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## WINDOWS



Femina Miss India 2020 Manasa Varanasi returns to her hometown Hyderabad on Wednesday

## No link between Char Dham road widening and glacier burst: Centre

NEW DELHI: The Central government on Wednesday told the Supreme Court that there was no connection between the massive ongoing Char Dham road-widening project and the glacier burst earlier this month that resulted in the death of a number of people in Uttarakhand. Attorney General KK Venugopal, representing the Defence Ministry, sought time to respond to an allegation by the chief of an expert committee appointed by the court drawing a link between the two.

## Priya Ramani acquitted in MJ's defamation case

NEW DELHI: Former Union Minister MJ Akbar's defamation case against journalist Priya Ramani -- filed over her allegations of sexual misconduct against him -- could not be proved, a Delhi Court said on Wednesday, acquitting her of all charges. "Women can't be punished for raising instances of sexual abuse," the court said, adding that "right of reputation" -- a reference to MJ Akbar's suit -- "cannot be protected at the cost of right to dignity". "The Indian constitution allows women to put forward her grievances before any forum and at any time," the judge said, taking cognizance of the lack of mechanisms to raise sexual harassment complaints.

## BUSINESS

India to be among fastest growing GDPs in FY22

P6



# Covid vaccine in open market by year-end: AIIMS chief

NEW DELHI

AS cases continue to rise in parts of the country and States like Maharashtra are contemplating another lockdown, AIIMS Director Dr R Guleria, who himself got the second dose of the Covid-19 vaccine on Wednesday, said the vaccines will be available in the open market by the end of the year. "The vaccines will be available in the open market only when prime targets - people to be vaccinated - are covered & there's an equivalence of supply-demand. Hopefully, there'd be



AIIMS Director Randeep Guleria after taking the second dose of Covid-19 vaccine, at AIIMS in New Delhi on Wednesday

such a situation by year-end or before that. Then there would be a likelihood of the vaccines to come to the open market," Dr Guleria said. Talking about the current

pandemic situation in India, Dr Guleria pointed out, "it is still not over". He said: "Right now our situation is fine and many might believe that in India pandemic case is less

but I would say this is our window of opportunity to get the vaccine as the pandemic is still not over and the situation can change anytime. As we have seen in Brazil, Europe, South Africa and the United Kingdom lockdown has been imposed again as the case spiked. We should maintain the present situation in the country as it is necessary." Sharing his experience of his past 28 days after taking the first dose of Covid 19 vaccine, Dr Guleria said: "I haven't found any side effect from the first dose. I didn't face any diffi-

culty. I would urge people not to fear the vaccine and it is totally safe. People should come out and take the vaccine. This is essential if we want to come out of the pandemic."

Talking about vaccine hesitancy among the people, Dr Guleria said many have been vaccinated and data also reflects that these vaccines are safe. "Vaccine hesitancy is understandable as people could have some doubts whether the vaccine is safe or not but so many days have passed and many have got the jab," he added.

## R-DAY VIOLENCE

# Man seen swinging swords at Red Fort arrested

PURNA SINGH  
NEW DELHI

A 30-year-old man allegedly seen swinging swords with the intent of "motivating" and "energising" protesters at Red Fort during the violence on Republic Day has been arrested, police said on Wednesday. Maninder Singh, who runs a sword training school near his home in Swaroop Nagar in northwest Delhi and works as a car AC mechanic, was arrested around 7.45 pm on Tuesday near the C D block bus stop in nearby Pitampura, police said.

"Singh was seen in a video swinging two swords at Red Fort with the intent of motivating or radicalising and energising violent anti-national elements indulging in brutal assault and attacking



Maninder Singh (centre)

police persons on duty with swords, 'khandas', iron rods, axes, 'barsaas', sticks etc and damaging the historical Red Fort on Republic Day," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) Pramod Singh Kushwah said in a statement.

Over 120 people have been arrested so far in connection with the violence across Delhi on January 26, officials said.

Clashes broke out between protesters and police during the tractor parade called by farmer unions to

highlight their demand for a rollback of the Centre's three farm laws. Many protesters reached the Red Fort on tractors and entered the monument, some hoisting religious flags on the flagstaff and its domes.

Singh was "radicalised" by seeing provoking Facebook posts of various groups, police said, adding he would frequently visit the Singhu border and was "highly motivated" by speeches made by leaders there.

According to police, Singh also "motivated" six people from the neighbourhood who had accompanied the tractor parade that headed from Singhu border towards the Mukarba Chowk. Two swords -- 4.3-foot-long 'khandas' -- used by Singh have been recovered from his house, police said.

# 'When chips were down, your code kept things running'

NEW DELHI

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday lauded the Information and Technology (IT) sector for remarkable growth even when the world was battling with Covid-19.

"When the chips were down, the core of India's IT industry kept things running. The last year's statistics may surprise the world, but India isn't surprised knowing your ability. When every sector was severely affected by the pandemic, you registered a growth of 2%," Modi said while addressing NASSCOM Technology & Leadership Forum (NTLF).

The Prime Minister said that in a major move, policies regarding mapping and geospatial data have been liberalised. It will, in turn, empower the tech start-up eco-system and the mission of Aatmanirbhar Bharat. With the National Digital

## Modi lauds IT sector



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses the NASSCOM Technology and Leadership Forum via video conferencing, in New Delhi on Wednesday

Communication Policy, the government has attempted to remove needless regulations out of the tech industry to allow future leadership to develop, he said. "Every Indian in New India is impatient for development. Our government understands how

our youth feels about it. The aspirations of 130 crore Indians push us to move faster," Modi said. To promote start-ups and young entrepre-

Prime Minister Modi said that in a major move, policies regarding mapping and geospatial data have been liberalised and they will, in turn, empower the tech startup ecosystem and the mission of Aatmanirbhar Bharat

neurs, the PM said the government is promoting self-certification so as they use every opportunity across the world. He hailed his government's Digital India Mission saying the products and solutions built by the IT industry have become a part of governance in the last six years.

Modi said digitalisation also helped in curbing black money. "In the last three-four years, India has turned from a heavily-cash-dependent society to a less-cash society. The more digital transactions take place, the lesser the black money would come into circulation." "India is not of ideas, it needs mentors who can turn ideas into reality," he added.

## Protest from 12 noon to 4 pm today

# Farmers gear up for nationwide 'rail roko'

NEW DELHI

FARMERS protesting against the three farm laws at Tikri border for the past over two months are gearing up to make 'rail roko' protest on Thursday a success by mobilising people in support of their demand.

Leaders of various farm organisations called upon the people to join them in large numbers to ensure their massive participation in the 'rail roko' protest from 12 pm to 4 pm.

Those staging a dharna at toll plazas and other points on various state and national highways have also been asked to mobilise people in a large number

for the protest. Farmers leaders said that a joint committee of various Haryana and Punjab farmer outfits had also been formed to contact social and other organisa-



File photo

tions to garner their support for the agitation.

Meanwhile, the agitation has forced the Railways to either cancel or divert trains in Punjab and other states. A release issued by the Northern Railway said that due to the farmers' agitation, the Darbhanga-Amritsar Express special train, which was to start on Wednesday, will remain cancelled.

## Stop vaccine nationalism, says India at UNSC meet on Covid

UNITED NATIONS: India, which has shipped 'Made In India' COVID-19 vaccines to 25 countries, on Wednesday appealed the international community to stop "vaccine nationalism" and actively encourage "internationalism", underlining that hoarding superfluous doses will defeat global efforts to attain collective health security and combat the deadly pandemic. Addressing the UN Security Council, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar outlined nine points for consideration of the international community to help the world put the COVID-19 pandemic decisively behind it and to emerge more resilient. "Stop 'vaccine nationalism'; indeed, actively encourage internationalism. Hoarding superfluous doses will defeat our efforts towards attaining collective health security," he said, speaking at the open debate on the implementation of resolution 2532 (2020).

# Nursery admissions begin in Delhi today

NEW DELHI

The process for nursery admissions in schools across the national capital will begin from Thursday and the application window will close on March 4.

The Directorate of Education (DoE) last week notified the admission schedule, bringing respite for anxious parents who have been waiting for the notification for over two months. As per the notified schedule, the first list of selected children will be displayed on March 20, followed by second list on March 25 and subsequent list for admission, if any, on March 27. The entire admission process will conclude on March 31.

Usually, nursery admissions in around 1,700 schools in the national capital begin in the last week of November. The DoE releases guidelines and schools are asked to furnish required information, following which the application process is rolled out in December.

However, there has been no development on it in 2020.

The Delhi government officials had in December said that a proposal to scrap nursery admissions is being considered as the schools have been closed for nine

months due to COVID-19 and will remain closed till a vaccine is available.

A whole year of online learning for small children seems unviable, they had said. But school principals had opposed this idea. "Since schools are closed in view of the COVID-19 pandemic and physical class room learning is not going on for entry level

classes at present, schools have been directed that no fee except prescribed registration fee, admission fee, caution fee (if school already charges) and tuition fee, shall be charged at the time of admission by the schools and thereafter only tuition fee shall be charged from the students till further orders.

"No deviation from the notified schedule shall be permitted.

Each school shall display the admission schedule on its notice board and website. Further each school shall ensure that application forms for admission are made available to all applicants till the last date of submission of admission's application form," a senior DoE official said. Schools can only charge a non-refundable amount of Rs 25 from the parents as admission registration fee and the purchase of prospectus of the school by the parents has been kept optional.





# Womenia

TWEET PATROL


**DIVYA DUTTA**  
**@DIVYADUTTA25**

 Lo chali main..  
 safari pe?  
 tiger se milne.


## Look flawless while attending online meetings

PUJA GUPTA

As we are all living in the age of constant video calls, zoom meetings and webinars made people even more conscious about their facial appearance. While some seek the help of make-up techniques to hide what they perceive as their facial flaws, others look for more sustainable long-term solutions such as facial aesthetic procedures.

This digital shift has led to a surge in demand for treatments to correct skin imperfections such as scars, acne, pigmentation, signs of ageing, large pores, dull skin and dark circles.

Here are a few skin procedures that will uplift your appearance, suggested by Integrative Aesthetic and Wellness expert says Dr. Kiran Sethi Lohia.

### Skin bio-remodelling with Hyaluronic acid

Ageing skin is often characterised by dullness, sagging and wrinkly skin. A new skin bio-remodelling procedure Profilo is a new way of giving a mature and ageing skin a new lease of life. Profilo is a hyaluronic acid-based skin procedure that works to galvanise the skin's ability to generate collagen and elastin – the two scaffolding proteins critical to skin's firmness and elasticity.

Hyaluronic acid is a hydrophilic substance found naturally in the skin, whose presence is critical to the health of the skin's extracellular matrix and its ability to hold on to moisture. As we age, our skin loses its natural reserves of HA resulting in dull, dry and lax skin.

Profilo that has very high concentration of HA is administered into the skin by trained aesthetic physicians. A lunch time procedure, Profilo uses pure and natural hyaluronic acid that mimics the skin's own repair mechanism. A progressive diffusion of the prod-

uct across widest sections through sub-dermal patterns results in a more youthful, firm and radiant skin, making you look more vibrant and radiant.

