



PEOPLE'S PARLIAMENT, ALWAYS IN SESSION



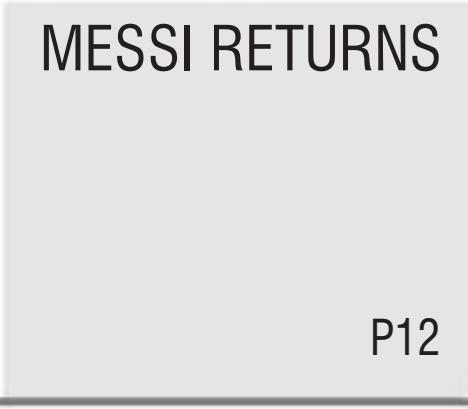
EIGHT PROPOSALS
TO STABILISE
INDO-CHINA TIES



PAK S.C. ORDERS
PEARL MURDER
ACCUSED FREED



RUSSIA COURT
REJECTS
NAVALNY'S APPEAL



MESSI RETURNS



P5

P9

P10

P12

WEATHER

Mainly clear sky. Shallow to moderate fog in the morning. Colad wave conditions at isolated places. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 20 and 03 degrees Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: Nil

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 100% Min: 59%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 19.4°C (-3) Min: 03.8°C (-5)

SUN RISES SUN SETS

07:10 hrs 17:58 hrs

MOON RISES MOON SETS

18:34 hrs 08:24 hrs

THUMBNAILS



Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee pays homage to Lala Lajpat Rai on his birth anniversary at the state Assembly in Kolkata. IANS

India slips ranks in Corruption Perception Index: India's rank has slipped six places to 86th among 180 countries in corruption perception index (CPI) in 2020. For 2020, Transparency International (TI)'s Corruption Perception Index (CPI) was released on Thursday. The index, which ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption according to experts and business people. India's rank is 86 out of 180 nations with a score of 40. The CPI score for India is almost constant this year as well as the previous year score. P5

HC denies bail to comedian Munawar Faruqui: The Madhya Pradesh High Court on Thursday refused bail to comedian Munawar Faruqui who is accused of passing "indecent" remarks about Hindu deities during a show, and noted that to "promote harmony" is one of the constitutional duties. Liberty of a person has to be "balanced" with his duties towards other citizens, Justice Rohit Arya of the Indore bench of the high court said. The court also turned down bail plea of Nalin Yadav, another accused in the case. P4

'India will soon make more Covid vaccines available to the world'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 28 JANUARY



India will soon make available many more Covid-19 vaccines to other countries after two Made-In-India jabs have already been introduced to the world, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Thursday while emphasising the country's global responsibility in fighting the pandemic.

In a special address at the World Economic Forum's online Davos Agenda Summit, Modi also said he wants to assure the global business community that situation will now change rapidly on the economic front also and invited businesses from all over to participate in the country's growth journey.

Modi said that some had said in February-March 2020 that India would be the worst affected country by Covid-19 and would face a "tsunami of corona infections".

Modi said, "We transformed the fight against coronavirus into a people's movement and today India is among the most successful countries in saving lives." Modi said India has started the world's largest coronavirus vaccination programme and its speed can be imagined from the fact that over 23 lakh health workers have been vaccinated in just 12 days. In the next few months, we would complete vaccinating 30 crore old people and people with comorbidities, he said.

He said India has ensured that it follows its global responsibility by sending essential medicines to over 150 countries while Covid-19 vaccines are also being sent to other countries. "While two Indian-made vaccines have already been introduced to the world, many more vaccines will be made available from India," he said. "India's upcoming vaccines will help other countries at a swifter pace to fight the pandemic," he added.

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SNS & PTI
NEW DELHI/KOLKATA,
28 JANUARY

India has flattened its Covid-19 graph and 146 districts have reported no new case of the viral disease in the last seven days, 18 in 14 days, six in 21 days and 21 districts in the last 28 days, Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said on Thursday.

This has been achieved due to pro-active testing with more than 19.5 crore Covid-19 tests conducted in the country so far, Vardhan, who chaired the 23rd meeting of the high-level Group of Ministers (GoM) on Covid-19 through a video-conference, said, according to a statement issued by the Health Ministry. The current testing capacity is 12 lakh tests per day,

COVID SUCCESS
► A total of 146 districts across the country have no new cases for the last seven days, 18 for the last 14 days, six for 21 days and 21 districts have not reported fresh cases of the coronavirus infection in the last 28 days

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HARSH VARDHAN
UNION HEALTH MINISTER

istry's data, 1,03,73,606 people have recovered so far.

The minister stated that 165 cases of a new UK variant of the virus have so far been reported in the country.

Delhi adds 199 fresh virus cases: Delhi today recorded 199 fresh coronavirus cases, which was the seventh time the daily Covid count stood below the 200-mark in the city in January.

These new cases were detected out of 57,993 tests, with the positivity rate standing at 0.34 per cent, according to the latest bulletin issued by the Delhi government's health department. The city's Covid recovery rate was 98.04 per cent.

The coronavirus infection tally in the national capital climbed to 6,34,524. (SEE P2)

FACT FILE
TOTAL CASES
1,07,01,193
ACTIVE CASES
1,73,740
NEW CASES
11,666
NEW RECOVERIES
14,301
TOTAL DEATHS
1,53,847
UNION HEALTH MINISTRY FIGURES AS OF 8.00 A.M.
THURSDAY, 28 JANUARY 2021

SC slams Centre over 'instigating' TV shows

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 28 JANUARY

The Supreme Court on Thursday said control over TV programmes having instigating effect is as important as providing "lathis" to policemen for law and order, and slammed the Centre for "doing nothing" to curb such shows.

Hearing a plea on the media reporting issue in the Tablighi Jamaat case, a bench headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde said control over TV programmes having instigating effect is as important as providing "lathis" to policemen for law and order and slammed the

Centre for "doing nothing" to curb such shows.

► The bench said: "We are not interested in what the people say on TV. They can say anything and use any tone on TV but as long as they don't instigate, we have no problem with that."

"Control over some news is as important as some preventive measure and checklaw and order situation. I don't know why you are blind to this. I don't mean anything offensive but you are doing nothing about it."

The bench said: "We are not interested in what the people say on TV. They can say anything these days and use any tone on TV but as long as they do not instigate, incite violence, we have no problem with

that. We are interested in broadcasts or programmes which have instigation effect and there are situations when it can cause riots, and there can be loss of life, property". Mehta agreed with the bench and said that sometimes it is done "deliberately" but sometimes it is "unfortunate".

The top court made the observations while hearing a batch of pleas which have raised the issue of media reporting of Tablighi Jamaat congregation in the national capital last year during the onset of Covid-19 pandemic.

The top court was hearing the pleas filed by Jamiat Ullama-I-Hind and others alleging that a section of the media was spreading communal hatred over Tablighi Jamaat congregation in the national capital last year during the onset of Covid-19 pandemic.

The Bombay High Court judge, who faced flak for acquitting a man of groping a 12-year-old girl's breast because he did not make skin-to-skin contact, had ruled four days earlier that holding the hands of a five-year-old girl and unzipping his pants do not amount to sexual assault under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

A single bench of Justice Pushpa Ganediwala made the observation on 15 January while ruling on an appeal by a 50-year-old man challenging a sessions court order convicting him for sexually assaulting and

molesting the 5-year-old girl. Another judgment passed by Justice Ganediwala on 19 January acquitting a 39-year-old man for groping a minor girl, noting that there was no "skin-to-skin" contact with sexual intent has faced severe flak.

The Supreme Court had on Wednesday stayed operation of that order after Attorney General K Venugopal mentioned the matter submitting that it was a very disturbing conclusion by the Bombay High Court.

The 50-year-old Libnus Kujur was convicted under sections 354-A and 448 of the IPC and sections 8, 10 and 12 of the POCSO Act in October 2020 and sentenced to 5 years in jail.

In her order, Justice Ganediwala noted that while the prosecution has established that the accused entered the house of the victim with an intention to sexually harass her, it has not been able to prove the charge of "sexual assault" or aggravated sexual assault".

She noted that the definition of "sexual assault" under the POCSO Act says that there has to be "physical contact with sexual intent without penetration".

"The acts of holding the hands of the victim, or opened zip of the pants as has been witnessed by the prosecution witness (mother of the victim) does not fit in the definition of sexual assault," Justice Ganediwala said.

Sourav undergoes second angioplasty

KOLKATA, 28 JANUARY

BCCI president and former India cricket captain Sourav Ganguly underwent another angioplasty operation a day after he was admitted to Apollo Gleneagles Hospital along EM Bypass in the city after suffering symptoms of dizziness and chest discomfort.

The 48-year-old had his first angioplasty operation in the first week of this month, involving the insertion of a stent in one of three blocked coronary arteries.

Two more stents were implanted during the operation today. A team of doctors, including eminent cardiologists Dr Devi Shetty from Bengaluru and Dr Aswin Mehta from Mumbai, after verifying Ganguly's health condition, decided to perform the second angioplasty operation today.



The Congress will stand with the farmers in this struggle. Those who want to break them are traitors

PRIYANKA GANDHI
CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY

8,244 more get Covid shots in Delhi, 77 pc turnout reported

Capital records 199 fresh coronavirus cases, 6 fatalities; positivity rate stands at 0.34 pc

SNS & PTI

NEW DELHI, 28 JANUARY

Over 8,200 healthcare workers received Covid vaccine shots in Delhi today in the second week of the vaccination drive as the city recorded a turnout of more than 77 per cent.

After a sluggish start since the exercise was kicked off on 16 January, the inoculation drive has picked up pace in the last few days.

The targeted number for

vaccination today was 10,600, officials said.

"Today, 8,244 people were administered coronavirus vaccine, and AEFI (adverse events following immunisation) was reported in 15 people," a senior health department official said.

Also, 100 or more healthcare workers were vaccinated at 34 sites, including 10 Delhi government hospitals.

The number of those vaccinated at Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality Hospital stood at 10, while 79 people were given the shots

at Indian Spinal Injuries Centre (ISIC), the officials said.

Last Monday, 7,408 healthcare workers had received the jabs in Delhi, with a turnout of over 91 per cent, the highest till date.

Under the nationwide Covid vaccination drive, a total of 4,319 (53 per cent) health workers against a target of 8,117 were administered the shots at 81 centres across the city on day one.

On the second scheduled day of vaccination in Delhi, the fig-

ure stood at 3,598 (44 per cent of the target).

The sharp fall came after one severe and 50 minor AEFI cases were reported on the first day of the drive on 16 January.

The count on the third scheduled day was much higher — 4,936 (48 per cent).

The counselling sessions conducted over the past few days and the option to get vaccinated in advance even if the scheduled date is later have helped in ramping up the numbers, a doctor said.

The government maintains that till date, no case of serious or severe AEFI is attributable to vaccination.

According to official data, the district-wise distribution of 15 AEFI cases today was: Central Delhi (1), East Delhi (0), New Delhi (1), North Delhi (0), North East Delhi (0), North West Delhi (2), Shahdara (3), South Delhi (2), South East Delhi (2), South West Delhi (1) and West Delhi (3).

While 14 of these cases were reported from sites where Covishield shots were adminis-

tered, one was from a centre where Covaxin shots were given, the data indicated.

The vaccine is to be administered in Delhi on four scheduled days a week — Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. Other regular vaccination work will be carried out on the remaining days.

Oxford's Covid vaccine Covishield is being administered at 75 centres while Bharat Biotech-made Covaxin is being administered at the remaining six facilities in the national capital.



Representational Image

Classified

LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE COURT OF
SH. AJAY PANDEY
Addl. District Judge-II (N.W.)
Room No. 317, Third Floor,
Rohini Courts, Delhi
PETITION U/S 8 (2) OF
HINDU MINORITY AND
GUARDIANSHIP & WARD
ACT, 1890.
Case No. GP/4/2020

1. Pooja, w/o Late Sh. Manoj Kumar, r/o B-4/261, Sector-7, Rohini, Delhi-110085.
2. Sonil (Through his mother Smt. Pooja), s/o Late Sh. Manoj Kumar, r/o B-4/261, Sector-7, Rohini, Delhi-110085.

Versus

1. State of NCT of Delhi.
The Petitioner(s) above, named having applied to be adopted/declared as guardian of the person and property of minor(s)/Lunacy/ Insanity.

Given under my hand and Seal of this Court on this 10th day of December, 2020.

Addl. District Judge-II
(N.W.)

Rohini Courts, Delhi
Seal of the Court

COURT NOTICE
(U/s 5 Rule 20 CPC)
IN THE COURT OF
SH. ANTRUPERT SINGH
Civil Judge
(Junior Division),
Gurugram
Archana Jaiswal
Versus
General Public
CNR No. HRGR02-002924-2019

Next Date: 11-02-2021
Publication Issued to:
Mrs. Arjit Kaur,
Spouse : Sh. Ramesh Gupta,
E-161/162, 2nd Floor, Amar Colony, Lajpat Nagar, New Delhi.

In above titled case, the defendant(s)/respondent(s) could not be served. It is ordered that defendant(s)/respondent(s) appear in person or through counsel on 11-02-2021 at 10:00 a.m.

For details logon to
https://highcourtgd.gov.in/?rs=district_notice&district=gurugram.

Dated, this day of 27-01-2021.

Civil Judge
(Junior Division),
Gurugram

Seal of the Court

COURT NOTICE
(U/s 5 Rule 20 CPC)
IN THE COURT OF
SH. ANTRUPERT SINGH
Civil Judge
(Junior Division),
Gurugram
Bhupender Singh
Versus
Universal Buildwell Pvt. Ltd.,
Office 102, 1st Floor, Antriksh Bhawan, Connaught Place, Delhi, Also at A-609, Sushant Lok I, Gurugram.

In above titled case, the defendant(s)/respondent(s) could not be served. It is ordered that defendant(s)/respondent(s) appear in person or through counsel on 20-03-2021 at 10:00 a.m.

For details logon to
https://highcourtgd.gov.in/?rs=district_notice&district=gurugram.

Dated, this day of 27-01-2021.

Civil Judge
(Junior Division),
Gurugram

Seal of the Court

COURT NOTICE
(U/s 5 Rule 20 CPC)
IN THE COURT OF
SH. ANTRUPERT SINGH
Civil Judge
(Junior Division),
Gurugram
Next Date, Purpose of case, Orders and Judgments as well as other case information is available on <http://ecourts.gov.in>

HDFC Bank Ltd.

Ingrid Baker

CNR No. HRGR02-004700-2017

Next Date: 09-07-2021
Publication Issued to:
Ingrid Baker

Indiscovery Education Pvt. Ltd., 4th Floor, Emerald Court SCO 57, Sec. 29, Gurugram, Haryana, Also at Tower-A 403, Bestech Parkview SPA Sec-47, Gurugram, Haryana.

Whereas an petition under Section 378 of the Indian Succession Act, 1925 for grant of Administration filed by the petitioner.

Whereas in the abovenoted petition, the applicant/petitioner has applied under Section 278 of the Indian Succession Act, 1925, in respect of the Safe Locker No. 372 with the State Bank of India, Chandni Chowk, Delhi.

Whereas the 04-03-2021 at 10 O'Clock in the forenoon has been fixed for hearing of the case, notice is hereby given that person having any interest in the administration of the concerned may if he/she desire appear on 04-03-2021 and see the proceedings.

Given under my hand and Seal of this Court on this 14-01-2021.

Additional District Judge-01

East District
Karkardooma Courts, Delhi

Seal of the Court

COURT NOTICE
(U/s 5 Rule 20 CPC)
IN THE COURT OF
SH. ANTRUPERT SINGH
Civil Judge
(Junior Division),
Gurugram
Bhupender Singh
Versus
Universal Buildwell Pvt. Ltd.,
CNR No. HRGR02-004700-2020

Next Date: 02-03-2021
Publication Issued to:
Universal Buildwell Pvt. Ltd.,
102, 1st Floor, Antriksh Bhawan, Connaught Place, Delhi, Also at A-609, Sushant Lok I, Gurugram.

In above titled case, the defendant(s)/respondent(s) could not be served. It is ordered that defendant(s)/respondent(s) should appear in person or through counsel on 02-03-2021 at 10:00 a.m.

