have split into 11 teams to carry out tasks ranging from data entry of the arrested and missing protesters, figuring out where they are jailed to filing their

bail applications. Few of them have set up their tents at three borders ~ Singhu, Ghazipur and Tikri ~ and are contacting the families of those arrested or missing by wading from trolley to trolley. Besides this, they have also set up toll-free numbers to address the farmers' grievances.

Advocates Ajit Pal Singh Mander and Hakam Singh head the teams and carry out coordination among them. "Data is collected by three teams at the border and execution is carried out by eight teams at different courts in the city," Mander, who belongs to Punjab's Bathinda district, said.

He further stated that as many as 251 projects worth Rs 926.24 crore had been approved under NABARD under MLA priorities during the year 2020-21.

Out of this, Rs 565.52 crore has been provided for roads and bridges whereas Rs 360.72 crore have been provided for minor irrigation and drinking

water schemes.

Apart from this, a provision of Rs 13,300 crore was made during the first three years tenure of the previous state government under the annual plan outlay whereas during the first three years tenure of the present government a provision of Rs 21,300 crore was made as annual plan outlays, he added.

The Chief Minister said during the first three years tenure of the previous state government 433 MLA priority schemes worth Rs 2033 crore were approved while the present government 639 MLA priority schemes worth Rs 2382 crore had been approved.

A financial assistance of Rs 3000 per month was being provided to a family with chronically ill patients under the Sahara Yojna, he said.

He further stated that as many as 251 projects worth Rs 926.24 crore had been approved under NABARD under MLA priorities during the year 2020-21.

Out of this, Rs 565.52 crore has been provided for roads and bridges whereas Rs 360.72 crore have been provided for minor irrigation and drinking

years tenure of the previous state government, whereas a provision of Rs 2221 crore has been made during the first three years tenure of the present government.

"The state government would accord topmost preference to the MLA priorities and special stress must be laid on preparation of DPRs under MLA priorities.

The MLAs are elected representatives of their areas and well understands the developmental needs of their area," he said.

He added despite the Covid-19 pandemic, the state government was ensuring that the pace of development does not get affected.

He thanked the MLAs for making their contributions and cooperation to fight the pandemic.

Punjab farmers' protest forces BJP to cancel meeting

PTI
NAWANSIHAL, 8 FEBRUARY

Farmers here on Monday forced their way through police barricades to protest outside the venue of a meeting called by the BJP, leading to the cancellation of the event which was to be attended by state party chief Ashwani Sharma.

Despite heavy police presence, the protesting farmers broke police barricades put up at several places and reached the meeting venue at Pando Mohalla here.

Punjab BJP chief Ashwani Sharma was scheduled to meet party leaders, said officials.

Farmers led by activists of the Kirti Kisan Union staged a sit-in outside the venue and accused the BJP of spoiling the atmosphere by organising meetings despite the ongoing agitation against the Centre's new farm laws. The farmers said they will continue to oppose the BJP till the Centre repeals its farm laws.

HP to start 2nd phase of vaccination of frontline workers from 10 Feb

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 8 FEBRUARY

The Himachal Pradesh government will start the second phase of vaccination of frontline workers from 10 February under which around 48,000 officials of various departments will get the Covid vaccine.

State National Health Mission (NHM), Mission Director Dr Nipun Jindal informed about this after reviewing COVID-19 vaccination drive with all the CMOs, district immunization officers and the In-charges of various medical colleges of district hospitals.

"Around 48,000 frontline workers from the State Police, Central Armed Police Forces, Urban Development, Revenue and Panchayati Raj Departments have been identified to be vaccinated in the second phase. The 2nd phase shall commence from 10 February," he added.

The average number of beneficiaries vaccinated in the state per session is 58, which is higher than the national average

He said till Saturday, the state has achieved coverage of more than two-third of Health care workers for the 1st dose of Covid-19 vaccine which was barely 24 percent a week ago. The average number of beneficiaries vaccinated in the state per session is 58, which is higher than the national average.

Jindal further stated that the district authorities had been given directions to complete the first dose of Health Care Workers by 9 February.

The Union government has assured continuous supply of vaccine to meet the targets of vaccination and to that effect the state might receive another 1,87,000 doses of the Covishield vaccine within this week, he added.

The vaccine wastage in the state has been 2.5 per cent only which is way lower than the admissible figure of 10 per cent.

"The district health teams have been directed to target the districts, sub division headquarters and the battalion where the load of this vaccination is high.

The district authorities have been further directed to accomplish 50 per cent vaccination of the frontline workers till 13 February i.e. a day before the pulse polio immunization in the state," he added.

He informed that close to 90,000 doses of the Covishield are being distributed from the State vaccine store.

The Union government has assured continuous supply of vaccine to meet the targets of vaccination and to that effect the state might receive another 1,87,000 doses of the Covishield vaccine within this week, he added.

TRAFFIC WOES



Heavy traffic jam at NH-24 on Monday.

PB Cong to hold protest against fuel prices hike on 11 Feb

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 8 FEBRUARY

The Punjab Congress will stage a statewide protest on 11 February against the 'inescapable' hike in petrol, diesel and kitchen gas prices by the Narendra Modi regime.

The protests will be carried out across all cities from 11 a.m. till 1 p.m. Disclosing this on

'The prices of oil and gas should have reduced as a result of decrease in crude prices but the Centre is deliberately spiking prices each time to break the back of the common man'

Monday, Punjab Congress chief Sunil Jakhar, who would lead the protest march from Abohar said that due to oppressive policies of Centre, each segment of society is dis-

tressed.

On one side while Centre's ego is forcing farmers to protest, it is putting undue financial burden on common man by hiking prices of

petrol, diesel and gas. A gas cylinder used to cost Rs 438 in 2014 when Dr Manmohan Singh was the Prime Minister, Jakhar pointed out underlining that the same cylinder cost has crossed Rs 750. This too when prices of crude oil is almost half than what it used to be in 2014, Jakhar quipped targeting the Modi regime for looting the

public. The prices of oil and gas should have reduced as a result of decrease in crude prices but the Centre is deliberately spiking prices each time to break the back of the common man, Jakhar said.

Punjab Congress chief said the party will raise the voice of people against this atrocity during the protest march on 11 February.

No respite from cold in most parts of Punjab, Haryana

PTI
CHANDIGARH, 8 FEBRUARY

Narnaul in Haryana was the coldest place in state at 5.2 degrees Celsius

Cold weather conditions persisted in most parts of Punjab and Haryana on Monday, with minimum temperatures hovering below normal limits.

In Punjab, Adampur was the coldest place recording a low of 4.6 degrees Celsius, according to the Meteorological (Met) Department officials here.

(7.4) and Gurdaspur (7.7 degrees Celsius) also settled below the normal limits.

Chandigarh, the common capital of the two states, recorded a low of 7.6 degrees Celsius.

Narnaul in Haryana was the coldest place in state at 5.2 degrees Celsius. Amritsar, Bathinda, Faridkot and Halwara registered their respective minimums of 5.5, 5, 5.8 and 5.6 degrees Celsius.

The minimum temperature in Ludhiana (7.1), Patiala

1.01 lakh migratory birds spotted in HP's Pong dam this year

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 8 FEBRUARY

Himachal Pradesh Forest Minister Rakesh Pathania said on Monday that a total of 1,05,78 birds of 96 species were counted during this year at the Pong Dam Lake Wildlife Sanctuary.

Of them, water dependent migratory birds were 1,01,431 of 51 species and water dependent resident birds were 6,433 of 29 species. As many as 714 birds of 16 other species were also recorded.

The minister said the results of the annual water bird count conducted during this year

show that the habitat of migratory and resident water birds has gradually improved in the state due to effective and timely interventions.

He said that the annual water bird count at Pong Dam Lake Wildlife Sanctuary was conducted in the first week of February, 2021 and the exercise was conducted under restrained conditions due to the prevailing Avian Influenza outbreak in Pong Dam Lake as well as the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The exercise was conducted by Wildlife wing of Himachal Pradesh by deploying 57 staff members in 26 sec-



tions of the sanctuary for counting the water dependent birds.. The total popu-

lation of the flagship species, Bar-Headed Geese, is 40,570. The other species which

have higher population count during this year are Eurasian Coot (24,163), Northern Pin-tail (12,702), Common Teal (8,444), Little Cormorant (3,649), Great Cormorant (3,410), Grey Lag Goose (2,297), Northern Shoveler (2,275) and Common Pochard (2,138).

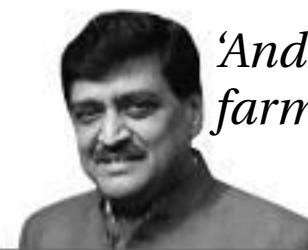
The species which find noticeable mention are Red-necked Grebe, Great Bittern,

annual bird count exercise in Pong Dam Lake Wildlife Sanctuary as per schedule. He said that this year the annual bird count exercise assumes significance, considering the Avian Influenza outbreak in the Wildlife Sanctuary. He expressed satisfaction over the timely and effective containment measures taken by Wildlife wing to control and contain the outbreak.

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) (Wildlife) Archana Sharma and Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF), Wildlife (North) Dharamshala, Upasana Patiala also participated and supervised the

total population of water birds declined during the peak of Avian Influenza outbreak, there is gradual increase in the total population of birds as a result of continuing containment measures being taken in the Pong Dam Lake, the minister said.





'Andolan-jivi' word by PM Modi an insult to farmers

SENIOR CONGRESS LEADER AND MAHARASHTRA MINISTER ASHOK CHAVAN
ON NARENDRA MODI'S RAJYA SABHA SPEECH

THUMBNAILS



A man pulls his tricycle loaded with stone blocks braving the chill in Delhi on Monday.

SUBRATA DUTTA

Double murder: Family feud claimed lives of two as a man killed his wife and 9 year-old daughter followed by an altercation in Baghpat Kotwali on Monday. Accused Gulam surrendered before the police and he was taken into custody. A case of double murder has been registered against him.

SNS

17 Rafale jets by March: India will have 17 Rafale jets by March this year and the entire fleet of the fighter aircraft bought by the country will reach by April 2022.

PTI

Liver transplant: A nine-month-old boy from Iraq got a new lease of life after going liver transplant at a Delhi hospital. Head of the Department of Liver Transplant and Hepato-Pancreatic-Biliary Surgery, HCMCT Manipal Hospitals, Dr Shailendra Lalwani's team performed the surgery that makes Hamad one of the youngest babies undergoing a very complex liver transplant procedure.

SNS

Severed head retrieved: Two people were arrested on Monday after a woman's headless torso was found in a field in Fatehpur (UP) and the severed head retrieved from a well, as police look for the man she had eloped with two months ago.

PTI

Govt taking steps to help U'khand: PM

Modi asserts govt is working to further strengthen infrastructure in the state to deal with any natural disaster in future



Uttarakhand CM Trivendra Singh Rawat oversees rescue operation at Tapovan tunnel.

IANS



Rescue operation in progress in Uttarakhand on Monday.

Over 30 workers from UP's Lakhimpur Kheri missing

LAKHIMPUR KHERI, 8 FEBRUARY

Opinions may differ about whether sneezing at the start of a journey or work is 'inauspicious' or not.

But a constable of the Lok Rakshak Dal (LRD) here received bleeding injuries and fractured nose for his sneezing when few youths were about to initiate their land documentation work at the Mamlatdar (Sub-Registrar) office.

The LRD jawan, Yuvrajsinh Jhala, 26, had gone to the Sub-Registrar's office at Naroda on Saturday to inquire about the status of land sanctioned for Krishnanagar police station to which he is currently attached.

The report of them going missing surfaced when some of the rescued workers contacted their family members and told about the tragedy.

According to the kin of those missing, at least 34 people from various villages 15 from Ichhanagar; eight from Bhairampur; four from Babupurwa; three of Tikonia; and one each from Bhulanpur, Kadiya, Singahi and Mirjapur--are missing.

Nighasan Subdivisional Magistrate (SDM) Om Prakash Gupta had said on Sunday that the administration was not in a position to confirm the number of missing people till communication with the Uttarakhand government.

There is no doubt that global warming has resulted in the warming of the region. Climate change driven erratic weather patterns like increased snowfall and rainfall, warmer winters have led to the melting point of a lot of snow, he added.

Recalling the horrors of the 2013 deluge in the hill state in which thousands were killed, a part of the Nanda Devi glacier broke off at Joshimath on Sunday, leading to a massive flood in the Alaknanda river system. The Snow and Avalanche Study Establishment (SASE) of the Defence Research and Development Organisation is investigating the exact reason for the flooding but there are no clear answers yet for a glacier to have

melted in the winter.

It is not clear whether the flood is a typical Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) or some temporary damming due to a landslide and avalanche that might have blocked the mainstream to form a temporary lake which burst, said Ranjit Rath, director general of the Geological Survey of India (GSI).

Once the water level recedes

a team of experts will assess

the damage as well as the

triggering factor responsible

for the outburst, Rath told

reporters here.

As the nightmare envisaged

by numerous environmentalists warning against untrammeled development in the mountains came true on Sunday, glaciologist Farooq Azam said a glacial burst is very rare. Satellite and Google Earth images, Azam added, do not show a glacial lake near the region, but there's a possibility

it may be a water pocket in the region.

Water pockets are lakes

inside the glaciers, which may

have erupted leading to this

event, Azam said. The scientist, however, said further analysis, weather reports and data are needed to confirm if this indeed was the case.

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Whole country is with Uttarakhand. The most important thing right now is that relief operations are not hindered..

CONGRESS LEADER RAHUL GANDHI
EXPRESSING SOLIDARITY WITH THOSE AFFECTED BY THE GLACIER BURST IN UTTARAKHAND

Rousing welcome in TN as Sasikala returns

Jittery AIADMK ministers accuse Sasikala, nephew Dhinakaran of posing threat to law & order, file complaints with police

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

CHENNAI, 8 FEBRUARY

A ousted AIADMK leader V K Sasikala received a rousing welcome from her supporters on Monday when she returned to Tamil Nadu days after completing her four-year jail term in Bengaluru in a corruption case, jitters appeared in ruling AIADMK, which she controlled earlier, indicating fierce fighting ahead of Assembly elections.

Supporters thronged the highway from Bengaluru to Chennai as Sasikala's convoy passed. 'Chinnamma', as she is fondly addressed by her followers, was greeted by people who waved both the AIADMK and AMMK flags as she entered Tamil Nadu.

Sasikala crossed Tamil Nadu at Athipalai in Krishnagiri district bordering Karnataka, around 10 a.m. and her supporters broke into celebrations. Her nephew and AMMK chief T T V Dhinakaran, who accompanied her, said she would visit the residence of AIADMK founder and late chief minister M G Ramachandran in Chennai later. He claimed



several functionaries of the ruling AIADMK turned up to welcome Sasikala.

But the AIADMK's current leadership reiterated that Sasikala and those with her had nothing to do with the party and that it was illegal on their part to use the party flag as she travelled in a car sporting it.