### Acne scar revision procedures

Acne scars are another major aesthetic concerned experienced by a large number of people. Breakouts that cause trauma to the skin results in scarring which sometimes manifest itself as dents and pits on the skin, and at other times as hyperpigmentation. A number of women tell us how they are not confident enough to step out without makeup as acne scars give them an unseemly appearance.

Such scars and pigmentation tend to be more apparent as the camera focuses closely on the face. This often affects the self-esteem and psychological wellbeing of people. This is where laser skin procedures such as Pixel CO2 and Radio Frequency plasma can come to your aid. Scar revision treatments help replace compacted scar tissue with healthy new collagen, significantly improving the appearance of scars.

### Skin resurfacing- Clearlift 4D procedure

Uneven skin texture, enlarged pores and rough skin is another major aesthetic irritant for a large number of people. These imperfections also tend to get accentuated on video-based calls and webinars.

Skin resurfacing with Clearlift 4D procedure is a non-invasive laser-based skin treatment that quickly and effectively treats a variety of skin imperfections in no downtime. The procedure works by using five tips for different skin depths, in conjunction with the powerful and versatile Alma Q-Switched laser. The procedure tightens pores, reduces oil production and smoothens rough and uneven skin texture, giving you a clear and even skin tone.



## Foods that are good for brain power

With the pandemic and dynamics changing about work from home, a lot of women have been consulting me. They suddenly seem to be forgetting things and facing memory lapses, awaking in the middle of the night when one suddenly remembers it. So how does one ensure that their brain is always functioning and our gray matter is healthy and witty? Just add on these brain food which I add on to all my clients it keeps their mind sharp and alert at all times

### Cow's ghee

70% of your brain is made of fat so fat is your super food for the brain. Desi Cows ghee is said to promote memory and intelligence according to Charaka, the author of the most influential tests of Ayurveda. Cow's ghee is also high in Vitamin A promoting memory.

### Flaxseeds

Flax may be new to the current generation but it is one of the oldest grain seeds having high levels of Omega 3, antioxidants,



Naini Setalvad

vitamins and minerals improving mental alertness.

### Coconut

Be it the oil, fresh pieces or grated fear not the coconuts. Southern India is known for its brain power would definitely attribute it to the coconut and its oil is featured abundantly in their diet.

**Eat my smart brain foods and see how you feel brainier!**



### Turmeric

Science has proven that this miraculous ancient Indian spice contains bio-compounds that can directly enter the brain and benefit the brains cells. Boosting a growth hormone that helps brain cells grow and may prevent the onset of Alzheimer's. Always remember its best absorbed when

combined with good quality fat.

### Water

I want you to always remember that water serves as the best pick me up. Keep yourself well hydrated for effortless cognitive functioning.

### Vitamins

Vitamin D3 and Vitamin B12 are

both evenly linked to good brain operation and memory upkeep. See that you keep your levels at optimum

**Sunlight, exercise and fresh air**  
Although these are not foods, sunlight gives Vitamin D3, exercise keeps your brain active and alert and fresh air gives direct oxygen to the brain all assisting in proper functioning.

**Be aware of foods which inhibit brain and memory function such as: Alcohol**

Alcohol leaves your brain feeling foggy, confused and dull.

### Processed foods

Made from heavily refined ingredients and additional additives and chemicals that may lead to excessive food cravings, addictions and chronic diseases.

### Sugar

You may consider sugar as tasty, satisfying and irresistible however I would describe it as addicting, toxic and deadly. Sugar has the same hedonic effect on your brain as any drug, making you dependent on it. Not only diabetes but other deadly diseases that arise from over consumption of sugar are Alzheimer's and Cancer.

## NEWS ROUNDUP

## UNESCO, Bhumi Pednekar together to educate girls on menstrual hygiene

With an aim to raise awareness and educate girls on menstrual hygiene management, UNESCO has joined the #KeepGirlsInSchool mission, being supported by Bollywood actress Bhumi Pednekar.

The movement, launched by feminine care brand Whisper, begins with shedding light on the impact of 2.3 crore girls dropping out of school due to lack of period education and protection.

According to studies, even today, 71 per cent of adolescent girls in India remain unaware of menstruation till they get their first period. This affects their confidence and self-esteem adversely, leading to 2.3 crore adolescent girls dropping out of school every year, at the onset of the puberty. In addition to this, the ongoing pandemic has led to the closure of schools and lack of structured learning process, making these girls even more vulnerable to dropping out.

According to the UNESCO, the global pandemic has impacted 74 crore schoolgirls, and could severely affect their return to school.

To bring to light the struggles of young girls as they reach puberty, Whisper and UNESCO released a film that illustrates the journey of the playful innocence of a schoolgirl with boundless dreams coming to a grinding halt due to the lack of period education and protection. The film underscores the importance of empowering young girls to achieve their full potential and not let periods get in the way of 2.3 crore dreams.

Continuing to share her support for the cause,



Bhumi Pednekar said: "For the past one year I have been working closely with Whisper to drive awareness on the importance of menstrual hygiene education and protection. This gave me an understanding of the on-ground reality of crores of girls who drop out of school and unfortunately give up on their dreams of becoming a pilot, doctor, teacher, designer, etc. Every girl in India should be able to complete her education like I did and not have to drop out just because of periods. I strongly believe that empowering young girls with menstrual education and protection will give them wings to transform into leaders of tomorrow. It is great to see that Whisper and UNESCO are enabling this change at a ground level, which will not only accelerate the cause but also encourage wider participation. I urge everyone to come forward and be part of the #KeepGirlsInSchool movement."



## For a good cause

Vidyakansha was founded by 3 friends Aishwarya Mishra (ISB Hyderabad MBA student), Arushi Verma (IIM Bangalore Alumna) and Vartika Chaudhary (IIM Ahmedabad Alumna) in May '20, when the world was grappling with unprecedented times, in the foreground of the global pandemic. From its humble beginnings of 5 volunteers teaching 10 students over WhatsApp, Vidyakansha has grown into a digital educational revolution comprising 270+ highly qualified volunteers providing free, quality education over a robust technology platform to 840+ students in 5 states of the country- Telangana, Bihar, Uttarakhanda, Bengal and Gujrat.

The COVID lockdown brought education to a standstill for children all over the world. However, this disruption hit some worse than others. Inequalities in the society- be it geographic or economic, tend to percolate into education; an inevitability exacerbated by the pandemic. With schools shut down, and no provisions or resources for online education, the numbers of dropout rates in rural government schools soared.

Vidyakansha was started with humble initiative to re-ignite the joy of learning for the children in the Pakhrauni Village of Bihar, Aishwarya's hometown. A couple of classes with the students was all it took to uncover the glaring gaps in the quality of Rural education. It was a rude awakening for us to discover that students of the 10th grade were unable to comprehend class 6th level concepts. A weak academic & interpersonal foundation festers Rural children's self-confidence & motivation to excel, in turn, restricting their career growth and development.

What began as one-on-one tutoring by Vidyakansha's volunteer-teachers for 5 eager students over WhatsApp Video call, gradually transformed into a nation-wide movement for the upliftment of Rural India encompassing diverse course offerings like female hygiene, mental health, career counselling in addition to best-in-class academic learning. Vidyakansha have now



Vidyakansha Founders

amassed a motivated base of 270+ volunteers from the leading institutes of the country who are enabling a digital knowledge transfer to 840+ students across 5 states and 47 villages in rural India. Our journey has been nothing short of phenomenal.

The most recent feather on their cap is that has been our partnership with the Telangana government to revolutionize digital learning in government schools. Krishna Aditya, IAS' 14 of the Mulugu District in Telangana to set up smart classrooms in the rural government schools in Mulugu which would be gateways for quality teaching by our volunteer-teachers, during school hours with proactive support from school authorities and school teachers.

The first phase of our pilot in the Mulugu District has commenced and has been running successfully since 1st Feb'21, in which we have set up 6 smart classrooms, in 3 government schools, with over 12 laptops, speakers, projectors and modems over which the nearly 360 students of classes 9th and 10th are receiving free, quality education from Vidyakansha's volunteer-teachers.

Vidyakansha's curriculum and testing mechanism is driven by data-analytics and we adopt a constructivist and practical approach of teaching to ensure the holistic growth and development of the student. With a strict teacher to student ratio of 10:1, we at Vidyakansha ensure that each student is getting the time and attention, he or she deserves.

In the second phase of the expansion, we hope to reach out to and transform education for more students in the Mulugu district as well as other remote districts of Telangana through our smart classrooms.

## CROSSWORD

### Across

- 1 Martial arts school (4)
- 4 Secret \_\_\_\_ : spies ? (6)
- 8 Legal right (3)
- 10 Burial place (4)
- 13 Omit (5,3)
- 14 One-sided (2,5)
- 15 Speaks publicly (6)
- 17 Factotum (3,3,3)
- 21 Tokyo's former name (3)
- 22 A tough, hard wood (3)
- 23 U.S. Govt. Uncle \_\_\_\_ (3)
- 26 Doctor (9)
- 27 Pertaining to a style (6)
- 28 Willies (7)
- 32 Natural disaster (3,2,3)
- 34 Cut or lop (4)
- 35 Tunisian ruler (3)
- 36 A community near a large city (6)
- 37 Chinese secret society (4)

### Down

- 1 Over-nurse (4)
- 2 Hop, skip and \_\_\_\_ (4)

### 3 System of worship or devotion (4)

- 5 Rule (6)
- 6 "New", as a prefix (3)
- 7 Most secure (6)
- 9 Behold, look (3)
- 11 Compound (5)
- 12 Guitar-like musical instrument (5)
- 15 Acorn bearers (4)
- 16 "A hit" changes that man from Bangkok ? (4)
- 18 06-06-1944 (4)
- 19 Physicist Niels (4)
- 20 Fifth month (3)
- 23 "Ivanhoe" author (5)
- 24 New Zealander (5)
- 25 Men from our continent (6)
- 26 Suffer or be punished ? (3,3)
- 28 Piece of work (3)
- 29 Concept (4)
- 30 Therefore (4)
- 31 Self-satisfied (4)
- 33 Clumsy boat (3)

## SUDOKU

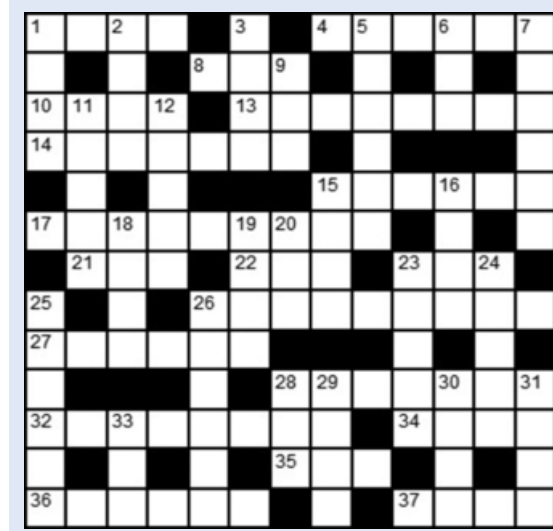
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7	9	8	3	5	2	4	6	1
1	5	3	6	8	4	2	9	7
6	4	2	1	9	7	3	5	8
8	1	4	9	3	5	7	2	6
5	6	7	8	2	1	9	3	4
2	3	9	4	7	6	8	1	5
4	2	5	7	6	9	1	8	3
9	8	1	5	4	3	6	7	2
3	7	6	2	1	8	5	4	9

SOLUTION TO FEBRUARY 17

## MAINTAIN A HEALTHY WEIGHT

Weight loss is a subject that runs in the minds of most women. Although quite distressing, reaching and maintaining a healthy weight is important for your overall well-being. Being overweight can significantly increase the risk of several chronic diseases and can reduce the quality of your life. Therefore, the best way to maintain a healthy weight is to have a good relationship with your food, get enough sleep, and exercise regularly.





