

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

HYDERABAD | FRIDAY | 8 JANUARY 2021

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ADVANTAGE RECREATION

Fully loaded clubhouse, indoor & outdoor games, party lawns & more

73372 27707 / 70953 33335
aparnaconstructions.com

WEATHER

Max: 27.7°C
Min: 19.5°C
RH: 53%
Rainfall: 0.2 mm

Forecast: Cloudy sky.
Moderate rain. Max/Min temp. 29/18 °C

COVID-19 COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+20,261)	(+254)
1,04,12,704	1,50,592
covid19india.org	
(+379)	(+3)
TS: 2,88,789	1,559
(+295)	(+1)
AP: 8,84,171	7,126

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

CASES	DEATHS
8,80,24,536	18,99,015
COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES	218

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari; Dakshinayana
Tithi: Margasira Bahula Dasami till 9.39 pm
Star: Swati till 2.10 pm
Varjyanam: 7.23 pm to 8.53 pm
Durmuhuram: 9.04 am to 9.48 am; 12.45 pm to 1.29 pm
Rahukalam: 10.30 am to 12 noon
HJRI Awwal 23, 1442 AH
Jamadi-ul-Awwal 23, 1442 AH
PRAYERS
Fajr: 5.44 am
Zohar: 12.32 pm
Asar: 4.21 pm
Maghrub: 6.04 pm
Isha: 7.15 pm
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.48 AM
SUNSET TODAY 5.57 PM
MOONSET 1.35 PM
MOONRISE 1.41 AM

COUNTER POINT



We should not allow anyone from virus-affected states!

SHORT TAKES

JEE-Adv. test for IITs on July 3
New Delhi: Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhrayal "Nishank" on Thursday said the JEE-Advanced test for admission to Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) will be conducted on July 3 and the eligibility criteria of 75 per cent marks in class 12 has been relaxed.

Full report on Page 2

Fashion designer Satya Paul dead

Coimbatore: Fashion designer Satya Paul, known for giving the Indian saree a contemporary touch, has passed away at the age of 79, his son Puneet Nanda said. Paul, who had suffered a stroke in December, breathed his last at Sadhguru's Isha Yoga Center on Wednesday.

Full report in Hyd Chronicle

CMYK



Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao greets Justice Hima Kohli (right) after she was sworn in as the new Telangana High Court Chief on Thursday.

Hima Kohli takes oath as state CJ

VUJJINI VAMSIDHARA | DC HYDERABAD, JAN. 7

Justice Hima Kohli is the Telangana High Court's first woman Chief Justice. She is also the only woman Chief Justice in the country at present.

cases along with Justice Rao and disposed of 60 per cent of these.

During the proceedings, Chief Justice Kohli urged counsels to have due diligence while preparing cases and while coming in for the hearing.

She advised counsels to attend court to argue cases, instead of seeking adjournments. She said adjournment dates will not be given at the sweet wishes of counsels.

The Chief Justice said she would ensure that the conventions and practices being followed at the Telangana HC are honoured and the opinions of the Bar held in high esteem.

Are protesting farmers safe from Covid, asks SC

FARMERS TAKE OUT TRACTOR RALLY, VOW A REPEAT ON REPUBLIC DAY

New Delhi, Jan. 7:

Ahead of talks with the government, thousands of farmers on Thursday took out tractor-march from protest sites of Singh, Tikri and Ghazipur borders and Haryana's Rewasan against the three agriculture laws amid heavy police deployment.

According to the protesting farm unions, this is

just a "rehearsal" for their proposed January 26 tractor-parade that will be moved into Delhi from different parts of Haryana, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh.

Bharati Kisan Union (Ekta Ugrahan) chief Joginder Singh Ugrahan said that farmers participated in the march with over 3,500 tractors and trolleys.

— PTI

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Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, replied, "Certainly not" and said he would file a report within two weeks.

— PTI

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CLASSIFIEDS

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TWO READY to occupy 1BHK Flats for Sale in East Marredpally, Secunderabad in a gated community, 1st floor and 2nd floor. Villa for sale in Attapur Eden Vistas West facing 5,145 Sqft, handover in 3months. If interested kindly Contact: 9000333726. (HYMM/2021/C05506)

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SAKET PRANAMAN Active Adult Retirement Homes 28, 3BHK With all Facilities. @Gowdavalli Near Komppaly. Ph:9133008529 (HYMM/2021/C05329)

✓ JUST FOR Rs.19,35,000/- (Rs.1800/- per Sqft) Luxury 28x23 BHK Flats in Gated Community Apartments. Free Amenities & Car Parking, Clubhouse & Swimmingpool, Shopping mall, Pre-Launch Offer near Celebrity Resorts, Before Genome Valley, Shamirpet. Call: 7951089995. (S/2021/C00140)

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3BHk LUXURY Villa for Sale in Saket Bhushan Community with all amenities at Gowdavalli, Near Komppaly. 1675 Sq Yards with 17875ft Price 1.15cr. Call:901093000. (HYMM/2021/C05330)

✓ EAST FACING 3 BHK/ 205 Sq.Yds (29yrs Old) In Mansoorabad L.B.Nagar @ Rs.13.0 Cr. Seller buyers contact: 7382371552 No Brokers Pl. (HYMM/2021/C02272)

PREMIUM VILLAS in Gated community for Sale at Mokila @ 1.70 crs (Special Offer available). Contact 7353585358 (HYMM/2021/C05324)

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1.2,3,4.5 & 10Acres Farm Lands with Clear Title For Sale, Near Moimbabudh Chevella at best price, 6km from Appa Junction. Price Starts From Rs.1.2 to 1.5Cr. Ph:9963038315. (HYCL/2021/C02267)

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PATANCHERU & SULTANPUR Open Plots HMDA Gated Community, 6km from BHEL & Chandanagar, 8km from Miyapur, 11km from JNTU, 80% Loan available. Ph:8688023404/ 8688021020. (HYCL/2021/C02261)

HUDA APPROVED Damaiguda Main Road, 150x40 Plots for sale, East/West Facing (Gated Community) Rate, 30,000/- PYD. Neg. Clear Title. Ph:9849043026, 9849091343. (HYCL/2021/C02266)

HMDA & PERA Approved Commercial & Residential Plots For Sale On 100feet Road Face Very Near to Medchal & Ghalkeser Residential Area, Infosys, Singapur Township, Medcity, AIMS Hospital & Newly Sanctioned IT Hub. Loan Facilities. Ph:8125812455. (HYCL/2021/C02266)

HMDA OPEN Plots for Sale at Ghantasala with all amenities, fully developed & Mega New Project on Warangal to Hyderabad highway facing project. Ph:9849018826, 9849549981. (HYCL/2021/C05517)

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FOR SALE North East facing Plot 726 Sq.yards with 6500 built up area in Film Nagar, JubileeHills only interested parties pls contact on 8897998934 between 2pm to 6pm N Brokers pls. (HYMM/2021/C05499)

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HMDA/ DTCP Approved open Plots located Near kothur/Shadnagar. Clear Title /immediate Registration. Call: 9347537837 (HYMM/2021/C05489)

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REAL ESTATE WANTED PLOTS Bollarum, Yaprak, Kondapur, Damburu, Nizamguda, Thimmapura, Silent Wald, Onglitha Projects, Thumkura, E.M.E. Housing Society, Shamerpet, IndusPark, Medchal, Dublin, and Near by. Contact: 8074203475. (HYMM/2021/C05518)

PLOT REQUIRED WANTED APP 2000 sqyards plot for constructing warehouse or readymade industrial shed in kozipally, Goddappothram, Bonthalli industrial area. sales@sarthakindustries.com call 9484018090 (W/2021/A000891)

RENTLS

COMMERCIAL

GODOWN FOR Lease/ Rent. Suitable for Auto Mobile services and Warehouse @11,250, 9000, 6000 Sq.Ft at Bairamalguda, Sagar Road, L.B.Nagar, Hyderabad. Ph:939031345 / 9391600528. Ready to Occupy. (L/2021/C00008)

INDEPENDENT BUILDING Habiguda for Rent. Street No:8, Near by Spensor Super Market, 8200 Sqf Godown/ Small School/ Corporate Office, Hospital. Contact: 9849230615. (S/2021/C01867)

✓ HIMAYATHNAGAR MAIN road near VRK Silk 2nd building, 600sqft Ground. Cell Shop for any commercial purpose, 2nd floor 950sqft for any office purpose. Ph:8712366000. (S/2021/C00748)

TO-LET COMMERCIAL space on 2nd Floor and 3rd Floor for Rent @ King Koti, Opp Edem Garden Function Hall. Area- 1000 Sq ft each. Contact: 9885537083. (HYCL/2021/C02253)

✓ MADHUPUR HITECH City 10,000 sqft, ground + 6 floors, 91 rooms, attached bathrooms suitable service Apartments, Hostels, guest houses, offices, Lab's, Hospitals, Institutions. Ph:9849036150. (S/2021/C01827)

✓ COMMERCIAL SPACE Available for Rent. Area: 1256 Sq ft on 1st Floor at West Marredpally Main Road. 8919023976 & 9848011866. (HYMM/2021/C05488)

FLATS

DOUBLE BEDROOM

2BHK FLAT with 2 toilets and two-wheeler parking for Rent in Tarnaka, Secunderabad. Contact: 8527533609. (HYMM/2021/C05507)

THREE & MORE

✓ SCENICVIEW EAST facing 3BHK Semi Furnished Flat (2545 Sqft) Kondapur Masjidabada Modular Kitchen, 100% Power Back Up and Water, ACS, Solar Water, Club House Facility, Double Parking. 9819635234. (HYMM/2021/C04956)

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INDEPENDENT HOUSE

DOUBLE BEDROOM

FLINNAGAR, ROAD No:9, 2 Bedroom, 3000sqft Independent House & Penthouse available for Rent. Commercial or Residential purpose. Contact: Devi 9885633260. (HYCL/2021/C02263)

THREE & MORE

BANJARAHILLS, 4000 Stt. Ground, First, Second floors, Plot No:54 @ B.N.Reddy Colony, Road No:14, Two Ctr. Parking, Gated community. Call: 9848071622, 9848464974, 9959973616. (S/2021/C01039)

INDUSTRIAL SHEDS

AVAILABLE ACC Sheds approx 875 & 7945 Sq.feet or full 16680 Sq.feet at APIE, Balanagar 3rd plot from main road. for godown purpose, only. Contact: No.8919476864, 988535222, 9949355405. (HYMM/2021/C05512)

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WANTED EXPERIENCE sales man, Sales Women and Accounting Operator in Jewellery field. Jevar The House of Jewels, 8-2-601/A-P4, Plot No.4, Devi Kunji, beside Masqati Diary, Road No.10, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad. (B/2021/C00464)

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✓ URGENTLY REQUIRED Senior Sales Executives with past experience in wholesale food products in and around Hyderabad. contact: 9885314333. (HYMM/2021/C05484)

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REPUTED EQUIPMENT manufacturing company in Hyderabad requires Sales Engineers for Hyderabad and Vizag locations. Experience 2-4 Years in construction equipment. Send CV admin@cmacoin.970520000. (HYMM/2021/C05511)

SEHIL REQUIRES Experienced Sales & Marketing Executives (Male), Contact in Person with Resume and Photograph between 12pm to 6pm. Sheet Hardware Pvt. Ltd., Osmangunj, Hyderabad-50012. Contact: 801955119, 040-24601318. (B/2021/C00771)

DIRECT SALES Executives required for FMCG Household Medicine Products. Age & Education No B. Venkaiah Reddy The Grand Solitaire, S.D.Road, Secunderabad. Contact: 8435963303 Dr.Kalash. (S/2021/C01851)

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MANAGERS BRANCH MANAGER: Graduates with Experience or Fresher with ability to a Major role in Courier Express/ Cargo Industry may apply. Send your resume immediately to hydro-admin@tgpcglob.com (HYMM/2021/C05490)

WALK-IN INTERVIEW Wanted Real estate, Promotional Managers Qualification: MBA, Salary: 25k to 1Lakh Contact number: 9515935567. (HYCL/2021/C02269)

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INVITING AREA wise franchisee's for Ezeec Check (World's First Public Booth for Blood Pressure Monitoring). Rs.2Lacs to 10Lacs Investment. Quick returns on investment and personal income. Interested may call 9014027197. visit us @ www.enterprise.in (HYMM/2021/C05508)

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MOSQUITO NET

✓ LETS GET rid of Mosquitoes with our systems operable screens, UPVC Mesh shutters, Fiber, Aluminium, S.S.Mesh for windows. Please Contact: Sankalp Marketing 7995311177, 6309566695. (S/2021/C01037)

POULTRY

VENCOPBO CHICKEN rich in protein, great in taste eat & enjoy. Vencopbo's Broiler Hyderabad Zone price per kg. Farm Gate Rs.87, Retail Live Bird Rs.109, Dressed with skin Rs.158, Skinless Rs.180, Ph: 97992239. (HO

IN BRIEF

Bus passes can be bought from home

Hyderabad: Bus passes can now be purchased or renewed at 31 new TSRTC centres in the city. According to RTC officials, those who reside in the same colony or work in the same office can either renew or generate a new pass without stepping out of their homes. To do so, they have to call 8008204216 and give their details. Officials from the department will come to the residence and take the renewal fee. They will bring the bus pass to the doorstep by the evening. This will be done at no additional charge, the official said. The only amount the users will have to pay for is the cost of renewing or issuing a new pass (which comes along with an ID card).

HC seeks report on stagnant rainwater

Hyderabad: The Telangana High Court on Thursday directed the commissioner of Jalgalli municipality of Ranga Reddy district to file a status report in two weeks on petitions that were filed seeking removal of stagnated rainwater in Osmansagar and surrounding areas. The petitioners had approached the court because their houses were inundated in the floods of October last year, and the water had not been cleared by the authorities.

Earlier, the court had directed the municipality to drain out the water. But, even today, some parts of the colony were submerged, the petitioners said. The division bench headed by Chief Justice Hima Kohli directed the authorities to remove the water and submit a status report.

Driver returns after 3 years in Saudi jail

Hyderabad: A poor driver from a village of Nizamabad has returned home after spending more than three years in jail in Saudi Arabia. Abdul Zubair was allegedly confined on a false allegation by his employer. The Indian Embassy and a forum of NRIs helped secure his release. Zubair said he had gone to Saudi Arabia for a job as a driver. His employer Abdullah Dakheel had promised him to provide a vehicle, but did not do so. He was neither ready to retain him as a driver nor release him. The employer also kept Zubair's accommodation and other related documents. Zubair therefore started working for another employer. His former employer Dakheel lodged a complaint alleging that Zubair had stolen 45,000 Riyals. Police arrested him. His case was pursued by the Vision Trust NRI Forum and secured his release. Forum chairman Jalil Ansari thanked Indian Ambassador Dr Ausaf Saeed who took a special interest in this matter.



Customers look at the kites on display ahead of the Sankranti festival next week at Gulzar Houz in Hyderabad. —S. SURENDER REDDY

Chinese 'manja' cuts profit of kite makers

Craftsmen face tough time to meet day-to-day expenses

**SANJAY SAMUEL
PAUL I DC**
HYDERABAD, JAN. 7

cuts across religious barriers.