Sasikala's return to Tamil Nadu is being keenly watched for political impact as it

comes at a time when the state is going for Assembly elections. She has been convicted along with J Jayalalithaa and underwent her sentence in the ₹ 66.65-crore disproportionate assets (DA) case at the Parapana Agrahara central prison in Bengaluru since February 2017 and was set free on 27 January.

On Monday morning, she left for Tamil Nadu, accom-

panied by Dhinakaran in a convoy of around 200 vehicles as her supporters raised slogans hailing her. Before leaving, Sasikala offered flowers to Jayalalithaa's portrait.

Clad in a green colour saree, the favourite hue of Jayalalithaa, and wearing a face mask, she travelled in a car that sported the AIADMK flag over the bonnet, disregarding the warning by the rul-

ing party against its use by non-members and pending police case filed by ruling AIADMK. However, Dhinakaran has defended it, saying she continued to remain the AIADMK general secretary, pointing to petitions pending in court over her 'expulsion'.

Sasikala's return has made the ruling AIADMK visibly jittery as its ministers have filed complaints with the

DGP accusing Sasikala and her nephew TTV Dhinakaran of posing a threat to law and order.

The Jayalalithaa memorial has been temporarily shut, and security has been beefed up in several parts of Chennai including the former CM's residence and AIADMK headquarters.

Sasikala will be forced to sit out of electoral politics until 2027 as she has been barred from contesting elections as per Section 8 of the Representation of the People's Act, 1958 which disqualifies a person if convicted for certain offences. But she could lead her party in the Assembly elections.

Sasikala's sister-in-law J Ilavarasi and Jayalalithaa's disowned foster son V N Sudhakaran was also sentenced to four years imprisonment in the disproportionate assets case.

Although Sasikala's electoral ambitions will have to be deferred for another six years, she will not be deterred from returning to active politics trying to recapture the rein of the party once she controlled. Her fighting spirit was evident on Monday when she defied the AIADMK's warning and travelled in a car bearing the party flag.

RINL privatisation: YSR's bid to convince Centre on divestment

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

HYDERABAD, 8 FEBRUARY

After CM YSR Jagan Mohan Reddy's letter to PM Narendra Modi to reconsider the decision to privatise Vizag steel plant, YSRCP today attempted to pressure on local BJP and Jana Sena leadership to convince Centre against the proposed 100 per cent divestment of the steel plant.

Describing the steel plant as "jewel of Andhra Pradesh" CM Reddy also urged Modi to take measures for financial restructuring easing the burden of debt servicing.

Even BJP leaders and sympathisers in the state have suggested looking at alternatives including merging RINL with SAIL or NMDC in order to save the steel plant.

Denying special status and other promises made by the Centre, the decision to privatise the steel plant has not gone down well with the common people as students as students are making initiatives to form joint action committees to begin agitation against the privatisation move.

While BJP ally Jana Sena chief Pawan Kalyan today left for Delhi to discuss about current political situation as well as Vizag steel plant which is regarded as symbol of Telugu pride and aspirations BJP's Andhra leaders too have informed the Centre about the strong sentiments of the people against privatisation of the steel plant.

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Even BJP leaders and sympathisers in the state have suggested looking at alternatives including merging RINL with SAIL or NMDC in order to save the steel plant.

YSRCP minister Avanti Srinivas today addressed a protest rally organised by all unions of the steel plant at BC Road, Peddantayada and urged BJP and Jana Sena leaders to put pressure on the Centre to withdraw the decision to privatise the steel plant.

GSI working to find out focal point of Uttarakhand flash flood

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 8 FEBRUARY

global phenomenon. With the passage of time, some of the glacial lakes near the terminus often coalesce together and form large glacial lakes dammed by glacial moraines.

He further opined that the constitution of these moraines comprising loose boulders, gravels, sand admixture often containing dead ice, imparts inherent weakness to these dams. These lakes are quite common on the debris-covered Himalayan glaciers wherein the lower part of the glacier moves very slowly and at times remains almost stationary. The glacial breach and outbursts, termed as Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) or some temporary damming due to a landslide and avalanche.

While addressing a Press gathering on the Glacial Outburst in Chamoli, Dr Rath said he was of the opinion that the glaciers in the Himalayas are retreating under climate change scenario. Such recession is a

Won't allow business over hunger, need law on MSP: Rakesh Tikait



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
GAUHATI, 8 FEBRUARY

will not be decided the same way," Tikait said.

On the PM's remark about the emergence of a "new community" which is "engaged in protests", Tikait said, "Yes, this time it is the farmers' community which has emerged and people are also supporting the farmers". He said what the farmers protesting against the new laws have highlighted is that there is no law on MSP because of which traders loot them by buying crops at lower prices. He also slammed the attempts to divide the ongoing movement of farmers on caste and religious lines.

"Desh mein bhook pe vyaapaar nahi hogा. Bhook kitni lagagi aanaaj ki keemat utni hogi. Desh mein bhook se vyaapaar karne walon ko baahar nikaala jaega (There will not be business over hunger in the country). If hunger goes up, price of crops will be decided accordingly. Those wanting business over hunger will be driven out of the country," he told reporters.

"The way rates of a flight ticket fluctuate three to four times a day, the price of crops

Pb polls: 'Farmer on tractor' most sought-after symbol

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CHANDIGARH, 8 FEBRUARY

A "farmer riding a tractor" remained the most in-demand symbol among independent candidates for the February 14 civic body polls in Punjab, according to officials.

Some contestants opting for the symbol said it will help them get votes of those who expressed solidarity with the farmers camping at the Delhi borders against the Centre's new farm laws.

According to former

PB betrayed farmers by saying nothing about their problems: Cong

The Congress on Monday alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's speech in Parliament was without any substance and he betrayed farmers by saying nothing to resolve their problems.

Congress members in Rajya Sabha also walked out of the House after the prime minister's reply to a discussion on a motion thanking the President for his address to the joint sitting of Parliament at the start of the Budget session.

Farmers had expected the prime minister to address their grievances and all eyes were on him, but he let them

down by not giving a solution to their over 75-day agitation against the new farm laws, Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge told reporters.

He said the prime minister should have announced repeal of the farm laws and bringing fresh ones after wider consultations with all stakeholders.

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The PM's address in Rajya Sabha today had no substance and as usual he made a political speech. The PM tried to mislead in his speech and said nothing to resolve the issues of farmers, Kharge said.

Bengal will show red cards to Mamata-Modi in 2021 polls: Salim

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 8 FEBRUARY



The CPI(M) Politburo member, Md Salim today criticized prime minister Narendra Modi, saying had the latter cared for the people of India, he wouldn't have flown to Haldia yesterday in his special helicopter to attend a government sponsored BJP programme and instead would have visited Joshi Math in Uttarakhand to lend support to the victims of the natural disaster.

The PM in his first public rally in Bengal before Assembly polls launched an offensive against the Left Front-Congress poll alliance, alleging that they are in secret collusion with Trinamul Congress, and are involved in political match fixing behind closed doors.

Addressing the Press, Salim said, "Modi is now talking in

the lines of Mamata Banerjee who keeps blaming the Opposition for hatching conspiracies against her party. The truth is, BJP and Trinamul are hand-in-gloves while people of Bengal remember that it is the same Modi who had publicly announced that Miss Banerjee sends him specially selected kurta-s and sweets on special occasions. What does she get in return gift is yet to be known."

Referring to the public rally attended by the PM at Haldia with other BJP leaders of the state, the CPIM leader said, "It

is most unfortunate that instead of visiting the people of Uttarakhand who are trauma-stricken due to the natural disaster, Modi chose to fly in his special chopper to Haldia and attended a government sponsored party programme. He acted like Mamata Banerjee who holds public rally with state government funds."

"Since Narendra Modi used a football reference to woo his party supporters at the rally, he must remember that he is giving one after another self-goal while his party is buying players with TMC jerseys. The

BEFORE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL -II, DELHI.
4th Floor Jeevan Tara Building Parliament Street New Delhi - 110001.
DATE: 01.02.2021
APPLICANT

OA NO 409/19
BANK OF INDIA
VERSUS
IRSHAD KHAN & ORS.
To,
DEFENDANT

3. MR. MOHD. MASHALLAH R/HOUSE NO. D-23, 3rd FLOOR, DDA COLONY, NEW JAFRABAD, SHAHDARA, DELHI
4. M/S MASCOT SOHO HOMES PVT. LTD., B-22, GAZIPUR, VILLAGE GAZIPUR, NEW DELHI - 96
ALSO AT: H-10, SECTOR-63, NOIDA - 201301 UP

Whereas the above named applicant(s) have instituted a case for recovery of Rs. 37,02,386/- (RUPEE THIRTY SEVEN LAKH TWO THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY SIX ONLY) against you and where as it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in the ordinary way therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to appear in the Tribunal on 05.05.2021 At 10.30 A.M.

Take notice that in default of your appearance on the day before the mentioned, the case will be heard and determined in your absence.

BY ORDER OF THE TRIBUNAL, FOR REGISTRAR DRT-II, DELHI.

BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL,
NEW DELHI, COURT-III AT NEW DELHI
COMPANY APPLICATION NO. (CAA) 123 of 2020

In the matter of Scheme of Amalgamation between API Institute of Clinical Laboratory & Research Private Limited and Dr. Lal PathLabs Limited and their respective shareholders and creditors

Company Application No. (CAA) 123 of 2020 filed BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL,
NEW DELHI, COURT-III, AT NEW DELHI

Dr. Lal PathLabs Limited (CIN No. L74899DL1995PLC065388), a company incorporated under the Companies Act, 1956, having its Registered Office at Block E, Sector-18, Rohini, New Delhi - 110085

...Applicant Company/Transferee Company

ADVERTISEMENT OF NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to directions issued vide order dated 29th January, 2021 passed in the Company Application No. (CAA) 123 of 2020 (hereinafter referred to as the "Company Application") by the Hon'ble National Company Law Tribunal, New Delhi Bench that Company Application under Sections 230 to 232 of the Companies Act, 2013 has been presented by the Applicant Company for seeking approval of the proposed Scheme of Amalgamation between the Transferee Company and API Institute of Clinical Laboratory & Research Private Limited and their respective shareholders and creditors.

The next date of hearing on the Company Application fixed by the Hon'ble Tribunal is 9th March, 2021. Any person desirous of supporting or opposing the said Company Application should send notice of his/ her intention signed by him/ her or their advocate along with their name and address to the Counsel for the Applicant Company so as to reach the Counsel for the Applicant Company not later than two days before the date fixed for hearing of the Company Application, if the said person seeks to oppose the Company Application. A copy of the Company Application in (CAA) 123 of 2020 will be furnished by the undersigned to any person requiring the same on payment of prescribed charges for the same.

Dated this 8th day of February, 2021

Tarun Dua/ Anant Garg

L&L Partners
Law Offices

Counsel for the Applicant Company
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OA No. 1435/2018

Citibank N.A. Applicant

VERSUS

Mr. Jamil Ahmed Defendant

To,

1. Mr. Jamil Ahmed, House No. 3910,

1st Floor, Gali Jagat Cinema Walli, Near

Kasturba Hospital, Darya Ganj, New

Delhi - 110002. Also at: Jami &

Company, Shop No. 42, Poultry Market,

Ghazipur, Near Fish Market, New Delhi - 110096

Whereas the above named applicant has instituted a case for recovery of Rs. 11,50,891/- (Rupees Eleven Lakhs Fifty Thousand Eight Hundred Ninety One Only) against you and whereas it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in ordinary way. Therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance before this Tribunal, the case will be heard and decided in your absence.

Due to ongoing Pandemic Situation, all the matters will be taken up through Video Conferencing and for that purpose:-

(i) All the Advocates/Litigants shall download the "Cisco Webex" application/Software;

(ii) "Meeting ID" and "Password" for the next date of hearing qua cases to be taken by "Registrar/recovery Officer-I and Recovery Officer-II shall be available one day prior to the next date at DRT Official Portal i.e. "drt.gov.in" under the Public Notice Head.

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Heat is on

Given his provenance ~ his book, after all, is titled 'What Was Liberalism? The Past, Present and Promise of A Noble Idea' ~ it would be relatively easy for the administration and the BJP's communication machine to dismiss and/or demonise James Traub as the archetypal Western liberal who is clueless about the Indic resurgence on the subcontinent. They would be ill-advised to do so. For Traub, although his positions on the issues of the day are rooted very much in the knowledge claims of Western social sciences and he can fairly be described as a long-term resident of the left-liberal ecosystem which has romanticised the shambolic non-governance and rise of vicious identity politics in these parts over the decades in the name of democracy, is also an old India hand who has been reporting from and on the country from the days of the Emergency. Traub is a fine journalist with an inside track on the Joe Biden administration and what he has been hearing ~ as he writes in the latest issue of 'Foreign Policy' ~ ought to be of concern to New Delhi. For President Biden is under pressure from within to 'get tough on America's friends', especially those countries where the Democrats perceive there has been a marked democratic backsliding. And India heads that list. The fact that India is described as a "democracy in decline" in an influential journal, citing the recent crackdown on protesters and journalists in particular, and civil society in general, is not good news. Even if one accepts New Delhi's argument that such sweeping generalisations are an insult to India's democratic vibrancy, values, and institutions, and conveniently elide the facts of particular cases whether relating to protestors, journalists or NGOs, it cannot be denied that Freedom House now ranks the country in 83rd place, at the very bottom of officially "free" states, and expresses the fear that the "values-based distinction between Beijing and New Delhi" could be getting "blurred". Or that Reporters Without Borders ranks India 142nd on Press freedom - three slots below Myanmar. New Delhi may well choose to hit back, and none of these organisations are free of bias. But just as it would have been a sober option to have ignored the tweets on farmers' protests by international celebrities/influencers rather than mounting a clumsily orchestrated counter-campaign, it would make more sense to hear out these criticisms, course-correct where required, and ignore the noise for the rest.

President Biden has been quick to denounce the recent goings-on in Myanmar, Russia, and China. But how, as Traub asks, will an administration committed to restoring democracy at home and abroad deal with an "illiberal democracy" that is a rising power in Asia and a crucial counterweight to China? The answer to that question may well lie in how the Indian establishment plays this going forward. New Delhi by all means should stick to its guns on the farm laws, abrogation of Article 370, the push for a uniform civil code, the Supreme Court mandated reconstruction of a Ram temple at Ayodhya, and protecting individual liberty as well as fixing individual liability before the law. The sovereign domain in a democracy is non-negotiable. But we would do our cause no harm by being less abrasive and more open to conversations.