For details logon to
https://highcourtgd.gov.in/?rs=district_notice&district=gurugram.

Dated, this day of 27-01-2021.

Civil Judge
(Junior Division),
Gurugram

Seal of the Court

COURT NOTICE
(U/s 5 Rule 20 CPC)
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Dated, this day of 27-01-2021.

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(Junior Division),
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CNR No. HRGR02-004700-2020

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Publication Issued to:
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CNR No. HRGR02-004700-2020



The schedule for class 10 and 12 board exams will be announced on February 2

RAMESH POKHRiyAL 'NISHANK'
UNION EDUCATION MINISTER

The Statesman
NEW DELHI, FRIDAY 29 JANUARY 2021

03

Red Fort violence instigated by BJP, AAP: Punjab CM

Capt Amarinder hits back at Union minister Javadekar for blaming the Congress, Rahul Gandhi, and Punjab govt over the Republic Day violence during the farmers' tractor rally in the Capital

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 28 JANUARY

Punjab chief minister Captain Amarinder Singh today hit out at Union minister Prakash Javadekar over his "disgraceful and desperate" attempt to "shift" blame for the shocking Red Fort violence during agitating farmers' tractor rally in Delhi on the Republic Day.

Capt Amarinder alleged that the 26 January Red Fort violence had been instigated by supporters and members of Javadekar's own Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in collusion with the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), with the Congress nowhere in the picture.

"Workers and supporters of BJP and AAP, and not the Congress, have been caught on camera waving the Nishan sahib at the Red Fort," the CM said in a strong reac-



tion to Javadekar's "unfounded" allegations against the Congress and his Punjab government.

Capt Amarinder's comments came even as Delhi Police named Deep Sidhu, a key aide of BJP MP Sunny Deol, as one of the main instigators of the Delhi violence. He charged that Amrik Micky, an AAP mem-

ber, was also spotted at the violence site.

Not a single Congress leader or member was seen at the Red Fort indulging in any kind of lawlessness, Amarinder claimed, adding that even farmers were not responsible for the 26th January trouble, which was in fact the doing of anti-social elements who had infiltrated the tractor rally.

The Centre should also get a free and fair probe conducted into the possible role of any political party, or even a third country as is being alleged by the BJP's own leaders, to ensure that the guilty are punished and genuine farmers are not unnecessarily maligned or harassed, Capt Amarinder said.

The CM also lashed out at the Union minister for accusing top Congress leader Rahul Gandhi of inciting the violence, asking "Did the Congress leader ask anyone to climb Red Fort? He did not. It was BJP and AAP men who did that," he alleged, adding that Rahul had, in fact, promptly condemned the violence and made it clear that violence was no solution to the crisis.

"How could I stop peaceful farmers from going to their own national capital to exercise their democratic right of protest," the CM further said,

reacting to the Union minister's statement that the Punjab government failed to stop farmers from joining the tractor rally.

The permission for the tractor rally was officially given by Delhi Police and there was no reason for the Punjab government to prevent farmers from joining the rally, said the CM, adding that if there was a ban on the movement of farmers to the Delhi borders, the central government, of which Javadekar is a part, should have directed their BJP chief minister in Haryana to stop them on the way.

If the Centre can put its farm laws — against which farmers have been agitating for months — in abeyance for two years, why it could not simply revoke them and bring fresh legislations after due discussions with the farmers and other stakeholders, the CM added.

Haryana extends suspension of mobile internet in 3 districts

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 28 JANUARY

The Haryana government on Thursday extended the suspension of mobile internet services in three districts — Sonipat, Jhajjar and Palwal — until 5 p.m. Friday in the wake of violent farmers' protests in neighbouring Delhi.

"Haryana government has extended the suspension of mobile internet services (2G/3G/4G/CDMA/GPRS), all SMS services (excluding banking and mobile recharge) and all dongle services etc provided on mobile networks except the voice calls in the territorial jurisdiction of districts of Sonipat, Palwal and Jhajjar for next 24 hours till 5 p.m. on 29 January," an official spokesperson said.

This order is issued to prevent any disturbance of peace and public order in the jurisdiction of these three districts of Haryana and shall be in force with immediate effect," he added.

Sharing more details in this regard, the spokesperson said the suspension has been



ordered under Rule 2 of Temporary Suspension of Telecom Services (Public Emergency or Public Safety) Rules, 2017. All telecom service providers of Haryana including the Head of BSNL (Haryana jurisdiction) are hereby directed to ensure the compliance of this order.

The spokesperson said the state government has decided to extend the suspension of internet services in order to stop the spread of disinformation and rumours through various social media platforms, such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, etc on mobile phones and SMS, for facilitation and mobilisation of mobs of agitators and demonstrators who can cause serious loss of life and damage to public and

private properties by indulging in arson or vandalism and other types of violent activities. After the Centre shut down internet in Singhu, Ghazipur, Tikri, Mukarba Chowk and Nangloi and adjoining areas in the National Capital Territory of Delhi, the Haryana government on Tuesday followed suit suspending mobile internet services, SMS and dongle services provided on mobile networks in Sonipat, Jhajjar and Palwal districts till 5 p.m. on 27 January.

The Manohar Lal Khattar government said the decision was taken on the basis of intelligence reports on the likelihood of violence and disturbance of public peace in the national capital region districts of Haryana.

Road accidents down by 13.82 pc in Haryana

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 28 JANUARY

The number of road accidents in Haryana went down by 13.82 per cent in 2020 as compared to the number of such mishaps reported in 2019.

With 9,431 road accidents in 2020, the average number of accidents reported daily came down to 26 as compared to about 30 cases of mishaps were reported everyday in 2019. The number of people who died also dropped by 10.87 per cent while injuries to persons also saw a dip of 18.19 per cent.

Giving this information on Thursday, Director General of Police (DGP), Haryana, Manoj

Yadava said the reduction in road mishaps and casualties is a result of better traffic management, enhanced safety measures, improved enforcement of traffic regulations together with continuous awareness drive about road and traffic safety.

However, the lockdown enforced to contain the spread of Covid-19 also contributed to a significant dip in accidents. Sharing the official data, he said that the number of road mishaps in 2020 came down to 9,431 from 10,944 in 2019, showing a fall of 1,513 cases. In terms of fatalities in road accidents, 4,507 people died last year compared to 5,057 in the same

Capt seeks Punjabi's inclusion in J&K's list of official languages

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 28 JANUARY

The DGP said incidents of injuries to people also saw a decline of 1,703 cases. In total, 7,659 cases of injuries to persons were reported in 2020 as compared to 9,362 in 2019. Giving highest priority to saving the lives of people, he said that police have provided 84 ambulances, 40 big cranes and 22 small/medium cranes in all districts for immediate first-aid to the accident victims and removal of such vehicles. In addition, 45 Traffic Assistance Booths have also been set up every 10-km along National Highways to provide help to the accident victims.

Jammu and Kashmir.

Voicing the resentment of the Punjabi community over the exclusion of Punjabi from the list of official languages, Amarinder pointed out that Jammu and Kashmir was a part of Punjab during the era of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, with Punjabi one of the vernacular language of the region. When Jammu and Kashmir came into existence as an independent State, Punjabi was a widely spoken language in the State and is now the mother tongue of all the Punjabis in the Jammu region, besides being spoken by the Punjabi community living in Kashmir Valley, he wrote.

We are taking all necessary COVID-19 Precautionary Measures.

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ARROW raymond Colorplus LOUIS PHILIPPE PARK AVENUE

- PUNCHKUIAN ROAD, Garwal Bhawan, (Near Jhandewalan, Gole Chkr.)
- WAZIRPUR A-5, Near Richi Rich Banquet (Opp. Shalimar Bagh)
- JANAKPURI B-1/2, Main Najafgarh Road, Opp. Metro Pillar 543
- NOIDA, Nirula's Sec-2, Near Metro Station, Sec-15, Noida, UP
- LAJPAT NAGAR, 49, Main Ring Road, Adj. Haldi Ram, Near Moolchand Crossing

TRAFFIC ADVISORY

BEATING RETREAT AND ILLUMINATION ON 29th JANUARY, 2021 (4:00 PM ONWARDS)

TRAFFIC RESTRICTIONS

The following traffic restrictions will be put in place on 29.01.2021 from 1400 hours to 2130 hours.

- Vijay Chowk will remain closed for general traffic.
- Traffic will not be allowed on the following stretches:
 - Rafi Marg between R/A Sunehri Masjid and R/a Krishi Bhawan.
 - Raisina Road from R/a Krishi Bhawan towards Vijay Chowk.
 - Beyond R/a Dara Shikoh Road, R/a Krishna Menon Marg and R/A Sunehri Masjid towards Vijay Chowk.
 - Rajpath between Vijay Chowk and "C" hexagon.

General public/motorist are advised to take alternate routes i.e. Ring Road, Ridge Road, Aurobindo Marg, Madarsa 'T' Point, Safdarjung Road, Kamal Ataturk Marg, Rani Jhansi Road, Minto Road etc.

DIVERSIONS FOR BUSES

D.T.C and other city buses shall be diverted from their normal routes from 1400 hours to 2130 hours on 29.01.2021 to facilitate the vehicles of invitees and spectators and to avoid traffic congestion on roads round the venue of the ceremony and India Gate.

METRO STATION

Entry/ Exit gates at Rail Bhawan & Udyog Bhawan/ Central Secretariat Metro Station will remain closed from 02:00 PM to 06:30 PM on 29.1.2021.

PARKING

Parking will be available for those coming to see illumination at Vijay Chowk behind the water channels between Rafi Marg and "C" Hexagon (after 7:00PM).

INSTRUCTIONS TO GENERAL PUBLIC

- In case of any unidentified object or suspicious persons being seen, information must be conveyed to the nearest policeman on duty.
- General public and motorists are advised to keep patience, observe traffic rules & road discipline and follow directions of traffic personnel and remain updated through Traffic Police Facebook page, Twitter handle and Traffic Police Helpline. People are requested to plan their journey accordingly to avoid inconvenience.

DP/9268/2021



Thaipoosum festival celebrations at Chennai on Thursday. IANS

Cold wave grips parts of Rajasthan: Cold wave conditions prevailed in parts of Rajasthan on Thursday with Mount Abu, the state's only hill station, recording sub-zero temperatures, the meteorological department said. According to the Met Official, the weather will remain cold and dry in many parts of the state for the next 24 hours. PTI

Man gets 7 years in jail for killing wife for dowry: A local court has sentenced a man and his parents to seven-year imprisonment for killing his wife for dowry in 2014. Additional Sessions Judge Santosh Kumar Tiwari awarded the sentence on Wednesday to Sanjay Shukla, his father Radhey Shyam, mother Gayatri Devi and three others. PTI

Alappuzha bypass thrown open to public: Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari and CM Pinarayi Vijayan on Thursday jointly opened to the public a 6.8 km two-lane Alappuzha bypass on NH66 from Komady to Kalarcode. The project was constructed spending a total of Rs 348 crore. PTI

Jaishankar makes 8 proposals to stabilise ties with China

The minister asserted that any attempt to change the status quo at LAC was unacceptable to India

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 28 JANUARY

Acknowledging that the events of 2020 in Eastern Ladakh have put the Sino-Indian relationship under "exceptional stress," external affairs minister S Jaishankar today made eight broad proposals for stabilising bilateral ties while asserting that any attempt to change the status quo at the LAC was completely unacceptable to India.

Jaishankar said that while both nations were committed to a multi-polar world, there should be a recognition that a multi-polar Asia was one of its essential constituents. Obviously, each state would have its own interests, concerns and priorities but sensitivity to them could not be one-sided.

As rising powers, he said, each state would have its own set of aspirations and their pursuit too could not be ignored. There would always be divergences and differences but their management was essential to bilateral ties.

J

aishankar noted that despite all the differences and disagreements that the two countries had on the boundary, the central fact was that border areas still remained fun-



damentally peaceful. The last loss of life before 2020, when the Galwan Valley incident took place on 15 June, was, in fact, as far back as 1975.

"That is why the events in

Eastern Ladakh last year have so profoundly disturbed the relationship. Because they not only signalled a disre-

gard for commitments about minimising troop levels, but also showed a willingness to breach peace and tranquillity," he said and drew attention towards the impact of the events on both public and political opinion in India.

To date, India has not received a credible explanation for the change in China's stance or reasons for massing of troops in the border areas. "It is a different matter that our own forces have responded appropriately and held their own in very challenging circumstances. The issue before us is what the Chinese posture signals, how it evolves, and what implications it may have for the future of our ties," he added.

Jaishankar said that even before 2020, the India-China relationship witnessed decisions and events that reflected the duality of cooperation and competition. In this con-

nexion, he recalled how the trade grew dramatically though its one-sided nature made it increasingly controversial.

Yet, when it came to interests and aspirations, some of the divergences were also apparent, he said and recalled the practice of stapled-visas or the reluctance of China to deal with some of India's military commands. Then there was China's opposition to India's membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and to a permanent seat in the UN Security Council.

When it came to trade, promises of market access did not match delivery. The blocking of UN listing of Pakistani terrorists involved in attacks on India had its own resonance. In this connection, he also talked about the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which violated India's sovereignty.

India to emerge as major producer of defence equipment: PM

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 28 JANUARY



Against the backdrop of the ongoing Sino-Indian military stand-off at Eastern Ladakh, Prime Minister Narendra Modi today asserted that the country has one of the best war machines in the world.

India has decided to manufacture more than 100 defence related equipment in India. The steps being taken by the government would ensure that India emerged as a major producer of defence equipment and not remained a major arms buyer, he said addressing the National Cadet Corps (NCC) rally here.

Modi said nations with a strong sense of discipline in social life thrived in all fields. The NCC, he said, has a major role to play in installing this sense of discipline in the social life of India.

The Prime Minister said that as the largest uniformed youth organisation, the NCC was gaining in stature day by day. NCC cadets were present everywhere where the Indian tradition of valour and service was being promoted or awareness about the Constitution was being generated.

Modi said it was incumbent on all the citizens to fulfil their duties enshrined in the Constitution. "Whenever this is followed by citizens and civil society, many challenges can be met with success."

He said that it was this blend of sense of duty among the citizenry and bravery of the security forces that broke the back of naxalism and Maoism which was affecting a large part of the country.

Modi said Coronavirus was a challenging period for India but it also brought the opportunities for the country, improved the country's capabilities and made it "Aatmanirbhar" (self-reliant).

The PM also laid out the plans for expansion of the NCC in border and coastal areas and recalled his 15 August speech in which he had announced a new role for cadets in 175 such districts. He informed that about 1 lakh cadets were being trained by the Army, Air force and the Navy for this. One third of them were girl cadets.

The training infrastructure for NCC was being strengthened. As against just one firing simulator earlier, 98 were being established now. Micro flight simulators were also being increased from 5 to 44 and rowing simulators from 11 to 60.

TN CM inaugurates Jayalalithaa's 'Veda Nilayam' memorial



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CHENNAI, 28 JANUARY

overnment to go ahead with the opening ceremony but ordered that the building shall not be thrown open to the public.

Passing interim order on petitions by Deepak and Deepa, nephew and niece of the late AIADMK supremo, Jayalalithaa was held here on Thursday.

In a simple function, Tamil Nadu chief minister K Palaniswami unveiled a plaque that declared the Veda Nilayam residence where the late leader lived - in posh Poes Garden area - a memorial in her honour and following take over of the residential property by the government.

Palaniswami, flanked by his cabinet colleagues, including Deputy Chief Minister O Panneerselvam and Assembly Speaker P Dhanapal paid floral tributes to a portrait of Jayalalithaa and they lit a traditional lamp symbolising the opening of the memorial.

The Madras High Court on Wednesday allowed the government to go ahead with the opening ceremony but ordered that the building shall not be thrown open to the public.