The charm of this age-old festival is fading off. Its popularity among the youths and children is decreasing. A reason is the invasion of technology and access to entertainment via TV, internet and the cellphone.

This apart, another major blow for craftsmen came in the form of the Chinese manja (which is banned) and plastic kites which too are Chinese made. This resulted in a financial crisis for these families.

The festival made the city sky colourful every year this season. The competition of kite-flying involves cutting of the kites in the air; a skillful sporting event that

and grandfather Yousif's three sons, Mohd Hafeez, Mohd Raheem and Kareem, are also into this trade. Mohd Hafeez said:

"Our whole family is involved in kite-making. Every day, we end up making 100 to 150 kites. Earlier, shopkeepers used to give orders throughout the year. Now it is tough for us to meet our day-to-day expenses. Kite flying seasons in the past lasted four months. Now, it has shrunk to two or three days."

The 55-year-old Mohd Javeed Khan, an expert in cotton thread Manja, hails from a family whose past four generations were into this work. A resident of Mata Ki Khidki at Dabeerpura, he is now driving an autorickshaw for his family's upkeep. There used to be high demand.

The Chinese manja, a plastic thread, is now in high demand. "Earlier, we were engaged in making manja for six to seven months. Now, we do it for a month," he says.

Cotton manja is made of thread, glass powder that helps the threads cut each other, the ladies finger broth and colour.

The craftsman and the traders expressed the hope that this year's festival will see more colourful kites in the sky over Hyderabad. This will hopefully attract more youths into the sport and help the kite-maker families earn more.

Covid: Haj applications drop 70%

ATHER MOIN I DC
HYDERABAD, JAN. 7

less than the applications from Telangana state last year.

A total of 10,752 applications were received to fill a quota of 4,700 seats with the Haj Committee of India.

Many reasons are cited for the poor response this time. For one, there will be strict restrictions even if Haj is allowed this year.

Pilgrims have to keep themselves in mandatory isolation on reaching the holy places. Not more than two pilgrims will be allowed in a room at these holy places. This would split families.

Another reason is an extreme hike in Haj expenditures. The estimated cost per pilgrim now is about ₹135,000 for the Hyderabad embarkation point.

Chairman of the state Haj committee Mohammed Masihullah Khan said the poor response was due to Covid fear. Last year, the pilgrimage was put on hold due to the spread of the pandemic.

This time, too, there is doubt whether the Saudi authorities will allow the pilgrimage as usual.

Mohammed Masihullah said intending pilgrims who have not applied till now may submit their application via online to the website of Haj Committee of India, www.hajcommittee.gov.in.

He also requested them to produce documents such as passports, bank proof, address proof, passport-size photos with white background along with debit or credit card to pay the online HAF processing fee.

Pilgrims must have a machine-readable passport with the expiry date upwards of 10th January 2022 for applying via the Online Haj Application form for Haj-2021.

IIITH to create 'Indian language Alexas' project

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 7

The Indian Institute of Information Technology here is launching a pilot project to create an 'Indian Language Alexas' by developing an automatic speech recognition system for translation of Indian languages.

The IIITH has invited volunteers to contribute 2,000 hours of spoken Telugu for the year-long exercise.

THE IIITH has invited volunteers to contribute 2,000 hours of spoken Telugu for the year-long exercise.

To keep the language user friendly, it has planned debate and just-a-minute speaking competitions by liaising with educational institutions in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana state.

The crowd-sourcing project is a joint effort of IIITH with the government. The project team is led by Dr Anil Kumar Vuppala, associate professor, Speech Processing Centre, and Prakash Yalla, head, Technology Transfer Office, who say they want to champion the cause of Indian language Alexas, to help bridge the country's multilingual divide through artificial intelligence.

Another approach will be through the existing Telugu Wikipedia community consisting of scholars and lovers of the language.

VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURE SCHEME FOR EXOTIC LIVE ANIMALS**MINCEMEAT TO REPLACE RAW CHICKEN AT NEHRU ZOO**

T.S. SIDDHARTH I DC
HYDERABAD, JAN. 7

Raw chicken, a staple of carnivores in the Nehru Zoological Park, will no longer be served. It would be replaced with mincemeat, officials of the park said as began stepping up measures to prevent bird flu from infecting the inmates.

Reflective ribbons are being placed on aviaries, perching spots and water bodies to keep away migratory birds which usually home in on those spots.

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, N. Kshitiya, curator, Nehru Zoological Park, said: "We have constituted a 'rapid action force' team, consisting of veterinary doctors who will monitor the birds daily. There are five aviaries in the zoo and all of them, including the trees alongside, it have been festooned with reflective ribbons."

The zoo has initiated other steps to avoid the spread of Avian influenza. These include disinfection of the zoo, adding antibiotic powder and B-Complex syrup in the feed, providing a diet of fish for seven days for the birds and close monitoring of migratory birds visiting the wetlands of the zoo.

Officials have sprayed Viracid, an anti-viral liquid, around the enclosures and the night houses have been whitewashed. Avian influenza has spread over to at least four states — Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, and Rajasthan. States such as Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Kerala have been put on high alert after thousands of birds died from bird flu.

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Skoda Auto to launch midsized SUV Kushaq

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 7

THE ROLL-OUT of these vehicles will happen over the next 18 months, the company said in a release.

Skoda Auto India has said that its latest offering, a midsized SUV, Skoda Kushaq, will be the first in a series of vehicles tailored to meet the needs and demands of customers from the domestic market as well as those in emerging economies the world over.

The roll-out of these vehicles will happen over the next 18 months, the company said in a release.

The Kushaq, Skoda said, is the first vehicle designed and developed under the company's 'India 2.0' project. According to Zac Hollis, brand director, Skoda Auto India, the Kushaq offers a combination of the 'brand's timeless design ideals, unmatched performance, superior build quality, exemplary value proposition, and enhanced safety and security.'

It is deemed to be the best

Minimum temperature to drop from Jan. 9, says IMD

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 7

OVER THE last 24 hours, the coldest parts in the state were in Kamareddy at 17.10°C, Vikarabad 17.30°C, Ranga Reddy 17.70°C and Medchal-Malkajgiri district 17.90°C.

In the city, Ramachandrapuram and Patancheruvu recorded 18.20°C.

humid winds from the east which resulted in cloud formation. The IMD has forecast dry conditions for the city from Friday.

"For the next two days the minimum temperature would continue to stay at around 21°C. After that, the

conditions would be dry which would aid in the mercury levels falling. From January 9, we can expect a drop in the temperature," Dr Nagarathna said.

The wettest place in the state was Birkor in Kamareddy district which received 21.8 mm of rainfall, on Thursday.

Over the last 24 hours, the coldest parts in the state were in Kamareddy at 17.10°C, Vikarabad 17.30°C, Ranga Reddy 17.70°C and Medchal-Malkajgiri district 17.90°C.

In the city, Ramachandrapuram and Patancheruvu recorded 18.20°C.

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE****VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURE SCHEME FOR EXOTIC LIVE ANIMALS**

LAST DATE FOR VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURE EXTENDED TO

15 March, 2021

PLEASE AVAIL!

A scheme for Voluntary Disclosure and Registration of Stock, Import of Exotic Live Species in India, and related matters
[for Exotic Live Animals listed in CITES, excluding wild animals listed in the schedules of Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972]

"DEALING WITH IMPORT OF EXOTIC LIVE SPECIES IN INDIA AND DECLARATION OF STOCK"**Register/Apply for:**

- Voluntary Disclosure of possession of Exotic Live Animals by 15 March, 2021.
- Registration of change in stock of Exotic Live Animals (Transfer/Death/Acquisition).
- NOC for Import of Exotic Live Animals.
- Birth of progenies.

Benefits

- Immunity as per the directions of Hon'ble High Court of Allahabad in PIL Civil no. 12032/2020 dated 30/07/2020 and corroborated by Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.
- Enhanced veterinary care and well-being of animals.
- Control of zoonotic diseases.
- Simple online procedures of application and approvals.

The entire process has been made online.

Government of India "ADVISORY FOR DEALING WITH IMPORT OF EXOTIC LIVE SPECIES IN INDIA AND DECLARATION OF STOCK", Forms for Disclosure and User Friendly Manual can be accessed at <https://parivesh.nic.in>

IN BRIEF

Tahsildar axed for illegal passbooks

Kamareddy: Rajampet mandal tahsildar K. Moti Singh was suspended on Thursday for allegedly issuing illegal pattadar passbooks to ineligible persons. Reportedly, Moti Singh issued pattadar passbooks for government land in Survey Nos. 278, 279 in Shareshankar thanda to five persons. Following an inquiry, collector A. Sharath issued the suspension orders.

AJAY KUMAR LAUDS MISSION BHAGIRATHA

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 7

Union Jal Jeevan Mission director Ajay Kumar said that there was no other drinking water project like Mission Bhagiratha in the country. Telangana was the only state that supplied drinking water to every household, and several states were following the model, Kumar said.

A four-member team led by Ajay Kumar arrived in Hyderabad to inspect the Mission Bhagiratha project. They inspected Suryapet, Khammam, Bhadrachalam, Mahabubnagar and Elluru segments as part of their tour on Thursday.

Ajay Kumar's team inspected the intake wells, filter beds and supply of the water to houses. They interacted with beneficiaries in the villages.

58 FARMERS RECEIVE RYTHU BANDHU FUNDS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 7

Agriculture minister Singreddy Niranjan Reddy said that Rythu Bandhu funds have been deposited into the accounts of 58.07 lakh farmers, and the others would get the money in three to four days. The government has so far deposited ₹6,632.74 crore covering 132.65 lakh acres under the Rythu Bandhu scheme.

Niranjan Reddy thanked Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao on behalf of the agriculture department for depositing the Rythu Bandhu funds. Due to the pandemic, farmers were suffering financially, and the Rythu Bandhu funds are helpful to them.

He said the highest amount of ₹530.07 crore was given to 4,31,660 farmers in Nalgonda district and the least was ₹26.82 crore for 29,685 farmers in Medchal district.

Khammam, Sangareddy and Siddipet districts have the highest number of beneficiaries after Nalgonda. Medchal, Mulugu and Warangal Urban had less than one lakh beneficiaries.

BHARAT BIOTECH ENROLLS 25,800 VOLUNTEERS

Hyderabad, Jan. 7: Bharat Biotech has completed enrollment of 25,800 volunteers for the Phase-3 trials of its Covid-19 vaccine Covaxin, Suchitra Ella, joint managing director, Bharat Biotech International Ltd, said on Thursday.

In a message posted on the company's Twitter account, she thanked clinical trial sites, principal investigators and health workers for their support and trust in the "public-private partnership" vaccine discovery.

"My deep appreciation to all the volunteers for reposing and expressing Pro Vaccine Public Health Voluntarism in the phase-3 clinical trials of India's 1st fully indigenous Covid-19 vaccine," she said referring to Covaxin.

The company had said it is the only Phase-3 efficacy study for a Covid-19 vaccine, and the largest efficacy trial (Phase-3) ever conducted for any vaccine in India. —PTI

TRS will make TS Bimaar Telangana, says Chugh

Asserts BJP will win in 2023; end KCR family rule



BJP national general secretary Tarun Chugh and BJP state president Bandi Sanjay Kumar at the rally in Dichpally of Nizamabad district on Thursday.

Mallu Bhatti accuses CM of secret relationship with BJP

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 7

Congress Legislative Party leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Thursday accused Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao of taking a U-turn on agricultural policies after his visit to Delhi. This showed that he had struck a secret relationship with the BJP at the Centre to safeguard his corruption in the state. Mallu Bhatti said.

On Thursday, the CLP leader, addressing a press conference at the Assembly media point, announced that Congress MLAs would hold a dharna at Indira Park in the city to support farmers who are continuing their protest

in Delhi against the Centre's laws.

He expressed dissatisfaction that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union agriculture minister Narendra Singh Tomar did not visit the farmers who were protesting against the new farm laws and discuss the issue with them.

Bhatti pointed out that before going to Delhi, Chandrashekhar Rao had supported the farmers bandh call in the state. After his visit, he took a U-turn on the matter.

ported the farmers bandh call in the state. After his visit, he took a U-turn on the matter. "Why did KCR not visit the protesting farmers in Delhi to express his support? It is the nature of his politics," the CLP leader said.

He questioned the Chief Minister's claim that the state government would lose ₹7,500 crore by buying agricultural produce.

He alleged that the Chief Minister "colluded" with "middlemen who were planning to loot the farmers" by offering prices for their paddy. "The CM is not the CEO of the state," Mallu Bhatti said and said that the state was no corporate to loot public money.

HARISH: RYTHU VEDIKAS GOOD FOR AGRI SECTOR

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 7

Finance minister T. Harish Rao on Thursday said that Rythu Vedikas were very useful to bring about the development of farmers in the agricultural sector. The minister was speaking after laying the foundation stone for soil test lab at the market yard in Gajwel.

Harish Rao said that the Vedikas would provide comprehensive information to the farming community. Farming instructions, fertilisers and pesticides will be provided in stages through the Rythu Vedikas.

Soil tests will be done and land records will be provided to the farmers with comprehensive information, he said. The success stories of farmers will be communicated to others through the Rythu Vedikas.

Harish Rao said that the price of crops was being set by the Centre as the minimum support price. BJP leaders were claiming that the new agriculture laws would benefit the farmers. However, under the new laws, there will be no purchase centres, the minister explained.

He said that Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao was helping the farmers by providing water, Rythu Bandhu assistance, Rythu Bheema insurance and free electricity. The minister said the Centre should help the farmers by giving a good price to the crops.

Mandal-wise roadmap for election campaign

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 7

BJP state affairs in-charge Tarun Chugh instructed party leaders to work hard for the Legislative Council graduates elections from the Hyderabad-Ranga Reddy-Mahabubnagar constituency.

On Thursday, Chugh conducted a review meeting with key leaders, including state party president Bandi

Sanjay, Union minister of state G. Kishan Reddy, party vice-president D.K. Aruna and others on the situation after the GHMC elections result.

Chugh urged them to prepare their campaign with a mandal-wise roadmap as the elections were only two months away. Instilling confidence among youth about BJP capabilities would add to their cause, he said.

of the TRS, he said.

The BJP state president accused the Chief Minister of misleading the people on the funds given by the Centre by changing the names of Central schemes.

Nizamabad MP D. Arvind, speaking at the

leaders must coordinate with the old guard and the newcomers for bringing a cohesive blend and avoid group loyalties.

He suggested that agitations be held against the TRS government which has failed to provide employment for unemployed youth. The in-charge appreciated the hard work put in by leaders that has helped attract new voters.

event, said that the Bodhan Assembly constituency was utterly neglected by the TRS. "I am ready to debate on the problems of turmeric farmers and the farm laws at Mamidipally crossroads in Amroor," he said.