# Cabinet nod for amendment in JJ Act to strengthen child protection

NEW DELHI

THE Union Cabinet on Wednesday gave its nod for amendment in the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 to introduce measures for strengthening the child protection set-up to ensure the best interests of children.

It was a proposal by the Ministry of Women and Child De-

velopment (WCD), which seeks amendment in the existing JJ Act for giving protection to children that face trafficking, child labour and other issues.

Chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Cabinet approved the WCD ministry's proposal for amendments seeking authorisation to the District Magistrate, including the Additional District Magistrate, to issue adoption orders under Sec-

tion 61 of the JJ Act, in order to ensure speedy disposal of cases and enhance accountability.

Among some other aspects of the proposal, the District Magistrates have been further empowered under the JJ Act to ensure its smooth implementation as well as garner synergised efforts in favour of children in distress.

The draft amendment also defines eligibility parameters

for appointment of CWC members and categorises previously undefined offences as a 'serious offence'. Several difficulties faced in implementation of various provisions of the Act have also been addressed in the amendment proposal.

While announcing the move, Union Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani said, "This is a big step to protect children."



# UTTARAKHAND FLOODS: NO HEADWAY IN RESCUE WORK

DEHRADUN

RESCUERS are finding it difficult to make further progress inside a tunnel of the disaster-hit Tapovan project in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district due to the presence of water and sludge.

A total of 58 bodies have been recovered so far. Due to the presence of water and sludge inside the tunnel, the excavation work is being hampered, said state DGP Ashok Kumar. However, he said the rescue operation would continue till the last man or body is found inside the tunnel.

Two bodies were found inside the tunnel early on Tuesday morning. "The rescue operation is going on at a slow pace due to the presence of heavy sludge and also as a precautionary measure," a top government official said.

An NTPC official said the tunnel has already been dug at a level of 160 metres inside.

During the excavation work inside the tunnel, 11 bodies have been found so far. "We are expecting more bodies as we are not hoping for survivors now," admitted the official. There is still no contact with the remaining trapped people inside.

The rescuers are working at two locations - one inside the tunnel and other at the remains of the Rishiganga



project in Reni. Sniffer dogs are also being used in the rescue operation near Reni village.

After days of digging and excavation

work, jawans of the army, ITBP, NDRF and SDRF, who are engaged in the rescue works, have managed open a sizeable portion of the tunnel.

## Tapovan tragedy is second blow to NTPC

DEHRADUN

NTPC Limited on Wednesday said it is yet to make an assessment of the damage caused by the Feb 7 deluge to its 520 Mw Tapovan-Vishnugad hydel project.

After his recent visit to Tapovan, Union Minister of State for Power R.K. Singh had earlier put an estimated loss of Rs 1500 crore for the project which was nearing its completion when the disaster struck.

"At the moment our focus is entirely on the rescue operation. We will make an assessment of the damages at a later stage," said R.P. Ahirwal, General Manager of the NTPC Tapovan Project. The project was slated to be commissioned in 2023. After the deluge, the fate of the project hangs in balance.

It is not the first time that NTPC has suffered big losses in the hydropower sector in the hill state. In 2009, the centre had scrapped its 600 Mw Loharinagpala project on environmental and religious grounds related to the holy river Bhagirathi after late IIT Kanpur Prof G D Agarwal had staged fast unto death. NTPC had invested around Rs 650 crore in the project when it was stopped.

## Searching porn? Beware, UP cops watching you



LUCKNOW

THE police in Uttar Pradesh will now 'keep an eye' on people's internet search data to monitor those looking up pornographic content.

The 'UP Women Powerline 1090' will be alerted if a person searches for pornographic material on the internet and following the alerts, the police team will reach out to the person to prevent 'crime against women'.

The project, which had previously been conducted in six districts, had received good response from the public.

Additional Director General (ADG) Neera Rawat said that in view of the increasing use of the internet, the powerline 1090 would reach out to people to prevent crimes

against women.

She said that a company has been hired to keep an eye on what is being searched on the internet by using data.

"Basically, it is meant to study the analytics of the internet. If a person watches pornography, the analytics team will get the information," she added.

Those who search for pornography will receive an alert message and the information will be saved with the police as well.

"The internet data will inform the 1090 team if a person is searching for porn. The team will then send 'awareness messages' to the person," she said.

Uttar Pradesh has about 11.6 million internet users as per estimates.

## Chowk near Rinku's house will be named after him: Mayor

NEW DELHI

NORTH Delhi Mayor and senior BJP leader Jai Prakash on Wednesday visited the family of Rinku Sharma at Mangolpuri who was killed last week here, and announced that the road intersection near his house will be named after him.

After his nearly one-hour visit, the mayor also appealed to the Delhi government to release Rs 1 cr in compensation and offer a job to his next of kin.

A day earlier, Delhi BJP leader Kapil Mishra had met Sharma's family to provide financial assistance of Rs 1 crore, and alleged that the youth was targeted and killed for taking part in collection of donation for Ram temple construction in



Ayodhya. Pragya Thakur, the BJP MP from Bhopal also met his family at Mangolpuri and

extended her support and sympathies to them, said an aide of the MP. Police has denied any communal angle in the murder of the youth in Mangolpuri last week, though BJP, VHP and Ba-jrang Dal leaders have been charging it was the fallout of his participation in a donation drive for the Ram temple.

"I met Rinku Sharma's family to express my condolences to them. As a mayor, I made the announcement there that the 'chowk' near his house will be named after him," Prakash said. Also, efforts will be made to see, if a job can be offered to his next of kin, he said, adding, "we have asked for the biodata from his family". "I also appeal to the Delhi government to release Rs 1 crore as compensation to his family," he said.

## Artificial lake formed in U'Khand's Murenda

NEW DELHI

A natural lake has been formed in Uttarakhand's Murenda area after the recent floods that wreaked havoc in Chamoli district of the state. The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) team along with the officials of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) on Wednesday reached Murenda where the natural lake has been formed. The team has established its base camp near the lake besides selecting a location for making a helipad, an ITBP official said.

The helipad is being developed with proper markings and other aids to guide the aircrew. "One ITBP party with the DRDO team also moved ahead to the lake area for recon during the day," the official said. The team will monitor the exact location of the lake to access the threat level of the artificial lake formed due to the recent natural disaster, said the ITBP official.

## Asaram hospitalised after complaining of chest pain

NEW DELHI

SELF-STYLED godman Asaram Babu was admitted to a hospital after he complained of chest pain, restlessness, discomfort in the knees, and other ailments on Tuesday.

He is serving life imprisonment in Jodhpur Central Jail in a rape case. Asaram was taken to the emergency ward of Mahatma Gandhi Hospital in Jodhpur, from where he was shifted to Mathura Das Mathur Hospital. A cardiologist also checked him. Talking to ANI over the phone, Dr MK Aseri, Medical Superintendent of Mathura Das Mathur Hospital said, "Asaram was admitted after he complained about chest pain. There were minor changes in his ECG, but his condition is stable now." Asaram Babu was accused of raping a minor girl in his ashram in the Manai area near Jodhpur on the night of August 15, 2013.

He was found guilty of various charges, including sections 370(4) (trafficking), 342 (wrongful confinement), 354A (outraging modesty), 376 (rape), 506 (criminal intimidation) and 120 B (criminal conspiracy) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), and some sections of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.



# CONTROVERSY ERUPTS IN UTTAR PRADESH OVER SUHELDEV'S CASTE

LUCKNOW

WITHIN hours of the foundation laying ceremony of the statue of Maharaja Suheldev by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a controversy has erupted over the legendary warrior king's caste.

BJP MP from Basgaon, Kamlesh Paswan, has written a letter to the President Ram Nath Kovind, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and chief minister Yogi Adityanath. Alleging that some vested interests had suffixed 'Rajbhar' to the name of Suheldev whereas the warrior king belonged to the Pasi community.

He further said that the state government should mention his name as 'Maharaja Suheldev Pasi' on the memorial and also on other projects launched by the Prime Minister to mark his contribution.

UP minister Anil Rajbhar, meanwhile, claimed that Maharaja Suheldev belonged to the Rajbhar community while Paswan maintained that the minister's assertion



was igniting anger among the Pasi community that had great admiration regard for Maharaja Suheldev.

The BJP MP said that the state government should verify historical documents and add Pasi surname to the memorial and other projects being dedicated to the king.

Om Prakash Rajbhar, former UP minister and president of the Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party (SBSP), claimed that as per the historical texts, including Mirat-i-Masudi written by Abdur Rehman Chishti, Suheldev belonged to the 'Bhar' community which is a sub-

caste of Rajbhar.

"My party will oppose any move by the state government to project Suheldev as a Pasi. We are going to organise meetings in Rajbhar-dominated constituencies across the state to make our community aware of his contribution," he said.

BSP leader Ram Achal Rajbhar, on the other hand, stated that it was the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) that had first highlighted the role of Suheldev in upliftment of weaker sections.

"The BJP is now invoking his name to get Dalit votes," he said.

The Samajwadi Party spokesman said that the BJP was trying to divide the Dalit community by raising the issue of Suheldev's caste.

"Instead of creating ugly controversies over the caste issue, political parties should focus on the legacy and work done by great leaders," he said. A senior government official said that in all projects, the name of the warrior king was mentioned as 'Maharaja Suheldev' and the caste name was not mentioned at all.

POSSESSION NOTICE

WHEREAS, the authorized officer of Jana Small Finance Bank Limited (Formerly known as Janalakshmi Financial Services Limited), under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued demand notices to the borrower(s)/ Co-borrower (s) calling upon the borrowers to repay the amount mentioned against the respective names together with interest thereon at the applicable rates as mentioned in the said notices within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notices, along with future interest as applicable, incidental expenses, costs, charges etc incurred till the date of payment and/ or realisation.