Shah to address Gaudiya Vaishnavs during Bengal visit

RAJIB CHAKRABORTY
KOLKATA, 28 JANUARY



Union home minister Amit Shah is slated to arrive at the Kolkata airport tomorrow evening for his two-day Bengal visit. When the clamour grows to address the Matua community regarding CAA, BJP will also attempt to sway the sympathy of a few lakh people belonging to the Gaudiya Vaishnav community, followers of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

This is the saffron party's expectation because of their numerous devotees and monks. On 30 January, Shah will visit the ISKCON temple and offer his prayers at Mayapur Chandrodaya temple. A few hundred of the Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu are located at Mayapur, Nawadip and several areas of Nadia.

Even prime minister Narendra Modi visited the pristine and historic Gaudiya Mission temple at Bagbazar in 2016, and also addressed Netaji Indoor Stadium centenary celebrations of Gaudiya Mission and Math in Kolkata, which was thronged by their devotees and monks.

Party sources said that Modi's visit to Gaudiya Mission gave them several political benefits and Shah's visit to Mayapur will also accrue the sympathy

TENDER

NORTHERN RAILWAY

TENDER NOTICE

The Dy. Chief Engineer/TMC/Line, S.E. Road, New Delhi, for and on behalf of the President of India invites open e-tender under Single Packet System for the under noted work:-

1. Name of work and location	Supply of crimp fitted Hydraulic Hose assembly for Track Machines during IOH/POH at TMMD TKD, LKO, KKDE, BTI, JRC & MB and during breakdown at worksites (track Machines) under the jurisdiction of Dy. CEIT/MCL/NDLS for a period of one year.
2. Completion period of the work	One Year
3. Approx. Cost of work	Rs. 22,93,295/-
4. Cost of Tender Document	Nil
5. Earnest Money amount (to be deposited Online)	Nil. However, the tenderer has to mandatory submit Bid Security Declaration Performa to get this exemption of submission of EMD (i.e. ANNEXURE XVII of tender document)
6. Date & Time for submission of E-tender and opening of tender	Tender bid may be uploaded upto 15.00 hrs on 26.02.2021 on IREPS web site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in . The bidders can participate in the e-tender, the tender will be opened soon after 26.02.2021 up to 15:00 Hrs.
7. Detailed Tender Notice & Tender Document	The detailed e-tender notice and Tender Document is available on Railway web site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in . Above tenders document will be available for submission of offer on IREPS web site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in from 12.02.2021 to 26.02.2021. The bidders who desire to participate against e-tenders, are advised to electronically register themselves on the above website for which, they would require to, obtain class III digital certificate (if already not obtained) issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. All other terms and conditions in respect of above tenders are given in tender document. The detailed tender notice also can be seen on the Notice Board of the above office.



In every Opposition party-ruled states, CBI and ED are used aggressively by the BJP

CONGRESS LEADER RAHUL GANDHI

ACCUSING THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OF USING CBI AND ED AGAINST OPPPOSITION PARTY-RUN GOVERNMENTS

The Statesman

NEW DELHI, FRIDAY 29 JANUARY 2021

05

THUMBNAILS



All Bengal mid-day meal workers union activists during a rally in Kolkata on Thursday.

SNS

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, 28 JANUARY

In a scathing attack at the BJP government, PDP chief and former chief minister, Mehbooba Mufti, on Thursday described the violence on Republic Day in Delhi as "a conspiracy" to defame farmers agitating against the three farm laws.

Mehbooba, who is in Jammu to meet party leaders, when asked by media persons about the violence at the Red Fort and elsewhere in Delhi during the tractor rally, said; What happened on Republic Day and what we saw on the TV, the person who engineered violence belongs to BJP".

In an obvious reference to the small time Punjabi actor Deep Sidhu who is being blamed for the violence, Mehbooba said; "that person had been with the Prime Minister, Home Minister and he had been running the BJP election campaign in Punjab's Gurdaspur for Sunny Deol during Lok Sabha Polls. I feel that it has been a conspiracy to defame farmers," she said.

Pointing out that Repub-



lic Day marks the day when the Indian Constitution came into existence in 1950, she asked the central government to immediately withdraw the three farm laws "as these had been enacted without consulting the farmers who were apprehensive that they may lose everything including their land".

It is worth mentioning that also during the early days of farmers agitation Mehbooba had been supporting them and criticising the Modi government. In a sharp reaction she had said that "farmers have brought the Centre to its knees". Reacting to the National Investigation Agency (NIA) summoning some farmer

leaders, Mehbooba had tweeted; "GOIs pet agency NIA is now being unleashed on farmer unions. The rot that has set into India's premier terror investigative agency can be gauged from the manner in which they are fabricating charges on Kashmiris, farmers & those who dare to dissent".

'Made in India' revolvers: The home-grown revolver of Webley and Scott, the renowned British firearms company, is being manufactured in Uttar Pradesh's Hardoi town under PM Narendra Modi's 'Make in India' initiative. The firearm is likely to be launched by CM Yogi Adityanath next month. PTI

Earthquake of magnitude 2.8 hits Delhi: A low-intensity earthquake of magnitude 2.8 hit Delhi on Thursday at 9.17 a.m., the National Centre for Seismology said. The epicenter of the earthquake was West Delhi. PTI

Training material unveiled for ASHA workers to tackle leprosy

PTI

GUWAHATI, 28 JANUARY

An organisation in association with the National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP) authorities and the World Health Organization launched a training material on Thursday to improve skills of ASHA workers in tackling the Hansen's disease.

The flip chart for the Accredited Social Health Activists was unveiled by WHO Goodwill Ambassador and recipient of Gandhi Peace Prize Yohei Sasakawa. Developed jointly by Sasakawa, the NLEP and WHO India, the training material is printed in Hindi, Gujarati, Oriya and Bengali to help three lakh ASHA workers, Sasakawa India Leprosy Foundation said in a statement.

This training package will strengthen the ASHA workers' skill and facilitate early detection of leprosy cases and treatment, the organisation said. Union Health and Family Welfare joint secretary Rekha Shukla said the government is committed to make the country leprosy-free.

"The NLEP is focusing on early and active detection of leprosy cases for prevention of physical disabilities and to stop the community transmission. ASHA workers are the main frontline activists in this endeavour," she said. WHO India will also release short online animation films in regional languages for ASHA workers to educate them on how to use the training material effectively.

Altogether, 1,14,451 new cases of leprosy were detected in India in 2019-20, the statement said. "Globally, 2,02,189 new cases of leprosy were detected in 2019, of which South-East Asia accounted for 1,43,787," it added.

This training package will strengthen the ASHA workers' skill and facilitate early

K'taka Guv lauds govt for its achievements amid Covid-19

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

BENGALURU, 28 JANUARY

Opposition Congress on Thursday staged a symbolic protest during the joint sitting of Karnataka legislature, accusing the BJP government of

detection of leprosy cases and treatment, the organisation said. Union Health and Family Welfare joint secretary Rekha Shukla said the government is committed to make the country leprosy-free.

"The NLEP is focusing on early and active detection of leprosy cases for prevention of physical disabilities and to stop the community transmission. ASHA workers are the main frontline activists in this endeavour," she said. WHO India will also release short online animation films in regional languages for ASHA workers to educate them on how to use the training material effectively.

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PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 28 JANUARY

Alleging that seven years of the Narendra Modi government have "wrecked" the economy and high growth prospects, the Congress on Thursday said it is afraid that finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present "dressed-up" revised estimates for 2020-21 in the upcoming Budget session of Parliament and attempt to build an attractive narrative for the coming fiscal year.

The Opposition party demanded a large fiscal stimulus to the economy, asserting that such a step alone will put money in the hands of people and stimulate demand.

Former finance minister P Chidambaram also demanded that the government should make direct cash transfers to 20 to 30 per cent of the fam-

ilies at the bottom of the economy at least for a period of six months.

He said the Congress believes that the reality is that the economy is in a recession, the recovery will be slow and painful, and the "rate of GDP growth in 2021-22 (in constant prices) will be modest - no more than five per cent".

"We are afraid that the FM will present a dressed-up Revised Estimates for 2020-21 and attempt to build an attractive narrative for 2021-22. The RE for 2020-21 will be a set of false numbers and, therefore, the BE for 2021-22 will be a conjurer's illusion," Chidambaram said. Sitharaman is scheduled to present the annual Union Budget in Parliament on Monday.

The budget for 2020-21 began to unravel within weeks of its presentation, Chi-

dambaram said, noting that the Congress had even at that time pointed out that the assumptions behind the budget were wrong and the targets set were unattainable.

"Even without the pandemic, the economy would have continued on the downward path that had begun in the first quarter of 2018-19 and continued for eight successive quarters. The pandemic pushed the economy into an abyss - minus 23.9 per cent in Q1 of 2020-21 and minus 7.5 per cent in Q2," he said.

Sitharaman has the distinction of presiding over the first recession in four decades, the Congress leader added. The year 2020-21 will end with negative growth and none of the numbers estimated at the beginning of the year will be achieved, he claimed.

FM will present dressed-up revised estimates for 2020-21 in budget: Cong

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 28 JANUARY

joint sitting of the state legislature, Congress legislators led by their leader Siddaramaiah rose up holding placards for a couple of minutes, before they sat down and listened to the speech peacefully until completion. In the plac-

ards, Congress MLAs charged the government with 'neglecting North Karnataka by not holding a legislature session in the border district of Belagavi.'

The Governor in his address said his government has tried

its best to mitigate the adverse impact of Covid-19. "We have used the crisis as an opportunity, to build on our strengths, to create additional health infrastructure and enhance production capacity," he noted.

SEARCH OF KIDNAPPED

General public is hereby informed that one boy, (depicted in the photo), Name: Ayaan Ahmed @ Sahil, S/o: Yasmin Ahmed, R/o: H.No. V-80, Near Photo Chowk, Welcome, Delhi Aged: about 14 years, has been kidnapped from his house since 31.08.2016. In this regard a case vide FIR No. 393/16, u/s 363 IPC, Dated 05.09.2016, has been lodged at P.S. Welcome, Delhi. His physical description is as under: Height: 4'6" Feet. Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Oval, Built: Thin, Clothing: Yellow Colour Check Shirt, Cream Colour Capri and Blue Colour Hawai Chappal in her feet. Any person is having any information/due about this kidnapped boy, may inform SHO, PS Welcome, Delhi at E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in or website : <http://cbi.nic.in> or Fax No. 011-24368639, Tele No. : 011-24368638 or 24368641, Extn. 2101.



S.H.O
P.S. Welcome, Delhi
Ph. 011-22828277, 22826808

DP/534/NE/2021.

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is hereby informed that a man named Anup Kumar, S/o Late Sh. Ramesh R/o 15/23 2nd Floor, Street No. 3, Block-D, Harit Vihar, Burari, Delhi has been missing since 25.07.2020 from his house at 2:30 p.m. In this regard a D.D. No. 123-A, dated 26.07.2020 has been registered at P.S. Burari, Delhi. Since efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the missing man but no clue has come to light so far. The description of the missing man is as under:

Name: Anup Kumar, Gender: Male, Age: 38 years, Height: 5'3", Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Round, Built: Medium, Wearing: Blue colour t-shirt, grey colour pajama and sandal in his feet.

If anyone has any information regarding this missing Man, kindly inform SHO/Burari, Delhi.

E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in
Ph. 011-24368638, 24368641
Fax : 011-24368639

DP/416/IN/2020



SHO
P.S. Burari, Delhi.
Ph. No. 011-27616844, 27616845

SD/-
Company Secretary

Date 28.01.2021
Place: Chennai

NOTICE

No. 792/5, Extern Hotel Complex, Bangalore High Road, Sunwayvarcharam, Sirivennambadi Tank, Kachetepuram Dist. Pin - 562106, Tamil Nadu.

TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL INDIA LTD.

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to Regulation 29 read with Regulation 47 of the SEBI (Listing Regulations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 that a Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company will be held at the Corporate Office at Chennai on 11th February, 2021 at 3.00 PM to take on record the unaudited Financial Results of the Company for the Quarter and Nine Months ended 31.12.2020.

"India was ranked at 80th position out of 180 countries in corruption perception index (CPI) for 2019. The CPI score for India is almost constant this year as well as the previous year score," the index said. In 2019, India's score was 41. India is very clean.

A country with a higher score has a higher rank.

India's rank is 86 out of 180 nations with a score of 40.

"India was ranked at 80th position out of 180 countries in corruption perception index (CPI) for 2019. The CPI score for India is almost constant this year as well as the previous year score," the index said. In 2019, India's score was 41. India is

still very low on the corruption index, the report said, noting that experts feel CPI does not reflect actual real corruption level in any country.

This year, New Zealand and Denmark rank at first position with scores of 88.

Somalia and South Sudan rank lowest at 179th position with scores of 12. The US' ranking has declined for three consecutive years, dropping from 16th in 2017 to 25th in 2020.

TI has published its Corruption Perceptions Index every year since 1995. The Index reflects the perceptions of businesspeople, academics and risk analysts on corruption in countries, mainly in the business sector.

For any kind of information such as detailed Time-Table and stations enroute etc., passengers are requested to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or visit Indian Railways website <https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in> or NTES App.

RailMadad Helpline No.139

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Govt orchestrating violence to disrupt peaceful protests: CPM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 28 JANUARY

How did they reach ITO? They were even allowed to reach the Red Fort and climb up to the ramparts. Anyone who is familiar with the security at Red Fort knows that it is impossible to reach the ramparts without the gates being opened. These gates are usually under lock and key. Who opened the gates and who allowed them to climb the ramparts? This smacks of very clear connivance," he said.

The Left leader also said the entire flow of events on Republic Day followed a methodology used by the saffron party during anti-government protests earlier.

"This is the methodology of the BJP. All anti-government policy protests at the JNU, Jamia Millia, Shaheen Bagh - at all these places, peaceful protests were disrupted through the orchestration of violence.

"This is being done to farmers also. In the name of local people, political mobilisation is taking place to trigger a confrontation between farmers and locals. The widespread disagreement over these (three) farm laws (of the Centre) and the demand for their repeal are absolutely legitimate," he said.

Delhi violence a conspiracy to defame farmers: Mehbooba

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, 28 JANUARY

In a scathing attack at the BJP government, PDP chief and former chief minister, Mehbooba Mufti, on Thursday described the violence on Republic Day in Delhi as "a conspiracy" to defame farmers agitating against the three farm laws.

Mehbooba, who is in Jammu to meet party leaders, when asked by media persons about the violence at the Red Fort and elsewhere in Delhi during the tractor rally, said; What happened on Republic Day and what we saw on the TV, the person who engineered violence belongs to BJP".

In an obvious reference to the small time Punjabi actor Deep Sidhu who is being blamed for the violence, Mehbooba said; "that person had been with the Prime Minister, Home Minister and he had been running the BJP election campaign in Punjab's Gurdaspur for Sunny Deol during Lok Sabha Polls. I feel that it has been a conspiracy to defame farmers," she said.

Pointing out that Republic Day marks the day when the Indian Constitution came into existence in 1950, she asked the central government to immediately withdraw the three farm laws "as these had been enacted without consulting the farmers who were apprehensive that they may lose everything including their land".

It is worth mentioning that also during the early days of farmers agitation Mehbooba had been supporting them and criticising the Modi government. In a sharp reaction she had said that "farmers have brought the Centre to its knees".

Reacting to the National Investigation Agency (NIA) summoning some farmer leaders, Mehbooba had tweeted;

"GOIs pet agency NIA is now being unleashed on farmer unions. The rot that has set into India's premier terror investigative agency can be gauged from the manner in which they are fabricating charges on Kashmiris, farmers & those who dare to dissent".

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday said that most of the farmers do not understand the details of the new Farm Bills, if they did, the country would have been on fire and there would be agitation all across the country.