Feelers to Houthi

Joe Biden has been remarkably considerate. The American President has signalled his intent to delete the Houthi rebels of Yemen from the State Department's list of what it calls "foreign terrorist organizations". This reverses an 11-hour decision of the Trump administration not the least because Biden had resolved on 4 February that the United States would be terminating its support for a Saudi-led coalition's offensive operations in Yemen. Aid groups have already expressed their misgivings, saying that the gesture in favour of the Houthis will almost certainly worsen the dire humanitarian situation in the country. Since 2015, the crisis in Yemen represents a war without end. While the imperative of peace is generally conceded after six years of relentless strife, whether or not Biden's gesture will hasten the end to a festering conflict must remain an open question. There are red herrings across Biden's trail; the Houthis are as much a player in the Arab world's game theory as is Saudi Arabia. And the President must be acutely aware of the geostrategic contrempts. It bears recall that the State Department added the rebel group to a list of official terrorist groups on the day before Donald Trump left office despite an outcry from humanitarian organizations that said it would make it harder to get food, medical assistance and other basic goods to people in Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen, a direly fractious country. The Trump administration defended the move as part of a "broad pressure campaign" against Iran, which backs the Houthis against Yemeni forces supported by Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and other regional powers.

"We have formally notified Congress of the Secretary's intent to revoke these designations," is the official version of the State Department. "This decision has nothing to do with our view of the Houthis and their reprehensible conduct, including attacks against civilians and the kidnapping of American citizens. We are committed to helping Saudi Arabia defend its territory against further such attacks. Our action is due entirely to the humanitarian consequences of this last-minute designation from the prior administration, which the United Nations and humanitarian organizations have since made clear would accelerate the world's worst humanitarian crisis." On Saturday, the Houthis responded officially: "The American administration backing down from this designation is a positive thing and a good thing. The decision was wrong in the first place."

Animal Kingdoms

Eco-Parks serve to preserve and foster wild animals especially those that are endangered, and need special care lest they become extinct. They also serve to help animals breed in greater numbers



There is increasing reluctance on the part of industrialists to undertake afforestation as it is perceived to be a drain on their resources. This is a pity and a wasted opportunity. Not only is it essential for socio-economic reasons, but also to achieve carbon neutrality in their schemes and projects. The Government of India has set up a Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) as a National Advisory Council for technical assistance and evaluation of compensatory afforestation activities. It is advisable that rather than monitoring and giving financial assistance to such projects, afforestation should be made attractive and lucrative for those industries so that they are positively inclined to implement such schemes. Several industries have shown interest in setting up zoos to boost afforestation but they appear unaware of the high maintenance costs and other ethical issues involved in the running of a zoo.

Many environmentalists now see zoos housing animals in cloistered surroundings or cages as little better than a prison. They consider this is cruelty to the animals as well as damaging to the environment. Animals are kept under severe stress in cages and pens, which also leads to high mortality rates. Most zoos across the world are attracting fewer tourists now-a-days. A menagerie of wild animals trapped in cages is looked upon with pity instead of amusement. A visit to a zoo leaves the impression of cruelty towards these hapless animals. Increasingly, many animal rights activists are extremely vocal and seek to protect wildlife from harm and mistreatment.

A zoo may have served its purpose at one point in time but today it has lost its relevance. The Alipore Zoo in Kolkata is in total disarray and has more than 70 per cent of its cages empty. Similarly, zoos in Manali, Mumbai, Vadodara, Bangalore, and Hyderabad are all struggling. There has been a rapid shift globally to close down zoos in favour of Eco Parks. An Eco-Park is a well-

planned and spacious area where animals can live in a natural environment. They are not enclosed in cages or in highly restricted areas. In fact, they are so well adapted to these surroundings that they even multiply freely without any artificial means. This is something that most wild animals cannot do in captivity. A barren rocky hillock, neither fit for any industry, farming or residential purposes could become an ideal site for an eco-park. Its minimum area is anywhere over 200 acres or more. It can also house a variety of species many of which are endangered, primarily for the sake of trying to save them from extinction.

Eco-Parks are well designed and provide tourists with a panoramic view of wildlife, in a planned setting where the animals scarcely feel as though they are in restricted or confined surroundings. The National Park is thus left undisturbed and it is the Eco-Park that the tourists enjoy. Despite Eco-Parks being a great tourist attraction, very few exist in India. Meanwhile, overseas, Eco-Parks reap profits from tourism that in turn can be used to not only preserve wildlife sanctuaries but also become a valuable source of income for sustainability.

An Eco-Park can provide huge climate benefits as we tackle global warming. Bushes and trees can be grown with a plan for landscaping the areas by planting the right trees to suit birds and animals, and with a design to create a carbon sink. Industries could grow trees to offset their carbon emissions and also gain lucratively in the process. Also, industries could also adopt these parks for afforestation.

Eco-Parks serve to preserve and foster wild animals especially those that are endangered, and need special care lest they become extinct. They also serve to help animals breed in greater numbers. For example, a leopard

may give birth to two or four cubs but the chance of the cub's survival in the wild is less than one out of four. In an Eco-Park, they breed more freely, they are maintained in insular areas and under remote supervision which results in much better survival rates. In the present scenario where many animals are on the verge of extinction, such drastic measures are a must to ensure the survival of endangered species.

Most members of the wild cat family such as the tiger, cheetah, civet cat, and other smaller wild cats are close to extinction. The Indian cheetah which once was so common all over the sub-continent is now extinct. As with the Felidae family, the Indian bear (both Himalayan and peninsular), the Indian ungulates, the Indian wolf, the rhino and the hippo, the gibbon, the great Indian bustard, the Indian vulture, and almost all members of the pheasant family have either been made extinct or are at great risk of becoming extinct in the near future.

At the same time, there are several water species such as the blind freshwater dolphin (once a beautiful sight in the river Ganges), the gharial, the sea otter, and several sea species of whales, dolphins, dugongs, sea turtles, and so on which are in danger.

There are also many species which are not endangered today but need protection like the nilgai, the wild boar, and the peacock due to heavy deforestation and poaching. Eco-Parks act like a bulwark protecting wildlife, enabling them to breed, and then letting the adolescent animals into other national parks in a planned way. For the tiger, for example, an Eco-Park of 10 sq kilometres would suffice. Adult females are reared with one or two males and as they breed, the cubs are looked after by the females and monitored by the park authorities from a distance to ensure they are healthy, well provided for, and are not victims

of other carnivores or other male tigers. There is little or no direct contact with humans except remote monitoring, food provisions (live animals for hunting), medical supervision, and creating a natural ecosystem.

Many animals rearing activities in eco-parks, like those in the Scandinavian Eco-Park, have been so successful that they have been able to send surplus animals to other Eco-Parks or even back into the wild. They also have a gene pool which will be of immense help in preserving highly endangered species.

Singapore's River Themed Wildlife Park, Japan's Amphibian Park, the Madras Snake Park, and Australia's World Famous Marine Crocodile Park are biological storehouses. Many of these parks also take up the onerous task of tending to old, abused, and decrepit circus animals and other such unfortunate creatures who have been victims of man's cruelty and avarice (Kartick Satyanarayan's Bear Rescue Park in New Delhi is a classic example).

These parks could serve as part of veterinary colleges and research centers, and contribute to biomedicine in areas such as the investigation of snake venom, and developing antidotes, or for the study of animal senses such as a centre devoted to the study of Heat Sensors in Snakes or the Infrasound Sensors of Bats. This information can be useful to help us understand them better.

Eco-Parks are evolving institutions in respect to be conservation of biological diversity. From past functions in recreation as menageries and in education as living museums, they are coming to discharge these functions, plus other meaningful ones in research and conservation, as internationally oriented conservation centres. The zoo is now being transformed into a modern, interactive Eco-Park that aims to raise awareness of environmental issues and the importance of protecting animals' natural habitats. Let all of us do a kind act to fight for animal rights and give them freedom from zoos. Animals are also a part of the ecosystem which we all belong to.

A MEMBER OF THE **ANN**
ASIAN NEWS NETWORK

ASIAN VOICES
Banks can help stop wildlife trade

Despite being the fourth most lucrative trade globally, illegal wildlife trade (IWT) is often overshadowed by more prominent criminal ventures, such as drug trafficking and arms dealing. It is estimated that \$26 billion is made yearly at the cost of our natural environment, fuelling corruption, and damaging the reputation and economies of the affected countries. Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the global money laundering watchdog, recently released a report to the matter, which makes it clear that organised crime uses the wildlife trade to exploit weaknesses in the financial and non-financial sectors, to move, hide and launder their proceeds Asia, in particular, is deeply entangled in wildlife trafficking due to its rich biodiversity, high demand for illegal wildlife products and strong transit points. While China is allegedly the largest receiver of wildlife items, Cambodia, Indonesia, Singapore, and Hong Kong are also prominent end destinations. In recent years, more than 200 tonnes of African elephant ivory has been seized in the Southeast Asia region alone. This amount represents about 3,000 dead elephants and sadly, while these seem like staggering numbers, they are just a mere fraction of the trade brought to light by successful seizures. The methods for trafficking wildlife, and the inevitable money laundering that is involved, are hardly new. Tactics such

Jakarta Post
as mingling illicit proceeds with legal ones, mislabelling shipping containers, and forging documents are used by criminals to move, hide, and launder their proceeds. Hence, this also becomes a dimension of the wider trade-based money laundering problem, because from that perspective there is no difference between the content of a container being forged goods or ivory, or between people wanting to earn illicit money through trade fraud or selling powdered rhino horn. To crack down on IWT, it's important to understand how it works. Here are some of the facts: Trade routes are as global as those for any other illicit trade. According to Europol, the EU is a major transit point between Africa and Asia, and perhaps more importantly, the European fashion industry accounts for a whopping 96 per cent of the python skin trade. If we're looking at the trade of live animals such as tropical birds or snakes, the trade might very well be just between South and North America. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has found that both the countries of origin and destination are often unknown. While IWT does involve poaching of many iconic animals, it also involves various species that most people probably never heard of, such as glass eel smuggling from the US. Following the financial trails of wildlife traffickers is one of the most effective ways to identify broader criminal networks. The responsibilities that financial services organisations have to detect and fight money laundering also apply to illegal wildlife trafficking. Key things banks should know IWT risk must be part of a bank's risk framework and their anti-money laundering risk assessment, for example, by adding high-risk sources (Africa, South America), transit (EU), and destination countries.

J P GUPTA
The writer is Chairman ~ Expert Appraisal Committee (Industry-II), Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, Govt. of India

This refers to the editorial, 'Education suffers' (5 February). Education sector has been seriously hit post-Covid-19 both in terms of financial sustainability and also in terms of learning outcomes. This budget hasn't had anything specific to expand budgetary spend to offset the impact of Covid-19. The sector felt that the budget fell a bit short on capitalizing on the opportunity to build momentum for digitization in Indian education that could have had far-reaching benefits for the young population. The Centre has slashed allocation for education by about six per cent, even as it announced the development of 15,000 'Adarsh Vidyalayas' (model schools). Given the economic crisis that we are in, due to Covid-19 and the several competing social sectors that demand great attention, it is high time that the State and Central governments invite private capital to invest in education. This would mean higher investments through the private sector and FDI which could then be regulated by a government body. It is hoped that the MHRD provides more clarity on setting up institutions to strengthen assessments on critical skills enumerated by the NEP. However, the proposal to set up 100 new Sainik schools in partnership

with NGOs seems to be a forward-looking measure since the private sector and the states will not only expand the school base in this area but will also bring in synergies from the NGO and private sector. The announcement of qualitatively strengthening 15,000 schools under National Education Policy is likely to exert favourable impact on school education. Overall, education deserved more than what has been offered in this budget.

Yours, etc., SS Paul,
Nadia, 5 February

With the proposed GNCTD Act amendments, that relative calm stands threatened. It reportedly requires the city government to send legislative proposals for the

Cabinet's approval for amending the Government of NCT of Delhi (GNCTD) Act to arm the lieutenant governor with greater powers to control the Delhi council of ministers, stakes a needless inter-governmental confrontation. In July 2018, the Supreme Court had delineated a rational division of powers recognising Centre's prerogative over police, public order and land, while the Delhi government didn't need to obtain LG's "concurrence" on every issue of day to day governance. This ruling had eased considerably the flashpoints between LG Anil Baijal and the AAP government.

LG's opinion 15 days in advance and administrative proposals seven days ahead. No elected government will stomach vesting such discretionary powers in an unelected authority. Governance could again hit a standstill; the LG's lack of accountability to Delhi's electorate is reason enough to proceed slowly. Ironically, better governance and reducing potential conflicts were cited as reasons for the amendments. But Delhi police's recurring failures under Union home ministry supervision without city government oversight question such rationale.

Mixing politics with the administration of Delhi is best avoided. The national capital's residents gave AAP a second overwhelming mandate last year.

Rather than derail, BJP must close-

ly scrutinise AAP's work and claims on education, healthcare, cheap electricity and ration delivery. Attempting to run Delhi through the LG by retarding the elected government's policies will produce an administrative quagmire. Delhi already suffers a multiplicity of authorities including Union home and urban development ministries, LG, an elected state government, five municipal bodies and Delhi Development Authority. The law firm protests serve caution against bulldozing the opposition, even when the law itself is perfectly justified and rational. Delhi sorely needs clean air, solid waste management, law enforcement and ease of doing business ~ not another power grab.

Yours, etc., Khokan Das,
Kolkata, 5 February.

ELECTION BUDGET

SIR, The West Bengal Chief Minister showed her magnanimity in the proposed Budget this year as it is an election year. Every party takes advantage of the budget in election year and Mamata Banerjee is no exception. Her interim budget is appreciated.

She has proposed hundreds of flyovers, skyways, new roads, sewage, etc, only for Kolkata. There is nothing for the rest of West Bengal, not even for the 500-year-old twin city of Howrah. Indeed, Nabanna is in Howrah which is very rapidly becoming an illegal concrete jungle as if it has no civic authority or police. Why this disparity? Is it because most of the ministers and senior leaders of the Trinamul Congress live in Kolkata?

Yours, etc., Tushar Kanti Kar, Howrah, 6 February.



Love in the time of jihad

SUNIL SHARAN

It seems that nothing inflames a Hindu man more today than love jihad. There are many reasons for this. Firstly, in many cultures, women spurning their own and marrying the other is frowned upon by the men. Secondly, there are added problems whenever there is a contentious history with the other.

Before we dive into love jihad, let us dive into a similar jihad waged in a land far away, America. African slaves were brought to America's shores four hundred years ago, shortly after the white man had landed there. The slaves were going to do manual labour all their lives so the pick of them - the creme de la creme - were selected physique-wise. Rowing the galley ships from Africa to America further bolstered their physique.

I remember seeing a documentary about Indian Sikh soldiers stationed somewhere in Europe during World War I. The local women went mad after them. The men were seen as exotic manna from heaven. So too did the white woman in America start visualizing the slaves. The slaves were stronger than their own men. Their skin colour bled exoticism. And their perceived sexual prowess was an insuperable attraction.

White men didn't take kindly to what they called jungle fever. This comingling had to be stopped. Right after the end of slavery and even until today, white American society frowns upon a white woman consorting with a black man. Instead of the white woman running after the black man, it is made out by the white man as if the black man lures her into his dragnet.