Sr. No.	Loan No.	Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ Mortgagor	13(2) Notice Date/ Outstanding Due (in Rs.) as on	Date / Time & Type of Possession
1	30218850003578	M/s. Gupta Foam Sales Represented by its Proprietor Mrs. Renu Gupta, 2. Mrs. Renu Gupta, 3. Mr. Pramod Gupta (Guarantor)	Date of 13(2): 17.01.2020 The amount due to the Bank as on 10th January 2020 is Rs.6,50,995.43/- (Rupees Six Lakhs Fifty Thousand Nine Hundred Ninety Five and Forty Three Paise Only)	Date: 15.02.2021 11:30 A.M. & Symbolic Possession
Description of Secured Asset: Property Details-A Plot part of Kh. No. 111/251 min. situated at Village Habatpur, Pargana & Tehsil Dadri, District Gautam Budh Nagar, UP, admeasuring 55.5 Sq. Yards. Owned by Mrs. Renu Gupta, W/o. Mr. Pramod Gupta. Bounded as: East: Plot of Others, West: Plot of Others, North: Rasta 15 Feet, South: Plot of Others.				
2	30938850000516	M/s. Palki Fashion Point Represented by its Proprietor Mr. Praveen Kumar, 2. Mr. Praveen Kumar, 3. Mrs. Shalini (Guarantor)	Date of 13(2): 10.12.2019 The amount due to the Bank as on 06th December 2019 is Rs.13,01,217/- (Rupees Thirteen Lakhs One Thousand Two Hundred Seventeen Only)	Date 15.02.2021 02:00 P.M. & Symbolic Possession
Description of Secured Asset: Property Details- Kharsa No. 484, admeasuring 200 Sq. Yards i.e. 167.22 Sq. Meters, situated at Village Asalatpur, Pargana & Tehsil Loni, Ghaziabad. Owned by Mr. Praveen Kumar, S/o. Mr. Devinder Kumar Sharma. Bounded as: East: Rasta 15 Feet Wide, West: Plot of Others, North: Plot of Seller, South: Plot of Seller.				
Whereas the Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)/ Mortgagors, mentioned herein above have failed to repay the amounts due, notice is hereby given to the Borrower's mentioned herein above in particular and to the Public in general that the authorised officer of Jana Small Finance Bank Limited has taken possession of the properties/ secured assets described herein above in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the dates mentioned above. The Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)/ Mortgagors mentioned herein above in particular and the Public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the aforesaid properties/ Secured Assets and any dealings with the said properties/ Secured assets will be subject to the charge of Jana Small Finance Bank Limited.				
Place: Gautam Budh Nagar			Sd/- Authorised Officer	
Date: 17.02.2021			Jana Small Finance Bank Limited	
<div><div>J</div><div>JANA SMALL FINANCE BANK</div><div>(A scheduled commercial bank)</div></div>				
Registered Office: The Fairway, Ground & First Floor, Survey No. 10/1,11/2 & 12/2B, Off Domlur, Koramangla Inner Ring Road, Next to EGL Business Park, Challaghatta, Bangalore - 560071.				
Branch Office: 16/12, 2nd Floor, W.E.A, Arya Samaj Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi - 110005.				







# Revanth criticises KCR for toeing Centre's line

HYDERABAD

THE Congress party MP A Revanth Reddy on Wednesday said that he had organised his yatra as per the orders of the party Chief Sonia Gandhi. He said that he organised several programs for ten days as part of his yatra.

Speaking to media persons in the city, Revanth said that the protest program held by him at Achampet had turned into a padayatra following the suggestion by the party leaders Mallu Ravi and MLA Seethakka. "Thousands of people from the undivided Mahbubnagar district and Ranga Reddy district extended their support to yatra. I was not able to meet several people as the yatra was held without any prior planning," he added.

Stating that the subject of agriculture is a part of concurrent list of Indian constitution, Reddy said that the State government could reject the controversial farm laws introduced by the Centre. He alleged that the procurement centres in the State were being removed as per the controversial laws.



Congress MP Revanth Reddy addressing the media at Gandhi Bhavan on Wednesday

- Holds protest programmes during farmers yatra
- Says yatra held as per Congress party chief Sonia Gandhi's instructions

► Criticises Central govt for its decision to privitise PSUs

Commenting on the decision of the Central government to privatise profit-making public-sector undertakings, he termed the decision as cruel and added that the Centre had borne a loss of Rs 1.35 lakh crore incurred by the multinational companies of the

country. He alleged that the Central government was privatising all sectors through its wrong policies and added that it was also handing over the rights of farmers in the hands of the corporate companies. He alleged that the chief minister KCR was support-

ing all cruel acts of the Central government. He asked the CM as to why he was not standing by the farmers of the state. He alleged that the banks of the state were not giving loans to the farmers as the State government had not waived off their loans.

## Unions urge CM to pass resolution against VSP sale



Representatives of Visakha Ukku Parirakshana Porata Committee submitting a three-page memorandum to Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy at the airport in Visakhapatnam on Wednesday

- Meet him at airport, submit a 3-page memorandum
- Ask him exert pressure on the Centre to drop its plan

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VISAKHAPATNAM

REPRESENTATIVES of Visakha Ukku Parirakshana Porata Committee on Wednesday appealed to Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy to pass a resolution in the Assembly session opposing the Centre's proposal to privatise Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (VSP).

The Chief Minister, who came to the city on Wednesday, met the trade union leaders at Visakhapatnam airport lounge. The joint action committee submitted a three-page memorandum to the Chief Minister, requesting him to exert pressure on the Union government to stop the 'strategic sale' of the VSP.

The committee members alleged that the Centre is trying to dispose of the steel plant at a throwaway price to the private sector. Reiterating that the VSP is a pride and honour of the Andhra people, the JAC representatives urged the Chief Minister to mount pressure on the Centre to allot its own mines and help the plant to tide over the financial crisis. The trade union leaders appealed to the CM to put people's interests forward leading the Visakha stir and save the plant from falling into the hands of private management.

Ayodhya Ram, president of the recognised union of RINL, CPI state assistant secretary J V Satyanarayana Murthy, CPM state secretariat member Ch Narasinga Rao, INTUC national secretary Mantri Rajasekhara, among others were present.

## Two drug peddlers nabbed by Task Force

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
NAMPALLY

THE North Zone Task Force on Wednesday nabbed two drug peddlers from a lodge in Nampally police station limits and seized 30 gm each of heroine and Mephedrone drug from their possession, all worth Rs.3.50 lakh. The accused were identified as Ifteqar Ahmed and Krishna Kishore. The third accused Md. Salman is absconding.

According to the Task Force police, they received a tip-off about the persons staying in the lodge after arriving from Mumbai and intending to sell the drug in the city.

They laid a trap and nabbed the duo, while the third escaped. The main accused Ifteqar Ahmed

is a native of Sakinaka in Mumbai where he was allegedly peddling drugs. When Kishore went to Mumbai a few months back, he got acquainted with Ifteqar. They started consuming drugs. Both planned to sell drugs in Hyderabad.

Kishore agreed to help Ifteqar as he was getting a huge commission, said P Radhakrishnan Rao, DCP, Task Force.

He noted: As the duo agreed for a deal, they arrived in the city and planned to sell drugs in local market. Salman, an associate of Kishore, agreed to join the smuggling business on a commission basis.

However, they were apprehended and handed over to the Nampally police for further investigation.

## One held for cheating job aspirants

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

THE Detective department of Central Crime Station (CCS) on Wednesday brought one Pinjari Khaja to the city from Kurnool on prisoner transit warrant for cheating gullible job-seekers.

According to police, the accused colluded with his friends and they cheated 25 job aspirants who sought jobs in Railways. They promised Group-D posts in Railways through backdoor entry to the aspirants, claiming that they have high-level contacts.

Believing the fraudsters, the job-seekers paid money to the accused and his friends. They

collected around Rs.6-7 lakh from an aspirant and cheated 25 persons to the tune of Rs. 1.615 crore.

As the number of complaints were increasing against the accused, special teams were formed to nab the gang. After a lot of hard efforts, the accused was arrested under Section 406, 420 of IPC from his native place. The teams are still working to nab his associates, said Joint CP of CCS Avinash Mohanty.

He said "we will arrest the remaining gang members at the earliest". Mohanty urged job aspirants to not fall prey to such fraudsters. If anyone is similarly cheated the CCS can be approached with a complaint.

## Tamilisai gets addl charge as LG Pondicherry

SOMAJIGUDA

TELANGANA Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan on Wednesday received an appointment order of warrant from the Central Government which offered her an additional charge of a lieutenant governor of Pondicherry.

The centre has shifted the incumbent lieutenant governor Kiran Bedi for some reasons. Soon after her shunting, the Centre appointed Telangana Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan with full additional charge as the lieutenant governor of Pondicherry.

In a press release from Raj Bhavan, Tamilisai Soundararajan has said that Pondicherry special resident commissioner, Krishna Kumar Singh has offered the appointment order copy to her in the city in this regard. The Governor is to take a tour soon to the union territory to assume charge of lieutenant governor.



## KCR birthday: Golden saree for Yellamma

BALKAMPET

ON the occasion of Chief Minister K Chandrasekhara Rao's birthday, Animal Husbandry Minister T Srinivas Yadav along with TRS leaders presented a golden saree weighing 2.5 kg to the presiding deity of Yellamma

temple in Balkampet on Wednesday.

The Minister offered it on behalf of MLC Kavitha as she couldn't attend the ritual. The Minister performed special pooja on the occasion. Temple priests gave him Teertha Prasadam.



## TS doctor in Arizona Medical Board

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

DR. Shiva Kumar Y Gosi, the current Chair of the Department of Medicine at Banner Thunderbird Medical Centre in Glendale (Arizona), has been appointed as the member of Arizona Medical Board by the Governor's office.

Hailing from Kodangal town of Vikarabad district in Telangana, Dr. Shiva expressed his happiness and pride on being an NRI doctor of India who has been placed in Arizona Medical Board.

Dr. Shiva, MD, MPH, FFAFP, CPE, is a hospitalist. He completed his MBBS at Gandhi Medical College in 2007 and pursued



Masters in Public Health and MD from East Tennessee State University in the US and working as a hospitalist since 2013.

He also earned his MPH with a concentration in community health from East Tennessee State University and was awarded, certified physician ex-

ecutive credentials by the American Association of Physician Leadership. He is also a recipient of the Fellow of American Academy of Family Physicians.

Dr. Shiva has been an adjunct faculty and enjoys teaching medical students, residents, nurse practitioners, and physician assistant students. He has published medical articles, has been a peer reviewer for journals, and worked as an outside medical consultant for Arizona Medical Board. He is actively involved in multiple projects and key committees in his hospital. Dr Shiva is engaged with the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB's) work group on physician impairment.

## Bar Council, THCAA condemn advocates brutal murder

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD

THE Bar Council of the State of Telangana and the Telangana High Court Advocates Association deeply condemned the brutal murder of advocate couple Gattu Vaman Rao and Gattu Nagamani, after waylaying their car at Kalvacherla village near Ramagiri Police Station, Peddapalli district.

The State Bar Council demanded the police to probe into the matter immediately and arrest the culprits. It also sought the State government to enact Advocates Protection Act to safeguard the advocate community, who discharge their duties to protect the rights of the citizens. Further, the Executive Committee of the Telangana High Court Advocates Association (THCAA) unanimously resolved to stage protest against the murders, on the High Court premises on Thursday. The Association requested all the advocates to participate and condemn the brutal murders.

## Lockdown triggers scholar to complete 403 courses

PATANCHERU

PEOPLE remained locked in their houses, unable to come out due to fear of Covid-19 lockdown. Taking this as the chance to study, a full-time researcher of Hyderabad has spent most of his time studying an impressive number of online courses. During the lockdown, K Venkata Rami Reddy, a second-year full-time research scholar of GHBS, GITAM (deemed to be university) has studied 403 courses in the past six months listed on Coursera, an online platform that provided courses from all international

universities.

"I never thought that someday I would find holidays boring. To utilise the lockdown time, my research guide Prof. A Sreeram introduced me to the online courses and I was able to complete the courses I signed up for within a few weeks. The online platform offered some fantastic opportunities for continuous learning during lockdown", says Reddy.

Reddy had completed the courses offered by the Indian School of Business (ISB), University of Michigan, University of London, and from other international universities.