Speaking after inaugurating the Congress-led UDF convention in his Way

Watershed Initiative

After a week in the White House, the 46th President of the United States of America can be credited with a watershed initiative to ensure what he calls "racial equity". President Joe Biden has signed four executive actions on the issue that has of late ignited ugly incidents at St Bernadino and Ferguson, to name just two storm centres. By any reckoning, not the least by his immediate predecessor, Donald Trump, Tuesday's development is indubitably a big and early step in his efforts to dismantle systemic racism. Civil rights groups have, however, made it clear they will press for more sweeping changes in the months ahead. America's black, indigenous and Asian-American populations must keep their fingers crossed. Chiefly, Tuesday's signal initiative seeks to strengthen anti-discrimination housing policies that were weakened under President Trump, halt new Justice Department contracts with private prisons, increase the sovereignty of Native American tribes and combat violence and xenophobia against Asian Americans and Pacific islanders. The initiative has been announced weeks after the exit of a President who, to obfuscate a bumbling approach, had once blamed the Chinese alone for the coronavirus pandemic. It is a measure of President Biden's commitment to address America's ugly truth of racism that the initiative is part of an effort to infuse the focus on equity into everything the federal government does. "We're in a battle for the soul of this nation, and the truth is our soul will be troubled as long as systemic racism is allowed to exist," he said. "I'm not promising that we can end it tomorrow, but I promise you that we're going to make strides to end systemic racism, and every branch of the White House and the federal government will be part of that." The fact of the matter must be that racism is embedded in the colour of one's skin. The gross injustice of man towards man has been exacerbated over the past four years, exemplified most recently with the killing of a black by a white policeman who had pressed his boot on the neck of his victim until he died. A more brutal instance of racist killing will be hard to find. The actions do reflect the extent to which Mr Biden's ascent to the presidency was wrapped up with the nation's racial struggles. It bears recall that he began his campaign with a rejection of Trump's approach to race. The incumbent was propelled to the nomination largely by black voters and had aligned his campaign increasingly with their cause as protests against racial injustice erupted across the country. Mr Biden faces an unusually turbulent landscape early in his presidency, and he often frames the country's racial reckoning as one of several crises facing America, not to forget the coronavirus pandemic, the economic collapse and climate change. Activists are now shrilling for more from President Biden than a diverse administration and rhetoric about justice.

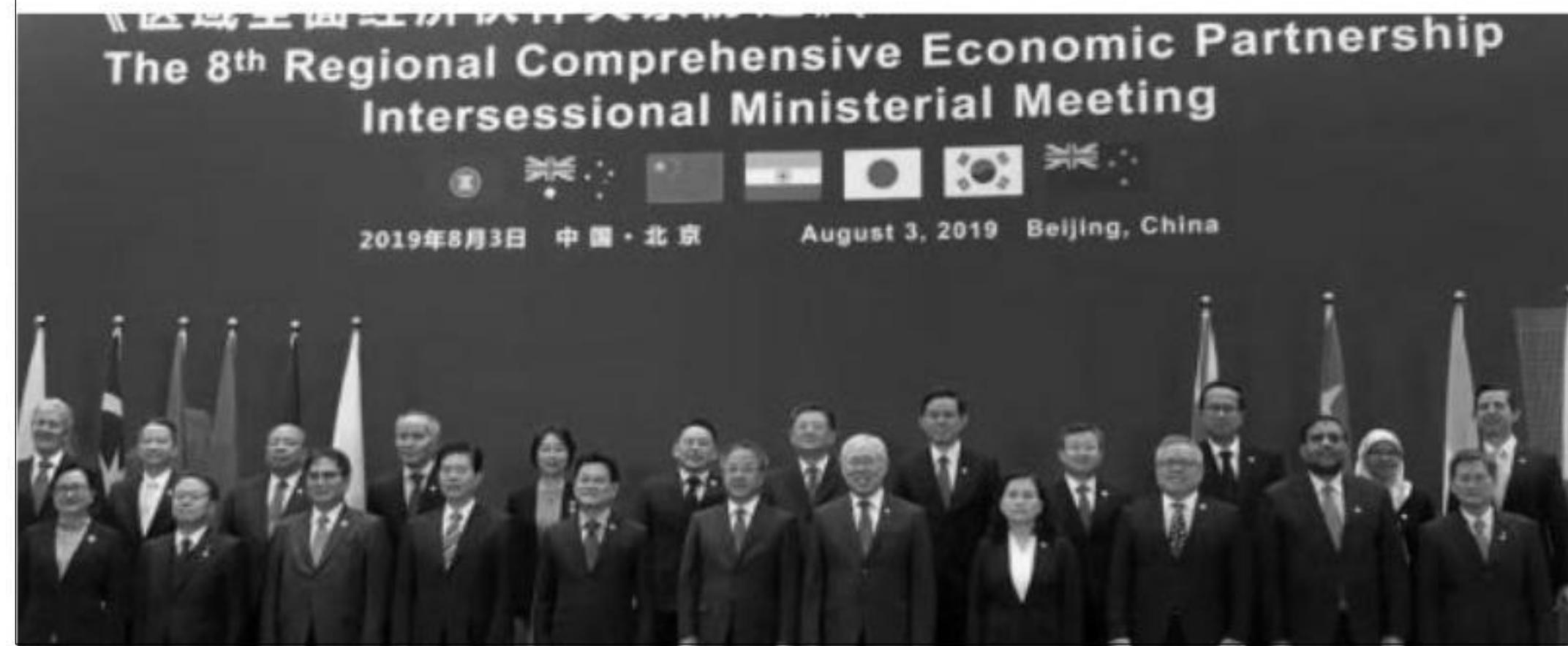
Beyond recognition

The road to democracy in Nepal might have been paved with good intentions, but has been marked by poor execution of the agenda. The ruling entity - the Nepal Communist Party - has not been recognised by the country's Election Commission for having failed to adopt what it calls "due procedures". There are no winners or losers in the tussle that saw Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli being expelled from the NCP's primary membership. Earlier, Oli had dissolved Parliament even though the Constitution accords no right to the Prime Minister to dissolve the House of Representatives. The constitutional crisis, that cannot but impinge on governance, has exacerbated this week with the country's Election Commission refusing to recognise either of the factions as "they had failed to adopt due procedures". In effect, the Himalayan country is nominally being governed by a party that has lost its relevance. Despite the vertical split, Oli and Prachanda remain chairpersons. The faction led by Prachanda had earlier removed Oli from the post of chairman and had selected Madhav Kumar Nepal in his place. The faction has now decided to strip Oli of even the party's general membership. The Prachanda faction has claimed that it ought to be recognised as the official NCP as it commands a majority in the party's secretariat, standing committee and central committee. This group has drawn a blank with the Election Commission, which has asserted that is difficult to introduce amendments, changes, or even effect a reshuffle in the records, as demanded by both factions of the NCP. The party suffered a vertical split after Oli decided to dissolve the House of Representatives and announced that midterm elections would be held on 30 April and 10 May. The Communist movement, such as it is in Nepal, has suffered a severe jolt in course of its honeymoon with governance. There is no ideological conflict here; only a bitter clash of personalities. This is bound to impinge on the party per se and the government which it runs.

Nepal's personality clash resonates in the echo chambers of the Biden administration as well. And this arguably explains why the US ambassador to Nepal, Randy Berry, met Prachanda, chairperson of the splinter faction of the NCP, on Monday to discuss the priorities of the new administration in the White House. Markedly, the meeting was arranged during a grave constitutional crisis in Nepal and is, therefore, considered as significant. Berry tweeted after the meeting: "I reiterated the US commitment to strengthening democracies, combating climate change, and uplifting the rights of women and girls around the world." On 22 January, Berry had called on Oli to share priorities of the Biden administration. In reality, a lame-duck administration now exists in Kathmandu. What will they know of the revised matrix of the United States who only intra-Communist infighting know? More's the pity.

Unsustainable RCEP

For several years, especially during the UPA rule we were, in fact, encouraged to believe the Chindia narrative so credulously that we did precious little to counter Beijing's policy of maritime encirclement of India through its 'string of pearls' strategy



The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) signed by China and 14 other countries from across the Indo-Pacific region including 10 ASEAN members, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and South Korea on 15 November 2020 at the ASEAN Summit in Vietnam was viewed by several analysts as heralding the rise of world's largest trading bloc representing 30 per cent of the global economy as well as world population. But the recent chain of events that began with the diplomatic row between China and Japan triggered by the visiting Chinese Foreign Minister's remarks in Tokyo related to the Japanese-administered Senkaku Islands followed by an escalation in the ongoing trade war between China and Australia has raised doubts over sustainability of this multilateral experiment amidst mutual distrust, asymmetric interdependence and strategic uncertainty.

Multilateralism, whether in the sphere of security or international trade, is not so much about the number of parties or size of population and economy they represent as the kind of relations instituted among them. In other words, RCEP as a regional trading arrangement with its modest goal of multilateralising the existing bilateral Free Trade Agreements into a single agreement needs to be assessed in terms of appropriate conduct of member-states disregarding their particular interests and the nature of relations shared among them rather than its size or geographic scope.

Even though RCEP in its Joint Declaration reaffirms ASEAN centrality in the economic integration process, China as a key player in the intra-regional trade landscape accounting for over 47 per cent of its combined GDP is certain to prevail over other members. With China in the lead role, one wonders whether the RCEP would survive the geopolitical jerks and jolts, the roots of which lie in the manner China uses its strategic leverage as the

dominant trade and investment partner to push its own regional agenda.

For Beijing, trade agreements are an integral part of its 'wedging strategy' designed to prevent or weaken any threatening alliance. Reflective of this, China has used trade as a political weapon to reward its security partners and punish those resisting its attempts to create a modern tribute system in the region.

Australia has, for instance, faced China's wrath ever since Prime Minister Scott Morrison called for an independent inquiry into the origins of the Covid-19 pandemic, which was first detected in the Chinese city of Wuhan. In

utter disregard to their bilateral free trade agreement, Beijing has imposed a slew of measures subjecting billions of dollars of Australian exports to punitive restrictions and tariffs over the past several months. While Morrison has called for 'happy co-existence' following a diplomatic war of words between the two countries over a 'deeply offensive' tweet posted by a Chinese official, Beijing continues to insist on political compliance not just from the Australian government but the country's free press and academia as well.

At any rate, wielding economic coercion is not new to China, nor has Australia alone suffered because of its economic dependence on trade with China. Back in 2016, South Korea went through a similar experience in the wake of Seoul's decision to deploy the US anti-missile THAAD system to strengthen the country's defense against North Korean missiles. So did the Philippines in 2012 when the ban on Filipino bananas hit its core agricultural sector amid the escalation of bilateral tensions triggered by Beijing's claims to the Scarborough Shoal, a coral reef

located within the exclusive economic zone of the Philippines in South China Sea.

Of all the RCEP member-states, it is Japan that has faced China's coercive economic treatment repeatedly since 2001 over a host of bilateral issues including the dispute over Japanese-controlled Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea.

In all, China's economic offensive against its regional trading partners reveals how interdependence is often asymmetric, which provides sources of influence to a less dependent actor in its dealings with others. As explained by leading liberal

institutionalists, Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, asymmetrical interdependence as a source of power entails not only the risks of disruption in supply chains and trade flows but also possibility of the dominant partner using asymmetric vulnerabilities as strategic leverage. Highlighting how inter-state trade relations were used

by Germany as an instrument of strengthening its national power, Albert Hirschman, an American economist in his classical study, National Power and the Structure of Foreign Trade observed, 'power elements and disequilibria are potentially inherent in such harmless trade relations.'

Unable or unwilling to recognize the correlation between economic interdependence and power politics, many analysts and decision-makers fell prey to China's charm offensive, its grand strategy of reassurance centered on the 'peaceful rise of China' thesis. Consequently, what dominated the policy circles and strategic community in many countries including India was the hackneyed neo-functionalist argument that economic interdependence would constrain ascendant China's behavior since it has much to gain from stable

relations and more to lose from conflicts.

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

ASIAN VOICES

Getting pandemic under control

Vaccines are undoubtedly the best hope the world has of bringing the COVID-19 pandemic under control with global infections fast approaching 100 million. But will the distribution of vaccines maximize their ability to stem the devastation of the pandemic? Vaccines are in short supply. How the limited vaccines available are allocated will likely make a difference to the global fight against the novel coronavirus.

Statistics from the World Health Organization indicate that 39 million doses of vaccines have been administered in 49 high-income countries while only 25 vaccine doses have been provided in one poor country. To be exact, 95 percent of the vaccines available have been acquired by 10 developed countries.

Little wonder WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus lamented that rich countries are rolling out vaccination programs while the world's least-developed countries watch and wait.

That younger, healthier adults in rich countries get vaccinated before older people in poorer countries is, he said, "not right". It may seem reasonable that those developed countries that developed the vaccines are justified in using the vaccines for their own people first and foremost. But the unequal distribution of vaccines could be consequential to the overall global fight against the pandemic.

The fact that the virus knows no borders and the pandemic will in no

CHINADAILY

way be brought under control unless the infection rate is brought down globally suggests that the equal allocation of vaccines matters for the world to effectively stem the spread of the virus.

If the pandemic is allowed to continue running rampant as it is in the developing countries, the virus may mutate and the new strains of the virus may compromise the effectiveness of the vaccines.

As a result, the effectiveness of vaccines as a shield against infection could be compromised if the vaccines are not distributed to all countries. If that becomes a reality, not only will the efforts and the money put into the development of the vaccines be in vain, but also the global fight against the pandemic will be put at risk.

Nor should it be forgotten that if the virus continues to devastate the global economy, even the developed countries will further suffer.

A study commissioned by the Research Foundation of the International Chamber of Commerce representing more than 45 million companies in over 100 countries suggests that vaccine nationalism could cost the global economy up to \$9.2 trillion, almost half of that incurred by the wealthiest economies.

Vaccine nationalism has pulled the wool over the eyes of politicians in developed countries, and they fail to see how injurious it is. Concerted global efforts with the support of the equal allocation of the vaccines are the way to finally win the war against the virus and revive the world economy.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

editor@thestatesman.com

Gandhi and Congress

SIR, This refers to the excellent article 'From defeat to hero' by Subrata Mukherjee and Sushila Ramaswamy (24-25 January). Rightly have authors said, 'Gandhi's congress was an umbrella party with many shades of opinions. However, the core power structure like the Working Committee was rigidly controlled by Gandhi and his close associates'. From 1920 until the early 1940s though Gandhi preferred not to be the formal member of the Working Committee he pushed his decision through coercion and seduction that contradicted the wishes of the party members. Despite the party being an umbrella of many shades

of opinions' his austere life style ... fasts, silences and penances ... 'rigidly controlled the power structure'. As Sunil Khilnani writes, 'These were the effective techniques of an eccentric parent, but they were not designed to nourish commitment to democratic institutions (Sunil Khilnani, *The Idea of India*, Penguin India, 1997, P-27). But Bose did not fall in line with Gandhi and decided to contest Gandhi's candidate, which he won hands down, making Gandhi extremely unhappy as he felt that his undisputed leadership was challenged. It's hard not to wonder why Gandhi suggested a sham of an election if he did not want any-

one else. Bose was hounded till he resigned as the Congress President. Bose was punished and expelled from the party on the pretext of 'grave act of indiscipline'. Bose faced the 'most unkindest cut of all' and 'the unjust humiliation' for he 'had the courage of his conviction and said openly that he did not believe in the cult of non-violence' (Dilip Kumar Roy, *Netaji* ... The Man: Reminiscences, P-53-54). Criticism of Gandhi was branded as 'disloyalty' by the Gandhi supporters 'Those who do not go with Gandhiji are politically dead' (KF Nariman, Non-violent Murder). Bose's ouster from the Congress should be viewed in the context of the following political events: the denial of post-election coalition between Jinnah's Muslim League and Gandhi's Congress in 1937, sabotage of coalition proposal between Bengal Congress and Fazlul Haq's Krishak Praja Party, and the conclusion of a secret deal in the presence of Krishna Menon with Atlee-Cripps in June 1938 (Kenneth Harris, Atlee P-152). If anybody stood on the way to the British machinations to divide India on religious lines with the help of the anglophiles like Nehru, it was Bose. After Nehru's return from Europe in October, 1938 Bose had to go, despite making sincere efforts to patch up with Gandhi loyalists by placing alternatives, to facilitate Nehru's understanding with future Viceroy, Mountbatten,

NETAJI FILES

SIR, During the UPA regime the BJP made many demands for declassification of the Netaji files, believing there was something that was being hidden by the Congress. Now that they are in power what stops them from the declassification of the files so that the truth about Netaji's death can be known. The 125th birth anniversary should have been the ideal time. Why are those voices silent now? Doesn't the nation want to know?