PRASHANT CHALLENGES BJP OVER SCHEMES

DC CORRESPONDENT
NIZAMABAD, JAN. 7

Housing minister V. Prashant Reddy on Thursday offered to resign from the Cabinet if BJP state president Bandi Sanjay and Nizamabad MP D. Arvind took the initiative for the launch of welfare schemes like those in Telangana in BJP-ruled states.

"If they are unable to do so, will they resign from the posts of state BJP president and MP," he dared the BJP leaders.

During a visit, the minister participated in various developmental works in Balkonda Assembly constituency and Nizamabad district headquarters. Nizamabad Urban MLA Bigala Ganesh Gupta, MLCs D. Rajeshwar Rao, V.G. Goud and Akula Lalitha accompanied the minister.

The minister said Sanjay and Arvind were indulging in false propaganda against the TRS government. Compared to the TRS, the BJP strength in Telangana state is nominal, he said.

He laid the foundation for a National Academy of Construction (NAC) in Nizamabad. The minister thanked Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao for sanction of ₹6 crore for the NAC.



Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao leaves Yashoda Hospital in Secunderabad after blood tests on Thursday.

— R. PAVAN

CM undergoes tests for lung inflammation

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 7

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao underwent medical tests at Yashoda Hospital. It is said that he was suffering from inflammation in the lungs, and his personal doctors conducted tests at the hospital. After completing the tests, the CM left for Pragati Bhavan.

Dr M.V. Rao, the CM's personal doctor, told the media that the Chief Minister's health was very good. He said that the CM undergoes a medical examination every year as part of his general check-up.

Dr Rao clarified that the CM did not have any signs of Coronavirus infection. A CT scan was done due to inflammation

in the lungs. The doctor said that an MRI scan was not required, and the Chief Minister needed to take rest.

Pulmonologist Dr Navneet Sagar and cardiologist Dr Pramod Kumar several tests on the CM. Minister K.T. Rama Rao, MLC K. Kavitha and MP J. Santosh Kumar accompanied the CM to the hospital.

tion in the lungs. The doctor said that an MRI scan was not required, and the Chief Minister needed to take rest.

Shruti said that Suman's utterances were aimed at surviving in the TRS, which can only be achieved by saluting the Chief Minister and his family members. She accused Suman of failing as an MP. Now, as MLA, he had done nothing for Dalits.

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SHORT TAKES

VILLAGERS WAYLAY OFFICIALS, NO HALT TO CHILD MARRIAGE

ANUDEEP CEREMILLA | DC
WARANGAL, JAN. 7

A team of officials who went to stop the wedding of an under-age girl in Tallakunta thanda under Wardhannapet mandal was turned away by villagers on Wednesday night. A crowd stopped the officials from reaching the house where the wedding ceremony for the 12-year-old girl was on. The villagers got into an altercation with child protection officers, police and ICDS officials around 11pm. District child development officer (DCPO) G Mahender Reddy said the villagers paid no heed to the words of the officials and abused them.

"Women ganged up against women officers and argued against any outside 'interference' in the issue. They said it was the family's decision as to when their children should get married. There was high tension. The villagers were in a mood to defy the police," he said.

CDPO Padma, supervisor Hemalatha, Wardhannapet police sub-inspector Vamsi Krishna, child protection officer Raju and police constables left the village without being able to halt the marriage event. The issue was reported to district collector M Haritha. A police case would be registered against the family members. Wardhannapet sub-inspector Vamsi Krishna said a case under sections 186, 188 of the IPC and sections 9 and 10 of the Prevention of Child Marriage Act 2006 has been registered.

BJP LEADERS DETAINED OVER TEMPLE PROTEST

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIZIANAGARAM, JAN. 7

BJP state president Somu Veeraju, MLC PVN Madhav and general secretary Vishnuvardhan Reddy were detained here as they tried to break the police cordon and reach the Sri Kodandarama Swamy temple atop Bodikonda in Ramateertham on Thursday, where an idol of Lord Rama had been decapitated.

In the melee, the BJP president fainted and fell down. What was styled as the BJP's Dharma Yatra, as announced by state party president a day ago, was stopped at Nellimerla junction in the morning.

This was the second time BJP leaders were detained over their attempt to enter Ramateertham. The first attempt was on Tuesday. "We want to know who is attacking Hindu temples and why. As many as 21 temples were attacked in the state and not a single person was arrested. Why is the government not allowing only the BJP and Jana Sena to enter Ramateertham," Veeraju asked before he was detained.

The police told them that Section 30 of the Police Act was in force till the end of this month. None would be allowed to visit the temple. The BJP leaders had a heated argument with the cops and then tried to break the cordon.

AP TO ALLOT PLOTS IN TOWNS, CITIES FOR MIGS

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, JAN. 7

Andhra Pradesh is coming up with a scheme to help the poor and the middle-income groups in urban areas to realise their lifetime's dream of owning a house. They would be provided with dispute-free plots in government-developed layouts.

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy held a review meeting with the minister for municipal administration Botsa Satyanarayana and chief secretary Aditya Nath Das and others here on Thursday.

The CM said that during the term of Y.S. Rajasekhar Reddy, there used to be a housing scheme called Rajiv Swagruha where the middle class people living in towns and cities were allotted flats. At present, the government is contemplating allotment of plots to such people with clear title and at lesser price. He directed officials to develop layouts and plots and allot them to the beneficiaries through draw of lot, especially for the benefit of the middle-income people. "Develop layouts in a novel manner," he advised them. The officials also discussed with the CM about development of the six-lane beach road from Bheemili.



R.S.S. Rao, executive director of Indian Oil Corporation Limited, along with other officials at the inauguration of biogas plant at Udityal village, Hyderabad, on Thursday.

Biogas from poultry litter ready to enter the market

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 7

A compressed biogas plant that exclusively uses poultry litter with a capacity to produce 2.4 tonnes of gas a day, and located at Udityal village near the city, logged an important milestone of commercial usage this week.

The first-of-its-kind plant in Telangana state, it has been established by Solika Energy Pvt Ltd (Solika), which was inaugurated by R.S.S.

by Srinivas Hatcheries and XEMX Projects.

"Solika is currently in the process of setting up the second CBG project in Telangana state. This is expected to have a CBG production capacity of 3.6 tonnes a day," said Himadeep Nallavadla, promoter of Solika Energy Pvt Ltd.

The plant at Udityal, located next to a poultry farm with more than 4.5 lakh birds that provides the raw material, was inaugurated by R.S.S.

Rao, executive director of Indian Oil Corporation Limited.

Solika built this plant under the Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation Scheme of the ministry of petroleum and natural gas.

The biogas that is produced will be supplied to an IOCL outlet in Attapur. Commercial sale at this outlet is expected to start later this month.

Compressed biogas is

expected to play an important role in India's energy future as it can help reduce fuel imports, provide a viable cleaner alternative fuel to vehicles, and provide additional sources of fertiliser to India's agricultural sector.

In addition to the gas, the plant also generates around 15 tonnes of organic manure a day as a byproduct, which the firm plans to provide to local farming communities.

Religious tolerance panels to tackle attacks on temples

DC CORRESPONDENT

VIJAYAWADA, JAN. 7

Expressing concern over the series of attacks on temples in several parts of the state, Chief Secretary Aditya Nath Das on Thursday warned of stern action against such gangs and vowed to restore peace and amity in the state.

The Chief Secretary announced setting up of state and district-level religious tolerance committees to curb attempts at fanning religious hatred and protect the religious sentiments of the people.

Addressing the media here, he termed the attacks on temples as unfortunate.

He said the state-level religious tolerance committee will have the Chief Secretary as its chairman, the director general of police as vice

chairman and principal secretaries of home, endowments, minorities welfare and representatives from Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Buddha and Jain religions as members while general administration department principal secretary (Political) would serve as its convener.

The CS said that at the district level, the collector will be the chairman. The SP would serve as vice chairman and assistant directors from minorities and endowments departments and representatives from all religions would be members while joint collector (Rythu Bharosa) would serve as the convener.

He said both state-level and district-level committees would meet whenever any breach of religious amity occurred, in order to initiate measures and curb recurrence of such incidents.

Maintaining that a series of welfare programmes and developmental works are being taken up by the state government without political, casteist or religious considerations, the CS said these were receiving accolades nationwide. He made it clear that government employees and officers should work with the sole aim of providing benefits to the people beyond any narrow considerations.

Additional DGP Ravi Sankar, while referring to the series of attacks of temples in Antarvedi, Krishna and Rajahmundry areas, said there were common strains in the way the attacks were done and it appeared that one person was doing this.

Democracy under assault, says Joe Biden

FROM PAGE 1

Loud cheers erupted in the congressional chamber when final certification of Biden's victory was announced. The President immediately released a statement pledging an "orderly transition" but suggesting he would remain in frontline politics, amid speculation that he may run again in 2024.

"Even though I totally disagree with the outcome of the election, and the facts bear me out, nevertheless there will be an orderly transition on January 20th," he said.

"I have always said we would continue our fight to ensure that only legal votes were counted. While this represents the end of the greatest first term in presidential history, it's only the beginning of our fight to Make America Great Again!"

Democratic Senate minority leader Chuck Schumer said Trump would bear "everlasting shame" for the assault on the Capitol.

Several hours after the violence began, Trump released a video in which he called on the crowd to leave but repeated his unfounded claims of election fraud. — AFP

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
Ministry of Education
(Department of School Education & Literacy)ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE POST OF DIRECTOR,
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING (NCERT)

Applications/Nominations are invited in prescribed proforma from eligible candidates for the post of Director, National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), having Pay Scale of Rs. 2,10,000 (fixed) + Rs.11,250/- as Special Allowance. The appointment shall be made by transfer on deputation or short-term contract on tenure basis for a period upto five years or upto the age of 65 years of the candidate or till the age of his/her superannuation in his/her parent organization or until further orders, whichever is earlier. For Eligibility and other details refer to our advertisement in the Employment News dated 16.01.2021 and/or visit the website of NCERT viz www.ncert.nic.in

Applications/Nominations, duly prepared in the prescribed proforma and printed on A4 size paper, should reach Shri T.S. Rautela, Director to Govt. of India, Ministry of Education, Department of School Education and Literacy, Room No. 503-D, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi-110115, through proper channel, within 30 days from the date of publication of the advertisement in the Employment news.

Those who have sent their Applications/Nominations, through proper channel, in response to the Advertisement published in the Employment News dated 05-11 September, 2020 need not apply afresh.

Davp 21104/11/0007/2021

Government of India
SERIOUS FRAUD INVESTIGATION OFFICE
2nd Floor Pt. Deendayal Antyodaya Bhawan
B-3 Wing, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003.
No. 2/1/2019-Admn.SFIO

It is proposed to fill up the following vacancies in this office on deputation/ISTC basis:

Sl. No	Category of post	Tentative Nos. of posts	Tentative Place of Posting	Level in the pay matrix or pay scale
1	Deputy Director (Investigation)	2	Delhi/Mumbai/Kolkata/Chennai/Hyderabad	Level 11 in pay matrix (Rs.67700-208700)
2	Sr. Asstt. Director (Taxation)	2		Level 10 in pay matrix (Rs.56100-177500)

2. Interested and willing govt. employees may forward their application complete in all respect through proper channel in the prescribed format to The Director, Serious Fraud Investigation Office, 2nd Floor, Pt. Deendayal Antyodaya Bhawan, B-3 Wing, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003 within 60 days from the date of publication of this advertisement in the Employment News. For details, etc. visit www.sfio.nic.in/

3. Since, this is a deputation post, private candidates need not to apply. Separate applications may be forwarded for each post along with photocopies of up to date ACRs/APARs for the last 5 years, duly attested (on each page) by an officer of the level of Under Secretary or above, Vigilance Clearance Certificate, Integrity Certificate and the Certificate of major/ minor penalty imposed on the officer during the last 10 years of his service. The Cadre Controlling Authority may also certify that the particulars furnished by the officer have been verified and found correct. Those who have already applied may apply afresh.

4. Applications without ACRs/ APARs, Vigilance Clearance or otherwise found incomplete will not be considered.

Davp 07102/11/0010/2021

Bhuma kin-Praveen Rao ties back in the spotlight

Both families linked by land deals in Hitec City

DC CORRESPONDENT
MAHABUBNAGAR, JAN. 7

● A CLOSE family member of Bhuma family said that Krishna Rao, father of Praveen Rao, used to work for the three-time Member of Parliament Bhuma Nagi Reddy

Rao. He used to run cinema theatres and liquor business, he said. Praveen Rao's brothers continued the cinema business. Rao's family and Subba Reddy continued to work together even after the death of Nagi Reddy.

A minister belonging to the undivided Mahabubnagar district and an MP were allegedly supporting Rao's family as they were assured of a share in the lands, the family member said.

Minister Srinivas Goud reacted to the issue on Wednesday and said that "Rayalaseema goondam" will not run in Telangana state. He said that on coming to know of the kidnap of Praveen Rao, he had spoken to the local DCP and quickly resolved the kidnap drama.

TRS MP Maloth Kavitha was the first person who alerted the Bowenpally police about the kidnap, the family member said.

Nagi Reddy, though belonging to Allagadda in Kurnool, entered Mahabubnagar and had business partnerships with people fronted by Krishna

cel of 50 acres is peanuts. There is much more to be unearthed," he said. Akhila Priya was arrested for alleged kidnap pertaining to Hafeezpet land.

With the death of Nagi Reddy in 2017, his children including Akhila Priya were reportedly clueless about the properties he had amassed and who had the title deeds and legal papers, the family member said.

"The Hafeezpet land par-

COPS LAUNCH MANHUNT FOR AKHILA'S HUSBAND

Hyderabad, Jan. 7: The police intensified efforts to nab former Andhra Pradesh minister Bhuma Akhila Priya's husband Bhargava Ram and other accused in the kidnap of a former sportsman and his two brothers here over a land dispute, a senior official said on Thursday. The trio had been rescued on Wednesday.

Police teams have been sent to Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka as part of the operations to nab them, the official said. A group of around 15 people posing as income-tax sleuths, with fake search warrants had entered the house of Praveen at Bowenpally on the night of January 5 on the pretext of conducting a raid and abducted him and his two brothers after locking up other family members.

Akhila Priya presently in judicial custody and lodged in a jail here. She moved a bail application in a local court which has been posted for Friday. A petition seeking her police custody for further interrogation will be filed, the official explained.