The fear that the white woman would run away with a free black man was the principal reason behind the American Civil War. If a black man was caught miscegenating with a white woman, he was simply hung. She was banished into eternal exile. White women were told that their mulatto children would have no place in American society, a fear that persists until today. White women were brainwashed that black men were



rapists and just wanted to use them for sex, a perception that persists until today.

Despite this, and especially in the sports and entertainment industries, there are many white woman-black man liaisons to be found. People in such rarefied air have been able to transcend societal dogmas. Or have they?

I was talking to an Indian Sikh girl in the US recently, and the subject of love jihad in India came up. I had begun to believe that it was some kind of conspiracy hatched by Muslim men to rape Hindu women into. I definitely believe that if Hindu women are allowed to intermarry with Muslim men, then Muslim women too should

be freely allowed by their culture and religion to marry Hindu men.

Restrictions bind Muslim women from doing so. In America, a white man-black woman relationship was taboo in the past, but now it does not carry anywhere near the stigma that a black man-white woman relationship still carries. It seems that there is not much mutual attraction between the black woman and the white man.

My Indian Sikh woman friend disabused me of my notions, or at least tried to. She claimed that Muslim men were so handsome, that's why Hindu women ran after them. By handsome, I am sure she meant that they were fair. I agreed Muslim men appeared physi-

cally stronger because they tend to eat more meat than Hindu men on average. But if there were many fair Muslim men around, then there was no shortage of fair Hindu men either. My discussion with the Sikh woman remained inconclusive.

If you consider the Indian entertainment industry, yes, you will find a lot of Muslim men marrying Hindu women. Not many in India begrudge these alliances. It seems that like in America, once again the interfaith couples have stepped into rarefied air beyond the pale of humdrum Indian society. No one can touch them there.

In America, spurned by white women, white men are increasingly

turning to Asian women in what is described as a virtual pandemic of yellow fever. Such men are also called rice kings, apparently because one of the reasons that they marry Asian women is because of the anticipation of rice-based delicacies made by the women.

Whether Hindu women are naturally attracted to Muslim men or are lured by them, do Hindu men in India have anyone to turn to in case love jihad continues unabated? But then is love jihad a jihad or is it love? The question still boggles the mind.

The writer is an expert on energy and contributes regularly to publications in India and overseas.

Dealing with the perception battle



HARSHA KAKAR

Comments on twitter by a former porn star, Mia Khalifa, a pop singer Rihanna, and youth environmentalist, Greta Thunberg, on supporting the farmers' agitation in India led to a massive response by the Indian government and well-known Indians. These pro-farmer comments were supported by politicians from UK and US, including US representatives, Jim Costa and Ilhan Omar as also Claudia Web from UK. They were also backed by Meena Harris, niece of US Vice President, Kamala Harris, and a few others.

Lawmakers representing UK and US, who supported agitating farmers, are ignoring the fact that their coun-

tries have approached WTO for unfair trade practices involving Indian agriculture. These governments have complained of Indian subsidies to agriculturists, including MSP, thus making the Indian agriculture market difficult to penetrate. In 2018, the US claimed that "India gives 60-70 per cent subsidy for rice and wheat against the stipulated 10 per cent." It is equally surprising that many of them did not comment when Capitol Hill was stormed last month.

The three who tweeted are influencers on social media with large followings. Rihanna, with over 100 million followers, has the fourth largest follower base on twitter. An article titled, 'What is an Influencer- Social media influencers defined,' published in Jan-

uary, states, "Mega influencers are people with a vast number of followers on their social networks. Although there are no fixed rules on boundaries between different types of followers, a common view is that mega-influencers have more than 1 million followers on at least one social platform."

It adds, "Many mega-influencers are celebrities who have gained their fame offline – movie stars, sportspeople, musicians, and even reality television stars. Their services will be costly." While the article refers to commercial activities, there is no doubt that celebrities occasionally offer support on political issues, either on personal request or payment. An Indian investigative site has claimed Rihanna was paid by a PR firm, linked to Khal-

eman supporters.

The Indian government reacted with a statement which read, "We would like to emphasise that these protests must be seen in the context of India's democratic ethos and polity, and the efforts of the Government and concerned farmer groups to resolve the impasse." It added, "It is unfortunate to see vested interest groups trying to enforce their agenda on these protests and derail them."

Similar views were espoused by many other prominent Indians.

Greta Thunberg inadvertently spilled the beans by including in her tweet a 'Tool Kit', which displayed these tweets were part of an extensive strategy which included holding protests across the globe. When the truth was revealed, Greta deleted her tweet and pushed another, claiming to be a victim, stating, "hate, threats and violations of human rights will never change that (her support)." Similarly, faced with a violent backlash on social media, Meera Harris was compelled to defend herself.

These comments by non-government entities, but social media influencers, with little knowledge on issues concerning the Indian farmer, should have been challenged by all Indian political parties, standing together, discarding their political affiliations. After all, it was a planned action to damage the Indian global image, not that of the current government alone. Political differences should never come in the way of countering such comments.

Former Finance Minister P Chidambaram tweeted, "When will you realize that people concerned with issues of human rights and livelihoods do not recognize national boundaries?"

In 2013, when Nawaz Sharif, in an interaction with Indian and Pakistani journalists in New York, termed

Mammoan Singh as a 'dehati aurat' (rural woman), it was Narendra Modi who led the charge against Nawaz. He stated in a rally even before Mammoan and Nawaz met in New York, "There can never be a greater insult to the Indian PM. There cannot be a greater insult to India. We will not tolerate any insult to India."

Another question which arises is whether the Indian government should have reacted to comments by a pop star, ex porn star and a youth environmentalist, supported by a few others. Their tweets may provide international traction to the protests as also draw in social media comments by a few global politicians. However, they do not represent views of governments. The Indian government claimed it was essential to respond, to influence those supporting the tweets without being aware of realities.

Had the government remained silent and let the debate continue on social media, it could have projected an image of power, strength and unwillingness to get drawn into policy issues which are solely internal. Countering the tweets displayed weakness and hurried decision making. It also provided additional publicity to the tweets, which may otherwise have been ignored. To back the Indian government and discredit comments by their citizens, the US and UK governments stated they supported the new laws and hoped protests would end with dialogue.

Within the nation, these comments have brought together many people who view them as interference in India's internal matters. Indians should not fall prey to targeted propaganda. We must accept that protest is a right in a democracy and our internal differences should be resolved through democratic means of dialogue, rather than through violence and intimidation.

The writer is a retired Major-General of the Indian Army.

NO 28820

ACROSS

- 1 Ridicule dummy (4)
- 3 Brute, maybe a strongman to some extent (5)
- 6 Thrill from essentially smacking naked skin first (4)
- 9 Choice of sides from newsroom accepted as standard (5)
- 10 Kiss of death from Bambi, maybe defining animated story (9)
- 12 Born in the jungle, ultimately (3)
- 13 Government committee's firm support (5)
- 14 Genetic code – with two lines describing the old from the east Lancashire town (7)
- 16 Awkwardly move a ball into empty goalmouth (7)
- 19 Surrender legal case about British money (6)
- 21 Order eggs flipped, showing affirmation (6)

DOWN

- 22 A fling with almost entirely inflexible, unscrupulous lawyer (7)
- 26 Frivolous four interrupt rehearsal (7)
- 29 In London 007 spelled out a mode of dispatch (5)
- 30 See 20 Down
- 31 Reduce European investment in party before team become old-fashioned (9)
- 33 Cream tea, extremely deficient and low in calories (5)
- 34 By which I mean an offence (2,2)
- 35 Creep dropping behind student brainbox? (5)
- 36 Unlit, deserted animal sanctuary (4)
- 1 Threaten nurse in club (6)
- 2 13 making love before showing brains (7)
- 4 Faded out the answer to what started Norton on the radio (5)
- 5 Help stops every now and then (3)

It is thirty years since one of the most tragic scandals that have ever disturbed the political world ruined the career of the "uncrowned king" of Ireland; and a new generation has now grown up to whom Parnell, Gladstone, Salisbury, and most of the other great figures of the political stage at the beginning of the last decade of the nineteenth century are but names on the printed page. Parnell had just come triumphantly through the ordeal of the Commission before which the Pigott forgeries were unmasked when his appearance in the Divorce Court as co-respondent in the case of O'Shea v. O'Shea in November, 1890, compromised hopelessly his position as leader of the Irish Home Rule party. The man who in the eyes of the public, and even in his dealings with his Parliamentary followers, was the incarnation of cold, stern aloofness, the very antithesis of the popular ideal of an Irishman, was suddenly revealed as one who had been leading a double life. Parnell's ascendancy over his colleagues was such that they re-elected him as their chairman, but Gladstone's intimation that his continuance in the position of Irish leader would nullify future efforts in the cause of Home Rule brought the Irish party face to face with the fatal effects of the revelations in the Divorce Court. The censures of Irish Catholic bishops had a similar effect.

THEFT WHILE IN CUSTODY

About a fortnight ago a man was discovered in an empty wagon at Sealdah Station with a despatch box of the Agent of the East Indian Railway which had been taken from the Howrah Station. The man gave his name as Surendra Nath Madak but it was subsequently ascertained that he was a Mahomedan and that his name was Karimullah. He was arrested and placed in the Railway Police lock-up at Sealdah Station where there was also a Bengali detained on a charge of being drunk and disorderly. The next morning the latter missed a gold ring which he had been wearing. Karimullah was searched and the ring was found on him. Yesterday the Police Magistrate of Sealdah sentenced Karimullah to three months' rigorous imprisonment for the theft of the ring.

INTERRUPTED MEETING AT KARACHI

Four leading Karachi citizens summoned a public meeting at Khalidina Hall last evening to consider the development of Sind and the formation of Sind's representatives on the new Councils into a union of progress for engineering the betterment of this province. The Hon. Mr. Webb was advertised as chairman of the meeting. One hour before the meeting a group of non-cooperationists collected outside the hall and harangued passers-by. They collected a large crowd who eventually rushed the hall and prevented the meeting being held by attempting to elect their own chairman. Mr. Webb and others appealed unsuccessfully for fair play to a large and noisy audience, many of whom were unaware of the objects of the meeting and asked them to withdraw from the hall.

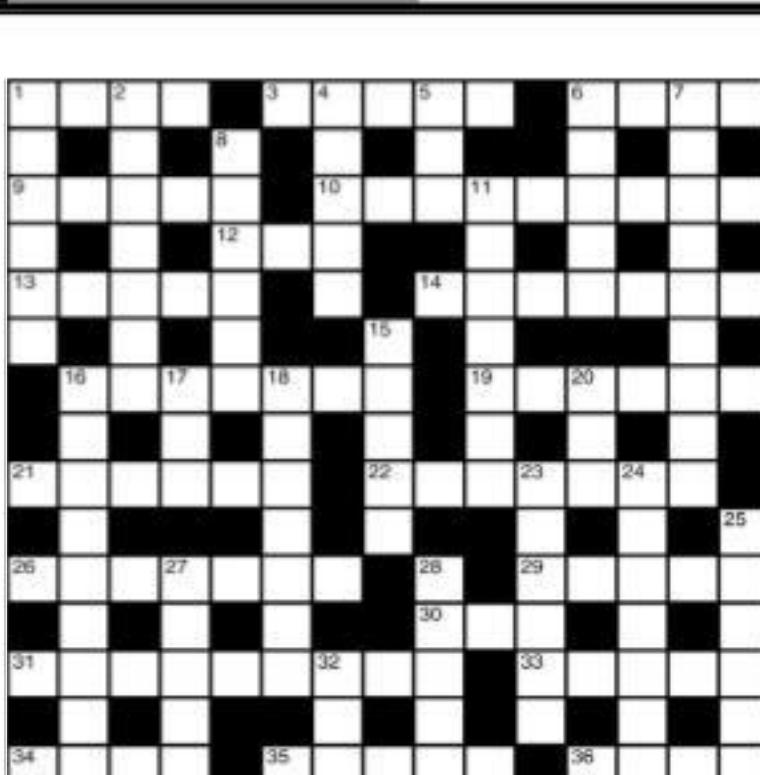
BASSEIN SURVEYORS' STRIKE

As sequel to the recent strike among the Revenue surveyors at Ngathaingyaung, in Bassein District, owing to their memorial for more pay not being granted, Maung Su and Maung Hmu, two third grade pleaders, and Maung Po Hla, petition writer, Bassein, have been sent up for trial after enquiry by the District Judge of Bassein. The first two accused are charged under the Legal Practitioners Act with unprofessional conduct in that they advised the strikers to continue the strike. The second accused was further charged with having suggested to the surveyors they should state a certain telegram was sent by the Inspector to the Superintendent stating that the strike was over. The third accused was charged with holding a meeting of strikers in his house where the matter of the strike was discussed.

GOLD AND SILVER EXPORT BILL

In the House of Commons, Mr. Samuel moved the rejection of the Gold and Silver Export Bill on the ground that freedom to export silver to the East was essential for our great interests there. He said that the Government had encouraged the formation in Britain of a syndicate to have the sole right of financing the Chinese Government. A British Syndicate had formed a syndicate in China, composed of Chinese merchants. If the Bill were passed the Government would be supporting the Chinese financial group, thus eliminating the whole of the British merchants in China, and the latter would be unable to carry out any large contracts with China. He believed that negotiations were going on with syndicates in America, Japan and China.

CROSSWORD



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

NOTE: Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required. (By arrangement with The Independent, London)

The overall market is maintaining its buoyancy with rally in all sectors, especially auto, IT and metals.