Yours, etc., Anthony Heniques, Mumbai, 24 January.

in Singapore (March, 1946), rejection of the coalition proposal yet again between Bengal Congress and Muslim League in April 1946, and the engineered failure of the united India Federation Plan in May, 1946. All this was manipulated to convince the USA which was opposed to the creation of Pakistan that a communal division was inevitable to avoid a social and political disaster in India.

Yours, etc., Sudipta Ghosh, Jangipur, 25 January.

WHATSAPP INTERACTION

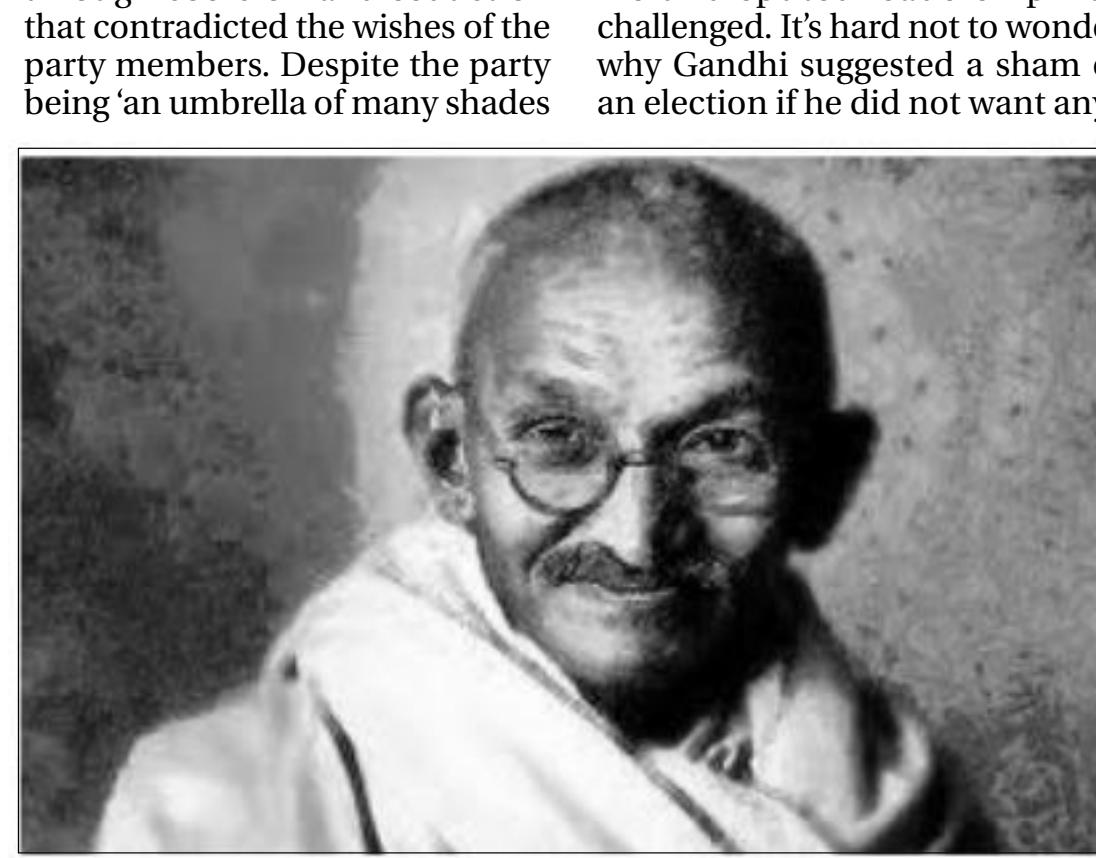
SIR, The 200-odd pages of purported WhatsApp conversations between Republic TV's Editor-in-Chief Arnab Goswami and ex-Broadcast Audience Research Council's chief Partho Dasgupta, appended to the supplementary charge sheet filed by the Mumbai Police on the Television Rating Point (TRP) manipulation case, expose the appalling unconcern of the political establishment about using sensitive matters for political gains through trusted lobbyists.

The alleged chats talk about the Pulwama terrorist attack, Balakot air strike, abrogation of the special status of Kashmir, the state of the economy, health status of a Union Minister and quality of the Union Cabinet.

In one of the chats, Goswami talks prophetically about the 'big man' scoring a stupendous victory in the general election, thanks to the Pulwama tragedy and the Balakot blitz. That the Narendra Modi government returned to power with an emphatic victory in the election is history now. It is difficult to determine the extent of the seepage of such sensitive information to the media networks; these days called "godi-media" (lapdog media).

It is callous to view the "Arbagate" as an isolated instance. Here, the silence of the ruling government at the Centre is appalling, and inappropriate as well. A thorough probe and trial cannot be overemphasised.

Yours, etc., Haridasan Rajan, Kerala, 24 January.



Presidency isn't as easy as removing a button

ATANU BISWAS

New US President Joe Biden has removed the 'Diet Coke' button installed on the Resolute Desk, the presidential desk at the White House Oval Office also known as the Hayes desk, by his predecessor Donald Trump. It is known that Trump, being a soda devotee, would consume up to 12 cans of Diet Coke a day and had the button put in place in order to "keep the carbonated beverages flowing". A staffer would provide the drink to the president when the button was pressed.

The removal of the button may just be a symbol of the typical American style of functioning when the regime changes. Yes, undoing the predecessor's legacy is an age-old trend in American history. Let's take an interesting recent example to illustrate the situation clearly. Democrat Barack Obama reversed a ban on abortion funding that was restored by his predecessor Republican George W Bush. Earlier this was revoked by Democrat Bill Clinton, and it was originally created by Republican Ronald Reagan.

With 17 executive actions on his first day in office, President Biden unleashed a full-scale assault on his predecessor's legacy by simply reversing several key Trump policies. Biden took action on the coronavirus pandemic; the US rejoining the Paris agreement on climate change; halting construction of a federally-funded border wall along the southwest border with Mexico; reversing the travel ban on certain Muslim and African countries; stopping the move to withdraw the US from the World Health Organisation; bolstering the sluggish economic recovery; extending the moratorium on evictions and foreclosures, and restoring federal efforts aimed at promoting diversity through a number of steps to emphasize racial equity and countering discrimination. In contrast, after two weeks in office Trump had issued eight executive orders, Obama had issued nine, George W Bush signed only two, and Clinton signed three executive orders.

While most of Biden's initial actions were well anticipated, apparently he is seeking to "reverse the gravest damages" done to the country by Donald Trump. Still it's "a long way to go," Biden declared. "We're going to need legislation for a lot of other



things we're going to do," the president asserted.

But a US president's power is not limitless, of course. Ask Barack Obama. When he ordered the closure of Guantánamo Bay, Obama had to face a host of obstacles to closing the prison, including addressing the fate of detainees and congressional resistance. Then, Trump, from the very beginning, was supposedly poised to undo Obama's achievements. In a desperate bid, Trump attempted to repeal Obamacare, but failed. And, what's more, this might have eventually helped to create an increased public understanding and appreciation of Obamacare. In turn, as some experts believe, Obamacare might have become the decisive force in depriving Trump of a governing majority during his presidency.

US presidents may also encounter cases that are constitutionally legal but politically difficult. For example, Richard Nixon could not dismantle Lyndon Johnson's Great Society which was eventually eroded by Ronald Reagan much later. Again, Republican Dwight Eisenhower not only had to keep the Democ-

rats' New Deal intact, but he also had to expand social security, raising the minimum wage and beginning new public works.

Democrats now have a narrow grip in both houses of the US Congress in addition to control of the White House. Democrats have taken control of the US Senate which is now split 50-50 with vice president Kamala Harris, a Democrat, holding the decisive vote in any tie between Republicans and Democrats. Democrats now hold a thin 222-212 majority in the House of Representatives, although their strength has been narrowed in the November elections. Overall, Biden might be in a reasonably comfortable position in exercising his agenda to some extent, at least in the next two years. But, a filibuster-proof majority means that the president will also have to deal with stubborn lawmakers and civil servants. And these are never very smooth processes or comfortable situations for a US president.

Then, what about American policies on important international issues such as Syria, Iran, Israel, Jerusalem, Taiwan, North Korea, and China, of

course? Would some of these really change significantly during Biden's presidency? History would tell us that it's never quite easy for presidents to abandon pragmatism for ideology, particularly on matters related to international relationships. To cite a few examples, Dwight Eisenhower had to follow Harry Truman's philosophy of communist containment, Clinton had to embrace Reagan's love of free trade, and Obama had to maintain the Bush agenda of expanding the security state.

And what about American society? Its struggle for achieving social equality would continue, for sure. Biden might try his best to make the 'divided' country 'united' again. However, that's not quite so easy. Many issues relating to a section of the society that Trump influenced would be irreversible. For example, Trump could appoint three judges in the United States Supreme Court, along with 54 judges to the United States courts of appeals, and 174 judges in the United States district courts, among others — each having a lifetime tenure. And the loyalty of US judges to their appointing party and appoint-

ing president's ideals are well-known and a matter of open discussion in US society and media. No undoing is possible in these appointments, and Trump's legacy would continue to dominate the country for decades to come. Many important social matters such as social equality, abortion, LGBT rights, etc. would eventually depend on the nod of the judiciary.

Now that Trump is out of the Oval Office, and even if after the impeachment trial, the Senate rules him ineligible to run in 2024, Trumpism will remain alive and active within American society in the decades to come. One cannot undo that overnight. There is no denying that ideals of those who stormed the US Capitol on January 6 are deeply rooted within the mentality of the society. And, as history has illustrated time and again, unseating a predecessor does not guarantee that your successor will not restore his policies by unseating you. Thus, even a 'Diet Coke' button may come back to the White House. Who knows?

The writer is Professor of Statistics, Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata.

Threat to Nepal's democratic ideals

PRAMOD MISHRA

shenanigans on the country's nationally and internationally educated and known writers and intellectuals?

Signs of the prime minister's hidden fangs and claws were apparent as soon as he whipped the country into a populist frenzy in the name of nationalism by baiting India and duping the country into giving his party near two-thirds majority in the federal parliament three years ago. The simple Nepalis were taken in by his glib tongue, poor health and unscrupulous tactics. And Nepalis, entrenched in the old regime of caste, ethnicity and privilege, found Oli as their messiah because the ship of their centuries-old unearned privilege was sinking.

At the same time, average Nepalis were too busy with their meagre lives in the midst of the pandemic and too easily entertained by Oli's glib tongue that they didn't know that this is no sign of a political leader who delivers. In fact, clever words have come in literature and history from some of the world's notorious villains, such as Iago, Lucifer, Goebbels and Shakuni. So, Nepalis find themselves in the middle of another political crisis on top of the global pandemic. They had thought that their job was done once they had waged the second people's movement in 2006. Now, the ball is in

the Supreme Court. And lawyers, writers, intellectuals who speak as citizens and who were instrumental in the second people's movement do not trust even the judiciary.

There is so much speculation as to what the country's apex court would do. So many conspiracy theories swirling around in Kathmandu. Inheritors of a culture of rumours about this remote kingdom's secretive palaces and their intrigues, Nepalis can't believe that the Supreme Court justices would follow the letter of the constitution and defend it. Accustomed to the corrupt ways of Nepal's caste-based officialdom, they can't trust even the justices of the highest court to do the right thing. They suspect Oli to have made a 'setting' with the other branch of the state — the judiciary — to achieve his nefarious goals of destroying Parliament. They think Oli has set it all up with India, China and the United States to make his move. Otherwise, how can a puny man like him dare do such a thing as overturning the people's long-earned constitution and democracy? And the Supreme Court itself, by dillydallying on such an important case, is feeding on the suspicion and paranoia of the citizenry. Nepalis are once bitten twice shy in matters of the state.

This is indeed a sad state of affairs in a country already plagued by myriads of ills. But what is the way forward?

The civil society members must not stop until Parliament is restored and justice prevails. They should press forward. Pressing this twin principle means they must unflinchingly insist on the restoration of Parliament on one hand, and bring the all opposing, republican and democratic forces together and get a written commitment from them to restore justice, clean governance and transparency in all aspects of politics.

Restoration of Parliament will help save the constitution and the commitment from the political parties will reverse the regressive steps. A firm commitment to clean governance and transparency will help restore people's faith in republicanism, secularism and federalism once again; in the past few years since Nepal was declared a republic, the political parties and their leaders (not just those in the government under Oli) did not insist on institutionalising the new structure.

The abolition of monarchy made them the guardians of the country. Secularism made them the preceptors and explainers of religious freedom, including Hinduism with all its virtues and vices. Federalism made them the

monitors to make sure it was implemented effectively, giving good governance to the people. But they did none of these things. Instead, they invested all their energies to sharing the spoils of the state and government for their parties. They closed their eyes to misgovernance, corruption, injustice. Their primary concern was to get plump and powerful judiciary, police and other positions for their own people. The parties of the 1990s and early 2000s refused to give up their culture and corrupt practices. The Maoists' entry into the mix, instead of infusing new blood, made even the viable newcomers sink with the old parties.

The civil society movement must insist on punishing Oli and restoring Parliament, but it must also insist that a new political culture develops in Nepal. Otherwise, republicanism, secularism and federalism—all three key aspects—will lose their shine with the people. You can't eat and dress republicanism, secularism and federalism. Without a course correction of the first, the constitution will be gone and many new Olis will rise on the horizon. Without the second, many hyenas waiting in the wings will pounce on and make a kill. Champions of freedom and justice in Nepal must achieve both. If Trump can go, can Oli's departure be far behind?

The Kathmandu Post/ANN

NO 28809

100 YEARS AGO

OCCASIONAL NOTE

The Duke of Connaught's reply to the Calcutta Corporation is instinct with the common-sense and tact which were the characteristic qualities of His Royal Highness's generation of the Royal House. The Duke succeeded in paying Bombay a compliment while at the same time stressing the predominant position which Calcutta today occupies in India's life and commercial development. The "London of the East" is as flattering - and at the same time as just - a title as any yet applied to the Calcutta of today. The smoke-laden Hooghly mists, no less than the murkiness of the great river, justify a comparison between the physical characteristics of Calcutta and the capital of the Empire. The parallel between the social atmosphere of the two great cities is no less just. It is thirty years ago since Mr. Kipling gave expression to the sense of emergence from an Indian "station" into a cosmopolitan city which is excited by the transition from Howrah station to Calcutta proper. The Europeanised Calcutta of today is strikingly like an Eastern suburb, or an eastern extension, of the British metropolis. It has about it nothing even vaguely "oriental," and the rapid development and increasing variation of its transit resources, its facilities for amusement, its Club life and a dozen other amenities the city now possesses remove it farther and farther from the type of Indian town to which formerly it closely adhered.

NEWS ITEMS

INAUGURATION OF IMPERIAL BANK OF INDIA

Rangoon, Jan 28

The inauguration of the Imperial Bank of India took place at the Bank of Bengal's palatial building yesterday when the Agent entertained to luncheon a large and representative company. Mr. E.O. Anderson proposed a toast to the memory of the expiring bank and health to the new, coupling with it the name of Mr. K.M. MacDonald the present Agent. He alluded to the long and successful career in Calcutta of Sir William Cruickshank, and the manner in which the heavy responsibilities during the late war had been overcome by Sir Norcot Warren, to whose ability, tact and personality the ceremony they were celebrating was brought about. He wished the new institution at least a similar period of success to that of the old, which had had a useful career of 112 years.

STUDENTS' STRIKE

Lahore, Jan 28

The students' strike continues in Lahore. The majority of the students of the Forman Christian College did not attend classes today but held a meeting in the college hostel at which they expressed their determination to remain on strike and appointed a committee to carry on non-cooperation propaganda. The principal has closed the College till February 7. The majority of students of the fourth year class of the Dyal Singh College also joined the strike today. The students of the Government College are also restive, and considerable unrest prevails in the Law College, where the students held a meeting today without arriving at any definite decision. They will hold another meeting tomorrow. The situation in the D.A.V. College and the Sanatan Dharma College remains unchanged.