— PTI

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation		Office of the Executive Engineer, Serilingampally Circle-20, SLP Zone-GHMC
Procurement Notice		
NIT No.	Category of Work	Estimate Amount (Rs.)
43/E/CIR-20/SLPZ/ GHMC/1/2020-21 Date: 07.01.2021	Other Works	17.60
Start Date/Last Date for Receipt of Bids		07.01.2021 01:30 PM
Name & Address of Officer/Cell No.		EE, CIR-20, SLPZ, GHMC 9154299724
R.O. No: 8238-PP/CI/Adv/1/2020-21		Sd/- Executive Engineer, Circle-20, GHMC

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA		
Department of Technical Education		
NOTIFICATION		
Centralized Apprenticeship Fair Walk in Interviews for Apprenticeship Training To Engineering Graduates and Diploma Holders in Reputed Organizations (Government & Private Sector)		
Venue	Date & Time	Category
K.G. Reddy College of Engineering & Technology, Mornabad Main Road, Chikur, Hyderabad, Telangana-501504	02-02-2021 (09.00 AM to 05.00 PM)	Engineering Graduates
	03-02-2021 (09.00 AM to 05.00 PM)	Diploma Holders in Engineering
https://telts.cgg.gov.in		ECE, EEE, ECE, EEE, Computer Science & IT, Diploma, Mechanical, Civil, Metallurgy, Auto, Mobile, Chemical, Mining and Pharmacy
R.O. No.: 887-DP-PL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2021-21		Date: 07.01.2021

NMDC Limited	
(A Government of India Enterprise)	
Khanji Bhavan, 10-311/A, Castle Hills, Masab Tank, Hyderabad-500 028	
CIN: L13100TG19580G01674	
CONTRACTS DEPARTMENT	
Tender Enquiry No. HO/(Contracts)/NISPO/R&B/RT2 Date : 08.01.2021	
NMDC Limited A "NAVARTANA" Public Sector Company under Ministry of Steel, Govt. of India, invites online bids from experienced domestic bidders for "Operation & Maintenance (O & M) of By Product Plant of 3 MTPA Integrated Steel Plant at Nagarnar near Jagdalpur, Chhattisgarh State".	
The detailed NIT and Bid documents can be viewed and/or downloaded from NMDC website http://www.nmdco.in , Central Public Procurement portal http://www.eprocure.gov.in and MSTC portal http://www.mstccommerce.co.in from 08.01.2021 to 29.01.2021.	
For Accessing the Bid document from NMDC website, the bidder has to register as "New User" in Bid section at NMDC's website link http://www.nmdco.in/nmdctender/default.aspx	
For accessing the Bid documents from Central Procurement Portal http://www.eprocure.gov.in , the Tenderer has to click on "Latest active Tenders".	
For accessing the bid document from MSTC, bidders to visit website link http://www.mstccommerce.co.in/eprocurement/mstcbuyer_login.jsp	

DECCAN Chronicle

8 JANUARY 2021

Trump's 'insurrection' was the final straw...

The violence unleashed by an invading mob ransacking the citadel of modern democracy was unbelievably shocking not only because they took place on Capitol Hill in Washington DC. The insurrection was sparked by the President of USA, Donald Trump, who incited his hardcore supporters to riot against this highly regarded symbol of the free world. All this would have been unthinkable if not for it being too predictable, as it was triggered by one of the most quixotic men to occupy the White House.

A day of such chaos as to shake the core of American democracy proved so futile in the end that its mastermind Mr Trump conceded he would respect the results of the election. Joe Biden of the Democratic Party had indubitably won the Electoral College votes as well as the voice of the people by seven million and is set to succeed him, after his victory was formally certified by the Congress at four o'clock in the morning. Reason as well as law and order had dawned again.

It would be extremely charitable of the Republican Party that Mr Trump belongs to if it were not to give greater force to the thought that he should be declared mentally unfit to rule and stripped of the presidency less than two weeks before his term runs out. After seeing Mr Trump elected to the highest office without winning all the people over in 2016, the Republicans lost the majority in the House of Representatives in 2018, the Presidential election in 2020 and a majority in the Senate in the two runoff elections in Georgia in 2021.

The first ever Senate wins for the Democrats in a long time in Georgia were a final rebuke to Mr Trump, who had contributed by sowing doubts in democratic elections. How they allowed such a leader so much latitude in behaving as he did post November 3 is a mystery. Senior leaders like Mitch McConnell and Mike Pence did the right thing finally in disowning their President. Vice-president Pence had, in the nick of time, upheld the highest traditions of democracy in carrying out the transfer of power, which is the very bedrock of democracy.

The scope allowed by the police forces in the Capitol for lumpen elements of the far Right to vandalise the Speaker's office and lord it over the Senate chamber for a while was appalling. And while a tweeting Mr Trump acted out the modern version of Nero playing the fiddle, Mr Pence ordered in the National Guard to secure the Capitol and save it from a perfidious set of rogues set loose on the word of an obnoxious master.

It is no more a puzzle how blind loyalty can drive people as illustrated in an overzealous lady who had to be shot outside the door of the chambers into which lawmakers had been locked in for their safety. Of course, the greater is the responsibility among leaders to discipline their flock. Mr Trump's biggest failure lay not in his buffoonery while in office and not even in his inability to lead when it came to personally dealing with an adverse poll result. His devilish goading of people to violence was responsible for the mayhem for which he will never be forgiven. He deserves his place in the dustbin of history.

Bird flu: Remain on alert

Most nations hit by pandemic Covid-19 are not in a position to face another health exigency but India has been called upon to pull up its socks against the avian flu which has till now killed thousands of migratory birds and poultry in four states and threatens to spread to more areas. The Union government has sent an alert to all states to monitor their avian stock especially in forest areas and in water bodies. As of now, 12 epicentres of the flu have been identified in four states — Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Kerala.

It has been clarified that the flu this time is spread mainly through migratory birds that travel thousands of kilometres from the icy cold climes to their tropical destinations from October to February. The government's attempt is to stop the secondary spread of the virus, and the state governments have already started addressing the issue. Thousands of infected ducks have already been culled in Kerala.

Economic activity on the ground has been halted for almost a year now, and a bird flu outbreak is a shock most poultry farmers would not be able to absorb, especially at a time when the markets have started slowly looking up. The government must work with the farmers to ensure that all the infected birds are properly dispensed with and that all the farmers who comply with the norms are compensated forthwith. The government must also think of enhancing financial help to encourage farmers to upscale their hygiene standards so that they do not fall prey to such outbreaks so easily. There must also be a mechanism to ensure that even the slightest of suspicions of the disease is scientifically addressed and acted upon without loss of time. All these measures call for close coordination among the state and central institutions and agencies. They could draw from the experience they have gathered while fighting Covid-19.

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K. SUDHAKAR
Printer & PublisherKAUSHIK MITTER
Editor

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Mary Mitzy

On this day last year, people all over the world were nursing new resolutions. The coronavirus shattered their hopes and dreams in no time. It spared none — not even the most important pillar of democracy — the judiciary. After the initial onslaught, it is said to have partially resumed its duties. So how did the Supreme Court of India function during the pandemic?

The Court completely shut the entry of advocates into its premises. In an epoch-making decision, it threw all its former reservations vis-à-vis digital operations to the winds, and finally went online. The Court revived the e-filing portal, introduced long back but not in use by advocates. And, only urgent matters were taken up for the "virtual hearing". The platform used by the Court is the Vidyo app.

During the initial stages of this changeover, the registry gave instructions to advocates on phone on how to log into the Vidyo app, when to log in, and so on. This was almost nine months ago. Today, nine months on, the

Supreme Court still takes up only urgent matters for hearing. Its functional can at best be said to be partial. Most benches now have three judges sitting on alternate days for a few hours.

The online system is convenient for many advocates who returned to their hometown during the lockdown and don't want to return to Delhi. Today we have lawyers appearing from various parts of the country before the Supreme Court as well as other courts. That aside, it has not been smooth sailing. Tech glitches and lack of Internet savvy plays a spoilsport in the day-to-day work of the court even after so many months have gone by.

Indian courts follow the system of an open court hearing. Everyone can watch the proceedings. But the Vidyo app has a limit in terms of the number of participants who can be admitted and the Supreme Court, too, came out with a notification restricting the advocates from sharing the link for appearance. It has affected mostly young advocates keen to learn court craft from watching the courts function.

But there's been worse happening. Many a time, during hearing a case, the advocate was logged out at the relevant moment and was unable to log in. This resulted in the case being decided in their absence. It is with great difficulty that one gets one's case listed for hearing and if it is decided in one's absence then one's entire effort becomes futile. On top of that, there is the pain of humiliation before one's client.

The appearance of the advocates before the court is run by the control room, comprising a team of technical hands who are almost completely unfamiliar with the legal process. It is their job to identify the lawyers for each case as per the item numbers written before their names. The control room decides whose mic should be unmuted and whose video made visible.

Now, the cases heard by the Supreme Court have anywhere between two and 30 parties. Who decides who will be unmuted? A control room that has no idea about the proceedings of a case?

Advocates keep sending requests to be unmuted or for the senior advocate to be allowed to speak. But only if they are lucky will their request be granted before the case is over. Or else, you just count yourself to be on the "unlucky list".

Besides, in a virtual court, there are limitations to the ways in which an advocate can try and persuade the bench to unmute them, once it has muted them to do which it has the powers. In a physical court hearing, the practice is to try and persuade the bench to hear them even if it puts the file down, and many do succeed in their efforts.

Then there is the interesting question of how come those who don't want themselves to be visible appear on the screen when they are least expecting to be seen. The new practice is that, once the court starts hearing a case, the screen will show only those advocates who are arguing that particular case. But many a time, lawyers were caught on screen dressed casually and doing something else even when their case was not being

heard. It led to much embarrassment in legal circles. Such situations could have been avoided if the control room had been more careful.

But the larger question is this: Are we going to continue to function in such a handicapped manner, and for how long? There are a large number of cases needing proper disposal. Many litigants' lives depend on the disposal of their long awaited cases. Some of them are languishing in jails, some are waiting for their salary, some waiting to be appointed to a job to sustain themselves and their families. Is it not time for the highest court of the country to resume physical functioning like every other organisation, observing strict social distancing rules?

If this anarchy continues, people may have to turn to other ways to redress their grievances and one fine morning we may find that we can do without the services of the judiciary.

The writer is a Supreme Court lawyer

Subhani



Hindus and patriotism: Why RSS chief is wrong

Karan Thapar

As I See It

We are all prone to saying foolish things. I do so quite often. In fact, it's probably one of the qualities that makes us human. On the other hand, robots or creatures that work on artificial intelligence are never foolish, although they could be wrong. However, there's a significant difference between the harmlessly foolish and the defiantly stupid. The latter, particularly when it's acted upon, can be dangerous. I'm afraid that the comments made by the *sarsanghchalak* of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh fall squarely into the latter category. I know my saying so will infuriate RSS members and the *sarsanghchalak*'s army of fans but that can't be helped. I would have to call a spade a fruit fork if I opted for gentler terminology!

At a book launch last Friday Mohan Bhagwat said: "If someone is Hindu, he has to be patriotic, that will be his or her basic character and nature". Just in case that wasn't clear enough, he added: "A Hindu can never be anti-Indian". Much as he might want that to be the case, it simply isn't true.

First of all, our history establishes that there is no shortage of Hindus who have been traitors — it's another matter that the country may not have been called India at the time. Amongst the earliest was Raja Aambhi of Taxila. Apparently, he had helped build the bridge across the Indus river which enabled Alexander to invade the country. That was way back in 326 BC.

Jump a few centuries to Raja Jaichand. In

1192, he supported Muhammad of Ghor against Prithviraj Chauhan. It didn't matter to him that Chauhan was his son-in-law. It's said the desire for revenge because Chauhan had eloped with his daughter outweighed any qualms about assisting the Afghan invader.

However, don't assume it's only in ancient or medieval times that Hindus were traitors. Modern Hindus are really no different. We have several examples of Hindu treachery from the British Raj. One of the most striking is Jayajirao Scindia, the Maharaja of Gwalior, who in 1857 supported our conquerors. There are accounts that suggest his part in helping the British capture the Rani of Jhansi was by no means inconsequential.

And so to our own time. I'm not sure how one should think of the likes of Chhotra Rajan, Vijay Mallya, Nirav Modi or, even, Lalit Modi. I certainly wouldn't accuse them of treason, but I would hardly call them patriots. And remember, every one of them is a Hindu.

However, I suspect that Mr Bhagwat would simply brush aside all the evidence of history that I have just marshalled. I believe his actual, but unstated, point is that India's minorities cannot be as patriotic as its Hindu citizens. This, presumably, is what he means when he said a Hindu is patriotic by "his or her basic character and nature", and "a Hindu can never be anti-Indian".

Alas, even by this interpretation, the *sarsanghchalak* is simply wrong. And since it is acts of valour against the Pakistanis that are

most likely to impress the rest of us are not. This is not just untrue, it's also wicked. It seeks to sow the seeds of doubt, suspicion, distrust and, eventually, difference between Indians. The undeniable truth is that patriotism is

If we want our country to survive and flourish, let's stop trying to define patriotism as a Hindu attribute and let's discard the belief that Hindus are special or better. Otherwise, we could end up like Yugoslavia.

The writer is a television commentator and anchor

LETTERS

ANOTHER NIRBHAYA

The gangrape in UP yet again proves that mere laws cannot check crimes against women. The mindset of society about women needs to change (*UP: 50-year-old gang raped, killed by priest, aides, DC, Jan. 7*). It is a pity that UP which gave most PMs including the present one, tops in crimes against women as per NCRB report.

Kshirasagara Balaji Rao
Hyderabad

FARMERS' LIVES

Prime Minister Narendra Modi complained against erstwhile PM Manmohan Singh being unable to make important decisions in running the government. Now, let him show his decision-making skills by solving the farmers' crisis. More than 70 farmers have died protesting. His demonetisation cost hundreds of lives.

Sayed Nooruddin
Hyderabad

BAD PRECEDENT

Non-prior approval of the heritage conservation committee and lack of consensus have set a bad precedent (*₹20,000-cr Central Vista project gets SC's 2:1 nod, DC, Jan. 6*). Time and again MPs belonging to the Bharatiya Janata Party harp that people have elected 303 of them. But have they been given rights to bulldoze any dissent including dissent on new farm laws and non-conservation of heritage and so on?

B. Raghunadha Rao
Hyderabad

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

TPS claim on PM's assurance denied

HYDERABAD, January 7
TELANGANA Praja Samithi Chairman M. Chenna Reddy's statement, that the Prime Minister has conceded "in principle" the demand for a separate Telangana State, was today described as "incorrect and misleading" by the Ruling Congress Party circles.

The Ruling Congress circles expressed their surprise and concern at the reported statement of Dr. Chenna Reddy.

A spokesperson of the Pradesh Congress Committee emphatically denied any knowledge of "such thinking on the part of the Prime Minister."

Ensuring justice in virtual courts: Who controls the mute button?



Mary Mitzy

Advocates keep sending requests to be unmuted or for the senior advocate to be allowed to speak. But only if they are lucky will their request be granted before the case is over. Or else, you just count yourself to be on the "unlucky list". Besides, in a virtual court, there are limitations to the ways in which an advocate can try and persuade the bench to unmute them, once it has muted them to do which it has the powers. In a physical court hearing, the practice is to try and persuade the bench to hear them even if it puts the file down, and many do succeed in their efforts.