VINOD NAIR
HEAD OF RESEARCH, GEOJIT FINANCIAL SERVICES

THUMBNAILS

Canara rate cut: Canara Bank has reduced its marginal cost of funds based lending rate (MLCR) on loans/advances by 10 basis points for overnight and one month tenor with effect from 7 February. The overnight and one-month MLCR is now 6.70 per cent, three-month MLCR 6.95 per cent, six-month MLCR 7.50 per cent, and one year MLCR 7.35 per cent, it said in a statement on Monday. **PPI**

Aditya Birla Capital: Aditya Birla Capital Limited has reported a 15 per cent growth in consolidated net profit at Rs 289 crore for the quarter ended 31 December 2020. The company's net profit in the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal stood at Rs 250 crore, according to a Press release. **SNS**

Dollar profit: Leading garment & hosiery company Dollar Industries Limited has reported a net profit of Rs 28.58 crore for the quarter ended 31 December 2020. The company's net profit during the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal stood at Rs 19.58 crore, according to a Press release. **SNS**

VRS Foods Ltd launches 'mooPay': VRS Foods Ltd, under the brand of 'Paras', has launched user friendly digital direct farmers payment application 'mooPay'. The app has been launched in collaboration with - tech startup and World Economic Forum's technology pioneer 'Stellaps' in two different milk shed zones of VRS Foods Ltd - Kanpur Dehat (UP), and Malanpur (MP) in the presence of the MD operations Narendra Nagar, according to a Press release. **SNS**

Insurance plan: Canara HSBC Oriental Bank of Commerce Life Insurance has strengthened its guaranteed savings portfolio with a new "Guaranteed Income 4 Life" plan acknowledging the needs of the customers in the given hour, according to a Press release. **SNS**

Utkarsh SFB: Utkarsh Small Finance Bank Limited (USFBL) has announced the inauguration of its branch in Salt Lake in Kolkata. On the occasion, Govind Singh, MD & CEO, USFBL, said: "The state of West Bengal figures high in our focus of expansion and we are pleased to expand our footprint by launching a new branch at Salt Lake, Kolkata." **SNS**

Malabar Gold and Diamonds: Malabar Gold and Diamonds, the flagship company of Malabar Group, will enable buyers to purchase highest quality gold bars sourced from gold mining to the hands of consumers. With this initiative gold traders, manufacturers and investors will witness transparent process through block chain technology, said a Press release. **SNS**

Vivo smartphone: Smartphone maker Vivo has expanded its Y-series line-up with the launch of Vivo Y20G. Priced at Rs 14,990 for 6GB+128GB storage variant, the Y20G will be available on Vivo India e-store, Amazon, Flipkart, Paytm, Tatacliq, and across all partner retail stores, said a Press release. **SNS**

Sensex closes above 51,000 for first time

Post-Budget rally continues for sixth session amidst strong corporate results

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 8 FEBRUARY

The Sensex closed above 51,000 points for the first time while the Nifty smashed past the 15,100-mark today as the post-Budget rally continued for the sixth session amid strong corporate results and robust foreign fund inflows.

A persistently bullish trend in global markets further bolstered risk appetite, traders said.

After touching a lifetime high of 51,523.38 points during the day, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended 617.14 points or 1.22 per cent higher at its record closing peak of 51,348.77 points.

► The NSE Nifty surged 191.55 points or 1.28 per cent to its lifetime closing high of 15,115.80 points. It touched an intra-day record of 15,159.90 points. ► The rupee fell by 4 paise



to close at 72.97 against the US dollar.

Mahindra and Mahindra (M&M) was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, soaring 7.23 percent, followed by Bajaj Finserv, Bharti Airtel, PowerGrid, Infosys and ICICI Bank.

On the other hand, Hindustan Unilever, Kotak Bank, Bajaj Finance, ITC, Bajaj Auto and Sun Pharma closed in the red, dropping up to 1.43 per cent.

Strong global cues supported the domestic rally. PSU banks, which was on a bull run, paused today with some correction noticeable in

FMCGs.

"The overall market is maintaining its buoyancy with rally in all sectors, especially auto, IT and metals. Improved domestic outlook is encouraging sustained FPI inflows," said Vinod Nair, head of research at Geojit Financial Services.

Sector-wise, BSE auto, metals, industrials, telecom, utilities and teck indices rallied as much as 3.07 per cent, while FMCG index closed with losses.

In the broader markets, the

BSE mid-cap and small-cap indices spurted up to 1.53 per cent.

Global shares marched to record highs on hopes that US President Joe Biden's \$1.9 trillion Covid-19 relief package will be passed by lawmakers soon.

Elsewhere in Asia, bourses in Shanghai, Hong Kong and Tokyo ended with significant gains, while Seoul was in the red.

Stock exchanges in Europe were trading on a positive note in mid-session deals.

Meanwhile, the global oil benchmark Brent crude crossed the \$60 per barrel mark after more than a year on improving demand prospects.

The rupee fell by 4 paise to close at 72.97 against the US dollar, weighed by a strong dollar sentiment and high demand for the greenback from importers.

At the Interbank Foreign Exchange (forex), the rupee opened sharply higher at 72.86 against the dollar. During the session, the unit touched a high of 72.80.

Ministry to finalise rules under 4 labour codes this week

NEW DELHI, 8 FEBRUARY

The ministry of labour and employment is likely to complete the process to finalise the rules under the four labour codes, paving the way for making reforms a reality soon.

Besides, the ministry is also progressing to roll out a web portal by June 2021 for registration and other facilities of workers in the unorganised sector, including gig and platform workers and migrant workers as enshrined in her Budget speech this year by finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

Rule making process is already underway and likely to complete in the coming week. All stakeholders are also consulted in framing of rules. This ministry would soon be in a position to bring into force the four Codes, viz., Code on Wages, Industrial Relations, Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSH) and Social Security Codes," labour secretary Apurva Chandra said in a media briefing today.

The labour ministry had envisaged implementing the four labour codes from 1 April this year in one go. **PTI**

Govt challenges verdict in Vodafone tax case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 8 FEBRUARY

India has challenged in the Singapore High Court an international arbitration tribunal constituted under the agreement between UK and India for Promotion and Protection of Investments and the Arbitration Rules of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) has ruled in favour of Cairn Group (Cairn Energy Plc and Cairn UK Holdings Limited) vide its order dated 21 December 2020.

An application has been filed in the High Court of Singapore to set aside the award dated 25.09.2020 in the case of Vodafone International Holdings BV. In the case of Cairn group, the matter is under consideration of the government," Thakur said in the Lok Sabha.

To a question on whether the total retrospective tax has to be paid by the government to these companies, Thakur said: "The details of the award are under examination by the government".

The government had used a 2012 law that gave tax authorities the power to reopen past cases, to seek taxes from Vodafone and Cairn over alleged capital gains made.

to medical care," Gowda said.

At this year's edition, "we would like to deliberate upon strategies to help us innovate and bring newer and affordable therapies to the market and cement India's position as a truly world-class favoured investment destination," he added.

Emphasising the importance of India for the inoculation against Covid-19 globally, minister of state for chemicals and fertilisers Mansukh Mandaviya said India has already made two Covid-19 vaccines and has supplied them to 12 countries.

India has also launched the world's largest Covid-19 vaccination programme, he added. The international conference will also provide an opportunity for showcasing how the Covid-19 crisis can be transformed into an opportunity for India, Mandaviya said.

Pharma market likely to hit \$130 billion

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 8 FEBRUARY

The Indian pharmaceutical industry has proved to be a dependable supplier of quality drugs at a time of global need on account of the Covid-19 pandemic, and is expected to reach a size of \$130 billion by 2030, chemical and fertiliser minister DV Sadananda Gowda said today.

Following the onset of the pandemic, the Indian pharma industry has shown its role as a reliable supplier of drugs and medical devices in a time of need, he added.

"The total market size of the Indian pharma industry is expected to reach \$130 billion by 2030. The medical devices industry in India has the potential to grow at 28 per cent per annum to reach \$50 billion by 2025," Gowda said.

He was addressing the curtain raiser Press conference

D.V. SADANANDA GOWDA
CHEMICAL AND FERTILISER MINISTER

on the 6th edition of "Indian Pharma & India Medical Device 2021".

"India has been serving more than 200 countries with its pharma products and will continue to discharge its responsibilities. We intend to continue formulating plans that are based on sound science, technology, business sense, and ethics," Gowda said.

Pharmaceuticals are one of the top-10 attractive sec-

tors for foreign investment in India. FDI inflows in the pharmaceuticals sector reached Rs 3,650 crore in financial year 2019-20, recording a growth of 98 per cent year-on-year, he added.

"While India will continue to strive to achieve and maintain a leadership position in the manufacturing and supply of high-quality generic medicines and medical devices, we also need to look at how to improve access

ONGC to usher in India's first geothermal energy at Ladakh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 8 FEBRUARY

State-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) today said it will implement India's maiden geothermal field development project in Ladakh that will use the heat generated by the Earth's core to generate clean energy.

The Bench also declined Amazon's request to keep its order in abeyance for a week so that it can explore appropriate remedies.

The court while staying the 2 February order said that statutory authorities, like National Company Law Tribunal, Competition Com-

panies of India and the Securities and Exchange Board of India, cannot be restrained from proceeding in accordance with law with regard to the deal.

The court also issued notice to Amazon and sought its stand on Future Retail Ltd's appeal by 26 February when it will commence day-to-day hearing of the matter.

The 2 February order had come on Amazon's suit seeking enforcement of the Emergency Arbitrator (EA) order restraining FRL from going ahead with its Rs 24,713-crore deal with Reliance Retail.

The Bench also declined Amazon's request to keep its order in abeyance for a week so that it can explore appropriate remedies.

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plaints to restrain FRL from going ahead with its Rs 24,713-crore deal with Reliance Retail.

The 25 October 2020 EA order by the Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC) had restrained FRL from going ahead with the deal with Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Retail.

CIL board had in December last year accorded its approval for venturing into the business areas like new and renewable energy. **PTI**

PE firm to buy controlling stake in ZCL Chemicals for ₹1,700 cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 8 FEBRUARY

Private equity fund Advent International will acquire a controlling stake in pharmaceutical company ZCL Chemicals for an enterprise value of Rs 1,700 crore, sources said today. Morgan Stanley Private Equity Asia is exiting its minority stake in ZCL, earlier known as Zandu Chemicals, with the transaction, according to an official statement.

ZCL manufactures specialty active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) and advanced intermediates, with a focus on niche therapeutic areas and has a US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved facility.

Advent announced that it has signed a definitive agreement to acquire a controlling

stake in ZCL Chemicals, while sources said that the enterprise value at which the stake of over 51 per cent has been acquired is Rs 1,700 crore.

► "ZCL is a high-growth business, led by a capable management team, which

will further fortify our presence in the API market, a key sub-sector focus of ours," said Shweta Jalan, managing director and head (India) at Advent International India.

ZCL is a high-growth business, led by a capable management team, which will further fortify our presence in the API market, a key sub-

sector focus of ours," said Shweta Jalan, managing director and head (India) at Advent International India.

This is Advent's third pharmaceutical investment in India and the second in the API space, she said.

In the past 12 months, Advent has committed over \$1.2 billion globally across the healthcare sector and \$600 million in four Indian companies into healthcare, consumer, and financial services, the statement said.

Advent, which signed its first cheque for an Indian company in 2007, has deployed over \$1.7 billion in the country across a dozen deals. Transactions over the past year include RA Chem, Bharat Serums and Vaccines and Aditya Birla Capital.

ZCL's differentiated product portfolio, strong pipeline and its high focus on quality and compliance impressed the private equity fund, its director Pankaj Patwari said. ZCL executive director Nihar Parikh said that over the past 12 years, they have established as a leading pure-play API company.

HCL Tech declares bonus worth ₹700 cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 8 FEBRUARY

HCL Technologies today announced a special one-time bonus worth over Rs 700 crore for its employees, as the IT giant marked \$10 billion (about Rs 72,800 crore) revenue milestone.

The special bonus will be paid to employees in February 2021, amounting to nearly \$90 million plus payroll taxes in some countries, the impact of which is excluded from FY21 EBIT (earnings before interest and taxes) guidance provided by the company last month, HCL Tech said in a statement issued.

HCL Technologies said it

is "issuing a one-time special bonus to employees around the world" worth over Rs 700 crore in recognition of its recent milestone of crossing the \$10-billion mark in revenue for 2020.

"In celebration and gratitude, all employees with one year of service or greater will receive a bonus, the equivalent of ten days' salary," the statement said.

Despite an unrelenting pandemic, each and every member of HCL family demonstrated strong commitment and passion, contributing to the growth of the organisation, Apparao VV, chief human resources officer of HCL Technologies, said.

We expect the sector to grow at higher double digits in the medium term, with private players growing even faster as they have been gaining market share over public sector firms and also because of the increase in premium pricing for the entire populace, with extra care needed

in claim severity across insurers, as the lack of standard rates between hospitals has led to higher outflows, it said.

While Covid-19-like scenarios would be rare events, it would increase the premium pricing for the entire populace, with extra care needed

for the treatment of infectious diseases, the report said.

It said the profitability of a large number of health insurers is largely driven by investment income, as many are yet to achieve underwriting profitability.

With interest rates remaining subdued for a medium duration due to ample liquidity in the system, there would be pressure on the profitability of insurers, the agency said.

It said the incremental use

of the new technology (such as blockchain) would be immensely advantageous for

the segment.

Technology would help reduce redundancy and duplication through seamless and real-time transaction recording across various insurance business process flows comprising contracting, underwriting, claim processing, dis-

tribution and historical tracking of diseases, the report added.

There is a great need for real-time technology for reimbursement-based claims, wherein customers need real-time monitoring of the status at each step of the health insurance claim, the report said.



China is committed to developing a relationship with the US that is non-conflictual
REACTING TO US PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN'S DIG AT CHINESE COUNTERPART XI JINGPING

The Statesman
NEW DELHI, TUESDAY 09 FEBRUARY 2021

09

Police use water cannon as Myanmar stir swells

The coup was seen internationally as a shocking setback for Myanmar, which had been making progress toward democracy in recent years

ASSOCIATED PRESS
YANGON, 8 FEBRUARY

Police fired a water cannon Monday at hundreds of protesters in Myanmar's capital who are demanding the military hand power back to elected officials, as demonstrations against last week's coup intensified and spread to more parts of the country.

The demonstrations in Naypyidaw, ongoing for several days, are especially significant since the city, whose population includes many civil servants and their families, has no tradition of protest and has a heavy military presence.

A protest also swelled at a major downtown intersection in the country's largest city, Yangon, with people chanting slogans, raising a three-fin-

ger salute that is a symbol of resistance and carrying placards saying, Reject the military coup and Justice for Myanmar."

There were also reports of new demonstrations in towns in the north, southeast and east of the country, as well as in the city of Mandalay, where there was a procession of marchers and motorbikes.

We do not want the military junta, said Daw Moe, a protester in Yangon. We never ever wanted this junta. Nobody wants it. All the people are ready to fight them. State media for the first time on Monday made reference to the protests, claiming they were endangering the country's stability.

Democracy can be destroyed if there is no discipline, according to a statement from the Ministry of Information, read on state television.



sition station. We will have to take legal actions to prevent acts that are violating state stability, public safety and the rule of law.

The coup was seen internationally as a shocking setback for Myanmar, which had been making progress toward democracy in recent years after five decades of military rule.

The takeover came the day newly elected lawmakers were supposed to take their

seats in Parliament after November elections. The generals have said that vote was marred by fraud though the country's election commission has dismissed that claim.

The growing protests recall previous movements in the Southeast Asian country's long and bloody struggle for democracy. On Sunday, tens of thousands of protesters rallied at the city's Sule Pagoda, which was a focal point of

demonstrations against military rule during a massive 1988 uprising and again during a 2007 revolt led by Buddhist monks. The military used deadly force to end both of those uprisings. Aside from a few officers, soldiers have not been in the streets at protests this past week.

Photos of the standoff in Naypyitaw on Monday showed a vast crowd of protesters hemmed in on several sides

by large numbers of police and police vehicles. Officers there trained a water cannon on the crowd, which was gathered near a giant statue of Aung San, who led the country's 1940s fight for independence from Britain and is the father of Aung San Suu Kyi, the elected leader who was deposed by last week's takeover.