FUTURE OF CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY

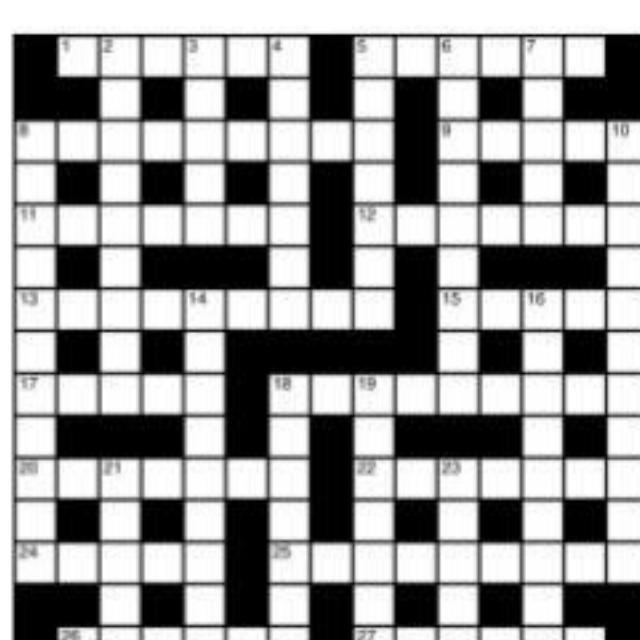
Delhi, Jan 28

Sir Deva Prosad Sarbadhikari has given notice of the following questions about the Calcutta University, which he intends to ask in the Legislative Assembly: (a) When will the work of reconstruction of the University of Calcutta be commenced, on what lines and by whom? (b) Has there been any enquiry as to the probable cost of carrying out the proposed scheme of reconstruction, if so what is the result? (c) Has it been ascertained what funds would be available for the purpose? (d) What funds are proposed to be set apart for the purpose and by whom? (e) When and on what lines, and in what Council or Legislature is the proposed scheme to be undertaken for such reconstruction?

ILICIT WHISKY TRAFFIC IN AMERICA

Two deaths were reported in New York during the New Year celebrations, both of which were caused by illicit whisky. The death toll is considerably less than was expected by the authorities who had awaited the coming of the festive season with considerable apprehension. All the hospitals of the city had prepared special wards to deal with the expected large number of cases of poisoning and had doctors and nurses on duty. One reason assigned for the small number of casualties is that genuine liquor is so easy to obtain that there is no need for dealers to sell wood alcohol and other "fake" spirits, which caused over a hundred deaths in New York and its environs a year ago.

CROSSWORD



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

- 1 Courage? Makes an error about one retreating (6)
- 5 The main section's working for run of performances (6)
- 8 Realm most disordered? (9)
- 9 Military leader around US city backing sceptical commentator (5)
- 11 Wage fuss (5-2)
- 12 Particle new to Planck, and not recalled after brief time (7)
- 13 Dismissed article in meadow that's turned shabby (3,2,4)
- 15 Hospital involved in remarkable cure gets decoration (5)
- 17 Beam when admitted by

- 18 the French Queen (5)
- 19 Trouble about Director and lead actor making early beginning (4,5)
- 20 Good lines about active spies being very reserved (7)
- 21 Set up H2O around rear of chalet? Absolutely! (5-2)
- 22 Name given to excellent city (5)
- 25 Arranged slam-dance festival (9)
- 26 Like a social structure expected to return in autumn? Not entirely (6)
- 27 Finishing game, ready to get engrossed in periodical (6)

- 2 Abandonment of rule in mine is producing chest disease (9)
- 3 Incompletely operate part of farm being out of practice (5)
- 4 Roman playwright in time before on one occasion expressing love (7)
- 5 The French city near Montpellier, turning influential (7)
- 6 Provides kit for a cricket club, English, during various tours (9)
- 7 One has a bad experience with daughter leaving (5)
- 8 Crowd surrounding

- 9 University church told stories about finally giving thanks (4,7)
- 10 Disputed promissory note stuck into early section of book? (11)
- 14 Mistake if kept in bound and frightened (9)
- 16 A lot of ridiculous events held up navigator lacking a skilled worker (9)
- 18 Accepting defeat, mostly recover, taking devious course? (7)
- 19 A rumour about ready money getting 17? (7)
- 21 Chance to forgo start of gruelling walk (5)
- 23 'Boring thing' (dismissing male jacket) (5)

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



5G core network should be Indian and the country should move faster on the next-generation technology with indigenously made telecom gears.

RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD
TELECOM MINISTER

THUMBNAILS

Indian Bank credit camp: Indian Bank Zonal Office, Delhi South, recently organised one retail and MSME mega credit camp at Gurgaon. Indian Bank FGM Vikash Kumar, ZM Himanshu Kansal graced the occasion. All Gurgaon and Faridabad branch managers attended the credit camp. Sanction tickets, DDS, vehicle keys were distributed by Indian Bank FGM and ZM to esteemed customers. Following sanctions and in-principle sanctions were accorded in the camp. Under retail sector, 26 proposals of Rs 15.46 crore and mobilised 7 customers amounting Rs 3.55 crore, according to a Press release. SNS

NBCC signs MoU with HSCL: NBCC (India) Ltd signed an MoU with its subsidiary company, Hindustan Steelworks Construction Limited (HSCL), on 15 January 2021, for the year 2020-21. The annual MoU was signed by P K Gupta, CMD, NBCC on behalf of NBCC and Rajendra Chaudhari, MD, HSCL and also director (comm), NBCC, signed on behalf of HSCL. SNS

Honda's export plan: Honda Cars India Ltd on Thursday announced that it will export its recently launched 5th generation Honda City to left hand drive countries. In a first for the company, this marks the beginning of production of left hand drive models in India for exports and reaffirms its commitment to the Government of India's "Make in India" initiative. SNS

HDFC Bank: HDFC Bank and CSC e-Governance Services India Ltd have jointly announced the EMI collection services for CSC-HDFC Bank's business correspondents across the country. This will make payments convenient for customers, who can now visit their nearest CSC, to deposit overdues, said a Press release. SNS

ICICI Home Finance: ICICI Home Finance Company (ICICI HFC) is offering affordable home loans for customers seeking to purchase homes in regularised colonies of Delhi-NCR such as Laxmi Nagar, Uttam Nagar, Krishna Nagar, Pitampura among others shortlisted by the company, according to a Press release statement. SNS

Jeep Compass: Jeep has announced the market launch of the new Jeep Compass in India. The new made-in-India Jeep Compass is priced from Rs 16.99 lakh (ex-showroom, New Delhi / Mumbai). Jeep brand dealerships will commence customer test drives and vehicle deliveries from 2 February. SNS

ICAI unit: The Institute of Cost Accountants of India has inaugurated its London Overseas Centre on 23 January 2021 through a virtual event on the auspicious day of Netaji's 125th Birth Anniversary and "Parakram". SNS

Equity benchmarks fall for fifth straight session

The Sensex has lost 2,917.76 points in five trading sessions, while the Nifty has lost 827.15 points

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 28 JANUARY

MARKET WATCH



► The 30-share BSE Sensex skidded 535.57 points or 1.13 per cent to finish at 46,874.36 points on Thursday.

► Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty tumbled 149.95 points or 1.07 per cent to 13,817.55 points.

► The rupee depreciated by 13 paise to settle at 73.05 against the US dollar.

and UltraTech Cement were among the gainers, jumping up to 6.16 per cent.

On the global front, Wall Street posted its biggest one-day percentage drop in three months amid a wave of profit-taking, even as the US Fed left the benchmark interest rate unchanged near zero and vowed to maintain its bond buying programme.

Asian and European bourses too wilted under selling pressure amid unabated rise in Covid-19 cases.

"Market turned cautious after the unidirectional upside

oil and gas, telecom, bankex and consumer durables managed to close in the green.

The broader BSE mid-cap and small-cap indices slipped up to 0.46 per cent.

According to traders, recent foreign fund outflows from the domestic capital markets are also weighing on market momentum.

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) offloaded shares worth a net Rs 1,688.22 crore on Wednesday, according to provisional exchange data.

Elsewhere in Asia, bourses in Shanghai, Hong Kong, Seoul and Tokyo ended in the red.

Stock exchanges in Europe were also trading with significant losses in early deals.

The global oil benchmark Brent crude futures slipped 0.27 per cent to \$55.39 per barrel.

Meanwhile, snapping its six-session rising streak, the rupee depreciated by 13 paise to end at 73.05 against the US dollar today, tracking muted domestic equities and a strengthening American currency overseas.

Foreign fund outflows and a sell-off in global markets also weighed on the local unit, forex traders said.

At the interbank forex market, the rupee opened at 73.13 against the greenback and hit an intra-day high of 73.04 and a low of 73.15.

It finally finished at 73.05, lower by 13 paise over its last close. On Wednesday, the rupee had ended at 72.92.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, advanced 0.08 per cent to 90.71.

"The Indian rupee depreciated for the first time in seven sessions as investors fled to the safety of the dollar due to souring risk sentiment in global markets," said Sriram Iyer, senior research analyst at Reliance Securities.

Iyer further noted that the dollar index rose ahead of the US GDP data.

"Weaker than expected data will push more investors towards the US dollar and vice versa," Iyer said, adding that markets will also look at cues from the jobless claims data.

ing the quarter was 72 per cent, compared to 87.6 per cent a year ago.

Scheduled domestic flight services were suspended in India from 25 March to 24 May due to the lockdown. The domestic flights resumed operations from 25 May but in a curtailed manner.

As on 31 December 2020, it is providing flight services to 60 domestic cities, IndiGo said.

India's largest carrier had a total cash balance of Rs 18,365 crore, comprising Rs 7,444 crore of free cash and Rs 10,920 crore of "restricted cash".

Restricted cash is not immediately available to the company and it is kept separate for a specific purpose.

Scheduled international flights have been suspended in India since 23 March. However, special international passenger flights have been operating in India under the Vande Bharat Mission since May and under bilateral air bubble arrangements between India and other countries since July.

IndiGo said it is providing flight services to six international destinations, under the air bubble arrangements as on 31 December.

IndiGo posts ₹620-cr net loss in 3rd quarter

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 28 JANUARY

Budget carrier IndiGo today reported a net loss of Rs 620 crore for the third quarter ended December 2020.

It had posted a net profit of Rs 496 crore in the same quarter of the previous fiscal.

In the June and September quarter this fiscal, the airline had incurred a net loss of Rs 2,884 crore and Rs 1,194 crore, respectively.

The airline's total income declined by 50 per cent year-on-year to Rs 5,142 crore in the third quarter, IndiGo said in a statement.

Its total expenses in the December quarter slipped 41 per cent to Rs 5,765 crore.

"The high level of consumer confidence in our product has indeed been heartening and we are glad to be making graduated and measured steps to a full recovery," IndiGo chief executive officer Ronjoy Dutta said.

The airline is looking forward to a gradual resumption of scheduled international flights as increased aircraft utilisation is critical to its return to profitability, he added.

The airline said its occupancy rate or load factor dur-

Our network is 5G ready: Airtel

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 28 JANUARY



company leveraged existing liberalised spectrum in the 1800 MHz band.

"In many ways now, it is a flick of a button to turn on 5G. It is important that we get the right 5G experience for which adequate spectrum in the right bands need to be made available.

"Today, we have conclusively demonstrated that as far as Airtel is concerned, we are 5G ready," Bharti Airtel MD and CEO Gopal Vittal said at a virtual conference.

The company said Airtel 5G is capable of delivering 10x speeds, 10x latency and 100x

For the demo run, the

concurrency when compared to existing technologies. Specifically, in Hyderabad, users were able to download a full length movie in a matter of seconds on a 5G phone.

Using dynamic spectrum sharing, Airtel seamlessly operated 5G and 4G concurrently within the same spectrum block.

The company said its

network is now fully 5G ready... and can use any spectrum band to click on 5G experience in a matter of months," Vittal said.

Airtel said it is committed to position India as a global innovation hub that is at the forefront of tech revolution.

India has the potential to become a global hub for 5G innovation, Vittal said, adding

this would require the coming together of ecosystem - applications, devices and network innovation.

"We are more than ready to do our bit," he emphasised.

Airtel said it is the first operator to demonstrate this capability. The company had already demonstrated 5G capabilities in labs, where on a standalone mode it was able to deliver experiences of up to 3 Gbps. "We are excited, as this has been demonstrated over a commercial network... the moment we receive government approvals and we have the right spectrum bands in adequate quantities, we will be able to roll this out, immediately.

"Even on existing bands of spectrum, 5G can be turned on but the full power of the experience will be felt only when adequate spectrum is available from the government," Vittal said.

Sales in the domestic mar-

Maruti Suzuki reports 26% rise in Q3 profit to ₹1,997 cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 28 JANUARY



ket stood at 4,67,369 units, a growth of 13 per cent, while exports surged 20.6 per cent to 28,528 units, it added.

Adding a note of caution, Maruti Suzuki India said: "These results have to be viewed in the context that in the previous year FY2019-20, sales volume declined by 16 per cent for the company and about 18 per cent for the industry".

On a standalone basis, the

company posted a net profit of Rs 1,941.4 crore, up 24 per cent against Rs 1,564.8 crore in the year-ago period.

Standalone revenue from operations rose by 13 per cent to Rs 23,471.3 crore for the third quarter as against Rs 20,721.8 crore in the same period last fiscal, MSI said in a statement.

During the December quarter, the company sold 4,95,897 vehicles, up 13.4 per cent compared to the same period of the previous fiscal.

SBI asset quality remains healthy: Chairman Khara

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 28 JANUARY

told reporters on the sidelines of an event here.

The macroeconomic situation is not the same as it was in April, and with the ease in restrictions post lockdown, we have seen a recovery process which led to growth in different pockets, he said.

He acknowledged that the macro-economy had seen difficulties at a point of time and the cash flows for the corporates had also been impacted.

Better treatment for Covid-19 patients and the arrival of vaccines have also improved confidence which is pushing economic recovery, he said.

Hints that the cash flows for the corporates have improved because of interventions like the ones the government has taken, Khara answered a specific question on asset quality saying: "These

are the positives which we have seen. This gives the confidence that perhaps situation may not turn out to be as bad."

Khara, who took charge as the chairman of SBI in October 2020, said it is important for the lenders to keep in touch with their borrowers at this crucial time to help and counsel them as and when required.

To a question of restructuring witnessed by the bank, he said the bank is analysing the cash flows of companies who have applied for the relief and will be taking a call based on the same, but declined to specify the quantum of relief sought.

The State Bank chairman was speaking after the listing ceremony for a \$600 million bond issue on the India INX.

Apple has doubled its business in India in the December quarter on the back of strong performance of its online store, and the tech giant sees a good growth trajectory going ahead, its CEO Tim Cook said.

The Cupertino-based tech giant posted an all-time record revenue of \$11.4 billion globally for the first quarter ended 26 December 2020, up 21 per cent year-on-year. International sales accounted for 64 per cent of the quarter's revenue.

"... If you take India as an example, we doubled our business last quarter compared to the year-ago quarter. But our absolute level of business, there is still quite low relative to the size of the opportunity," Cook said during an analyst call.

The company, which com-

petes with players like Samsung and OnePlus in the premium smartphone segment, has been aggressively ramping up its presence in the Indian market. "India is one of those, where our share is quite low. It did improve from the year-ago quarter. Our business roughly doubled over that period of time. And so, we feel very good about the trajectory. We are doing a number of things in the area. We put the online store there, for example, and last quarter was the first full quarter of the online store..."

TIM COOK
APPLE CEO

number of things in the area. We put the online store there, for example, and last quarter was the first full quarter of the online store..."

Cook said the company hit a new high watermark for its installed base of active devices, with growth accelerating as it passed 1.65 billion devices worldwide during the December quarter.

He added that the online store has received great reac-

Gold demand drops by 35% in 2020

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 28 JANUARY

REVIVAL HOPES

In the fourth quarter of 2020, the festive period and the ensuing wedding season revived hopes and drew in jewellery demand worth 137.3 tons, the strongest quarter in the year. Investment demand also showed significant resilience, growing 8 per cent to 48.9 tons... This can be expected to continue into 2021 as further normalcy returns and steady course of reforms strengthen the industry

SOMASUNDARAM PR
WCC MANAGING DIRECTOR, INDIA

pared to Rs 2,17,770 crore in 2019, according to the WGC data. Meanwhile, the total jewellery demand in volume terms in 2020 was down by 42 per cent at 315.9 tons, compared to 544.6 tons in 2019,

tons compared to 646.8 tons in 2019, it added.