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The writer is a Supreme Court lawyer

CINEMA



SUDARSHAN 35MM
11.00am, 2.15, 6.00, 9.00pm

BRAMARAMBA 70MM
11.30am, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30pm

MEGHA 70MM
11.15am, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15pm

SRI KRISHNA 70MM
11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

SRI LAXMI 70MM
12.00, 3.00, 7.00, 10.00

SAI RAM 70MM
11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15

GOKUL 70MM
11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15

SAC EESHWAR - 11.00am, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00pm

PRASADS : 3.15pm, 5.45, 8.15, 10.45pm

AMB CINEMAS : 4.20pm, 7.00, 10.10pm

TIVOLI TIVOLI - Sec-bad : 11.30, 2.10, 7.20, 10.10pm

PVR CINEMAS

FORUM MALL - Kukatpally

10.45am, 1.45, 4.45, 7.45, 10.45pm

GALLERIA - Punjagutta

12.00, 3.00, 6.00, 9.00

INORBIT - Cyberbad

12.45, 3.45, 6.45, 9.45

CENTRAL - Punjagutta

11.30, 2.30, 5.30, 8.30

IRRUM MANZIL

1.15, 4.15, 7.15, 10.15

RK - BANJARA HILLS

12.15pm, 6.45pm

ICON - HITECH CITY

2.00, 5.00, 8.00

MOOSARAMBAGH

1.15, 4.15, 7.15, 10.15

INOX

GVK MALL - Banjara Hill

10.55am, 12.30, 3.35, 6.40, 9.45pm

GSM MALL - Miyapur

11.20, 1.15, 4.20, 5.55, 6.10, 7.25, 10.30pm

M P MALL - Kachiguda

11.25am, 1.15, 4.20, 7.25, 9.30, 10.30pm

Cinépolis

DSL - Uppal

12.00, 3.10, 4.15, 6.15, 9.20, 10.25

MANTRA - Attapur

12.00, 1.00, 4.05, 7.10, 10.30

CCPL - Malikajir

1.15, 3.30, 4.20, 7.25, 10.30

MMAA Balanagar

12.45pm, 3.20, 6.10, 9.15pm

MATUVE TIVOLI

BVK - LB Nagar

12.30pm, 3.30, 6.30, 9.30pm

S 2 CINEMAS - Mallapur

12.15pm, 6.45pm

PLATINUM CINEMAS - Gachibowli

12.30, 1.30, 3.00, 4.00, 5.30, 6.30, 8.00, 10.30

Kiosk

SRVY FILMS

SHRI VIKRANT PICTURES

YASHODA PICTURES

AFTER A 2-DAY HIATUS, ODISHA RECORDS FRESH COVID DEATH

AKSHAYA KUMAR
SAHOO | DC
BHUBANESWAR, JAN. 7

A 70-year-old man from Odisha's Khorda district died of Covid-19 on Thursday, taking the total number of deaths in the disease to 1,888. The fresh casualty came after the state recorded nil death cases on Tuesday and Wednesday.

"Regret to inform the demise of 70-year-old male Covid posi-

THE STATE HAS so far recorded 3,31,151 Coronavirus cases, including the 230 new cases reported since Wednesday.

tive patient of Khordha district who was also suffering from Chronic Liver Disease with Pulmonary Hypertension & Chronic Kidney Diseases," tweeted the state health and family welfare department.

The first death due to Covid-

19 was reported on April 7 last year in Odisha after a 72-year-old man of Jharpada area here succumbed to the virus on April 6, 2020 while undergoing treatment at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Bhubaneswar.

The state has so far recorded 3,31,151 Covid-19 cases, including the 230 new cases reported since Wednesday. As many as 21,652 tests were conducted on Wednesday, the government said on Thursday.

CINEMA



RUNNING SUCCESSFULLY

SANDHYA 35-RTC X ROADS (ENJOY 4K DIGITAL PROJECTION & DOLBY) 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM

VISWANATH 70MM-KUKATPALLY 11.45, 2.45, 6.45, 9.45PM

RAJADHANI COMP-DILSHUKNAGAR 11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15PM

MANJU 70MM-11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM

LAXMIKALA MANDIR SENSATION 70MM 11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30PM 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM

SRI SAPOOJA 70MM 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM

ULS SRIDEVI 70MM-11.30, 2.30, 6.15, 9.15PM

MJR SQUARE-NARAPALLY 11.00, 7.35PM

Forum-12.45pm, 3.45pm, 6.45pm, 9.45pm
Inorbit Mall-01.15pm, 4.15pm, 07.15pm, 10.15pm
Central-12.00pm, 03.00pm, 06.00pm, 09.00pm
RK Mall-01.30pm, 04.30pm, 07.30pm
Hitech-12.15pm, 3.15pm, 06.15pm, 09.15pm
L&T-1.00pm, 04.00pm, 07.00pm, 10.00pm
Irrum manzi-11.00am, 2.00pm, 05.00pm, 08.00pm
Moosarambagh-12.45pm, 3.45pm, 06.45pm, 09.45pm

INOX Mp mall-12.30, 3.25, 6.20, 9.15pm 01.15, 04.15, 7.15, 10.15pm Mallapur

MIRAJ CINEMAS Chandanagar-12.45pm, 3.45pm, 06.45, 09.45pm Balanagar-12.15pm, 3.15pm, 06.15pm, 09.15pm

ASIAN CINCH Sha-11.00, 6.00pm! Mcube-11.00AM, 7.00PM Gpr-11.05AM, 1.55PM, 7.30PM Cinesquare-10.45, 4.30, 9.40pm

Laxmikala Cinepride 10.55AM, 1.55PM, 7.30PM, 9.55PM

OAMB Amb cinemas-gachibowli 11.40, 2.20, 7.00 1.15, 7.10pm

Ccp1-12.30, 3.40, 6.40, 9.45PM Mantra mall-12.00, 3.40, 6.00, 9.40pm Dsl virtue-12.00, 3.00, 6.00, 9.00pm GANGA ENTERTAINMENTS-9966963111

RELEASING TODAY IN THEATRES

DIRTY HARI Written & Directed by M S RAJU

SAPTHAGIRI 70MM 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM

ARJUN 70MM-11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30PM

TARAKARAMA 70MM-KACHIGUDA 11.15, 2.15, 6.00, 9.00PM

VIJETHA 70MM 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM **VYJAYANTHI** 70MM 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM

SUPER 70MM 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM **SREERAMANA** 70MM 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM

AMBA 70MM 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM **RANGA** 70MM 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM

SUSHMA 70MM 11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15PM **VIMAL** 70MM 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM

SAIRANGA 70MM 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM **ALANKAR** 70MM 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM

BR HITECH 70MM 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM **JYOTHIRCPURAM** 70MM 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM

SVR SIVASAKTHI 70MM 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM **GANESH** 70MM 11.30, 2.30, 6.15, 9.15PM

MUKUND 70MM-11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM

OAMB 10.50, 1.35, 4.30, 7.20, 10.00PM

11.00AM, 2.00PM, 6.00PM, 9.00PM

NARAPALLY-10.55, 4.45PM, 10.00PM

ASIAN CINEMA SIVAGANGA-11.00, 2.00, 9.00PM GPR-10.55, 1.45, 4.40, 7.20, 9.45PM RADHIKA-10.55, 1.50, 7.20, 9.50PM CINESQUARE-10.55, 1.55, 4.45, 7.25, 9.50PM MCUBE-10.45, 1.45, 7.25, 9.55PM

11.00, 6.00, 9.00PM 10.50, 1.40, 7.20, 9.50PM

TIVOLI 11.15, 4.40, 10.20PM PRASAD'S 1.00PM

GLOBAL CINEMAS LLP

Govt announces ₹28k crore industrial package for J&K

Bid to create 4.5 lakh jobs; Package to remain in force for 17 years

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC
SRINAGAR, JAN. 7

The government on Thursday announced a ₹28,400 crore industrial package for Jammu and Kashmir and said that it would help towards creating as many as 4.5 lakh jobs besides paving the way for ₹20,000 crore investments in the Union Territory.

"The package approved by the Centre will give boost to J&K's industrial potential and will remain in force for 17 years," said UT's Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, at a press conference in Jammu.

Called 'Industrial Development Package-2021', the scheme aims at providing a huge boost to the existing industrial sector, he said asserting that the Government of India "has once again shown its commitment towards sowing the seeds of growth, prosperity and employment in J&K".

He said, "This is a historic industrial package that will give a boost to the industrial sector in J&K, create employment and pave way for outside investments as well." He added that the package will act as a big relief to the existing industries and will cover the manufacturing units as well as the service sector that includes the Tourism and Information Technology. "This will give J&K's economy a new boost and lead the UT towards growth and sustainable

development," Mr. Sinha said. He stated that the administration headed by him was working on a long and short term strategy for streamlining the power infrastructure in J&K. He said, "J&K has earned the first slot on road connectivity front and in the near future, every village will be connected through a better road. In 2023, people of J&K will travel in metro for the first time."

Elaborating on the new industrial package, he said its main purpose is to generate employment beyond government jobs in both manufacturing and service sectors which directly leads to the socio-economic development of the region.

"The scheme is being implemented with the vision that industry and service led development of J&K needs to be given a fresh thrust with emphasis on job creation, skill development and sustainable development by attracting new investment and nurturing the existing ones. It will provide a major support to local industry, besides creation of new business opportunities", he said. He said the scheme is also about bringing radical transformation in the existing industrial ecosystem of J&K with emphasis on job creation, skill development and sustainable development by attracting new investment and nurturing the existing ones, "thereby enabling J&K to compete nation-

ally with other leading industrially developed states and UTs of the country". He said it is anticipated that the scheme is likely to attract unprecedented investment and give direct and indi-

rect employment to about 4.5 lakh persons. Additionally, because of the working capital interest subvention, the scheme is likely to give indirect support to about 35,000 persons.

Victim should not have gone out in evening: NCW member

Budaun (UP), Jan. 7:

The brutal gangrape and murder of a 50-year-old woman in Uttar Pradesh's Budaun district could have been avoided if the victim had not gone out in the evening, said a member of the National Commission for Women (NCW) on Thursday while expressing her dissatisfaction with the police action in the case.

"I tell women again and again that they should never go out at odd hours under anyone's influence," said NCW member Chandramukhi Devi after meeting the woman's family members.

"I think if she had not gone out in the evening or was accompanied by any child of the family perhaps this incident could have been avoided. But this was pre-planned as she was called through a phone call. She went (out) and then returned in such a state," she told reporters at the victim's village in the district.

On Sunday, the 50-year-old anganwadi worker who had gone to a temple was found dead under mysterious circumstances. Her

family members have accused the temple priest and his aides of raping and murdering her.

A case has been registered against the accused and two of them were arrested on Tuesday night, while the priest is still absconding.

"I am not satisfied with the role of the police. Had timely action been taken, perhaps the life of the victim could have been saved," said Devi, who arrived in the village on Wednesday night.

The SSP has told me that the woman was found in an unconscious state and had she got treatment, her life could have been saved. The FIR was filed late and the post mortem examination was also done much later, she said, adding that the autopsy report explains that the incident was "most sickening and unfortunate".

Devi, as part of the team from the NCW, on Thursday met the victim's family members as well as officials and took stock of the action taken in this connection.

Meanwhile, former Samajwadi Party MP Dharmendra Yadav alleged that the police and administration purposely delayed the post mortem examination and did not disclose the report. - PTI

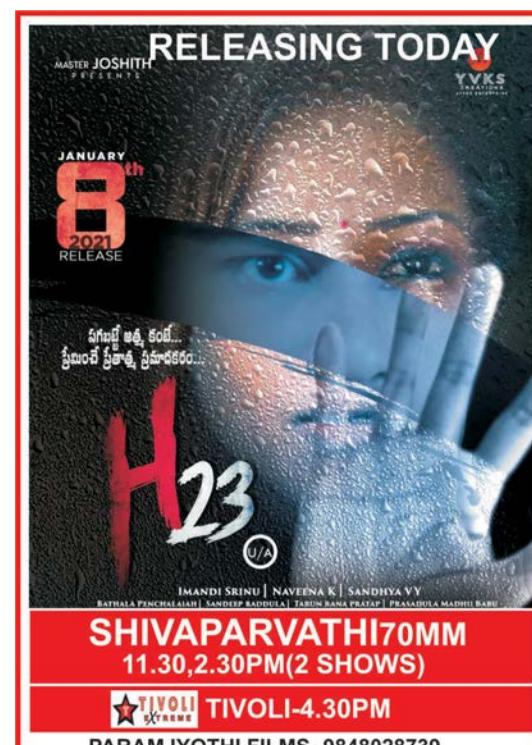
Plea seeks bar on leaders' re-election to same House

PARMOD KUMAR | DC
NEW DELHI, JAN. 7

The Supreme Court on Thursday sought response from the Centre and the Election Commission on a petition seeking to debar the lawmakers from contesting election during the term of the same House (assembly/parliament) after quitting it or being disqualified under 10th Schedule of the Constitution - anti-defection law.

A bench headed by Chief Justice Sharad A. Bobde also comprising Justice A. S. Bopanna and Justice V. Ramasubramanian gave the Centre and the ECI four weeks time to respond to the plea that any member of the House giving up the membership of a political party and resigning from the legislature should also come under the purview of 10th Schedule of the Constitution and

"In the state of Karnataka, 17 MLAs who resigned/were disqualified by the Speaker for anti-party activities, sought re-election and 11 of them got re-elected. Ten of them got ministerial berths in the new Government that was formed after the earlier government fell. Recently, in the State of Madhya Pradesh MLAs elected to the Assembly from one party resigned and defected and were immediately made ministers without being MLAs," the petition says.



SHORT TAKES

WOMAN SHOT DEAD IN CAPITOL A DON SUPPORTER

Washington, Jan. 7: The woman who died Wednesday of a bullet wound during the violent storming of the US Capitol was shot by police, authorities said. The only fatality tied to Wednesday's unrest was the woman, reportedly a dedicated Donald Trump backer and air force veteran who was among a throng of supporters of the president that invaded the US legislature.

Washington police chief Robert Contee said three other people, one woman and two men, had died Wednesday in the area around the Capitol, but did not link those deaths to the violence.

Each of the three "appeared to have suffered medical emergencies which resulted in their deaths," Contee told reporters.

HOST OF OFFICIALS RESIGN AFTER CAPITOL PROTEST

Washington, Jan. 7: US Deputy National Security Advisor Matt Pottinger, first lady Melania Trump's chief of staff Stephanie Grisham and White House Deputy Press Secretary Sarah Matthews have resigned following the violence at the US Capitol by supporters of President Donald Trump.

Grisham, who previously served as the White House press secretary before making way for current White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany in April, was the first to submit her resignation on Wednesday. "It has been an honour to serve the country in the White House," Grisham said in a statement posted on Twitter. Matthews also tendered her resignation. "As someone who worked in the halls of Congress, I was deeply disturbed by what I saw today," she said.

Trump's deputy national security advisor Pottinger also resigned. White House social secretary Rickie Niceta also submitted her resignation.

2 CONVICTED IN CHINA'S #METOO MOVEMENT

Taipei (Taiwan), Jan. 7: In a potential blow to the #MeToo movement in China, a young man and woman were convicted of defaming a prominent Chinese journalist for publishing an account accusing him of sexual misconduct.

A court in the eastern city of Hangzhou ruled on Tuesday that the evidence provided by former journalists Zou Sicong and He Qian against Deng Fei was "not enough to allow someone to firmly believe without any hesitation that what was described truly happened."