## Patriotic fervour marks arrival of Victory flame

VHANS NEWS SERVICE  
TIRUPATI

IT was a time of pride and patriotism at SV University here on Wednesday evening as the city witnessed the arrival of victory flame of 1971 war. It was being held on the occasion of celebration of 'Swarnim Vijay Varsh', Golden jubilee of the iconic and spectacular victory of Indian Armed Forces in the Indo-Pak War of 1971.

On this occasion, the victory flame which was lit at National War Memorial in Delhi by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on December 16, 2020, reached here on Wednesday and was brought to the SV University in a procession. During its 'last mile run' the flame was carried by eminent sports persons and finally received by Brigadier J J S Bhinder with full military honours.

In a ceremony held before the university administrative building, senior military officers and civil dignitaries, including the



Vice-Chancellor Prof K Raja Reddy, Municipal Corporation of Tirupati commissioner P S Girisha, Urban SP N Venkata Appala Naidu among others laid wreaths in honour of the sacrifice of the gallant warriors.

Speaking on the occasion,

Brigadier Bhinder told the media that they will honour one of the heroes of Andhra Pradesh Major Gen C Venugopal who resides in Tirupati on Thursday followed by a mega event in which Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy will participate. There are four such

victory flames being carried in four cardinal directions and the southern cardinal flame reached here from Hyderabad. These flames will travel back to Delhi through various places by December 16, 2021.

Urban SP Appala Naidu said

## DGP expresses happiness with peaceful polling

Says compared with 2013 local polls, there is hardly any trouble during the current elections

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
MANGALAGIRI

DIRECTOR general of police D Gautam Sawang complimented the voters for peacefully exercising their franchise in the elections to the local bodies.

He said in a statement here on Wednesday that the employees of various departments extended excellent cooperation to the police department for conducting the elections in free and fair atmosphere.

He said that the police department had conducted the first, second and third phase elections with utmost efficiency.

Particularly, the police had succeeded in peaceful conduct of elections in spite of the boycott call given by the Maoists.

The DGP said that precau-

tions were taken to prevent any untoward incidents though the voter turnout was huge in all the three phases.

Comparing with 2013 elections, there was hardly any trouble during the present polling.

He complimented police personnel for helping the aged and disabled to exercise their franchise.

He said that in all 66 platoons of APSP, 20 companies of CRPF, 41,000 civil police personnel were deployed during the elections this year.

The DGP was confident that the fourth phase polling would also be peaceful due to the strategies adopted by the police department. The police would strive hard to help people to exercise their franchise without any fear.



# University Grants Commission to universities ‘Encourage students to take voluntary online exam on cow science’

NEW DELHI

THE University Grants Commission has asked vice chancellors of varsities across the country to “encourage” students to take an online voluntary national-level exam to test their knowledge on ‘gau vigyan’ (cow science).

The ‘Kamdhenu Gau Vigyan Prachar-Prasar Examination’, for which there is no registration fee, will be held on February 25, and students from primary, secondary and senior-secondary schools as well as colleges can take the test being conducted by the Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog (RKA).

Besides them, anyone from the general public can also take the hour-long multiple choice question-based exam that will be held in 11 regional languages and English. The commission was constituted by the government for

conservation, preservation, protection and development of cows.

The exam on February 25 aims to “infuse curiosity into all Indians about cows and make them aware of the unexplored potential and business opportunities a cow can offer, even after it stops giving milk”, the RKA had said in its notification for the exam on January 5.

University Grants Commission (UGC) secretary Rajnish Jain in a letter to vice-chancellors said that “you are aware the Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, government of India, established in February 2019, has been working on dissemination of information on economic, scientific, environmental, health, agriculture and spiritual relevance of indigenous cow in the country”.

The RKA is going to conduct the all-India online ‘Kamdhenu Gau Vigyan Prachar-Prasar Examination’ for stu-



dents of primary, secondary and senior secondary schools, colleges, universities and for all citizens, Jain said. “I write this to request you, to give wide publicity to this initiative and encourage students to enrol or register themselves for this examination. This may also be brought to the notice of the colleges affiliated to your university,” he said in the letter to vice-chancellors.

The exam will be conducted in English, Hindi, Gujarati, Sanskrit, Punjabi, Marathi, Kannada, Malayalam, Tamil, Marathi, Telugu and Odia.

## NTA arranges alternative

The exam dates of Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) Main and class 12 board examinations are clashing with each other as both are scheduled to be held in May. To ensure right and equal opportunity for all the aspirants, the National Testing Agency (NTA) will arrange an alternative

for the aspirants who will be writing their board examinations on the day the JEE (Main) is being held. These students will be given the dates of their preference.

Senior Examination Director of NTA, Sadhana Parashar, said in a notice, “Keeping in mind that the dates of JEE Main and Class 12 board exams do not clash with each other, applications will be accepted from students from May 3. Its last date is May 12. The students will have to provide their Class 12th roll number and name of the board to the NTA while filling the form.”

The JEE Main exam is scheduled on May 24, 25, 26, 27 and 28. The CBSE 12th Board Biology exam is also on May 24. In such a situation, biology students were worried about the JEE Main exam.

However, now Biology students will be able to choose another date for the JEE examination from the dates fixed in May.

# ‘Metoo Akbar’ loses court battle

## Ramani acquitted: ‘Right of reputation can’t be protected at the cost of dignity’

### Feel vindicated on behalf of women who spoke against sexual abuse: Ramani

NEW DELHI

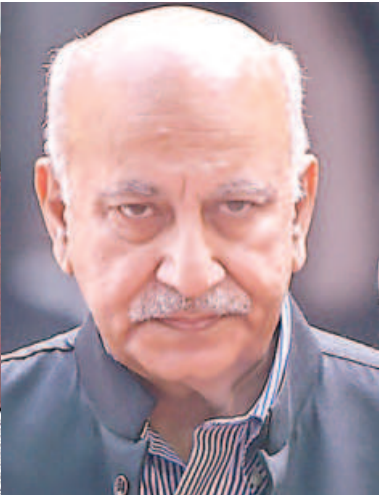
A Delhi court on Wednesday acquitted journalist Priya Ramani in the defamation case filed by former Union minister MJ Akbar. Ramani had accused Akbar of sexual harassment during the #MeToo movement in India in 2018. Court said that a woman has the right to put her grievances even after decades and that right of reputation cannot be protected at the cost of right to dignity.

“The woman has the right to put her grievances at any platform of her choice and even after decades,” Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Ravindra Kumar Pandey noted. The court further said that right of reputation cannot be protected at the cost of right to dignity. “Women cannot be punished for raising voice against the sexual abuse in the pretext of complaint of defamation.” The Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate also took consideration of the systemic abuse at workplace. He said that the time has come for the society to understand the implication of sexual harassment.

In the wake of #MeToo movement in 2018, Ramani had made allegation of sexual harassment against Akbar.

Pursuant to this, he filed the criminal defamation case against her and resigned as the Union Minister. Trial began in 2019 and went on for almost two years.

In 2017, Ramani wrote an article for the Vogue where she described her ordeal of be-



Priya Ramani and MJ Akbar

ing sexually harassed by a former boss during her job interview for his publication.

Ramani said she felt vindicated on behalf of all the women who have ever spoken out against sexual harassment at work place.

Ramani said that it feels great to have your truth validated before court. “It feels amazing, truly does. I feel vindicated on behalf of all the women who have ever spoken out against sexual harassment at work place,” she said.

Ramani said the sexual harassment issue

has gotten the attention it deserves. “It was me the victim who had to stand up in the court as an accused. I thank everyone who stood by me especially my witnesses Ghazala Wahab and Niloufer Venkatraman who came to the court and testified on my behalf. “I thank the court for the verdict and I thank my lawyer Rebecca John and the amazing team who believed in me and the wider cause. They put their heart and soul in the case,” she said.

Prominent Bollywood celebrities, includ-

ing actors Taapsee Pannu, Richa Chadha, and filmmaker Onir hailed journalist Priya Ramani’s acquittal.

The celebrities termed the judgement as a landmark moment for women and their fight against workplace sexual harassment. Taking to Twitter, Pannu said that the verdict had instilled her faith in justice at a time when the world looked bleak. “Amidst all the wrongs and unfair happening around, this did bring a ray of hope that somewhere something is keeping our hope in righteousness alive. Long live truth and justice,” the “Thappad” star wrote. Chadha wrote, “Hope Mr Burns spends the rest of his disgraced days in a radioactive den.”

“This is spectacular. A milestone judgement when it comes to sexual harassment. Important that the court points out that it’s not time-bound. Amazing #PriyaRamani #RebeccaJohn” he tweeted.

Actor Mini Mathur said: “Priya Ramani is acquitted. The fact that she needed to defend her accusations of harassment against a powerful man notwithstanding, this is a huge step forward for women speaking up against sexual harassment.

Union Minister Smriti Irani, reacting to the Delhi court order acquitting journalist Priya Ramani in a defamation suit filed by former minister MJ Akbar, said today that “due protection had been given to women” by law.

# Narayanasamy asked to prove majority

PUDUCHERRY

A delegation of opposition parties led by AINRC on Wednesday submitted a plea to an official in the Lt Governor’s office, seeking a direction to Puducherry Chief Minister V Narayanasamy to prove his government’s majority on the floor of the Assembly.

A day after the Congress government lost its majority with the resignation of one more MLA, the delegation of all

14 legislators belonging to the opposition in the territorial assembly, led by N Rangasamy, presented a joint memorandum to the officer on special duty, G Theva Needhi Das at Raj Nivas.

Seven legislators including Rangasamy belonging to All India NR Congress, four from AIADMK and three nominated MLAs of the BJP, who have voting rights formed part of the delegation.

Rangasamy, who is the Leader of Opposition, told reporters that the memorandum has been submitted to the official and said they have sought a direction to Narayanasamy to prove his majority on the floor of the House.

Kiran Bedi was removed as the Lt Governor of Puducherry last night and Telangana Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan, who has been assigned additional charge of the union territory would assume office on Thursday, sources said.

CM V Narayanasamy said, “Last 4 years were turbulent for our govt. Kiran Bedi had been creating problems with her interference in day-to-day administration. Our constant efforts against her actions have paid off. People like secular parties in Puducherry, communal elements not allowed.

“BJP has been poaching our MLAs in order to topple our govt. Three MLAs resignation has been accepted. People know about BJP’s game plan, they will give them befitting reply during election of 2021.”



## Bag containing ₹1.4 cr cash found inside train in Kanpur

KANPUR

AN unclaimed bag containing cash worth around Rs 1.4 crore was found in the Swatantrata Sangram Senani special train in Kanpur, a senior official said on Wednesday.

The recovery was made on Tuesday while the train was on its way to Jaynagar in Bihar from Delhi, said Railway’s Deputy Chief Traffic Manager, Himanshu Shekhar. The train’s pantry staff spotted the unclaimed red coloured trolley bag and reported the matter to the Railway authorities, Railway Protection Force (RPF) and Government Railway Police (GRP) who took the bag into their custody, he said.

The bag was opened in presence of Railway’s commercial staff, RPF and GRP and it was found packed with wades of currency notes, he added. The cash was handed over to GRP who informed the IT officials to investigate the matter.

The pantry staff said they were not aware of who left the bag in the compartment, Shekhar said, adding that the GRP officials would investigate the matter. He said so far neither has any one claimed the bag nor lodged a complaint about it at any of the stations along the route.