Suu Kyi, who became an international symbol of the country's fight for freedom while detained in her home for 15 years and earned the Nobel Peace Prize for her efforts, is now back under house arrest.

The risks of such confrontations were highlighted Sunday in the town of Myawaddy, on Myanmar's eastern border with Thailand, when police shot into the air in an effort to disperse a crowd. The Assistance Association

for Political Prisoners, an independent watchdog group, said one woman had been shot without providing details about her condition.

There have been no signs that either the protesters or the military will back down in their fight over who is the country's legitimate government: the politicians from Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy party, which won the recent elections in a landslide, or the junta. Suu Kyi's party has asked for international recognition as the legitimate representatives of the people.

A call for general strike was issued late Sunday by several activist groups in Yangon, but it was not clear if it had been widely circulated or adopted by the informally organized civil disobedience movement at the forefront of

the protests.

The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners says 165 people, mostly politicians, had been detained since the February 1 coup, with just 13 released.

One foreigner has been confirmed held by the authorities, Sean Turnell, an economist at Australia's Macquarie University who was an adviser to Suu Kyi's government. He was detained Saturday under unclear circumstances. A statement issued Monday by the office of Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne said he was being provided with consular support and described him as "a highly regarded advisor, member of the academic community.

We certainly believe he should be immediately released, it said.

Netanyahu pleads not guilty as corruption trial resumes

ASSOCIATED PRESS
JERUSALEM, 8 FEBRUARY



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu pleaded not guilty on Monday as his trial on corruption charges resumed in a Jerusalem courtroom just weeks before national elections in which he hopes to extend his 12-year rule.

Netanyahu was indicted last year for fraud, breach of trust and accepting bribes in three separate cases. In recent months, Israelis have held weekly protests calling on him to resign over the charges and criticising his government's response to the coronavirus crisis.

Protesters gathered outside the courthouse could be heard inside the room where the hearing was being held.

He stands accused of accepting lavish gifts from wealthy friends and offering to grant favours to powerful media moguls in exchange for favourable coverage of him and his family. The latest hearing was postponed last month due to lockdown restrictions on public gatherings.

Israel's longest serving leader is also the first sitting prime minister to go on trial for corruption. Israeli law requires Cabinet ministers to resign when charged with criminal offenses, but does not specifically address the case of a prime minister under indictment.

Netanyahu has denied any wrongdoing and has dismissed the charges against him.

EVERY VOTE COUNTS



Voters line up during general elections in Guayaquil, Ecuador.

Leftist leads in early returns for Ecuador presidential vote

ASSOCIATED PRESS
QUITO, 8 FEBRUARY

Lasso and indigenous rights and environmental activist Yaku Prez vying for second place.

A young leftist backed by a convicted-but-popular former president led the field of 16 candidates in early returns from Ecuador's presidential election Sunday, which was held under strict sanitary measures due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Andrs Arauz, who is supported by former President Rafael Correa, a major force in the troubled Andean nation despite a corruption conviction, appeared likely to go on to an April 11 runoff, though it wasn't clear hours after polls closed who else might advance. An early quick count showed conservative former banker Guillermo

Voters were required to wear masks, bring their own bottle of hand sanitiser and pencil, keep a 5-foot (1.5-meter) distance from others and avoid all personal contact in the polling places. The only time voters were allowed to lower their masks was during the identification process.

Reporter accused of spreading secrets arrested

CANBERRA, 8 FEBRUARY

China has formally arrested a Chinese-born Australian journalist for CGTN, the English-language channel of China Central Television, on suspicion of illegally supplying state secrets overseas, Australia's foreign minister said Monday.

The arrest of Cheng Leila last Friday starts an official criminal investigation and came six months after she was detained.

The Australian government has raised its serious concerns about Ms Cheng's detention regularly at senior levels, including about her welfare and conditions of detention, Foreign Minister Marise Payne said.

We expect basic standards of justice, procedural fairness and humane treatment to be met, in accordance with international norms, she added.

China's Foreign Ministry confirmed Cheng's arrest and said her legal rights were being fully guaranteed.

"We hope that Australia will earnestly respect China's judicial sovereignty and refrain from interfering in China's law-based handling of cases in any way," ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said at a daily briefing.

The charges, which could result in a penalty of life in prison or even death, are highly unusual for an employee of a media outlet tightly controlled by China's ruling Communist Party. AP

Israeli settlements may face new scrutiny

ASSOCIATED PRESS
JERUSALEM, 8 FEBRUARY



Israel's ongoing building of settlements in the West Bank and east Jerusalem would likely be more vulnerable to prosecution than its military actions against Palestinians, if the International Criminal Court's top prosecutor decides to open a war crimes investigation.

Such a probe is still a long way off, but the ICC moved a step closer on Friday when it cleared the way for prosecutor Fatou Bensouda to open a war crimes probe against Israel and Palestinian militants.

At the start of his trial last May, Netanyahu was flanked by a cohort of Likud party allies as he railed against the media, police, judges and prosecutors.

Any investigation would look at Israeli military actions

during a devastating 2014 war in the Gaza Strip and mass border protests that began in 2018. But Israel's settlement construction in the West Bank and east Jerusalem appear to be open to even tougher scrutiny.

International law bars a country from moving its civilian activities to occupied territory,

court to determine whether she had territorial jurisdiction.

In a 2-1 ruling last week, judges granted her that jurisdiction in the West Bank, east Jerusalem and Gaza Strip. The Palestinians claim all three areas, captured by Israel in the 1967 Mideast war, for a future state.

The ruling did not open an actual war crimes probe. That will be Bensouda's decision. In a brief statement, she said she would closely study the ruling before deciding how to proceed. That process could take months to play out.

In the meantime, Israel has launched personal attacks against Bensouda and accused the court of holding it to

unfair standards. It also says the Palestinians don't have a state says accuses the court of wading into political issues.

Although the Palestinians do not have independence, the state of Palestine was accepted as a nonmember observer state by the UN General Assembly in 2012. The Palestinians have used that upgraded status to join dozens of international organisations, including the ICC.

Israel's ongoing settlement building on occupied lands, starting half a century ago, could be much harder to defend.

Some 700,000 Israelis now live in settlements built in the West Bank and east Jerusalem.

LEISURE

10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

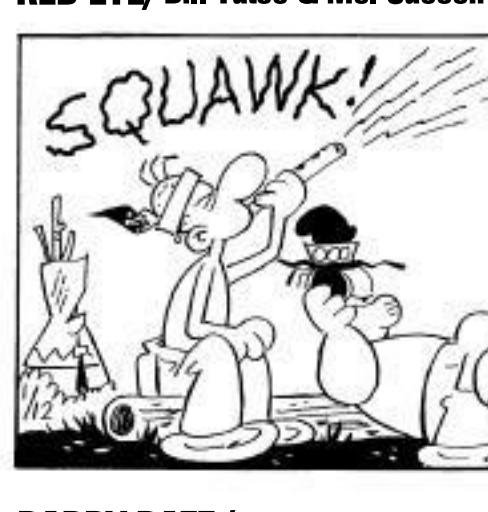
ACROSS	DOWN
1 Charter (4)	1 Title (7)
3 Egyptian cross (4)	2 Part of a step (5)
7 Age (3)	3 Enduring (7)
8 Particular (8)	4 Cutlery item (5)
10 Previous (5)	5 Pile (4)
11 Attire (7)	6 Enlistment of personnel (11)
12 Prone to steal (informal) (5-9)	9 Large-headed nail (4)
15 Propriety (7)	12 Board game (4)
17 Stint (5)	13 Patio (7)
18 Clumsy (8)	14 Rootstock (7)
20 Grease (3)	16 Shrewd (5)
21 Cattle shed (4)	17 Elegance (5)
22 Used to be (4)	18 Wan (4)

By arrangement with The Independent
Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required

BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker



RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson



DADDY DAZE/John Kovaleski



NEED TO KNOW

Ambulance
FD Block Association (Amb)
9630453-989-2222
Highly Qualified Nurses 24400160
City Point Nurses Centre
2567-4113, 9831142623
People's Relief Committee
2280-4943/9444

24 hrs Medical Oxygen Delivery

BOC India Ltd. 9831277777

Blood Banks

Ashok Laboratory 24720333

Central Blood Bank 23515293;

RACK 1

RACK 2

RACK 3

RACK 4

PAR SCORE 40-50

by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL

TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

SCRABBLE® BRAND

G R A M S I

N O O L B G

C I I A B F

S P S M L A L

S U T C C S A

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BRAND

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The world's rich countries must commit to doing whatever it takes to vaccinate the entire planet against Covid-19

FORMER MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND OF DEFENCE OF ECUADOR MARIA FERNANDA ESPINOSA

ON THE GLOBAL PANDEMIC

WEATHER

CITY	MAX(°C)	MIN(°C)
SINGAPORE	32	24 H
HONG KONG	21	16 H
TOKYO	9	1 H
LONDON	0	-2 H
DUBAI	24	18 CL
SAN FRANCISCO	12	8 H
NEW YORK	-3	-10 S
MOSCOW	-10	-22 H

S= sunny, CL= clear, H= hazy, R= rainy...

THUMBNAILS



A 76-year-old doctor Bachtiar Surya receives a shot from a colleague at Adam Malik Hospital in Medan, Indonesia on Monday.

AGENCIES

Collision off Japan coast: A Japanese navy submarine and a commercial ship collided off Japan's southern coast on Monday, causing minor injuries to three crewmembers of the submarine and damage to its mast, officials said. AP

Lanka to begin vaccination: Sri Lankan State Minister of Primary Health Care Sudarshini Fernando on Monday said the coronavirus vaccination drive for the general public will begin in the first week of March, starting with people above the age of 60 years. PTI

Easter bombings report: A senior Sri Lankan church official has asked President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to give him access to a presidential commission's report on Easter Sunday bomb attacks that killed more than 260 people, including churchgoers. AP

Pope seeks 'Copernican revolution' for post-Covid economy

ROME, 8 FEBRUARY

Pope Francis urged governments on Monday to use the coronavirus crisis as a revolutionary opportunity to create a world that is more economically and environmentally just and where basic health care is guaranteed for all.

Francis made the appeal in his annual foreign policy address to ambassadors accredited to the Holy See, an appointment that was postponed for two weeks after he suffered a bout of sciatica nerve pain that made standing and walking difficult.

Francis urged the governments represented in the Apostolic Palace to contribute to global initiatives to provide vaccines to the poor and to use the pandemic to reset what he said was a sick economic model that exploits the poor and the Earth.

There is need for a kind of new Copernican revolution that can put the economy at the service of men and women, not vice versa, he said, referring to the 16th-century paradigm shift that stated the sun was at the center of the universe, not the Earth.

He said such a revolutionary new economy is one that brings life not death, one that is inclusive and not exclusive, humane and not dehumanizing, one that cares for the environment and does not despoil it.

Francis has frequently called for the world to use the pandemic as a chance to re-imagine a global economy that values people and the planet over profits, and one where fraternity and solidarity guide human relationships rather than conflict and division.

AP

Trump trial to open with sense of urgency

Senate leaders negotiate details of the proceedings, with the duration of arguments, questions and deliberations all up for debate

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 8 FEBRUARY



Donald Trump's historic second impeachment trial is opening this week with a sense of urgency by Democrats who want to hold the former president accountable for the violent US Capitol siege and Republicans who want it over as fast as possible.

Scheduled to begin Tuesday, just over a month since the deadly riot, the proceedings are expected to diverge from the lengthy, complicated trial that resulted in Trump's acquittal a year ago on charges that he privately pressured Ukraine to dig up dirt on a Democratic rival, Joe Biden, now the president.

This time, Trump's January 6 rally cry to fight like hell and the storming of the Capitol played out for the world to see. While Trump very well could be acquitted again, the trial could be over in half the time.

Details of the proceedings are still being negotiated by the Senate leaders, with the duration of opening arguments, senators' questions and deliberations all up for debate.

So far, it appears there will be few witnesses called, as the prosecutors and defense attorneys speak directly to senators who have been sworn to deliver impartial justice as jurors.

Most are also witnesses to the siege, having fled for safety that day as the rioters broke into the Capitol and temporarily halted the electoral count certifying Biden's victory.

Defense attorneys for

Trump declined a request for him to testify. Holed up at his Mar-a-Lago club, the former president has been silenced on social media by Twitter without public comments since leaving the White House.

Instead, House managers prosecuting the case are

expected to rely on the trove of videos from the siege, along with Trump's incendiary rhetoric refusing to concede the election, to make their case. His new defense team has said it plans to counter with its own cache of videos of Democratic politicians making fiery speeches.

We have the unusual circumstance where on the very first day of the trial, when those managers walk on the floor of the Senate, there will already be over 100 witnesses present, said Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., who led Trump's first impeachment.

Trump is the first president to be twice impeached, and the only one to face trial after leaving the White House. The Democratic-led House approved a sole charge, incitement of insurrection, acting swiftly one week after the riot.

Democrats argue it's not only about winning conviction, but holding the former president accountable for his actions, even though he's out of office. For Republicans, the trial will test their political loyalty to Trump and his enduring grip on the GOP.

Initially repulsed by the graphic images of the siege, Republican senators including Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell denounced the violence and pointed a finger of blame at Trump. But in recent weeks GOP senators have rallied around Trump arguing his comments do not make him responsible for the violence. They question the legitimacy of even conduct-

ing a trial of someone no longer in office.

On Sunday, Republican Senator Roger Wicker of Mississippi described Trump's impeachment trial as a meaningless messaging partisan exercise.

Republican Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky called the proceedings a farce with zero chance of conviction and described Trump's language and rally words as figural speech.

Senators were sworn in as jurors late last month, shortly after Biden was inaugurated, but the trial proceedings were delayed as Democrats focused on confirming the new president's initial Cabinet picks and Republicans sought to put as much distance as possible from the bloody riot.

At the time, Paul forced a vote to set aside the trial as unconstitutional because Trump is no longer in office,

drawing 44 other Republicans to his argument.

A prominent conservative lawyer, Charles Cooper, rejects that view, writing in a *Wall Street Journal* opinion piece Sunday that the Constitution permits the Senate to try an ex-official, a significant counterpoint to that of Republican senators who have looked toward acquittal by advancing constitutional claims.

Republican Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, one of Trump's ardent defenders, said he believes Trump's actions were wrong and he's going to have a place in history for all of this, but insisted it's not the Senate's job to judge. But 45 votes in favor of Paul's measure suggested the near impossibility of reaching a conviction in a Senate where Democrats hold 50 seats but a two-thirds vote or 67 senators, would be needed to convict Trump.

WINTER PERILS



Transport services were disrupted in Germany and the Netherlands for the second day on Monday as heavy snowfall and icy temperatures gripped parts of central and northern Europe.

AGENCIES

US immigrants may have to wait longer for reform

ASSOCIATED PRESS
HOUSTON (US), 8 FEBRUARY

For nearly 17 months, the Trump administration tried to deport the mother and daughter from El Salvador. The Biden administration may finish the job.