The court ordered He and Zou to pay 11,712 yuan (\$1,813) in damages. The pair plan to appeal the ruling. The case was based on an article written by He that Zou published online in 2018, in which he alleged Deng lured her to a hotel room in 2009 to discuss story ideas, then took off her clothes while trying to kiss and grope her. He said that at the time, she was a 21-year-old intern at a news magazine where Deng was chief reporter.

SYRIA RESPONDS TO 'ISRAELI AGGRESSION'

Damascus, Jan. 7: Syrian air defence forces responded late Wednesday to "Israeli aggression" in the south of the country, the state news agency said.

Israel launched missiles in the air attack from the disputed Golan Heights at around 11 pm (2100 GMT), SANA reported, citing a military source.

"Our anti-air defences responded, targeting most of the missiles," the source added. The UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) later said that the Israeli strikes caused "deaths and injuries" but did not give details.

SOHR said the Israeli raids targeted several positions south of Damascus and came two days after a delegation of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard visited the area.

Israel has not commented on the incident.

Last month, Israel said it had hit about 50 targets in the neighbouring country in 2020.

The Jewish state has consistently vowed to prevent its arch-enemy Iran from gaining a foothold in Syria, where Tehran has backed President Bashar al-Assad throughout the nearly decade-long war.



Violent protesters, loyal to President Donald Trump, storm the Capitol on Wednesday in Washington. — AP/PTI



People stand around media equipment destroyed by Trump supporters outside the US Capitol in Washington DC on Wednesday. — AFP



Trump supporters face off with police and security forces in front of the US Capitol in Washington DC on Wednesday. — AFP

US riot: World leaders appalled

Some single out Trump for harsh criticism, say there should be a peaceful transfer of power

London, Jan. 7: Leaders around the world condemned the storming of the US Capitol by supporters of President Donald Trump on Wednesday, expressing shock at the chaos unfolding in a country they once relied upon for global leadership. "Disgraceful scenes in US Congress," tweeted Prime Minister Boris Johnson of Britain, a staunch ally of the United States over generations. "The United States stands for democracy around the world and it is now vital that there should be a peaceful and orderly transfer of power."

Other allies were similarly appalled at what they described as an attack on American democracy, though some said they believed US democratic institutions would withstand the turmoil. Some leaders singled out Trump for harsh criticism.

"Trump and his supporters should finally accept the decision of the American voters and stop trampling on democracy," German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas wrote on Twitter. "From inflammatory words come violent deeds."

"The beauty of democracy comes with violent deeds."

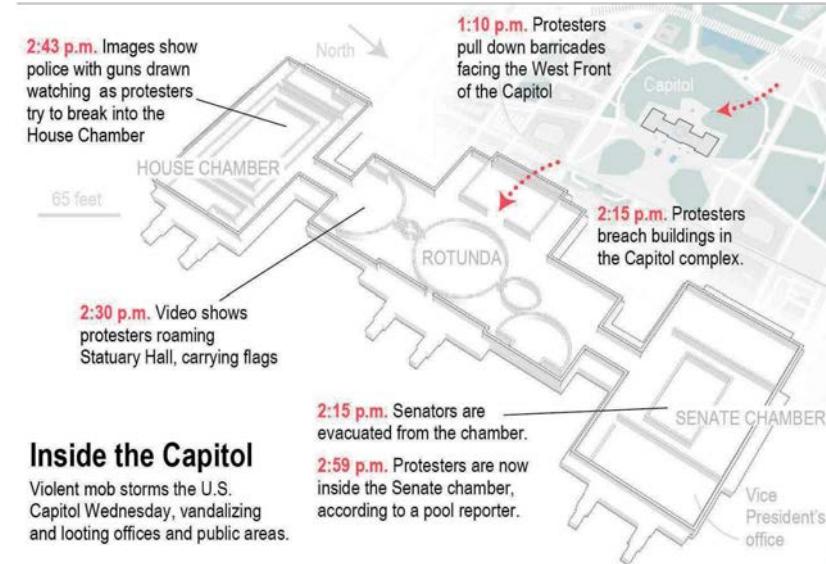
"And unfortunately it won't end today. When politics is replaced by deception and fanaticism of the people, the drift is inevitable."

European Parliament President David Sassoli, who leads one of the largest legislatures in the world, also denounced the scenes at the Capitol.

The European Union has spent four cantankerous years dealing with the Trump administration, and its top officials have repeatedly said they are looking forward to a better relationship under President-elect Joe Biden. "This is insurrection. Nothing less. In Washington," tweeted Carl Bildt, a former prime minister of Sweden.

Turkey, a NATO ally that has sometimes been at odds with Washington, expressed concern over the images of angry Trump supporters trying to thwart the certification of Biden as the new president.

The chaos forced lawmakers to be rushed from the building. A Turkish Foreign Ministry statement urged all parties in



Inside the Capitol

Violent mob storms the U.S. Capitol Wednesday, vandalizing and looting offices and public areas.

China goes online to mock 'beautiful sight' of US chaos

Beijing, Jan. 7: China's internet erupted in mirth at America's troubled democracy after supporters of President Donald Trump broke into the US Capitol, with Beijing criticising the "sharp contrast" between Washington's response to the chaos and the 2019 Hong Kong anti-government protests.

On Thursday morning,

state media tabloid *Global Times* tweeted side-by-side photo comparisons of Hong Kong protesters occupying the city's Legislative Council Complex in July 2019 with Wednesday's Washington riots.

The latter saw hardcore

Trump fans invade the US

Capitol to protest the election defeat, taking selfies,

scuffling with security,

and ransacking parts of

the building.

"@SpeakerPelosi once referred to the Hong Kong riots as 'a beautiful sight to behold,'" the Global Times said in the tweet, referring to Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi's June 2019 comment about Hong Kong's mass pro-democracy demonstrations, which at that time were mostly peaceful.

"It remains yet to be seen whether she will say the same about the recent developments in Capitol Hill." China's Communist Youth League also described the unrest as a "beautiful sight" on the Twitter-like Weibo platform.

Beijing's foreign ministry echoed those sentiments, saying "the reaction of some people in the US, including that of some media

outlets, is completely different."

Speaking at a press briefing Thursday, ministry spokeswoman Hua Chingyi said that the "sharp contrast (in reactions) makes one ponder, and deserves serious and profound reflection." The hashtag "#TrumpSupportersStormUSCapitol" ping-ponged across China's Weibo on Thursday, racking up 570 million views, as users compared the global support for Hong Kong's protesters with the outpouring of condemnation for the pro-Trump mob.

"At present, all European countries' leaders have shown double standards and condemned it (Washington rioting)," read one Weibo comment which gained over 5,000 likes.

— AFP

the United States to use "moderation and common sense."

"We believe that the United States will overcome this domestic political crisis with maturity," the ministry said. The ministry statement also urged Turkish citizens in the United States to stay away from crowds and demonstrations. Trump issued a restrained call for peace well after the melee was underway but did not immediately ask support-

ers to disperse. Later, he urged them to go home and called them "very special people."

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said his country was "deeply disturbed" by the events in the US, Canada's closest ally and neighbor. "Violence will never succeed in overriding the will of the people. Democracy in the US must be upheld — and it will be," Trudeau tweeted.

Volkan Bozkir, president of the 193-member United

Nations General Assembly, said he was saddened by the developments. But, he tweeted, "I believe that peace &

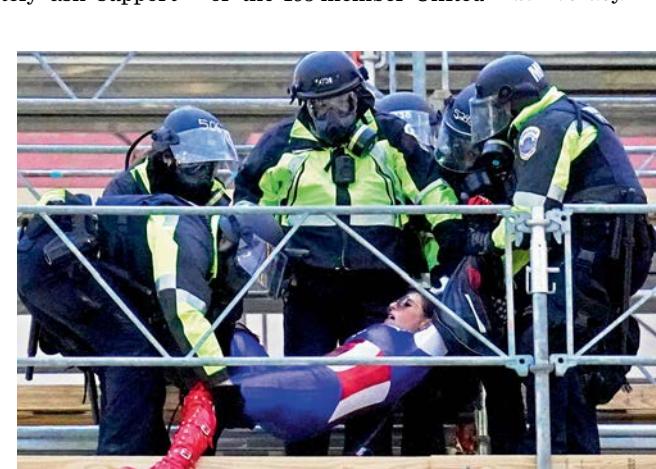
respect for democratic processes will prevail in our host country at this critical time."

Polish President Andrzej Duda, who twice visited Trump at the White House and hosted him in Poland, said on Twitter that his country had "full confidence in the power of American democracy."

— AP



Supporters of US President Donald Trump protest outside the US Capitol, in Washington, DC on Wednesday. — AFP



A demonstrator loyal to President Donald Trump, is removed by police, Wednesday, at the Capitol. — AP/PTI



Supporters of US President Donald Trump enter the US Capitol on Wednesday, in Washington, DC. — AFP

FB bans Trump till Biden inauguration

Washington, Jan. 7: Facebook will bar President Donald Trump from posting on its system at least until the inauguration of President-elect Joe Biden, the platform said Thursday.

In a post announcing the unprecedented move, Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg said the risk of allowing Trump to use the platform is too great following the president's incitement of a mob that touched off a deadly riot in the US Capitol on Wednesday.

Zuckerberg says Trump's account will be locked "for at least the next two weeks" but could remain locked indefinitely.

"This means these labelled tweets will not be able to be replied to, retweeted, or liked." Twitter and other social platforms were facing challenges amid the unrest after President Donald Trump, a fervent Twitter user, had rallied supporters in the capital city as Congress was set to certify the November election won by Joe Biden.

Twitter on Wednesday began limiting the reach of tweets stoking an assault on the US Capitol by a mob intent on overturning the election results.

cantly restricting engagement with tweets labeled under our Civic Integrity Policy due to the risk of violence," the Twitter support team said.

"This means these labelled tweets will not be able to be replied to, retweeted, or liked." Twitter and other social platforms were facing challenges amid the unrest after President Donald Trump, a fervent Twitter user, had rallied supporters in the capital city as Congress was set to certify the November election won by Joe Biden.

— AFP

UN chief, UNGA Prez show concern

United Nations, Jan. 7: Top United Nations leadership expressed sadness and concern over the violence in Washington DC by pro-Trump demonstrators who stormed the United States Capitol as lawmakers gathered to certify the presidential election results.

"The Secretary-General is saddened by the events at the US Capitol in Washington, D.C." on Wednesday, Stephane Dujarric, Spokesman for the Secretary-General, said in a note to correspondents.

"In such circumstances, it is important that political leaders impress on their followers the need to refrain from violence, as well as to respect democratic processes and the rule of law," the United Nations chief said.

President of the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly, Volkan Bozkir, tweeted that as

president of the 193-member UN body, "I'm saddened & concerned by today's developments at the Capitol in #WashingtonDC. The US is one of the world's major democracies. I believe that peace & respect for democratic processes will prevail in our host country at this critical time."

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), an international organisation that promotes world-wide parliamentary dialogue and representative democracy, also denounced the violence.

The IPU and the parliamentary community strongly condemn the violence and the assault on the US Capitol by protesters, it said in a statement.

"The integrity of this bastion of democracy and of the representatives of the people of the United States must be respected," IPU said.

— PTI

SHORT TAKES
WOMAN DIES IN NZ'S SUSPECTED SHARK ATTACK

Wellington, Jan. 7: A woman has died after an apparent shark attack at a popular New Zealand beach, police said on Thursday. Police were called to Waihi Beach on the east coast of the North Island in the early evening following reports a woman had been injured in the water.

"Initial indications suggest she may have been injured by a shark. Sadly she died at the scene a short time later," police said in a statement.

If confirmed, it would be the 25th shark attack fatality recorded in New Zealand and the first in seven years since a 46-year-old man died at Muriwai near Auckland.

Waihi Beach promotes itself as "one of New Zealand's safest surf beaches and home to a vibrant and friendly beachside community." However, there have been occasional shark sightings in the area in recent years including a 3.5 metre (11ft 5in) male last February.

100 TRAFFICKED ROHINGYAS HELD IN RAID

Yangon, Jan. 7: Nearly 100 Rohingya smuggled from Myanmar's conflict-scarred Rakhine state were arrested in a raid in Yangon, police announced on Thursday, with authorities saying they had been headed to Malaysia as part of a trafficking network.

The plight of the Rohingya captured international headlines in 2017 after a military crackdown in western Rakhine state sent almost 75,000 fleeing across the border to Bangladesh.

Members of the stateless minority group have long faced discrimination in Myanmar, where they are denied freedom of movement and citizenship, and lack access to work, healthcare and schools.

With the remaining languishing in camps that rights groups have described as "apartheid-like," many choose to embark on treacherous routes with human smugglers to reach Malaysia and Indonesia.

AFGHAN ATTACK KILLS AT LEAST 11: OFFICIALS

Kabul, Jan. 7: Separate attacks in southern Afghanistan left at least 11 civilians and security forces dead, officials said on Thursday, even as Afghan negotiators were in Qatar to resume talks with the Taliban aimed at finding an end to decades of conflict.

In southern Uruzgan province, a suicide car bomber detonated a vehicle full of explosives early Thursday near a military base, killing six security forces, said a provincial council member who was not authorised to speak with the media. Mohammad Karim Karimi, deputy head of the provincial council in Uruzgan, confirmed the attack on the military base in Tirin Kot, the provincial capital, but couldn't provide an exact death toll.

He said the explosion was so strong it sent shock waves through the city. In southern Helmand province, at least five civilians were killed and five others wounded in a suspected airstrike on the outskirts of Lashkar Gah.

-19.6 DEGREES IN BEIJING, COLDEST SINCE 1996

Beijing, Jan. 7: The mercury dipped to minus 19.6 degrees Celsius on Thursday morning in Beijing as a strong cold wave swept through the city, marking the coldest morning in the Chinese capital since 1966. The Nanjiao station, located in Beijing's Daxing district, is a national-level meteorological station founded in 1912.

Its data are used by experts to make historical comparisons. On early Thursday morning, half of Beijing's 20 national-level meteorological stations registered their lowest ever early-January temperatures, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported, quoting Lei Lei, chief forecaster of the Beijing municipal meteorological station.

The cold wave gripped Beijing since Wednesday, bringing drastic temperature drops and strong winds. As of Thursday morning, the city's weather authorities have maintained blue alerts for continuous low temperature and heavy winds, the lowest level in China's four-tier colour-coded warning system.

Cabinet members discuss Don ouster

Invoking 25th Amendment will need VP Pence to lead the Cabinet in a vote on removing him

Washington, Jan. 7: Members of President Donald Trump's cabinet on Wednesday discussed the possibility of removing Trump from office after his supporters stormed the Capitol, three US news channels reported.

The discussions focused on the 25th amendment to the US Constitution, which allows for a president's removal by the vice president and cabinet if he is judged "unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office." Invoking it would require Vice President Michael Pence to lead the cabinet in a vote on removing him.