# Petrol ₹100/L

JAIPUR

AFTER premium petrol, the price of normal petrol has also crossed Rs 100 per litre in Rajasthan’s Sriganganagar district.

Petrol and diesel prices in Sriganganagar on Wednesday stood at Rs 100.13 and Rs 92.13, respectively.

The rise in fuel price is despite the Rajasthan government last month reduced VAT on petrol and diesel by 2 per cent.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said the middle-class would not have been burdened if the previous governments had focussed on reducing India’s energy import dependence. Without referring to the relentless increase in retail fuel prices, which are linked to international rates, he said. India imported over 85 per cent of its oil needs in the 2019-20 financial year and 53 per cent of its gas requirement. “Can a diverse and

talented nation like ours be so energy import dependent?” he asked, addressing an online event to inaugurate oil and gas projects in poll-bound Tamil Nadu.

“I do not want to criticise anyone but I want to say (that) had we focused on this subject much earlier, our middle-class would not be burdened,” he said.

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot had blamed the Centre for the rising fuel prices. Replying to the debate in the state Assembly on the Motion of Thanks to the governor’s speech two days ago, the chief minister said the Centre is responsible for increase in fuel prices. India, the world’s third-biggest oil consumer, on Wednesday urged Saudi Arabia and other global oil producers to ease production cuts, saying rising international oil prices are hurting economic recovery and demand.

## Two Germans nabbed for growing cannabis in Maha

SATARA

IN a startling development, the Maharashtra Police swooped down on a private bungalow in Wai town in Satara district and arrested two German nationals found cultivating cannabis at a bungalow.

The bungalow, owned by a local citizen, is situated in the quiet Yashwant Nagar area of Wai town, a picturesque holiday-cum-film shooting destination, with the twin hill stations of Mahabaleshwar-Panchgani towering over it.

Satara Superintendent of Police Ajaykumar Bansal said that following a tip-off about two foreigners living and moving around in a suspicious manner at the bungalow in Nandanvan Park, a police party “paid them a visit” on Tuesday. When they attempted to question the duo, they gave furtive and contradictory replies after which the Wai police team decided to search the premises.

“The police party was shocked to see large quantities of cannabis (Ganja) being grown surreptitiously inside in around half-a-dozen rooms, on the roof and outside. It was like a ‘farmhouse’ for the illegal contraband,” Bansal told IANS.

The police team informed Bansal and Deputy Superintendent of Police Dheeraj Patil who ordered their arrest and launched a full-scale investigation.

The duo has been identified as Sergis Victor Manca, 31 and Sebastian Stein Muller, 25, who were produced before a local court and remanded to police custody till February 20.



Devotees participate in an eco-friendly immersion of Goddess Saraswati idol, in Kolkata, on Wednesday

# Cong sweeps urban polls in Punjab

CHANDIGARH

THE ruling Congress won six municipal corporations and emerged as the largest party in the seventh, sweeping the urban body polls in Punjab on Wednesday. The Congress won in Bathinda, Hoshiarpur, Kapurthala, Bhatinda, Batala and Pathankot, in the civic polls held against the backdrop of the farmers’ agitation.

In Moga, it needed victories in six more wards to control the municipal corporation. The counting for another municipal corporation will take place Thursday. In addition, results for 109 municipal corporations are also expected. The outcome comes as a boost for the Congress, which has been backing the protest by farmers – a majority of them from Punjab and Haryana – against the BJP-led government at the Centre.

The Congress is also eyeing a win in the Assembly elections, which are just a year away. Punjab Congress chief Sunil Jakhar said people have rejected the “negative politics” of parties like the BJP, SAD and AAP. “We contested on the development agenda. This victory will embolden our workers to work hard,” Jakhar told reporters. In Moga,

where no political party has scored a majority, the support of independent candidates could be crucial.

The Congress won 20 of the 50 municipal wards in Moga, the Shiromani Akali Dal 15, the Aam Aadmi Party 4, the Bharatiya Janata Party 1 and independents 10.

The Punjab election campaign was marred by stray clashes between party workers with opposition leaders alleging at some places that their candidates were being stopped from filing nomination papers.

The State Election Commission had ordered repolling at two booths for the Mohali municipal corporation. Therefore, the counting for the entire civic body will take place on Thursday. Altogether 9,222 candidates contested the polls to the eight municipal corporations and 109 municipal councils.

The Congress fielded 2,037 candidates, the SAD 1,569, the BJP 1,003, the AAP 1,606 and the BSP 160. As many as 2,832 were independents. The BJP and the Akali Dal, which had walked out of the National Democratic Alliance last year over the contentious farm laws, fought separately. Over 70 per cent voting was recorded in the civic body elections on February 14.

## Bank lockers run out of space

# ‘Don’t donate silver bricks’, Ram Mandir Trust tells donors

LUCKNOW

THE campaign to collect donations for the construction of Ram Mandir in Ayodhya is in full swing, but the temple trust is now faced with a unique challenge.

Members of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Tirtha Kshetra, which is raising donations for the temple, said they have appealed to the donors not to donate silver bricks as their bank lockers have no space to store them, according to ThePrint report.

More than 400 kg of silver bricks have been

donated so far, they added.

“People from all across the country are sending silver bricks for use in the construction of the temple. We now have way too many silver bricks that we have to think hard about how to keep them in safe storage,” Dr Anil Mishra, a trust member, told ThePrint.

“Therefore, the trust is now appealing to the donors not to donate silver.”

Mishra said “all our bank lockers are full (with silver)”.

“We fully respect the sentiments of



Lord Ram’s devotees, but it is our humble request that they should not send any more silver bricks. We will also have to spend a lot of money to safely store them.”

Mishra also said if there is any further need of silver for the construction of the temple, then “we will issue an appeal”.

According to sources associated with the trust, cash amounting to over Rs 1,600 crore has been received so far. The donation campaign, titled

‘Nidhi Sankalp Sangrah’, aims to reach out to more than 12 crore families in over five lakh villages. The campaign, scheduled to run until 27 February, is being reviewed on a daily basis, said sources. Various groups/teams formed by the trust to run this campaign have been asked to either transfer the money to the trust account or to accept donations as cheques.

Champat Rai, the trust’s general secretary, had earlier said that one lakh 50 thousand groups are engaged in this fund-raising campaign.

The entire temple will be built within the next 39 months, he had said.



FOREX (buy rates in ₹)			
US Dollar	77.1	South	
Euro	92.14	African Rand	5.68
UAE Dirham	21.78	Hong Kong Dollar	10.79
Thai Baht	2.79	Japanese Yen	0.79
British Pound	104.91	New Zealand Dollar	54.92
Australian Dollar	59.2	Saudi Riyal	21.32
Canadian Dollar	60.13	Swedish Krona	10.05
Swiss Franc	84.5	Singapore Dollar	57.49

DELHI THURSDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2021

## BIZ BRIEFS

### Ather begins bike mfg

Ather Energy began operations from its mega-factory in Hosur, Tamil Nadu and started delivering in its products in Mumbai, Pune, Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Chennai, and Hyderabad, with a capacity to produce 1,10,000 scooters per annum. The facility will serve as Ather Energy's national manufacturing hub catering to demand from us so far and the opening of this facility is truly a milestone for the company. The consumer demand has increased by multiple folds and with us expanding to new markets, this state of art facility, we will cater to demand across the country.”

### ImpactGuru raises funds

Hyderabad-based couple Rupal and Yogesh Gupta have taken to crowdfunding on ImpactGuru.com to cover the cost of Zolgensma therapy as their 2-year-old son Ayaansh is diagnosed with Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) Type 1. SMA is a rare genetic disease that attacks the baby's nerves and muscles, and as it progresses, makes it extremely difficult for the child to carry out basic activities like sit up. Commercially Zolgensma is available in the USA for approximately \$2.1 million (Rs 16 crores). In a heartfelt appeal, Ayaansh's parents said: "Please donate on our ImpactGuru fundraiser to relieve little Ayaansh of the daily torture of his condition. Every small amount will be one step closer to the required amount."

### Kotak Mahindra's new home loan

Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd, on Wednesday announced the launch of a multi-media campaign in Vijayawada. This focuses on its low home loan interest rate of 6.75 per cent. The features of the loan are attractive rates for both the salaried and self-employed customer segments and quick online sanction with Kotak Digi Home Loans and easy documentation. Elizabeth Venkataraman, Joint President, Consumer, Commercial & Wealth Marketing, Kotak Mahindra Bank, said: "The pride and joy in owning the home of one's dreams is unlike any other. However, for many it can be a dream too far. Now, with Kotak Home Loans offering an 'unbelievable' rate of 6.75 per cent, that dream is within reach."

### Classplus opens new office

Classplus has announced the opening of two new offices in Hyderabad and Bengaluru. Currently headquartered in Noida, this new office will help the company strengthen its presence in these key geographies, both of which are highly acclaimed for the quality of their educators and the academic excellence they instill and better service their growing customer base across Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Karnataka, which have witnessed massive growth over the last 12 months. Over the course of the next year, Classplus plans to add 100 new employees. Mukul Rustagi, co-founder, Classplus, said: "We are excited for this phase of growth in the Southern states. South India is a critical geography for us and sets the bar for academic excellence nationwide."

# India to be among fastest growing GDPs in FY22

The forecast for India in 2021 is on stronger side, says S&P Global Ratings

NEW DELHI

S&P Global Ratings on Wednesday said India will be one of the fastest growing emerging market economies with a 10 per cent growth in the next fiscal, and future sovereign rating action would hinge on lowering fiscal deficit and sustaining debt burden.

S&P Director, Sovereign & International Public Finance Ratings, Andrew Wood said the forecast for India in 2021 is on stronger side and shows that a lot of economic activity, which was frozen last year, is coming back on line to normalisation thereby brightening the growth prospects, as well as structural strengths of Indian economy coming back to the fore.

"India will be one of the fastest-growing economies in the EM (emerging market) space. India's contraction this year was steep and may be deeper than global average, but bounce back of 10 per cent that we are expecting next fiscal year will be putting India amongst the fastest growers in 2021 and more importantly we see Indian economy growing at 6 per cent over medium term, may be slightly higher, and that compares very well to EM all around the world," Wood said in a webinar on India outlook for 2021.

S&P says India's economy has stabilised over recent months, with progressively better manufacturing, services, labour market, and revenue data. The hard part will be converting these trends into a sustained recovery over the next few years



## FISCAL DEFICIT TARGETS

- Exceeded target of 3.5% of GDP in the current fiscal
- For 2021-22, 6.8% of GDP
- For 2025-26, 4.5% of GDP by 2025-26

S&P said India's economy has stabilised over recent months, with progressively better manufacturing, services, labour market, and revenue data. The hard part will be converting these trends into a sustained recovery over the next few years.

India has exceeded its fiscal deficit target of 3.5 per cent in the current fiscal by a wide margin due to higher spending to stimulate economy amid the pandemic.

The fiscal deficit - the excess of government expenditure over its revenues - has been pegged at 9.5 per cent of the gross domestic

product (GDP) in the current fiscal ending March 31, as per the revised estimate.

For the next 2021-22 fiscal, the deficit has been put at 6.8 per cent of the GDP, which will be further lowered to 4.5 per cent by 2025-26 fiscal ending March 31, 2026.