However, as lockdown eased and normalisation efforts were phased in, imports during the last quarter rose by 19 per cent year-on-year, pointing to the positive impact of pent-up demand, according to WGC managing director, India, Somasundaram PR. The fourth quarter (October-December) of 2020, saw improved consumer sentiments as gold demand was down by only 4 per cent at 186.2 tons, compared to overall demand in the same quarter of 2019 at 194.3 tons.

In the fourth quarter of 2020, the festive period and the ensuing wedding season revived hopes and drew in jewellery demand worth 137.3

tons, the strongest quarter in the year. Investment demand also showed significant resilience, growing 8 per cent to 48.9 tons," Somasundaram PR said.

He pointed out that this can be expected to continue into 2021 as further normalcy returns and steady course of reforms strengthen the industry.

"With the implementation of mandatory hallmarking in June 2021, establishment of the international bullion exchange in GIFT city and retail code of conduct under the aegis of the industry steering committee, industry growth will



US is ready to rejoin the Iranian nuclear deal and start negotiations with it only if Tehran joins and complies with its provisions

US SECRETARY OF STATE TONY BLINKEN
DURING AN INTERVIEW

The Statesman
NEW DELHI, FRIDAY 29 JANUARY 2021

09

China's package solution for UNSC

China has been blocking India's efforts to become a permanent member of the UN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

BEIJING, 28 JANUARY

China, which has been blocking India's efforts to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council, has called for evolving a package solution acceptable to all UN members to reform the top global governing body.

The reform should reflect the leadership of UN member states, adhere to extensive democratic consultations and gradually accumulate consensus, so as to find a "package solution" acceptable to all parties, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said Wednesday.

Wang spoke on the reforms in the powerful UN organ during his meeting through video link with Joanna Wroncka and Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani, co-chairs of the Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN) on the UNSC reform of the 75th Session of the UN General Assembly.

Wroncka and Al Thani are also permanent representatives of Poland and Qatar, respectively, to the UN.

India, Germany, Brazil and Japan which formed the G4 bloc to press for their inclusion as permanent members of the Security Council, have been calling for a "decisive push" for the long-delayed reforms of the UN body.

Last year, G4 Foreign Ministers meeting that included External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, called for a decisive push for UNSC reforms during the 75th session of the UN. They unanimously



called for text-based negotiations in a fixed time frame.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry in its reaction to the G4 ministers' call last year said there were enormous divisions and lacked consensus among the UN members.

In his meeting with Wroncka and Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani, Wang said the reform of the Security Council concerns the future development of the UN and the vital interests of its member states.

The reform should reflect fairness and justice, increase the representation and voice of developing countries, give more small and medium-sized countries the opportunity to participate in the decision-making of the Security Council, and correct histori-

cal injustices against Africa.

He also highlighted that the reform must be carried out in a stable and orderly manner, and effectively safeguard the unity of member states as well as the prestige of the UN, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

India has been spearheading decades-long efforts to reform the Security Council, saying a structure set up in 1945 does not reflect contemporary realities of the 21st Century and is ill-equipped to handle current challenges.

China is part of the permanent five (P5) of the UNSC with veto power and has been stonewalling India's efforts to become member of UN's powerful body for years pointing

to lack of consensus even though the other four, US, UK, France and Russia have expressed backing for New Delhi's membership.

Beijing's all-weather ally Pakistan is also opposed to India becoming a permanent member of the UNSC.

US President Joe Biden in his campaign policy document last year had reiterated its promise of supporting India as a permanent member of the UN Security Council.

India calls for six additional permanent seats - two each for Africa and Asia, one for Latin America and the Caribbean, and one for the West European and Others Group and also for increase in non-permanent seats.

Patriarch: Pope to meet Iraqi Shiite leader Sistani in Iraq

ASSOCIATED PRESS

ROME, 28 JANUARY

Iraq's top Catholic official said Thursday that a deadly suicide bombing in Baghdad hasn't thwarted Pope Francis' plans to visit, and he confirmed the pontiff would meet with the country's top Shiite cleric, Ali al-Sistani, in a significant highlight of the first-ever papal trip to Iraq.

The Chaldean patriarch, Cardinal Louis Raphael Sako, provided the first details of Francis' March 5-8 itinerary during a virtual press conference hosted by the French bishops' conference. The Vatican has confirmed the visit, but it still could be called off given the pandemic.

The trip is aimed primarily at encouraging the coun-

try's beleaguered Christians, who faced decades of discrimination by the Muslim majority before being targeted relentlessly by IS militants starting in 2014.

But the first visit by a pope to Iraq also has a strong interfaith component. Francis is scheduled to travel to Najaf on March 6 to meet with al-Sistani, one of the world's leading Shiite leaders, and to host an interfaith meeting that same day in the ancient city of Ur, the birthplace of the prophet Abraham, according to Sako. Francis has spent years trying to forge improved relations with Muslims. He signed a historic document on human fraternity in 2019 with a prominent Sunni leader, Sheikh Ahmed el-Tayeb, the grand imam of Al-Azhar, the

seat of Sunnilearning in Cairo. Brother Amir Jaje, an Iraqi Dominican who is an expert on Shiite relations, said he hoped Sistani would also sign onto the fraternity document, which calls for Christians and Muslims to work together for peace.

Francis' meeting with Sistani will be enormously symbolic for Iraqis, especially its Christians, for whom the encounter will mark a turning point in their country's often fraught interfaith relations. The Vatican has called for Iraqi authorities and the international community to provide the security, economic and social conditions to allow them to return, arguing that Christians are a small but crucial part of Iraqi society.

Israel's Ultra-Orthodox unrest threat to PM

ASSOCIATED PRESS

JERUSALEM, 28 JANUARY

As he seeks reelection, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has turned to a straightforward strategy: Count on the rock-solid support of his ultra-Orthodox political allies and stamp out the pandemic with one of the world's most aggressive vaccination campaigns.

But with ultra-Orthodox communities openly flouting safety guidelines and violently clashing with police trying to enforce them, this marriage of convenience is turning into a burden. Netanyahu has watched his political partners undermine the country's war against the virus and spark a public backlash that threatens him at the ballot box.

"Netanyahu's hope is that



Israel will be the first country in the world to be vaccinated, that he will be able to open the economy to everyone, ultra-Orthodox and secular, and then the problem will be forgotten," said Moshe Klughaft, a campaign strategist who has advised Netanyahu in the past. If the current troubles persist, he

developing world's highest rates of infection, with some 8,000 new cases detected each day. This week it tightened a month-old lockdown by closing its international airport to nearly all flights.

There are a number of reasons for the ongoing outbreak. Before the airport was shuttered, Israelis returning from abroad brought back with them fast-spreading variants of the coronavirus. Other segments of the population have also failed to comply with lockdown provisions that have closed stores, schools and restaurants.

But there is little question that the ultra-Orthodox sector—where schools remain open, synagogues are full and mass weddings and funerals continue to take place—has been a driving force in the spiking numbers.

Sri Lanka Prez receives free Indian Covid vaccines

COLOMBO, 28 JANUARY

Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa on Thursday received 500,000 doses of Covishield vaccine donated by India under its 'Neighbourhood First' policy.

India last week announced that it will send Covid vaccines under grant assistance to Sri Lanka and seven other countries like Bhutan, the Maldives, Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar and Seychelles, Afghanistan and Mauritius.

Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan and the Maldives have already received India's Covid vaccines under grant assistance in sync with its Neighbourhood First policy.

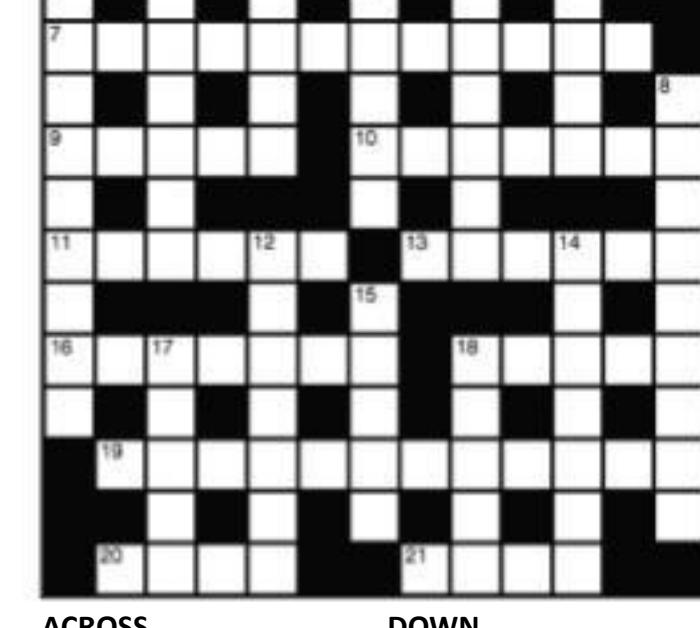
President Rajapaksa was at the Colombo international airport to receive the consignment of free Indian Covid vaccines which arrived on a special Air India flight.

Rajapaksa was joined at the airport by the Indian envoy in Colombo Gopal Baglay.

"The arrival of 500,000 doses of COVISHIELD vaccines happens on blessed Poya Day, which marks the 1st visit of the Buddha to Lanka. High Commissioner offered prayers at the sacred Gangaramaya Temple for the health and well-being of the people of Lanka on auspicious Duruthu Poya Day," the Indian High Commission here tweeted. The vaccination programme is to be launched in the country on Friday at six hospitals around the capital Colombo, health officials said.

LEISURE

10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



CROSS
1 Adherent of an Indian religion (4)
3 Hop-drying kiln (4)
7 Old-fashioned (12)
9 Golf course (5)
10 Swimmer's breathing-device (7)
11 Evil (6)
13 Take for granted (6)
16 Determine (7)
18 Inspection of accounts (5)
19 Military tribunal (5,7)
20 Flood defence (4)
21 Strong taste (4)

DOWN
1 Diabolical (7)
2 Prestige (5)
3 Evident (7)
4 Large voracious fish (5)
5 Crockery, cutlery, etc (9)
6 Serene joy (5)
8 Customers collectively (9)
12 Make bigger (7)
14 Downfall (7)
15 Microorganisms (5)
17 Tale (5)
18 Main artery (5)

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD
ACROSS
1 Bra, 3 Stacks (Brass tacks), 7 Disagreeable, 8 Chain, 10 Rockets,
13 Turnip, 14 Decade, 15 Night, 21 Assess, 22 Day.
DOWN
1 Bus, 2 Argentina, 3 Sherry, 4 Aga, 5 Killer bee, 6 Educated,
9 Atricious, 10 Coarsened, 11 Senility, 12 Sports, 13 Tee, 14 Carbon,
15 Confab, 16 Tenter, 17 Tenter, 18 Bonfire, 19 Bee, 20 Guy.
By arrangement with The Independent
Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required

BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker



RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson



DADDY DAZE/John Kovaleski



NEED TO KNOW

HOSPITALS

2258622, 2258500

RAILWAY INQUIRY

General Inquiry 139

Toll Free Nos. 1800125159

23864470

U.P. Railways 23868709

ROADWAYS INQUIRY

AIR INDIA Flight Inquiry and Reservation 09910383838

INDIGO AIRLINES New Delhi City Office 435131285, Call Centre 09910383838, Reservation 18001803838, Reservations 43513186; Indigo Airlines AP

25656421/25656431 Reservation 1528181

Air France Flight Inquiry and Reservation 23466262 (City)

25652294 (Airport)

Kuwait Airways Flight Inquiry and Reservation 23354373

port 011-25671580; Terminal I-B 25671576, Palam Road 25671579, 18001803838

JET AIRWAYS Flight Inquiry and Reservation 39841111

EMIRATES Flight Inquiry and Reservation 3373377

Air Canada Flight Inquiry and Reservation 41528181

High Commissioner offered prayers at the sacred Gangaramaya Temple for the health and well-being of the people of Lanka on auspicious Duruthu Poya Day," the Indian High Commission here tweeted. The vaccination programme is to be launched in the country on Friday at six hospitals around the capital Colombo, health officials said.

AP

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AP

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with 3x3 boxes. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that no row, column and no 3x3 box contains the same number. The difficulty level increases through the week.

9/18 © 2012 Creative Puzzles, Inc.

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IMF CHIEF ECONOMIST GITA GOPINATH

DURING AN INTERVIEW WITH PTI REGARDING POST COVID ECONOMIC SITUATION

WEATHER

CITY	MAX	MIN
SINGAPORE	29°C	25°C H
HONG KONG	26°C	20°C H
TOKYO	03°C	01°C H
LONDON	13°C	10°C H
DUBAI	21°C	15°C CL
SAN FRANCISCO	09°C	04°C C H
NEW YORK	-01°C	-07°C C S
MOSCOW	01°C	-03°C R

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

THUMBNAILS



A test screening tent is seen next to a Christmas pavilion in Paris, France on Thursday. IANS

Cannes festival postponed: The 2021 edition of the Cannes Film Festival has been postponed and will now take place in July. In a brief statement, the festival's organisers said that the festival has been pushed by two months due to the pandemic. "Initially scheduled from 11 to 22 May, 2021, the festival will therefore now take place from 6 to 17 July," it added. AP

Giphy purchase: The UK's competition watchdog launched a formal investigation on Thursday into Facebook's purchase of Giphy over concerns it will stifle competition for animated images. The Competition and Markets Authority said the investigation's first stage has a deadline of 25 March to decide whether to trigger a more in-depth probe. AP

Texas hostage: Indian-origin pediatrician kills self, another doctor

HOUSTON, 28 JANUARY

A 43-year-old Indian-American pediatrician diagnosed with terminal cancer shot dead a lady doctor and then killed himself after taking hostages at a medical office in Austin, according to police in the capital city of the US state of Texas.

The armed man was identified as Dr Bharat Narumanchi, who was recently diagnosed with terminal cancer, police said, adding that he had recently been turned down for a volunteer position at the medical facility. Police received a call on Tuesday saying a man walked into the offices of Children's Medical Group (CMG) with a gun and was holding hostages inside the building, the CNN reported, citing Austin Police Department press release.

Initially several hostages were being held, police said, but several escaped and others were allowed to leave, except a pediatrician named Katherine Dodson.

The hostages who escaped the office told officers on the scene that the man was armed with a pistol and what appeared to be a shotgun, police said. He also had two duffel bags. Dr Narumanchi had visited the CMG office a week prior to the shooting and applied for a volunteer position.

The suspect had terminal cancer and had only been given weeks to live, Austin police Lt. Jeff Greenwalt told reporters on Wednesday.

"So we feel like his terminal cancer probably played a large part in whatever it was that occurred in his life and what was happening yesterday," he was quoted as saying by US media reports.

But for now, Greenwalt said, investigators are still trying to unravel what could have led to the hostage situation.

He called for any of the doctor's family and friends who might have knowledge about Narumanchi to contact the homicide department. AP

US terrorism alert warns of politically motivated violence

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 28 JANUARY

The Department of Homeland Security issued a national terrorism bulletin Wednesday warning of the lingering potential for violence from people motivated by anti-government sentiment after President Joe Biden's election, suggesting the January 6 riot at the Capitol may embolden extremists and set the stage for additional attacks.

The department did not cite any specific plots, but pointed to a heightened threat environment across the US that it believes will persist for weeks after Biden's Jan. 20 inauguration.

It is not uncommon for the

federal government to warn local law enforcement through bulletins about the prospect for violence tied to a particular event or date, such as July 4. But this particular bulletin, issued through the department's National Terrorism Advisory System, is notable because it effectively places the Biden administration into the politically charged debate over how to describe or characterize acts motivated by political ideology and suggests that it sees violence aimed at overturning the election as akin to terrorism.