CNN quoted unnamed Republican leaders saying the 25th amendment had been discussed, saying they had described Trump as "out of control." CBS reporter Margaret Brennan said that "nothing formal" had been presented to Pence, and ABC reporter Katherine Faulders said "multiple" sources had told her that discussions took place on the unprecedented move.

Trump's encouragement of the protesters, his unfounded claims that he lost the November 3 presidential election due to massive fraud, and other bizarre behaviour have raised questions about his ability to lead.

While only two weeks remain before President-elect Joe Biden takes office, after the attacks on Congress Wednesday Democratic lawmakers called for invoking the 25th Amendment as well.

Democrats of the House Judiciary Committee sent a letter to Pence urging him to act to remove Trump, saying he had stoked an act of insurrection and "sought to undermine our democracy." Pointing to a rambling speech Trump gave Wednesday, it said he "revealed that he is not mentally sound and is still unable to process and accept the results of the 2020 election." Others blamed Trump for fuelling terrorism. "The President incited a domestic terror attack on the Capitol. He is an imminent threat to our democracy and he needs to be removed from office immediately," said Representative Kathleen Rice in a tweet.

"The Cabinet must invoke the 25th Amendment," she wrote. The lawmakers' call was echoed by the influential



Police with guns drawn watch as protesters try to break into the House Chamber at the US Capitol in Washington on Wednesday.

DEMOCRATS SEIZE US SENATE CONTROL

Atlanta, Jan. 7: Democrats seized control of the US Senate Wednesday with dramatic election wins in Georgia, slapping Donald Trump's party with a crushing loss two weeks from the president's exit and handing Joe Biden comprehensive power in Washington.

The Republican debacle in Georgia - sealed when Jon Ossoff was proclaimed the winner in the second of two Senate runoff races - came as Trump supporters furious about his election defeat launched a violent assault on the US Capitol, disrupting Congress's session to affirm Biden's victory and plunging Washington into chaos.

A defiant Trump, speaking to supporters at a street rally before the unrest, insisted that "we will never give up, we will never concede" defeat.

But by the end of his four-year term, Trump managed to lose the White House, the House of Representatives and now the Senate to Democrats.

The southern state that has leaned Republican for two decades has delivered a political stunner twice in two months: In November when Democrat Biden narrowly defeated Trump, then in the runoffs that ousted two sitting GOP senators loyal to Trump.

The narrow and historic victories by documentary producer Ossoff, who at 33 becomes the youngest US senator since Biden himself took office in 1973, and Reverend Raphael Warnock, the first African American ever to represent Georgia in the Senate, will end divided government in Washington and give Biden a golden opportunity to get his legislative agenda onto the floor.

Warnock, 51, defeated Kelly Loeffler, a 50-year-old businesswoman appointed to the Senate in December 2019, while Ossoff, who becomes Georgia's first Jewish senator, bested the 71-year-old David Perdue.

Although the Senate will be split exactly 50-50, Democrats will hold the power advantage because incoming Vice President Kamala Harris will serve as the tie-breaking vote.

— AFP

Protest intolerable both at home, abroad: Pompeo

Washington, Jan. 7: Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, a staunch ally of President Donald Trump, on Wednesday condemned the storming of the US Capitol by thousands of supporters of outgoing President Donald Trump on Wednesday, calling it an "attack on democracy."

"I have travelled to many countries and always support the right of every human being to protest peacefully for their beliefs and their causes," Pompeo wrote on Twitter.

"But violence, putting at risk the safety of others including those tasked with providing security

for all of us, is intolerable both at home and abroad."

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Canadians are "deeply disturbed" by the storming of the US Capitol by thousands of supporters of outgoing President Donald Trump to "stop trampling on democracy" after they stormed the US Capitol building in anger over his election defeat.

"Trump and his supporters should finally accept the decision of American voters and stop trampling on democracy," Trudeau said. "The enemies of democracy will be pleased to see these incredible images from Washington DC," he added.

— AFP

Washington Post.

"Responsibility for this act of sedition lies squarely with the president, who has shown that his continued tenure in office poses

a grave threat to US democracy. He should be removed," the Post said.

"The president is unfit to remain in office for the next 14 days. Every second

he retains the vast powers of the presidency is a threat to public order and national security," they said.

— AFP

National Guard activated to help quell protests

Washington, Jan. 7: National Guard troops are being mobilised in Washington and neighboring states after protesters supporting President Donald Trump stormed the US Capitol Wednesday, the White House and Pentagon said.

White House spokeswoman Kayleigh McEnany said in a tweet that Trump had directed the callup of National Guard troops "along with other federal protective services" to deal with the unrest.

"We reiterate President Trump's call against violence and to remain peaceful," she said, after protesters with Trump banners shut down the US legislature to protest Joe Biden's election victory.

Pentagon Spokesman Jonathan said the entire 1,100-strong Washington DC guard had been called up to support federal law enforcement while neighboring Virginia and Maryland announced they were deploying guard troops and state police.

American democracy is "limping on both feet" after the storming of the US Capitol by Donald Trump supporters, a senior US lawmaker said Thursday.

Konstantin Kosachyov, the chair of the Russian upper house's foreign affairs committee, said the stunning events in the US capital showed that Washington had no right to lecture other countries on democracy.

— AFP

US Cong certifies Biden's over Don

POMPEO SCARES SANCTIONS OVER HK MASS ARRESTS

Washington, Jan. 7: US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Thursday threatened sanctions against individuals and organisations involved in the arrest of dozens of Hong Kong democracy figures, voicing anger that an American was among them.

The formal certification by the Joint Session came in the wee hours of Thursday. The Joint Session resumed its meeting late Wednesday night after it was disrupted by hundreds of supporters of incumbent President Donald Trump who violently stormed the Capitol Hill.

Commenting on the certification, Trump said the decision "represents the end of the greatest first term in presidential history." He, however, said there will be an "orderly" transfer of power to Biden on January 20.

"Even though I totally disagree with the outcome of the election, and the facts bear me out, nevertheless there will be an orderly transition on January 20th," Trump said in a statement. "It's only the beginning of our fight to Make America Great Again," Trump said while repeating false claims about the election fraud.

Biden, 78, and Harris, 56, are scheduled to be sworn in as the President and Vice President of the country on January 20. The inauguration is going to be a low-key affair given the Covid-19 pandemic. The counting of Electoral College votes and its subsequent certification came after an ugly episode of violence inside the US Capitol, resulting in four

PAK COURT ISSUES ARREST WARRANT FOR JeM CHIEF

Lahore, Jan. 7: An anti-terrorism court in Pakistan on Thursday issued an arrest warrant for banned Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) chief Masood Azhar on the charges of terror financing, days after another dreaded terrorist and Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi was arrested here on similar charges.

The Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) Gujranwala issued the warrant against Azhar during a hearing in a terror financing case instituted by the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) of Punjab police against some members of the JeM.

Pompeo said the 53 people arrested on Wednesday "should be released immediately and unconditionally."

"The United States will not stand idly by while the people of Hong Kong suffer under Communist oppression," Pompeo said in a late-night statement after a day of political violence in Washington.

Pompeo said the 53 people arrested on Wednesday "should be released immediately and unconditionally." "The United States will consider sanctions and other restrictions on any and all individuals and entities involved in executing this assault on the Hong Kong people."

Pompeo, who remains in office for two weeks, said the United States would also "explore restrictions" against the financial hub's trade representative office in Washington. — PTI

— PTI

Jaishankar discusses role of provincial councils with Lanka

Colombo, Jan. 7: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Thursday met the Tamil leadership in Sri Lanka and discussed issues pertaining to the development and devolution and the role of provincial councils as part of national reconciliation.

The meeting assumed significance in the backdrop of moves by the ruling Sri Lanka People's Party (SLPP) allies to mount a public campaign for abolition of the country's provincial council system.

Jaishankar tweeted after the meeting.

Tamil National Alliance (TNA) is the main Tamil party in the island nation. Jaishankar also met a delegation of the Tamil Progressive Alliance.

"Pleased to meet the TPA delegation. Appreciate their positive sentiments about our development programmes. This will remain an important facet of India's commitment," he tweeted. Jaishankar is on a three-day visit to Lanka from January 5-7 on the invitation of Lanka foreign minister Dinesh Gunawardena.

It is his first overseas

visit of the year. On Wednesday, Jaishankar spoke on the need to ensure aspirations of the minority Tamils are addressed within a united Sri Lanka.

Addressing a joint media interaction with Gunawardena, he underlined India's backing for Lanka's reconciliation process and an "inclusive political outlook" that encourages ethnic harmony. "As we promote peace and well-being in the region, India has been strongly committed to the unity, stability and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka.

— PTI

1 in 1L had reactions to Pfizer vaccine

Washington, Jan. 7: Roughly one in a hundred thousand people who received the Pfizer-BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine have had severe allergic reactions, US health officials said Wednesday while stressing that the benefits of immunization greatly outweigh the known risks.

The data comes from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which documented 21 cases of anaphylaxis after administration of a reported 1,893,360 shots from December 14 to December 23.

"This averages out to a rate of 11.1 anaphylaxis cases per one million doses administered," senior CDC official Nancy Messonnier told reporters.

By comparison, flu vac-

cines cause about 1.3 anaphylaxis cases per million doses administered, and so the rate of anaphylaxis for the Pfizer vaccine is roughly ten times greater.

Messonnier added that anaphylaxis cases were still "exceedingly rare" and it remains in people's best interest to take the vaccine, particularly in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic that is a far greater danger to their health.

"A good value proposition for someone to get vaccinated is their risk from Covid and poor outcomes from Covid is still more than the risk of a severe outcome from the vaccine," she said.

"Fortunately, we know how to treat anaphylaxis, and we've put provisions in place to ensure that at

GLOBAL VIRUS DEATHS HIT RECORD HIGH, EU APPROVES SECOND VACCINE

Brussels, Jan. 7: The EU cleared a second Coronavirus vaccine for use on Wednesday bringing relief to European countries struggling with spiralling infections, as the world clocked up a record number of deaths in a single day. The Moderna vaccine is now set to join Pfizer-BioNTech's jab for use in the 27-nation European Union, where governments have been criticised for slow rollouts of the doses already available.

"We'll have more than enough safe and effective vaccines for protecting all Europeans," promised European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen.

The breakthrough came as a record 15,769 Covid-19 deaths around the world were registered in 24 hours. The United States, the world's worst-hit country, logged a record 3,936 deaths and Britain recorded its own record of more than 1,000 new deaths, leapfrogging Italy to become the fifth worst affected nation in the world.

Meanwhile, a high-profile mission to probe the origins of the pandemic was in disarray after Beijing denied entry to a WHO team at the last minute.

quick BITES

INDICATORS	%
aSensex	48,093.32 -0.17
Nifty 50	14,137.35 -0.06
S&P 500*	3,803.45 1.48
Dollar (₹)	73.31 -0.25
Pound Sterling (₹)	99.68 0.07
Euro (₹)	89.97 0.26
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	50,335 ▼714 1.41
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	54.51 0.21
IN 10-Yr bond yield*	5.892 0.003
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.073 0.031

* As of 8:30 PM IST

LIC provides another chance to revive policies

LIC has launched a Special Revival Campaign starting from January 7 till March 6 for its customers to revive their lapsed individual policies. It has authorised its 1,526 satellite offices to revive policies where special medical tests are not required. "Policies of specific eligible plans can be revived within five years from the date of the first unpaid premium subject to terms and conditions," LIC said.

PM to interact with economists for Budget views



Prime Minister Narendra Modi will interact with economists and sectoral experts on Friday to deliberate on measures that may be included in the upcoming Budget. The virtual meeting is being organised by Niti Aayog. It will also be attended by finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman. Participants include Arvind Panagariya, K. V. Kamath, Rakesh Mohan, Shankar Acharya, Shekhar Shah, Arvind Virmani and Ashok Lahri.

Elon Musk, world's richest man, is worth \$188.5 bn

Tesla's Elon Musk surpassed Amazon's Jeff Bezos to become the world's richest man, Bloomberg News reported on Thursday. Including the day's gains in Tesla shares, Musk, 49, had a net worth of over \$188.5 billion, \$1.5 billion more than Bezos. Tesla shares were up as much as 7.4% on Thursday at a record high of \$811.61. Reacting to the development, Musk tweeted, "How strange. Well, back to work."

Haldi Golf County appoints JLL as sales partner

Haldi Golf County, a joint venture of Dream Valley Golf and Resorts and Girdhari Homes, on Thursday appointed JLL India, a global real estate firm specialising in property and investing management, as their strategic sales partner. Through this association, both firms aim at creating an interface for golf-enthusiasts and buyers, who plan site visits to 250-acre Haldi Golf County on Medchal highway.

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■ Manufacturing could contract by 9.4% NSO sees 7.7% dip in growth in FY21

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO
NEW DELHI, JAN. 7

As a part of its first advance estimates of the economic growth, the government, on Thursday, said that its economy could shrink by 7.7 per cent in the current financial year 2020-21 (FY21) as compared to 4.2 per cent growth in FY20. The government said the contraction was because of the nationwide lockdown imposed in March 2020 to counter the coronavirus pandemic.

The Real GDP or GDP at constant prices (2011-12) in the year 2020-21 is likely to attain Rs 134.40 lakh crore levels, down 7.7 per cent as compared to Rs 145.66 lakh crore in 2019-20," said the National Statistical Office (NSO) in its advance GDP estimates. The Reserve Bank of India's estimate for the current fiscal is 7.5 per cent contraction.

The Real GVA (gross value added) at basic prices is estimated at Rs 123.39 lakh crore for 2020-21 as against Rs 133.01 lakh crore in 2019-20, showing a contraction of 7.2 per cent. According to NSO estimates, nominal GDP, or GDP at current prices, in the current fiscal is likely to be Rs 194.82 lakh crore as against Rs 203.40 lakh crore in year 2019-20. The growth in nominal GDP during 2020-21 is estimated at 4.2 per cent.

As per the estimate, there was contraction in almost all sectors, with the exception of agriculture. The manufacturing sector is

ESTIMATES POINT TO SUSTAINED V-SHAPED RECOVERY: FINMIN

New Delhi, Jan. 7: The finance ministry said the latest GDP estimates of 2020-21 reflect continued resurgence in economic activity in Q3 and Q4 which would enable the Indian economy to end the year with a contraction of 7.7 per cent," it said in a statement.

—PTI

likely to see a contraction 9.4 per cent against flat growth of 0.03 per cent in the previous year. The NSO estimates significant contraction in mining and quarrying, and trade, hotels, transport, communication and services related to broadcasting.

Reacting to the government's advance estimate, economists and industry captains are of view that the recovery momentum seen in the last few months will need to be further sustained in the coming months.

While Chandrajit Banerjee, director general, CII, said, "The advance estimate for the full year pegged the contraction in GDP at 7.7 per cent, showing a much shallower decline than earlier expected. Government spending did much of the heavy lifting in supporting growth along with a healthy agriculture performance, which was aided by a good

monsoon. In the last few months, there has been a strong economic recovery which will require to be nurtured especially in supporting the critical pillar of consumption."