"Vast economic growth is crucial and critical for maintaining those deficits at those rates financing them and keeping debt stocks from rising even further. If that were the case if the economy were to recover at a much slower pace than expected we would have additional concerns

regarding the sustainability of those fiscal accounts," Wood added.

S&P currently has a 'BBB' rating on India, with a stable outlook.

To a query on what could put downside pressure on ratings, Wood said, "If we have a much lower than expected recovery, slower nominal GDP growth, that would be a concern. If economy is not growing quickly then fiscal deficit would be lot higher and debt stock could be rising rather than stabilising. That would entail high government deficit and higher general government debt stock which could cause us to question the sustainability of India's public finances."

India's general government debt/GDP ratio, which stood at 72 per cent in 2019, has risen to around 90 per cent. On the banking sector, S&P said large capital raising would bolster bank balance sheet and expects capital infusion in state-owned banks to be sufficient to support credit growth.

S&P Associate Director, Financial Institutions Ratings, Deepali Seth-Chhabria said the presence of a large number of government-owned banks distort the competitive environment in the Indian banking sector.

## Shunya seals the deal with Shraddha Kapoor

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

NATUREEDGE Beverages, which produces and markets its products under Shunya brand, announced to bring on board Bollywood actress Shraddha Kapoor as an investor partner, further significantly increasing the startup's valuation.

Shunya brings the age-old goodness of ayurveda into modern-day life. It product offerings at present include two herb-infused drinks Shunya Go & Shunya Fizz, with the best-quality ingredients, made using cutting-edge manufacturing processes and designed in a contemporary format to fit seamlessly into the modern lives.

"2020 amplified how I felt about living clean and focusing on wellness, and for a while now,



I've been keen on investing in a brand that I truly believe in. A brand that wasn't just all talk, but one that actually lived up to the promises it made! I believe in doing good, living good and feeling good and Shunya shares these very values too," said Shraddha Kapoor.

At Shunya, we believe in everything that is clean, pure and a 100 per cent feel-good. We are conscious, playful, energetic brand and we could not think of a better fit for us than Shraddha, said Sidhesh Sharma, founder and CRO, Naturedge Beverages, and president, Baidyanath Group.

### Apollo partners with Anaatomiz 3D to set up 3D-printing labs

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

APOLLO Hospitals Group will enter into partnership with Anaatomiz3D Medtech, to establish hospital 3D-printing labs for design and printing of complex implants in India, according to a media release from the Apollo group on Wednesday. The first lab would be launched in Apollo Health City, Hyderabad. The labs would provide medical 3D printing services through the creation of anatomical models for pre-surgical planning and education, patient-specific cutting and drilling guides, and customized implants and implant moulds.



Pratap C Reddy, CEO of Apollo Hospitals, said the partnership with Anaatomiz3D Medtech, a leading 3D-printing technology company, would enable Apollo to set up 3D-printing labs for design and printing of complex implants in India, according to a media release from the Apollo group on Wednesday. The first lab would be launched in Apollo Health City, Hyderabad. The labs would provide medical 3D printing services through the creation of anatomical models for pre-surgical planning and education, patient-specific cutting and drilling guides, and customized implants and implant moulds.

## Mkt extends losses amid global weakness

MUMBAI

EQUITY indices buckled under selling pressure for the second straight session on Wednesday as risk appetite remained subdued amid a bearish trend overseas.

Profit-booking was seen in finance, IT and FMCG counters, while a depreciating rupee also weighed on investor sentiment, traders said. The 30-share BSE Sensex slumped 400.34 points or 0.77 per cent to close at 51,703.83. The broader NSE Nifty tumbled 104.55 points or 0.68 per cent to 15,208.90.

Nestle India was the top loser in the Sensex pack, shedding 2.80 per cent, followed by Bajaj Finserv, Asian Paints, HDFC Bank, IndusInd Bank, Maruti, Dr Reddy's and HDFC. HDFC twins accounted for over half of the benchmark's losses.



On the other hand, SBI, PowerGrid, NTPC, Reliance Industries and Bajaj Auto were among the gainers, climbing up to 2.39 per cent. Global markets were on the backfoot amid rising US Treasury yields and concerns over frothy valuations. "Domestic equities witnessed pull-back today amid weak global cues. Profit booking was visible in IT, Pharma and FMCG space, while PSU Banks continued to see investors' interest with PSU Bank index rising briskly by over 6 per cent."

"As indicated rotational trading was seen, where a number of mid cap and small cap stocks witnessed sharp uptick as improving earnings visibility is attracting investors to this space, especially in sectors which are considered to be beneficiary of higher capex," said Binod Modi, Head-Strategy at Reliance Securities. BSE healthcare, IT, finance, bankex, realty and FMCG indices slipped up to 0.91 per cent, while power, telecom, energy and industrials rose as much as 1.26 per cent.

Broader BSE midcap and small-cap indices outperformed the benchmark, rising up to 0.53 per cent. Elsewhere in Asia, Hong Kong ended on a positive note while bourses in Tokyo and Seoul were in the red. Stock exchanges in Europe were also trading with losses in mid-session deals. Meanwhile, the global oil benchmark Brent crude was trading 0.58 per cent higher at \$63.71 per barrel. The rupee ended 5 paise lower at 72.74 against the US dollar. Foreign institutional investors were net buyers in the capital market as they purchased shares worth Rs 1,144.09 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data.

# Cement units can bring industrial growth

AKULA SRINIVAS PRASAD ADILABAD

ADILABAD district is well known for cotton cultivation in the State but due to lack of investors no cotton based textile industries have been established, except two spinning mills in the district.

Despite the availability of limestone deposits in large quantities in the district, no cement related industries have been developed and the lone Cement Corporation of India (CCI) plant which is now defunct, used to provide direct and indirect employment to about two thousand people.

The district economy is based on agriculture and its ancillary service sector. The district has 305 micro and small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) established with an investment of Rs 30.50 crore and providing direct and indirect employment to about 1,220 people.

There are 28 agro-based, 10 plastic based, 52 food based units in the district. Under large and medium enterprises, the district has only two spinning mills, with an investment of Rs 73 crore and providing direct and indirect employment to about 1,078 people.

## Locals urge Telangana govt to attract investors into Adilabad dist

Agro Industries Chamber of Commerce president Raju Chintawar speaking to the Bizz Buzz said, the district has bountiful natural resources and good production of cotton and pulses.

The basic amenities like water, land and electricity for the establishment of industries here are also available in plenty. Large scale industries need huge investment for the establishment, and hence investors are not coming forward. There is no textile hub nor special economic zone so far.

The major challenge in attracting the investors is lack of connectivity to major towns or the proximity to big cities in order to transport their products. Currently there are two spinning mills in the district. One is Ashtalaxmi spinning mills and GMR Spintex spinning mills.

The spinning mills need Rs 70 to 80 core investment depending on the spintex machinery. The strengthened mill can generate employment for more than 1,000 people. And there is good opportunity for the setting up more spinning



mills, thereby generating employment to large number of unemployed youths in the district.

Another big challenge for the industrialists is the sustainability. That is they need to run the mills irrespective of the raw material availability. In case the production of the raw material falls, the industry management will have to run the unit till end of the year and pay salaries to its employees. The district gets good yield of red gram after cotton. So,

there is good scope for setting up red gram processing units in the district. There is an opportunity to set up units for processing other pulses too. The district is known for its forest based wood furniture units besides rubber processing units. Three years ago, the government gave green signal for opening of a private cement factory in the district in view of the massive lime stone deposits.

The government had issued orders for mining and set a deadline



TELANGANA

of three years to set up the industry. However, due to several factors not in government's control, the cement factory could not be established. But, if the cement factory is established, as many as 2,000 people will get both direct and indirect employment. Though some private parties are interested to set up cement factory, locals allege that the concerned department officials are not paying attention in this regard.

Once a cement factory starts

working, it will provide employment. Besides, several other income sources will develop. It will give a good fillip for the business sector. The government will get an income in the form of royalty from the cement factory owner.

The State government had allotted 1,572.89 acres of land on lease at Yopalguda and Ramai villages under Adilabad mandal. Of this land, an extent of 747 acres was kept aside as it comes under Yopalguda agency area and 783 acres was identified for the construction of the factory near Rami village.

A total of 664 acres was for mining and 118 acres was for the construction of plant. The government will have to shed huge amount in compensation to the owners in the agency area.

Despite full of natural resources, the region remains backward, as there is no source of employment. Locals are forced to migrate to cities in search of livelihood. The State government should focus on attracting cotton spinning mills, textiles industries, cement units and agri processing units. If that happens, locals will have plenty of jobs at their disposal.



IPL AUCTIONS

# RCB, CSK could bid for Glenn Maxwell

292 players shortlisted

All eyes on Moeen, Malan, uncapped Azharuddeen

CHENNAI

FLAMBOYANT Australian Glenn Maxwell is expected to be a favourite, despite his underwhelming record, along with England's spin bowling all-rounder Moeen Ali during a condensed IPL players auction slated here on Thursday.

A total of 292 players have been enlisted for the shortened auctions -- 164 of them Indian and 125 overseas. There will also be three associate players in the auction.

With 61 slots across eight franchises up for grabs, Royal Challengers Bangalore has the maximum, 11 vacancies, to fill with a purse of Rs 35.4 crore while Sunrisers Hyderabad has only three slots available with Rs 10.75 crore in its kitty. The highest purse available is with Anil Kumble coached 'Punjab Kings', formerly Kings XI Punjab, which has Rs 53.20 crore available for spending on nine spots.

With the IPL back in India after being held in the UAE last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, focus will be on big-hitters as well as slow bowlers and Maxwell and Moeen fit the cat-

egory to the T. However, Maxwell averages 22 in the tournament, having played 82 matches for his 1505 runs. He last played for Punjab. Moeen, on the other hand, was seen in action for Royal Challengers Bangalore in the previous season.

While Maxwell and his former skipper Steve Smith are both in the highest bidding category



of Rs 2 crore, one name that will surely attract attention is world's No.1 ranked T20 batsman David Malan from England. A strike-rate of nearly 150 in 19 T20 Internationals has catapulted Malan into limelight and a few teams may like to raise

their bids for the 33-year-old with a base price of Rs 1.5 crore.

One of the most keenly-watched teams going into the auction will be Chennai Super Kings after a nightmarish 2020 season when they failed to qualify for the IPL play-offs for the first time in tournament's history.

**Sachin Tendulkar's son Arjun, a left arm fast bowler who made his senior Mumbai team debut this year, is bracketed in the Rs 20 lakh category and the kind of traction that the young kid brings along could mean that some bidders will be there for him**

and head coach Stephen Fleming have always valued experience way more than exuberance of youth in their team. A case in point is

Robin Uthappa, who hasn't performed for at least five seasons, being picked by CSK from Rajasthan Royals during the trading window with an all-cash deal.

"Check out the kind of players Dhoni picks. It's always middle level senior guys who have experience of handling pressure situations. It doesn't matter how the guy is perceived as a player in the fraternity." "The only time his expectations didn't match was with Kedar Jadhav. Or else, he likes a bit of seniority and those with game awareness," a source close to the franchise told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

So, with nearly Rs 20 crore (19.90 crore) to spend and six vacancies to fill, Dhoni will look at some potential big hitters to help him, Suresh Raina and Faf du Plessis in the middle. Since the IPL will be held in India, Maxwell despite his under-achieving stats could be picked for his skills as a tight off-break bowler on slower tracks. In case of Malan, Kings XI Punjab could walk away with him considering their purse and lack of consistent firepower at the top of the order. The only part that



is debatable about Malan is how good he is when it comes to playing slow bowlers in Indian conditions.