They are being held at a family detention center in remote Dilley, Texas, but have repeatedly been on the verge of deportation. The Friday before Christmas, both were driven to the San Antonio airport and put on a plane, only to be pulled off when attorneys working for immigrant advocacy groups filed new appeals.

I have faith first in God and in the new president who has taken office, that he'll give us a chance, said the mother, who goes by the nickname Barbi.

She left behind two other children in El Salvador and

suspended his 100-day moratorium on deportations, and the immigration bill is likely to be watered down as lawmakers grapple with major coronavirus pandemic relief bill as well a second impeachment trial for former President Donald Trump.

Even if Biden gets most of what he wants on immigration, fully implementing the kind of sweeping changes he promised will take weeks, months, perhaps even years.

That means, at least for now, there is likely to be more overlap between the Biden and Trump immigration policies than many of the activists who backed the Democrat's successful campaign had hoped.

It's important that we pass policies that are not only transformative, inclusive and permanent but also that they are policies that do not increase

the growth of deportation, said Genesis Renteria, programs director for membership services and engagement at Living United for Change in Arizona, which helped mobilized Democratic voters in a battleground state critical to Biden's victory.

Biden has ordered a review of Trump policies that sent people from Central America, Cuba and other countries to Mexico while their cases were processed often forcing them into makeshift tent camps mere steps from American soil.

But those orders likely won't help Barbi and her daughter Barbi and her daughter, like others who have been held for months at Dilley, could be removed from the country at any time. Advocates who originally commended Biden for championing immigration reform now worry that not enough will be done.

In addition to the council's persistent focus on Israel, the Trump administration took issue with the body's membership, which currently includes China, Cuba, Eritrea, Russia and Venezuela, all of which have been accused of human rights abuses.

One senior US official said the Biden administration believed the council must still reform but that the best way

to promote change is to engage with it in a principled fashion.

The official said it can be an important forum for those fighting tyranny and injustice around the world and the US presence intends to "ensure it can live up to that potential."

That official and three others familiar with the decision were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly ahead of the announcement, and spoke on condition of anonymity.

The decision is likely to draw criticism from conservative lawmakers and many in the pro-Israel community.

Trump pulled out of the world body's main human rights agency in 2018 due to its disproportionate focus on Israel, which has received by far the largest number of critical council resolutions against any country, as well as the number of authoritarian countries among its members and because it failed to meet an extensive list of reforms demanded by then-US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley.

In addition to the council's persistent focus on Israel, the UN Human Rights Commission, has been something of a political football between Republican and Democratic administrations for decades. While recognizing its shortcomings, Democratic presidents have tended to want a seat at the table while Republicans have recoiled at its criticism of Israel.

Prosecutor in Lebanon's port blast summons ex-army chief

BEIRUT, 8 FEBRUARY

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Although the US will have only nonvoting observer status on the council through the end of 2021, the officials said the administration intends to seek one of three full member seats currently held by Austria, Denmark and Italy, from the Western Europe and other states group that come up for election later this year.

The UN General Assembly makes the final choice in a vote that generally takes place in October every year to fill vacancies in three-year terms at the 47-member state council.

US engagement with the council and its predecessor, the UN Human Rights Commission, has been something of a political football between Republican and Democratic administrations for decades.

While recognizing its shortcomings, Democratic presidents have tended to want a seat at the table while Republicans have recoiled at its criticism of Israel.

Each news cycle seems to bring new restrictions. US President Joe Biden reinstated restrictions on travellers from more than two dozen European countries, South Africa and Brazil, while people leaving the US are now required to show a negative test before returning.

Canada barred flights to the Caribbean. Israel closed its main international airport. Travel into the European Union is severely restricted, with entry bans and quarantine requirements for returning citizens.

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation says international arrivals fell 74 per cent last year, wiping out \$1.3 trillion in revenue and putting up to 120 million jobs at risk.

A UNWTO expert panel had a mixed outlook for 2021, with 45 per cent expecting a better year, 25 per cent no change and 30 per cent a worse one.

UK considers booster jab to combat S African Covid variant

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LONDON, 8 FEBRUARY



to work well against the Covid-19 variants currently dominant in the UK.

"In terms of other variants, not in the UK, we need to be aware that even where a vaccine has reduced efficacy in preventing infection, there may still be good efficacy against severe disease, hospitalisation, and death. This is really important for protecting the healthcare system," he said.

His intervention came as a small sample study conducted with the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine, which also has a tie-up with the Serum Institute of India, found in South Africa that it may not be as effective in preventing mild to moderate Covid-19 against the local

variant. However, experts have stressed that the vaccine's protection against severe disease and death remains promising.

"This study confirms that the pandemic coronavirus will find ways to continue to spread in vaccinated populations, as expected, but, taken with the promising results from other studies in South Africa using a similar viral vector, vaccines may continue to ease the toll on health care systems by preventing severe disease," said Andrew Pollard, Professor of Paediatric Infection and Immunity.

Meanwhile, South Africa

is considering giving a Covid-19 vaccine that is still in the testing phase to health workers. The country is scrambling to come up with a new vaccination strategy after it halted use of the AstraZeneca vaccine — which is cheaper and easier to handle. Among the possibilities being considered: mixing the AstraZeneca vaccine with another one and giving Johnson & Johnson's single-dose vaccine, which has not yet been authorised for use anywhere.

They are the annual journeys of late winter and early spring: Factory workers in China heading home for the Lunar New Year; American college students going on road trips and hitting the beach over spring break; Germans and Britons fleeing drab skies for some Mediterranean sun over Easter.

All of it cancelled, in doubt or under pressure because of the coronavirus.

Amid fears of new variants of the virus, new restrictions on movement have hit just as people start to look ahead to what is usually a busy time for travel.

It means more pain for airlines, hotels, restaurants and tourist destinations that were already struggling more than a year into the pandemic, and a slower recovery for countries where tourism is a big chunk of the economy.

Colleges around the US have been cancelling spring break to discourage students from travelling. After Indiana University in Bloomington replaced its usual break with three "wellness days", student Jacki Sylvester aban-

doned plans to celebrate her 21st birthday in Las Vegas.

Instead she will mark the milestone closer to home, with a day at the casino in French Lick, Indiana, just 50 miles (80 kilometers) away.

I was really looking forward to getting out of here for a whole week. I wanted to be able to get some drinks and have fun see the casinos and everything and honestly see another city and just travel a little, she said.

"At least it's letting us have a little fun for a day in a condensed version of our original Vegas plans. Like, I'm still going to be able to celebrate."

I'm just forced to do it closer to home. At bus and train stations in China, there is no sign of the annual Lunar New

Year rush. The government has called on the public to avoid travel following new coronavirus outbreaks.

Only five of 15 security gates at Beijing's cavernous central railway station were open; the crowds of travellers who usually camp on the sprawling plaza outside were absent.

The holiday, which starts Feb 12, is usually the world's

With the right approach



Here are some on-point tips and tricks to tackle the vast syllabus and face the board examinations with complete ease

SWOYAN SATYENDU

for effective learning:

Create a proper to-do based micro study planner

Just like micromanaging stuff helps keep things sorted, creating a micro-study planner with a to-do list can help students create a note of all the chapters that they need to learn in a subject. Apart from this, creating a micro-planner also enables them to make note of what to learn in a chapter, which exercises to practice, which books to refer to, so on and so forth. One can also keep track of which formulas to learn or which questions to particularly stress upon.

Mark the level of difficulty for each topic

One of the most important pieces of advice that a student must under-

stand and follow is to never just start with the easy portion and keep difficult topics for later. One must start with the difficult chapters first while he/she still has the time, such that going forward it is convenient to complete the syllabus. To further plan the syllabus more strategically, one can combine an easy chapter with a difficult one to balance through the day. This tactic will not only hold one's interest in learning throughout the day but will also make one feel positive about one's preparation and approach.

While studying, make a separate sheet for all doubts

Instead of marking the queries/questions in the book, it is best to create a sheet with all the doubts, to be able to revisit them once the student has completed the chap-

ter. This is convenient because one can go through the doubtful points later while revising during the exams.

Have a checklist

Having a checklist of doubts can also keep things organised. It will not only keep one on track but will also allow one to not lose out on the opportunity to revisit the questions they had doubts about.

Make memory maps or formula trackers

Creating a quick revision map with all the short pointers from each chapter, to help revise and recollect the information about the chapter; and a formula tracker – important formulas to remember from each chapter. Also, it is best that students use online available study notes that

are thorough.

Make a quick revision sheet (for difficult portions)

This is necessary to be able to revise right before the exams. This way one can first revise the important points that are difficult to remember and then revise the rest of the syllabus.

Having a strict regime can help a student stay ahead in the course and implementing the above-suggested tricks will further enable them to effectively approach the syllabus for learning. Studying and preparing is vital for securing good marks in the exams, and hence, we'd suggest that students revisit the syllabus at least once or twice before the examinations start to be more confident in their mind about their preparation.

The writer is COO, ODM Educational Group

With board examinations around the corner, millions of students are all set to pick up their books, study notes, and every available piece of material to start learning the subjects or revise them. Every student tries with the best of their potential to plan their syllabus for effective learning and securing good marks.

Though many are able to plan and achieve their target successfully, some struggle till the eleventh hour to finish cramming the syllabus. However, this is not the right approach towards scoring good marks in the exams or even studying the material. So, to enable every student to be a master of the subjects, we have enlisted six ways to approach the syllabus

JITIN CHADHA

As we begin 2021 and India's efforts to tackle the impact of the global pandemic continue, the union budget for 2021-22, presented by finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman offers a sense of reassurance and a glimmer of hope. The focus on higher education under "Reinvigorating human capital", one of the six pillars of the budget, is progressive in its outlook and vision. It reinforces many of the initiatives put forward by the National Education Policy (NEP) which was approved in July last year. A qualitative strengthening of educational institutes by incorporating the multifarious facets of the NEP points towards a new and flexible understanding of education in the country. Apart from creating 15,000 "exemplar schools" under the larger framework of establishing hybrid educational institutes, the budget also proposed to set up a Higher Education Commission of India. This will not only mean changes and reforms in accreditation, funding and overall regulation but will also allow for a fluid learning environment.

In this first ever digital budget presentation what comes across is the fact that the world as we know it has changed and it is vital that we keep abreast with these changes and the new demands of these uncertain times. Reworking traditional concepts of what education has meant in the past is more important than ever before. The focus on multidisciplinary learning that the budget emphasises is, therefore, particularly significant. Not only will it imply a greater focus on collaborative work in today's globalised world but it will also mean an increased synergy and knowledge transfer between leading Indian and international institutions. This paves the way for a plethora of avenues, which will be open to the youth of the nation ensuring that they have access to an education that is holistic, balanced and an amalgamation of the best features of

BECOMING A KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

The recent budget presentation paves the way for a plethora of avenues for students, ensuring that they have access to an education that is holistic and balanced

what the Indian educational system has to offer and those that can be taken from institutes across the world.

Although the budget allocated for school education for this financial year at an estimate of around Rs 55,000 crore has seen a decrease as compared to the previous year, it is important not to overlook the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the socio-economic landscape of the

nation. Additionally, the focus on blurring geographical boundaries when it comes to education is a welcome change especially in times where our interdependence has come to light and our reliance on digital mediums has increased. As India moves towards becoming a knowledge economy and society, more and more young Indians are likely to aspire for higher education. Certain problems being faced by the

higher education system in India includes rigid separation of disciplines, less emphasis on learning outcomes and a lack of focus on innovative teaching and research work, resulting in less than desired standards of undergraduate education. The NEP, which the budget highlights addresses these issues and provides achievable solutions for them. Higher education should ideally lead to knowledge creation and

innovation thereby contributing to a growing national economy. As we enter a new year, and a new era, the budget bodes well for the future of the country, one where we shall be equipped to deal with the challenges the coming times will present us with both in the field of education and beyond it.

The writer is director, Indian Institute of Art and Design (IIAD)

PLUS POINTS

Career conclave



Twin Win- a personality development organisation and Inspiration School, Haldwani organised an online career conclave recently for the students of classes IX to XII in which experts from countries like India, USA, UK, Australia participated.

Professor Col Shishir Kumar, an edupreneur, Dr Sheetal Sharma, soil scientist with International Rice Research Institute, Dr Parag Rastogi, environmental scientist from Ecole Polytechnique Federale de Lausanne, Switzerland, John Allison, PhD in aerospace engineering from University of Strathclyde, UK and many others conducted enriching sessions with students and gave them tips on how to make a successful career in their respective fields. Through the conclave the students realised there are innumerable career options that they can choose from and what skills are required to be successful in a particular career. Besides discussions related to career, the sessions also had profound discussions on topics like saving the environment, responsibilities as an ideal student/teacher, time-management, life skills, and anecdotes to motivate the students.

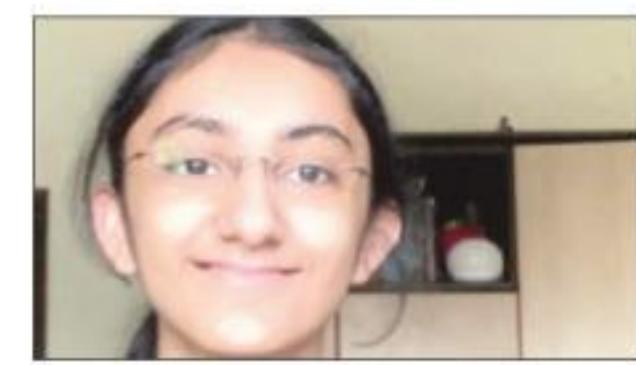
Enriching summit



The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) organised the Smart Supply Chain and Logistics Summit recently. This summit was conducted virtually wherein industry stalwarts from the field shed their wisdom to the students of B-school.

After an enriching introductory session that bore witness to enlightening addresses by several industry experts, the first session - "Building Supply Chains for the Future" was initiated and moderated by Dr Jitendra Das, director, FORE School of Management. The first speaker of this session was Anand Darbhe, managing director, Accenture Strategy and Consulting, Accenture India. His agenda for the address was Digital Supply Chain Building: The Supply Chain for the Future. The second speaker was Prabhat Pant, group head- Supply Chain Management, Jakson Group. His address was centred on the topic future of supply chain. After the informative session, the floor was open for a brief round of question and answer.

Admirable innovation



Saanvi Mehra, a student of class X from The Shriram Millennium School designed a project to identify children afflicted with Down Syndrome- a genetic disorder, through their photographs. Designed as part of a project submitted to Google India Code to Learn contest 2020, this tool has the potential of saving more than 20,000 children's lives annually in India alone. This innovation not only secured Mehra a victory in the contest in the Class IX-X category, but will also be a boon for the children suffering from Down Syndrome. For details, visit: <https://mehrasaanvi.wordpress.com>

Crucial competition



The India finals of the Global Student Entrepreneur Awards (GSEA) 2021- a competition focused on student entrepreneurs will be held from 11-13 February. The award is being organised by Entrepreneurs' Organisation (EO). The Bhopal Chapter of EO would host the finals.