Aditi Nayar, principal economist, Icra, said, "While the advance estimates of GDP for FY2021 have been based on data that is available for only the first six to eight months, the modifications made in the extrapolation process seem to have captured the impending upturn expected in the remainder of this extremely tumultuous year".

The GDP growth rate contracted by 7.5 per cent in the second quarter (July-September), after shrinking by an unprecedented 23.9 per cent in April-June. Last month, the Reserve Bank of India had predicted the growth rate may enter the positive territory in the October to December quarter.

India to have 50-plus unicorns in 2021: Nasscom

New Delhi, Jan. 7: India saw 12 new unicorns being created in 2020, the highest ever addition in a single year, and is on track to have a 50-plus strong 'unicorn club' in 2021, a Nasscom-Zinnov report said.

Unicorns are companies having valuation of more than \$1 billion.

The report said the Indian tech start-up base is witnessing a steady growth of 8-10 per cent year-on-year, and over 1,600 tech start-ups were added in 2020.

Although cautiously optimistic, the report said 2021 promises a return to normalcy for the Indian tech start-up ecosystem and deep-tech, and new start-up hubs will continue to grow at 40-45 per cent CAGR.

India is on track to have a 50-plus strong 'unicorn club' in 2021 (from 38 in 2020), and M&A deals and IPO pipeline are also expected to accelerate in 2021, said the report, titled Indian Tech Start-up Ecosystem on the March to Trillion Dollar Digital Economy.

It said over 2,100 start-ups are leveraging deep-tech, up from over 1,600 in 2019, and 20 per cent of the deep-tech start-ups are based outside known start-up hubs.

Fintech, health-tech, edtech, agritech and enterprise tech segments are witnessing rapid digital adoption, it said.

—PTI

SHORT TAKES



BCCI president Sourav Ganguly waves as he leaves for his residence after being discharged from a hospital in Kolkata on Thursday.

— Pritam Bandyopadhyay

Dada discharged from hospital

Kolkata: Sourav Ganguly, the former test captain who is president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India, was discharged from a hospital on Thursday after treatment for a mild heart attack.

The 48-year-old Ganguly "suffered a blackout" while exercising at his personal gym last Saturday morning and was taken to a Kolkata hospital, where he underwent an angioplasty.

On the first day of the third test between India and Australia in Sydney, the BCCI posted an update on Twitter to say Ganguly had been released from the hospital.

"I thank the doctors at the hospital for the treatment," Ganguly was quoted as saying in the BCCI post. "I am absolutely fine. Hopefully, I will be ready to fly soon."

Ganguly, a left-handed opening batsman, scored 7,212 Test runs with 16 centuries. — AP

IPL trade window to close on Feb. 4

New Delhi: The IPL's governing council has decided that the eight franchises will be allowed to submit the names of their retained players by January 21, league's chairman Brijesh Patel said on Thursday.

Patel and members of the IPL GC recently had a virtual meeting earlier this week where the planning and preparations of the next IPL was discussed at length.

"We will have the players' retention till January 21 and the trading window for the franchises closes on February 4,"

Patel, the former India Test batsman said while informing that the date of the auction is yet to be finalised.

It is expected that the mini auction that is supposed to be held this year for the existing eight teams will be held in the second or third week of February.

The eight IPL teams enjoy a players' purse of ₹85 crore and Patel said that there will be "no increase of purse" for the 2021 auction. — PTI

76ers pip Wizards despite Beal's 60

Los Angeles: Joel Embiid's 38 points and 28 from Seth Curry saw the Philadelphia 76ers withstand a 60-point performance from Washington's Bradley Beal in a 141-136 NBA win over the Wizards on Wednesday.

Tobias Harris and Shake Milton scored 19 points each and Ben Simmons added 17 points and 12 assists as the 76ers notched their fifth win in a row and pushed their league-leading record to 7-1.

The Sixers led by as many as 21 points in the third quarter, but the Wizards hung around and knotted the score at 131-131 with four minutes left to play.

In Orlando, Terrence Ross scored 20 points and Dwayne Bacon added 19 to lead the Magic to a 105-94 victory over the Cleveland Cavaliers. — AFP

Live on TV

CRICKET

Australia vs India: Third Test — Day Three from 5 am (Saturday) on Sony Six, Ten 1, HD

Big Bash League: Adelaide Strikers vs Melbourne Renegades from 12.40 pm on Sony Ten 2, HD

UAE vs Ireland: First ODI from 11 am on Eurosport, HD

FOOTBALL

Indian Super League: North East United vs Hyderabad FC from 7.20 pm on Star Sports 2, 3

FA Cup: Aston Villa vs Liverpool from 1.15 am (Saturday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

WWE

SmackDown: Bouts from 6.30 am (Saturday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

Dry after drizzle

Oz recover from early blow on rain-hit day

Sydney, Jan. 7: Debutant Will Pucovski and Marnus Labuschagne smacked half-centuries as Australia recovered from an early setback to build a promising first innings in the rain-hit third Test against India on Thursday.

Following David Warner's departure for five, the hosts recovered to 166 for two at stumps after more than three hours' play was lost due to persistent drizzle at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

Labuschagne was not out 67 while Steve Smith, who has struggled for runs this series, hit an attacking unbeaten 31. Pucovski contributed 62 in an impressive maiden Test innings.



Fellow debutant Navdeep Saini and Mohammed Siraj, in only his second Test, shared the wickets in a clash both sides are desperate to win with the four-match series level at 1-1.

After captain Tim Paine won the toss and chose to bat in front of 8,692 socially-distanced fans, just under the quarter of capacity allowed, the rain started falling 35 minutes into the opening session.

It was enough time for Siraj to grab the key wicket of Warner on his return from injury, caught by Cheteshwar Pujara to put Australia on the back foot.



Australia's Marnus Labuschagne plays a shot on way to his half-century against India on the first day of their third Test at Sydney Cricket Ground on Thursday. — AP

But a 100-run partnership between Pucovski and Labuschagne swung in Australia's favour before the former fell to Saini.

The patient Labuschagne, who has been Australia's best batsman this series, survived an

edge off Jasprit Bumrah on 11, which just failed to carry to slip, but was otherwise authoritative.

He brought up his ninth Test 50 with a boundary off Siraj, while Smith looked in ominous touch at the other end after failing to reach double figures in his four previous innings.

Smith hit five boundaries in his 31 which came off 64 balls. Pucovski resumed on 14 and Labuschagne two when play finally restarted at 3 pm after the lengthy rain delay. — AFP

SCORECARD

Australia 1st Innings: Will Pucovski lbw Navdeep Saini 62, David Warner c Cheteshwar Pujara b Mohammed Siraj 5, Marnus Labuschagne (batting) 67, Steven Smith (batting) 31. Extras (NB-1) 1. Total (for 2 wickets in 55 overs) 166. Fow: 1-6, 2-106. **Bowling:** Jasprit Bumrah 14-3-30-0, Mohammed Siraj 14-3-46-1, Ravichandran Ashwin 17-1-56-0, Navdeep Saini 7-0-32-1, Ravindra Jadeja 3-2-0.

NUMBERS GAME

● Navdeep Saini became the 299th Indian Test player. The allrounder made his Test debut after playing 46 first class matches. He also played seven one-day internationals and 10 Twenty20 Internationals before making his debut in Tests. ● William Jan Pucovski became 460th Australian player to appear in a Test match. The right hand batsman from Malvern, Victoria, made his Test debut after playing 23 first class matches. ● The 100-run stand for the second wicket between Marnus Labuschagne and William Pucovski was Australia's 16th century stand for this wicket against India. It was 43rd time when over 100 runs were added for the second wicket at the Sydney Cricket Ground. ● Steven Smith became the 10th Australian and 48th batsman overall to hit 800 fours in Test cricket. The first four off bowler Jasprit Bumrah during his unbeaten 31-run knock was his 800th in 136 innings of 76 Test matches.

— S. PERVEZ QAISER

Plan is to build pressure on Australia, says Siraj



India's Mohammed Siraj celebrates after taking the wicket of Australia's David Warner during Day One of the third Test match at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Thursday. — AFP

the day has given India encouragement for Friday.

"It is because of the easy nature of the surface that our batsmen stepped out but when they saw the ball turning sharply late in the day, they went back to the crease," Siraj observed.

"Let's see what happens tomorrow. The plan is to bowl in one tight channel and build pressure."

When the Indian national anthem was played out before the start of the game, Siraj got teary-eyed thinking about his father, who died in November. — PTI

Smith looks to overcome fear

Sydney, Jan. 7: Australian batting mainstay Steve Smith on Thursday said he was looking to put Ravichandran Ashwin under pressure after being at the receiving end of the India off-spinner's guile in the first two Tests.

Breaking his run of poor scores, Smith played some attacking shots and marched on an unbeaten 31 by the close of play on the opening day of the third Test at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

"I'm good, nice to spend a bit of time out there, nice to stitch in a partnership with Marnus. I wanted to put him (Ashwin) under a little bit of pressure which I haven't done this series.

— STEVEN SMITH

Australia star batsman

It was just trying to hold the grip a bit tighter, I've been struggling, so I was getting into good positions today. I was good to get a couple of boundaries early. Marnus played well, hopefully we go along well tomorrow," the star batsman added.

Smith and Labuschagne added 60 runs for the third wicket to help Australia regain some lost ground after the comprehensive defeat to the visitors in the Boxing Day Test in Melbourne. — PTI



City sink United in Manchester Derby

Manchester, Jan. 7: Manchester City reached the League Cup final for fourth consecutive season as they inflicted more semifinal pain on Manchester United with a 2-0 win at Old Trafford on Wednesday.

John Stones and Fernandinho were the unlikely goalscorers for Pep Guardiola's men, who will face Jose Mourinho's Tottenham in the final at Wembley on April 25.

City great Colin Bell was remembered before kick-off after he died, aged 74, on Tuesday with his former teammate Mike Summerbee reduced to tears as he watched on from the stands.

Stones breathed a sigh of relief that Marcus Rashford was flagged for offside after the ball rebounded off the defender and into the net after Rashford's

initial effort was saved by Zack Steffen. At the other end Ilkay Gundogan thought he had continued his fine goalscoring form of late when he swept home Phil Foden's cross, but the German was also offside.

Steffen was deputising for Ederson, who was one of City's absences due to Covid-19, and the American produced an incredible save to deny Bruno Fernandes his 16th goal of the season with a curling effort that was destined for the top corner.

City looked more like their old selves in a thrilling first-half performance to blow away Chelsea on Sunday and they were inches away from the opener thanks to a stunning move that started deep inside their own half and ended with Kevin De Bruyne smashing against the post from the edge of the area. — AFP

Rider Santosh in coma after crash

New Delhi, Jan. 7: Renowned Indian motorcycle racer C. S. Santosh suffered a crash during the ongoing Dakar Rally in Saudi Arabia and was put in a medically-induced coma after being airlifted to a hospital in Riyadh.

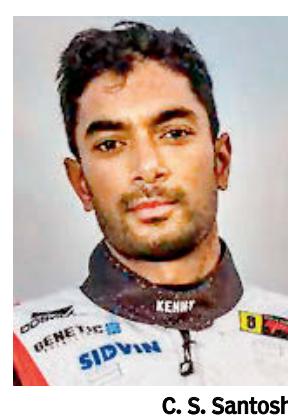
The 37-year-old Santosh, who was representing Hero MotoSports in one of the world's biggest rallies, suffered the crash on Wednesday.

"We are pleased to share that he has no major physical injuries except for the dislocated right shoulder and head trauma. The latest scans have also shown no major issue that could impact his full recovery," Hero MotoSports said in a statement.

"The medical team attending to him have decided that the best approach to manage the injury is to reduce the body functions to a minimum and keep him in a sedated condition or an artificial coma," it added.

"He is receiving the best possible medical care and will continue to be under constant observation for the next few days," the statement further added.

According to reports, he was conscious when paramedics arrived on the scene before he was rushed



C. S. Santosh

to Riyadh.

The incident occurred on the same stage where last year Hero MotoSport rider Paulo Goncalves died while competing in the Dakar 2020. Hero MotoSport withdrew from the rally after the death of Goncalves.

Santosh crashed around 135km into the stage on a gravel track and had to forfeit the stage.

This was Santosh's seventh attempt at the Dakar Rally, considered the world's most grueling off-road motorsport event.

Santosh had a near-fatal accident during the 2013 Abu Dhabi desert challenge, suffering burns to his neck after his Suzuki MX450X caught fire. — PTI

Barcelona revive with Leo's brace

Madrid, Jan. 7: Ronald Koeman said Barcelona can still win La Liga after Lionel Messi scored twice on Wednesday in a 3-2 win over Athletic Bilbao.

Messi's double helped Barca reduce the gap behind La Liga's leaders Atletico Madrid to seven points, even if Atletico will be hard to catch, given they also have two games in hand.

Barca trailed to an early Inaki Williams strike but responded with a slick attacking performance that had Messi at the heart of it. It was his cross that led to Pedri's equaliser and then the Argentinian could have had a hat-trick, only for VAR and the woodwork to intervene.

ATLETICO LOSE BADLY

La Liga leaders Atletico Madrid crashed out of the Copa del Rey on Wednesday after suffering a shock second-round 0-1 defeat to third-division Cornellà, who sit seventh in the Segunda 'B' division, Spain's third tier, but deserved a historic win

thanks to a finish by Adrian Jimenez in the seventh minute.

Atleti's task became tougher when 20-year-old Ricard Sanchez was sent off in the 63rd minute. Cornellà had lost to Barcelon's second team in their previous match in December and in a rare appearance in the Copa del Rey's Last 32 in 2015 they took a 9-1 drubbing on aggregate by Real Madrid.

Atletico's defeat makes it consecutive seasons they have lost to a third-tier side in the Cup after being knocked out by Cultural Leonesa 12 months ago.

JUVE JOLT FOR MILAN

Federico Chiesa scored a brace as Juventus inflicted a first league defeat this season on Italian league leaders AC Milan, ending their 27-match unbeaten run with a 3-1 win on Wednesday.

Stefano Pioli's side maintained their one-point advantage over city rivals Inter Milan who missed a chance to go top with a 2-1 loss at Sampdoria. — AFP

BARTY, SERENA FOR OZ OPEN WARM UP EVENTS

Melbourne, Jan. 7: World number one Ashleigh Barty and 23-time Grand Slam champion Serena Williams will spearhead the two WTA tournaments in Melbourne ahead of the Australian Open, with the top 32-ranked women split evenly across the simultaneous events, organisers said on Thursday.

The onslaught of Covid-19 has forced a radical change to how the early 2021 tennis season will look, with the Australian Open pushed back three weeks to February 8. Players will arrive in Australia from January 15 and undergo a mandatory two-week quarantine before two WTA and two ATP events are held alongside the ATP Cup, all at Melbourne Park. — AFP

Game set for match



Sports Authority of Telangana State chairman Allipur Venkatesh Reddy (second from left) felicitates IPS officer, cricketer and tennis player C. V. Anand during the inauguration of the S. V. Ramayya Memorial Senior Open Tennis Tournament organised at the Lal Bahadur Stadium on Thursday. As many as 374 players are participating in the day/night tournament that will conclude on Sunday.

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