Among Indian players, the three notable capped names are Kedar Jadhav, veteran off-spinner Harbhajan Singh and fast bowler Umesh Yadav. The auction dynamics, when it comes to Indian players, have been very different compared to foreign players due to the limited available slots (8) in each squad. For example, a Yuvraj Singh or a Jaydev Unadkat, despite underwhelming performances season after season, got bank breaking deals simply because they are Indian players with specific skill sets. That's the reason Sunrisers Hyderabad or a Rajasthan Royals won't mind having an Umesh on board be-



cause of his experience at the highest level.

Similarly, Kedar and Harbhajan, with high-end base prices may go unsold during the first lot. But they are likely to be picked up in the final hour after franchises have settled squads. Ditto for Steve Smith, among those with the highest base price but having a strike-rate which is not the greatest for a top-order batsman, might not find too many bidders unless any franchise is looking for a suitable captaincy candidate.

As usual, there would be some eye-popping bids for the uncapped domestic players like Kerala's Mohammed Azharuddeen (Junior), Tamil Nadu's handsome hulk Shah Rukh Khan, all-rounder R Sonu Yadav, Baroda's Vishnu Solanki



and Bengal's Akash Deep. They could invite mini-bidding wars with their lowest base price bracket of Rs 20 lakh.

Sachin Tendulkar's son Arjun, a left arm fast bowler who made his senior Mumbai team debut this year, is bracketed in the Rs 20 lakh category and the kind of traction that the young kid brings along could mean that some bidders will be there for him. Mumbai Indians (15.35 crore) and Delhi Capitals (Rs 13.40 crore) will require seven and eight players respectively but the finalists of last year probably have a stable core and can look at improvising during the auctions. It could well be the case of re-buying a few players from the auction as per needs. *PTI*

## Ashwin jumps to fifth in ICC Test all-rounder rankings

DUBAI

INDIA'S Ravichandran Ashwin jumped to fifth spot among all-rounders in the latest ICC Test Player Rankings following his brilliant show with the bat and the ball against England in the second match while his captain Virat Kohli remained at fifth among batsmen.

Ashwin hit an excellent 106 in India's second innings and took eight wickets with his off-spin in the second Test against England in Chennai, which the hosts won by 317 runs on Tuesday. He has logged 336 points in a list headed by West Indian Jason Holder (407 points). Ashwin's spin bowling partner Ravindra Jadeja remained at second with 403 points, followed by Ben Stokes (397) of England and Shakib Al Hasan (352) of Bangladesh.



The 34-year-old Ashwin remained static at seventh among Test bowlers with 804 points while pacer Jasprit Bumrah, who was rested from the Chennai Test, also retained his eighth spot with 761 points with Australian pacer Pat Cummins (908) topping the chart. Kohli, who made 0 and 62 in Chennai, retained the fifth position among batsmen with 838 points.

Kane Williamson (919) of New Zealand retained the top position with Steve Smith (891) of Australia in second spot. Another Australian Marnus Labuschagne (878) moved up to third while England captain Joe Root (869) slipped to fourth after his two innings of 6 and 33 in the Chennai Test. Another Indian Cheteshwar Pujara -- 21 and 7 in Chennai -- slipped to eighth place with 727 points. *PTI*

## India keep all players in squad for last 2 Tests except Thakur

NEW DELHI

THE selectors on Wednesday retained 17 of the 18 members in the Indian squad for the final two Tests against England while senior pacer Umesh Yadav's inclusion would depend on his fitness assessment ahead of the day/night game in Ahmedabad.

Shardul Thakur is the only player who has not been kept as he will be released to compete in the Vijay Hazare Trophy. The anticipation was around senior pacer Mohammed Shami's fitness and it has been learnt that he is still not 100 percent fit for the rigours of five-day games. "Umesh Yadav will join the team in Ahmedabad and after his fitness assessment will replace Shardul Thakur, who will be released for Vijay Hazare Trophy," BCCI secretary Jay Shah was quoted as saying in a press release.

## NEW MOTERA STADIUM

# 4 dressing rooms, LED lights installed to eliminate shadows

AHMEDABAD

THE Motera stadium had undergone extensive renovation which started when current BCCI secretary Jay Shah was in charge of state cricket unit. With a seating capacity of 1,10,000, which is more than Melbourne Cricket Ground, the GCA will put up around 55,000 tickets on sale for the next two Test matches at the venue. Recently, the Syed Mushtaq Ali trophy's knock-outs were held at the Motera

The newly-installed LED floodlights at refurbished Sardar Patel Stadium in Motera will eliminate shadows, making it easier to spot the aerial balls during the upcoming day/night Test between India and England, starting February 24. The world's largest cricket stadium will also have 11 centre strips, which is also unique, along with never-before heard four dressing rooms with in-built gymnasium, said Gujarat Cricket Association's joint



secretary Anil Patel.

The Motera stadium had undergone extensive renovation which started when current BCCI secretary Jay Shah was in charge of state cricket unit. With a seating capacity of 1,10,000, which is more than Melbourne Cricket Ground, the GCA will put up around 55,000 tickets on sale for the next two Test matches at the venue. Recently, the Syed Mushtaq Ali trophy's knock-outs were held at the Motera.

"This is the only stadium in the

world with 11 centre pitches on the main ground. Also we are the only stadium in the world with same soil being used for practice as well as centre strips," GCA joint secretary Patel said. "Instead of mast lights, we have installed LED lights on the entire circular roof for better visibility and to eliminate shadows," he said.

Patel also said that state-of-the-art drainage system will help the ground dry up in quick time in case of a heavy downpour. "Sand has

been used underneath the grass. This along with a state-of-the-art drainage system will remove the rainwater very quickly in comparison to other regular grounds. "Even in case of 8 cm of rainfall during a match, the water would drain out very fast. This will reduce the chances of matches being cancelled due to rain," said Patel.

He added that equipment worth Rs 2 crore were purchased just for the upkeep of the ground. The stadium, spread in an area of 63 acres, also has 6 indoor pitches with bowling machines. This is in addition to the outdoor practice pitches and two practice grounds with a small pavilion area, said Patel. "This is the only stadium in the world with four dressing rooms for the players. Each dressing room has a state-of-the-art gymnasium among other amenities. The stadium also has a clubhouse with 50 deluxe rooms and five suites," Patel said during the media tour of the stadium. *PTI*

## Nomaan scalps six wickets

HYDERABAD

RIDING on deadly bowling spell by Mirza Nomaan (6/54) Nizam College defeated Vijaya CC by huge 184 runs in HCAA-2 Division Two-Day Leagues Cricket organised by The Hyderabad Cricket Association played at ECIL Grounds, Hyderabad.

In another match played at AN Cricket Grounds, Hyderabad banking on Nadeem Khan

5/40 New Blues CC defeated Marredpally CC by 4 Wickets.

**Brief Scores**  
HCAA-2 Div 2 Day League (Complete Scores)

**Nizam College**  
364/8 in 90 overs (Akshil Kumar 180, K Anirudh 68; Ershad 3/91) beats

**Vijaya CC**  
180 allout in 55.2 overs (Mirza Noman 6/54; Yashwanth 2/50)

**Marredpally CC**  
208 allout in 56 overs (Vivek 84; Nadeem Khan 5/40) lost to

**New Blues CC**  
209 allout in 32 overs (Eshwar 64, Vishnuvardhan 63; Krish 5/59)



Mirza Nomaan



Nadeem Khan

## Chennaiyin eye pride with NorthEast pushing the envelope towards playoffs

GOA

CHENNAIYIN FC's Hero Indian Super League playoffs dream was over after their draw in their last outing against FC Goa. However, coach Csaba Laszlo isn't ready to stop at this juncture as he looks to end his season on a high when they take on NorthEast United FC at the GMC Stadium, Bambolim, on Thursday.

"We have two games to go and this is not just about playoffs but it is to take good results. In these two games, we will do everything in order to win," stated Laszlo. Last season's semi-finalists had major issues due to not scoring enough goals. They created 183 chances and attempted 234 shots (2nd most by any team in ISL7) however, ended up scoring just 13 this season.

Laszlo's side had the least goal conversion rate of 5.55, highlighting how wasteful they have been in offense. He gave an honest roundup about his team's campaign. "Every team has ups and downs and not every season is perfect. I think this season we had a lot of good things. But it wasn't so fantastic and no so positive especially in offence."

"It (NorthEast) will be a tough



game. They have made good recruitment especially the foreigners. And in this game we see if we get the opportunity or not but our target is to win this game. Our attention is on playing successful football and scoring goals. We go into the game the way we went against Goa and this is our target," stated Laszlo, whose side hasn't won in their last seven games.

Meanwhile, NorthEast United are unbeaten in the last six games

under coach Khalid Jamil and are eyeing the playoffs. There have been a lot of positives for NorthEast ever since Khalid Jamil was handed the charge. They have won four and drawn 2 taking them into the top four. But the goal hasn't been achieved yet as four teams are still vying for the last two play-off spots. The Highlanders assistant coach Alison Kharsyntiew urged his team to not take their opponents lightly. "We just have to con-

trol them, dictate the play and not give them time with the ball and space to operate. "We have to be calm, composed, and concentrate on our game. At the same time we have to show aggression we have to play with intensity and 100 percent effort to win the match," he said.

## Hero ISL 2020-21 playoff dates announced

Fatorda to host final on March 13

GOA

FOOTBALL Sports Development Limited (FSDL) on Wednesday released the schedule for the Hero Indian Super League (ISL) 2020-21 playoffs with the Final on Saturday, March 13. The season saw Hero ISL expand to 11 teams. The number of matches going up from 95 last season to an unprecedented 115. This has been one of the most closely fought seasons ever with thrilling last-minute finishes in numerous games. Eight teams still remain in contention for a top-four finish, heading into the final three rounds of the League stage.

The JL Nehru Stadium in Fatorda will host the Hero ISL Final in con-

**Hero ISL 2020-21 Playoff dates**  
Friday, March 5 - Semi-final 1 - 1st leg  
Saturday, March 6 - Semi-final 2 - 1st leg  
Monday, March 8 - Semi-final 1 - 2nd leg  
Tuesday, March 9 - Semi-final 2 - 2nd leg  
Saturday, March 13 - Final

secutive seasons and for a record third time. The first-leg semi-finals will be held on Friday, March 5, and Saturday, March 6. The return legs are scheduled on Monday, March 8, and Tuesday, March 9. The semi-finals will be played across two venues - GMC Stadium, Bambolim and JL Nehru Stadium, Fatorda, before the latter also hosts the summit clash. The 'Away Goal' rule will not apply in the semi-finals this season. Teams with the highest goal aggregate in their respective two-legged ties will progress to the final.

## Hockey tournament

Five-a-side hockey tournament for men and women on league cum knock out basis rolled on from Wednesday at Gymkhana Hockey Grounds inaugurated by Mynampally Hanumanth Rao MLA of Malkajgiri constituency. The tournament commenced with Men's league matches. A total of 24 teams are participating in this tournament.