A total of 28 teams from 14 chapters of EO across India will be participating in this year's India finals. The winner will compete in the global finals of GSEA 2021. To qualify for the competition, the student entrepreneur's business must have been in operation for a minimum of six consecutive months. For details visit: www.eonetnetwork.org



For more updates

www.thestatesman.com

KIND GESTURE

India's swashbuckling wicketkeeper-batsman Rishabh Pant (*in photo, left*) said he will donate his match fee towards rescue operations for the glacier burst in Uttarakhand and also encouraged others to come forward and contribute. A glacier broke off at Joshimath in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district on Sunday, leading to a massive flood in the Dhauliganga river and causing large-scale devastation in the upper reaches of the ecologically fragile Himalayas. Pant was born in Roorkee, a town in the state's Haridwar district.

THUMBNAILS

Sports awards: India hockey team skipper Rani Rampal will compete with chess ace Koneru Humpy and young shooter Manu Bhaker for the BBC 'Indian Sports-woman of the Year' award after being nominated for the honour along with two others on Monday. Vinesh Phogat, who is the only Indian woman wrestler to have qualified for the Tokyo Olympics and the Asian Games 100m silver medallist Dutee Chand, who missed out on the inaugural award last year, have been again nominated by the 40-member jury panel.

New deal: Formula One world champion Lewis Hamilton will stay with Mercedes for a ninth season after signing a one-year deal, the team said Monday. Since joining Mercedes for the 2013 season, Hamilton has won six world championship titles moving him level with Michael Schumacher on a record seven for his career.

Ibrahimovic nets 500th club goal: Zlatan Ibrahimovic took his tally to more than 500 club goals as he scored twice to help AC Milan beat Crotone 4-0 and move back top of the Serie A standings. The 39-year-old Ibrahimovic is in his second spell at Milan, where he has now scored 83 goals. His goal tallies for other clubs are Malm (18), Ajax (48), Juventus (26), Inter Milan (66), Barcelona (22), Paris Saint-Germain (156), Manchester United (29) and LA Galaxy 53.

Shooters plea: There could, after all, be a reprieve for the 15 shooters recently banned by the National Rifle Association of India's governing body from participating in the next national championships on disciplinary grounds. The shooters, including Tokyo Olympics quota holder Yashaswini Deswal, were prohibited from competing at the nationals after they took part in unrecognised online tournaments last year without the approval of the sport's apex body in the country.

Ref Mike Dean reports threats: Premier League referee Mike Dean has reported receiving death threats to the police after being targeted through his family's social media accounts. The menacing messages were received after Dean sent off West Ham's Tom Soucek in Saturday's game against Fulham.

PSG beat Marseille: Kylian Mbappe scored early on as Paris Saint-Germain eased to a 2-0 win at bitter rival Marseille in the French league. The contest was far removed from September's fiery meeting in Paris, when Marseille won 1-0 and five players were sent off on Sunday. Mbappe struck in the eighth minute with a confident finish after sprinting clear from near the halfway line, and strike partner Mauro Icardi flicked a looping header over goalkeeper Steve Mandanda in the 23rd.

Messi sparks Barca comeback: Lionel Messi was still celebrating his equalizer after coming off the bench for Barcelona when Sergio Busquets handed him the captain's armband. Messi showed why Barcelona agreed to keep him an extremely rich man when on Sunday he acted as Ronald Koeman's super sub, scoring one goal and setting up another to help Barcelona earn a 3-2 win at Real Betis.

Mohammedan Sporting win: Mohammedan Sporting Club defeated Gokulam Kerala FC 2-1 at Kalyani Stadium on Monday. Mohammedan SC were leading 1-0 at halftime by the goal of John Chidi. John Chidi Uzodinma scored the opener for the Black Panthers and Hero of the Match Asheer Akhtar added a second as Sharif Muhammad's long-range strike late in the game only proved to be a consolation.

England set target of 420, India in trouble at 39/1

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CHENNAI, 8 FEBRUARY

India were left with the herculean task of chasing a world record 420 after England refused to declare in an unbalanced second essay, cut short by Ravichandran Ashwin's (*in photo*) brilliance on a sharply turning fourth day strip in the opening Test here on Monday.

At stumps, India were 39 for one, requiring another 381 runs to set a new record and take a 1-0 lead in the four-match series.

Relishing bowling on a responsive pitch, the seasoned Ashwin returned excellent figures of 6/61 to snap England's second innings at 178 after the home team conceded a massive first-innings lead of 241 runs.

With opener Rohit Sharma (12) back in the hut, Shubman Gill (15) and Cheteshwar Pujara (12) will begin the proceedings for India on the fifth and final day at the MA Chidambaram pitch, which has started to play tricks. India would have been in a bigger hole had it not been for a seventh-wicket partnership of 80 runs between newcomer Washington Sundar (85) and Ashwin, who also contributed a 31 with the bat before picking his career's 28th five-wicket haul. But despite the duo's best efforts, the hosts still fell way short of the follow-on

target after being bowled out for 337. India resumed the day at 257 for six.

Hoping to give their bowlers some respite from the sweltering heat, England decided against enforcing the follow-on and batted again. But the start wasn't the one they wanted as Ashwin bowled his off-spinners to deadly effect with the new ball, the bounce aiding him in his endeavour. Ashwin removed Rory Burns with the very first ball of the second innings when he induced an edge for Ajinkya Rahane to take an easy catch in the first slip. Having ambled to 16 off 37 balls, he

Dominic Sibley was shown the door by Ashwin, with the bounce again helping the off-spinner. Veteran pacer Ishant Sharma was rewarded for bowling with a lot of heart throughout the match when he had Daniel Lawrence trapped in front of the wicket with the one that snaked in. That was wicket number 300 for Ishant, making him the sixth Indian and third pacer from the country to reach the landmark. Ben Stokes could not replicate the form of his first innnings as he played away from his body to give Rishabh Pant a catch off

At stumps, India were 39 for one, requiring another 381 runs to set a new record and take a 1-0 lead in the four-match series.

Ashwin.

As wickets kept falling at one end, skipper Joe Root (40 off 32 balls) looked like he was batting on a pitch different from the one where the ball was turning from one end to the other, scoring runs without much ado. With all the confidence in the world, first-innings double centurion Root swept and reverse swept the India spinners, including Ashwin, as runs came at a fast clip when he was in his element in the second session. He not just negated but also attacked the spinners with aplomb but what Root could not tackle was a delivery that

kept low on landing before thudding against the English run-machine's pads.

The umpire had no hesitation in raising his finger as Jasprit Bumrah appealed for an LBW. Ollie Pope (28), Jos Buttler (24) and Dom Bess (25) made useful contributions, but England strangely kept on batting even after the lead crossed 350 and then 400 on a track which is expected to give the bowlers a lot of purchase on the final day. While 16 wickets fell on the first three days, a staggering 15 fell by the wayside on Monday and the Chepauk pitch played a major part.

SCOREBOARD

England 1st Innings: 578 all out
India 1st Innings: (Overnight 257/6)
Washington Sundar not out 85
R Ashwin c Buttler b Leach 31
Shahbaz Nadeem c Stokes b Leach 0
Ishant Sharma c Pope b Anderson 4
Jasprit Bumrah c Stokes b Anderson 0
Extras: (B-4, LB-1, NB-1) 6
Total: (all out in 95.5 Overs) 337
Fall of Wickets: 1-19, 2-44, 3-71, 4-73, 5-192, 6-225, 7-305, 8-312, 9-323.
Bowling: James Anderson 16.5-5-46-2, Jofra Archer 21-3-72, Ben Stokes 6-1-16-0, Jack Leach 24-5-105-2, Dominic Bess 26-5-74, Joe Root 2-0-14-0.

England 2nd Innings:
Rory Burns c Rahane b Ashwin 0
Dominic Sibley c Pujara b Ashwin 16
Daniel Lawrence lbw b Ishant 18
Joe Root lbw b Bumrah 40
Ben Stokes c Pant b Ashwin 7
Ollie Pope c Rohit b Nadeem 28

Jos Buttler st Pant b Nadeem 24
Dominic Bess lbw b Ashwin 25
Jofra Archer b Ashwin 5
Jack Leach not out 8
James Anderson c and b Ashwin 0
Extras: (NB-7) 7
Total: (all out in 46.3 Overs) 178
Fall of Wickets: 1-0, 2-32, 3-58, 4-71, 5-101, 6-130, 7-165, 8-167, 9-178, 10-178
Bowling: Ravichandran Ashwin 17.3-2-61-2, Shahbaz Nadeem 15-2-66-2, Ishant Sharma 7-1-24-1, Jasprit Bumrah 6-0-2-1, Washington Sundar 1-0-1-0.

India 2nd Innings:
Rohit Sharma c Jack Leach 12
Shubman Gill batting 15
Cheteshwar Pujara batting 12
Total: (for one wicket in 13 Overs) 39
Fall of Wickets: 1-25, Jofra Archer 3-12-1, Jack Leach 6-1-21-1, James Anderson 2-1-2-0, Dominic Bess 2-0-3-0.

Ishant becomes third Indian pacer to take 300 Test wickets

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CHENNAI, 8 FEBRUARY

Veteran fast bowler Ishant Sharma on Monday became the sixth Indian and third pacer from the country to take 300 wickets in Test cricket, joining legendary former India captains Kapil Dev and Anil Kumble after a "roller-coaster" ride.

Ishant reached the landmark when he trapped Dan Lawrence with a delivery that swung back sharply before hitting his pads in England's second innings on the fourth day of the opening Test here.

Besides Kumble (619) and Kapil (434), Ravichandran Ashwin (377 before this game), Harbhajan Singh (417), and Zaheer Khan (311) are the other bowlers from the country who have reached the landmark.

"First two days it felt like we were playing on the road, but on the fourth day it started turning a bit and we caught a bit of a break." Even on the first two days I thought we bowled well even though we weren't getting much help," Ishant added.

The BCCI and ICC joined some cricketers in congratulating the seasoned pacer who began his Test career way back in 2007. "Congratulations @Imlshan. He becomes the third Indian fast bowler to take 300 Test wickets. He traps Lawrence in the front as England lose their third wicket," the BCCI tweeted soon after he accomplished the feat.

Pakistan beat S Africa by 95 runs in 2nd test, win series

AGENCIES
RAWALPINDI, 8 FEBRUARY

Fastbowler Hasan Ali's 10-wicket haul gave Pakistan its first series win over South Africa in 18 years as they beat the Proteas by 95 runs in the second test on Monday.

Hasan, who bagged five wickets in the first innings, tormented the Proteas again returning figures of 5-60 as South Africa collapsed to 274 all out after lunch on the last day to give him his maiden 10-for in a Test. The last time Pakistan beat South Africa in a test series was in 2003 when it won 1-0 after lunch.

Aiden Markram hit a resolute 108 the opener's first test hundred in almost three years and Temba Bavuma made 61 before Hasan got two wickets off two deliveries with the second new ball to spark the collapse.

Hasan was outstanding because he has awareness and took advantage of the experience of playing here, said Pakistan captain Babar Azam. At one time, we thought the game could've gone either way when Markram and Bavuma were playing well, but we knew one wicket can bring us

FC Goa hold Mumbai City FC

AGENCIES
GOA, 8 FEBRUARY

A resilient FC Goa held Mumbai City FC to a 3-3 draw in a high-intensity ISL fixture at the GMC Stadium in Bambolim on Monday.

Mumbai City FC looked the better side in the opening minutes as they opened the scoring through Hugo Boumous (20') and Adam Le Fondre (26'). Ghan Martins (45') then scored a spectacular goal for the Gaurs to cut short the deficit.

FC Goa returned in the second-half with better tempo as Igor Angulo (51') equalised the scoreline. It was a cagey game then as both sides looked to find the winner.

Rowlin Borges (90') then put Mumbai City FC ahead for a few minutes before Ishan Pandita (95') netted the equalizer in the final minute. The draw saw Mumbai City FC consolidate their top spot with 34 points while FC Goa sit third with 23. Goa dominated the match in terms of possession and passing but Mumbai's defense stood tall denying the Gaurs.

England bowling coach Lewis defends batsmen's approach

AGENCIES
CHENNAI, 8 FEBRUARY

England bowling coach Jon Lewison Monday defended his batsmen's approach in the post-tea session on the fourth day of the opening Test against India, saying accelerating wasn't easy on a "tricky" Chepauk pitch.

England set India a world record chase of 420 after being bowled out for 178 in their second innings. The hosts were 39 for one at stumps.

"The guys were positive in the way they played. I don't think it is a straightforward pitch where you can be reckless to score. But we were very comfortable with the amount of overs we wanted to bowl on Monday," he said when asked about the decision to not declare early.

"We will try to have a bite with the second new ball if possible on Tuesday. We are comfortable with where we are at in the game," Lewis told reporters during a virtual media interaction after the day's play.

Replies to another question on whether he thought 419 was enough and if England would have liked more time to bowl at the Indians, he said the batsmen played positively



with an intent to score and accelerating wasn't easy.

"The pitch is good but tricky. Accelerating against India in India isn't always straightforward. The guys played positively with intent to score, but within the constraints of the conditions," Lewis added.

"We will try to have a bite with the second new ball if possible on Tuesday. We are comfortable with where we are at in the game," Lewis told reporters during a virtual media interaction after the day's play.

India's flamboyant wicket-keeper-batsman Rishabh Pant on Monday won the ICC's inaugural Player of the Month award for his superlative performances in the two Tests against Australia in January.

Pant scored a 97 at Sydney and an unbeaten 89 at Brisbane that powered India to an incredible series win against

interesting observations on what people think might happen or not but as a cricketer that's the last thing that you have on your mind," Ashwin said when asked how his back is holding up after such a grueling effort, having missed the last Test in Australia due to back spasms. "For me, part and parcel of my cricket days was bowling 40 to 45 overs a day and go back in the nets again. When it comes to bowling, the joy that I have even when some parts of my body are not responding properly, I can still keep going but that's how much I love my art.

"I would think I would like to keep bowling as long as I think," said the man who has 385 Test wickets. Just like Ishant Sharma, Ashwin also conceded that the track was really flat and England winning the toss became crucial. "Look, personally when I saw the wicket, I believed it will be a good one to bat but I thought it might go a little more than what happened on the first day."

"It was really flat and it was like a crucial toss for us, I would say," said Ashwin, who knows the Chepauk track like no other having grown up playing the game at this venue from the age-group level.

"Playing in her 21st Australian Open, the elder Williams beat Kirsten Flipkens 7-5, 6-2. At 40, Venus is the oldest woman in this year's draw and just the sixth player in her 40s to compete at the Australian Open.

I like my job, she said.

No matter what happens to you in life, you always hold your head up high and give 100 million percent. And that's what I do every single day, and that's