The wording of the document suggests that national security officials see a connective thread between recent violence over the last year

Security department did not cite any specific plots, but pointed to a heightened threat environment across the US that it believes will persist for weeks after inauguration.

motivated by anti-government grievances, including Covid restrictions, the 2020 election results and police use of force. It also singles out racially motivated acts of violence such as the 2019 rampage targeting Hispanics in El Paso, Texas, as well as the threat posed by extremists motivated by foreign terrorist organizations.

Information suggests that some ideologically-motivated violent extremists with objections to the exercise of governmental authority and the presidential transition, as well as other perceived grievances fueled by false narratives, could continue to mobilize to incite or commit violence, the bulletin said.

A DHS statement that accompanied the bulletin noted the potential for violence from a broad range of ideologically-motivated actors. The alert comes at a tense time following the riot at the Capitol by supporters of then-President Donald Trump seeking to overturn the presidential election. DHS also noted violent riots in recent days, an

apparent reference to events in Portland, Oregon, linked to anarchist groups. The domestic terrorism attack on our Capitol earlier this month shined a light on a threat that has been right in front of our faces for years, said Rep. Bennie Thompson, a Mississippi Democrat who is chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee.

I am glad to see that DHS fully recognizes the threat posed by violent, right-wing, domestic extremists and is taking efforts to communicate that threat to the American people. The alert was issued by acting Homeland Security Secretary David Pekoske. Biden's nominee for the Cabinet post, Alejandro Mayorkas, has not

been confirmed by the Senate. Federal authorities have charged more than 150 people in the Capitol siege, including some with links to right-wing extremist groups such as the Three Percenters and the Oath Keepers.

The Justice Department announced charges Wednesday against 43-year-old Ian Rogers, a California man found with five pipe bombs during a search of his business this month who had a sticker associated with the Three Percenter on his vehicle. His lawyer told his hometown newspaper, the Napa Valley Register, that he is a very well-respected small business owner, father, and family man who does not belong to any violent organizations.

Virus aid package acid test for Biden

Success would give new US President a signature accomplishment in his first 100 days

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 28 JANUARY

More than a sweeping national rescue plan, President Joe Biden's \$1.9 trillion Covid relief package presents a first political test of his new administration, of Democratic control of Congress and of the role of Republicans in a post-Trump political landscape. For Biden, the outcome will test the strength of his presidency, his unity agenda and whether, after decades of deal-making, he can still negotiate a hard bargain and drive it into law. For House and Senate Democrats with the full sweep of power for the first time in a decade, drafting, amending and passing a recovery package will show Americans if they can lead the government through crisis.

And for Republicans, the final roll-call vote will indicate whether they plan to be constructive advocates of the minority party or just say-no obstructionists without former President Donald Trump. This

is an opportunity for the Democrats to put forward the things that people went to the polls, put them in office to do, said Rashad Robinson, president of Color of Change, an advocacy organisation.

"It's just really hard to speculate about failure," he said. It's something that I think, you know, we really can't face. So many of our communities are in dire straits.

The immediate challenge is whether Biden will be able to muscle bipartisan support in Congress, achieving a type of unifying moment he aspired to in his inaugural address, or if opposition from Republicans or even some from his own

party will leave him few options but to jam it into law on a party-line vote.

The days and weeks ahead, against the backdrop of Trump's impeachment trial on a charge of inciting an insurrection with US Capitol siege, will set the tone, tenor and parameters of what will be possible in Washington.

Success would give Biden a signature accomplishment in his first 100 days in office, unleashing \$400 billion to expand vaccinations and to reopen schools, \$1,400 direct payments to households, and other priorities, including a gradual increase in the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour. It would establish his presidency as a force to be reckoned with.

US jobless claims drop; still at 847,000 as pandemic rages

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 28 JANUARY

Failure to deliver a deal that has widespread political and popular support would show the limits of Democrats' reach, despite unified party control, and the power of Republicans poised to capitalize on any early stumbles in their efforts to regain control. What the president has proposed and what we are working on in support is to be robustly and quickly help everyone, said Democratic Senator Debbie Stabenow of Michigan, a member of party leadership.

Everybody's lives have been turned upside-down, let's face it, she said. We're going to work our hearts out to get that done. With an evenly divided Senate and a slim majority in the House, Democrats are operating as if they know they are borrowed time, rushing into the Biden era as if there is not a minute to waste. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., is pushing ahead next week, laying the groundwork for a go-it-alone

approach that could allow passage with a simple 51-vote majority, rather than the 60-vote threshold that's typically needed to advance legisla-

tion, under a reconciliation package that is being prepared by Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., the incoming Budget Committee chair.

lion Americans are continuing to receive traditional state unemployment benefits. That is down from nearly 5 million the week before and from a staggering peak of nearly 25 million in May when the virus — and lockdowns and other measures to contain it — brought economic activity to a near halt. The drop suggests that some of the unemployed are finding new jobs and that others have exhausted state benefits. The job market remains under strain even though the spread of vaccines offers hope for an end to the health crisis.

China is modernising its arsenal of nuclear weapons and has shown no interest in negotiating limits. North Korea is at or near the point of being able to threaten the US homeland with a nuclear missile strike. Russia has begun deploying new, exotic-capable devices designed to evade the best of American missile defences. Iran is seen as the biggest missile threat in the Mideast.

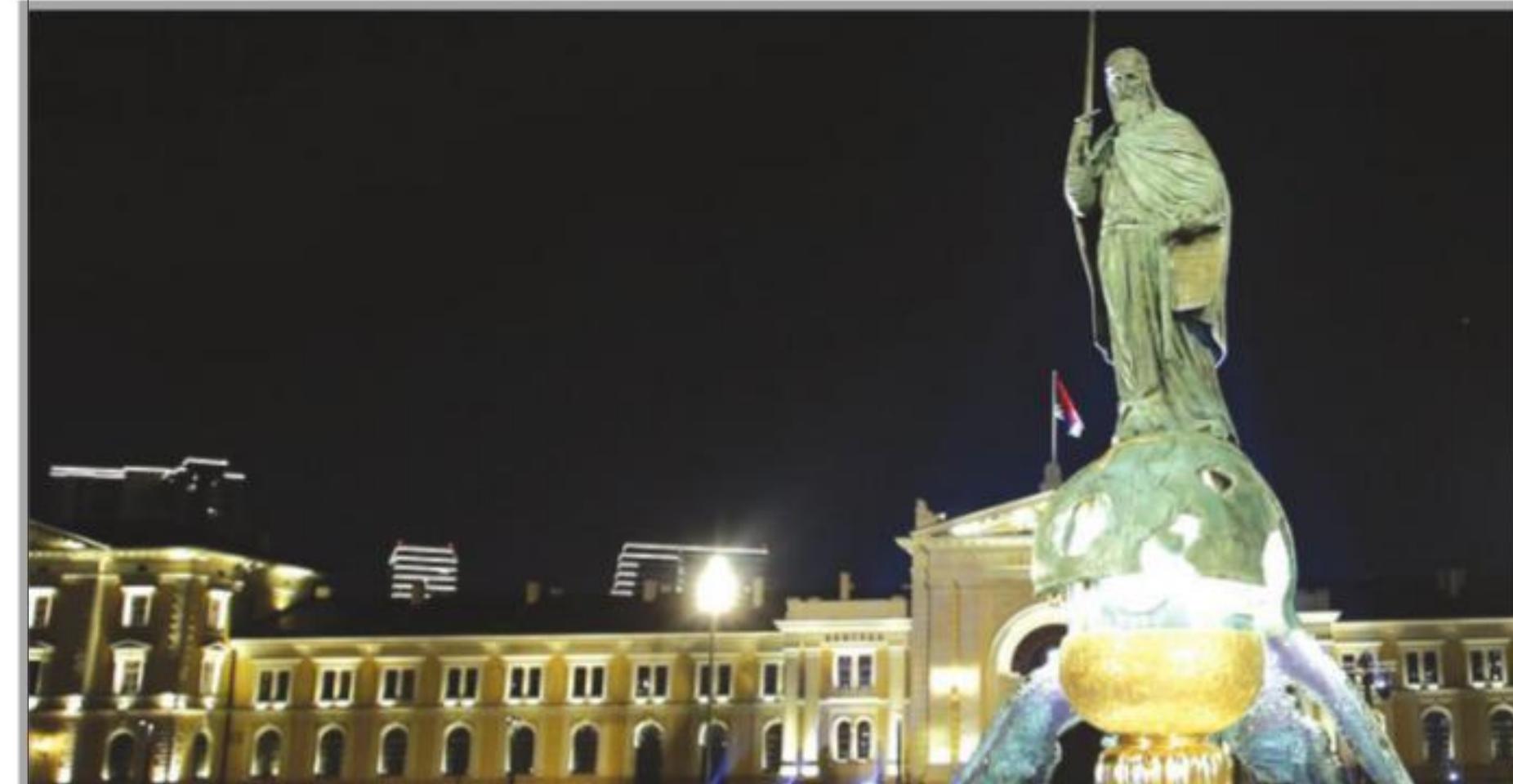
Each of those problems is a priority for President Joe Biden, but he acted on Russia first, reflecting the urgency of extending the treaty even as Biden seeks to take a tougher line with Russian President Vladimir Putin in response to issues like the arrest of opposition figure Alexei Navalny and Russia's alleged involvement in a massive cyber espionage campaign against the US government.

In announcing that Biden and Putin agreed in a phone call Tuesday that they would extend by five years the New START treaty which would otherwise have expired next week the White House alluded vaguely to broader challenges with Moscow. It said the leaders also agreed to explore strategic stability discussions on a range of arms control and emerging security issues.

New START, negotiated while Biden served as vice president, limits the United States and Russia to 1,550 deployed nuclear warheads on strategic weapons like submarines, bomber aircraft and land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles. The limits took effect in February 2018 and would expire in February 2021 unless the parties agreed to extend the deal for up to five years.

Both houses of the Russian parliament voted unanimously Wednesday for the treaty extension. AP

STANDING TALL



Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic unveils a 70-ton bronze sculpture of the legendary founder of the Serbian state, Stefan Nemanja in Serbia. AP

'Take every shift as it comes': No respite for hospitals as UK surpasses one lakh deaths

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LONDON, 28 JANUARY

Critical Care staff prone a Covid patient on the Christine Brown ward at King's College Hospital in London. AP

When the U.K. surpassed 100,000 coronavirus dead this week, it was much more than just a number to Justin Fleming. Lying in a hospital bed with Covid, he knew how easily he could have become one of them, were it not for the medics and other staff who worked to save his life.

"I thought I might not see my partner again, my mum — be a dead friend, be just a stat," said 47-year-old Fleming, who was rushed to King's College Hospital in mid-January struggling for breath. His condition improved after two weeks of receiving oxygen on an acute care ward.

The scale of Britain's coronavirus outbreak can seem overwhelming, with tens of thousands of new infections and more than 1,000 deaths added each day. But on hospitals' COVID-19 wards, the pandemic feels both epic and intimate, as staff fight the virus one patient at a time, and with no end in sight. Fleming says he was amazed by the diversity of the "incredible" staff — including recently qualified

medics, a nurse newly arrived from the Philippines and staff drafted from dental wards and brain injury teams — who eased his isolation and saved him from joining the roster of the dead. "Because you have to be isolated (with Covid), you feel like you've just vanished," he said. "It's almost like you can become a non-person within a week."

Fleming is one of more than 37,000 coronavirus patients being treated in Britain's hospitals, almost double the number of the spring surge. King's College Hospital, which sits in a

diverse, densely populated area of south London, had almost 800 patients earlier this winter. A new national lockdown has seen the number fall to a still-challenging 630. Critical care consultant Dr. Jenny Townsend works on a 16-bed intensive care ward that currently has 30 patients, with two beds squeezed into each bay designed for one. In normal times, one intensive care nurse looks after one patient. The ratio is now as high as one to four.

UK tightens overseas travel rules, warns holidaymakers

Near-total abortion ban takes effect in Poland

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WARSAW, 28 JANUARY

A near-total ban on abortion has taken effect in Poland and triggered a new round of nationwide protests three months after a top court ruled that the abortion of congenitally damaged fetuses is unconstitutional.

Led by a women's rights group, Women's Strike, people poured onto the streets of Warsaw and other cities late Wednesday. More anti-government demonstrations are planned for Thursday evening.

Poland's top human rights official denounced the further restriction of what was already one of the most restrictive abortion laws in Europe, calling it a tragedy for women. The state wants to further limit their rights, risk their lives, and condemn them to torture, said Adam Bodnar, the human rights commissioner, or ombudsman, whose role is independent from the Polish government.

This offensive is opposed by civil society. The only remaining legal justifications for abortion under Polish law are if the woman's life or

health is at risk or if a pregnancy results from a crime like rape or incest.

The restriction of abortion comes amid a broader erosion of civil liberties and democratic norms under right-wing populist governments in Poland, as well as Hungary. The erosion of democratic rights in the two nations also is spreading to other parts of ex-communist central Europe, presenting a challenge for U.S. President Joe Biden as he seeks to restore democratic norms at home and abroad. Poland's constitutional court on Wednesday issued a justification of a controversial October ruling that bans abortions in cases of fetal congenital defects, even ones so severe that there is no chance of survival upon birth.

Speaking to court via video link from jail, Navalny denounced criminal proceedings against him as part of the government's efforts to intimidate the opposition.

You won't succeed in scaring tens of millions of people who have been robbed by that government, he said.

The 44-year-old Navalny, the most well-known critic of

Russia's President Vladimir Putin's government, was arrested January 17 upon his return from Germany, where he spent five months recovering from nerve-agent poisoning that he blames on the Kremlin. Russian authorities have rejected the accusations.

Navalny was jailed for 30 days on request by Russia's penitentiary service, which charged that he had violated probation terms from a suspended sentence on a 2014 money-laundering conviction, which he rejected as politically driven. He now faces accusations in two separate criminal probes.

The Moscow Region Court on Thursday rejected his appeal against the arrest.

During the court hearing, Navalny's defense argued that he was undergoing reha-

bilitation in Germany and was unable to register with authorities as required by probation terms during the period.

His lawyers also contested his arrest, charging that due process was repeatedly violated. In his remarks during the hearing, Navalny denounced his jailing during a court hearing quickly staged at a police station as a mockery of justice.

It was demonstrative lawlessness intended to scare me and all others, he said.

In an apparent effort to thwart the next wave of rallies set for Sunday, police on Wednesday searched Navalny's apartment, a rented accommodation where Navalny's wife, Yulia, has been living and residences of several of his associates and supporters.

Creating an impact

MOHAMMAD TAREEQ

In the crowded space of B2B marketing, setting oneself apart and creating a distinct brand identity is tricky business. When it comes to startups, this challenge is even more daunting. This is why a traditional promotional strategy that talks repeatedly about the goodness of one's product and service is not sufficient anymore. B2B marketers today require a diverse set of strategies to attract potential consumers, convert those leads into sales and establish a lasting relationship with them. This is where content marketing is making a major difference.

Content marketing broadly refers to a strategy of creating engaging but non-promotional content and distributing it among a wide array of potential audience through multiple social and digital media channels. This strategy may include engaging blogs, thought leadership articles and interesting visual content that offer informational or emotional value to the reader/viewer. The more compelling the content, the larger and deeper its impact is likely to be on one's target audience.

For startups looking to make a

splash in a busy marketspace, content marketing emerges as a very useful strategy to set themselves apart. The emergence of a fledgling content to commerce model in recent years proves the power of content in creating a ready market for a new product or service.

What engages or attracts an audience to a particular content - be it verbal or visual? Certainly, not a story that blatantly promotes a product. That would rather be spam! Content marketers do not create promotional content that directly shoves their products onto the readers. An intelligent content marketing strategy finds unique ways to talk about their industry, its challenges and bright spots. It talks about the subjects that people in that industry would like to read.

To cite an instance, a neutraceutical product manufacturer or distributor must create content on the power of using food as medicine. Informative, engaging and value-driven content not only helps attract an audience, it is also shared widely on the social media and generates a larger discussion on the subject. Make no mistake, this also draws a large num-

ber of potential consumers to one's homepage and also converts those leads into buyers. In fact, content marketing brings in considerable traffic through organic searches.

A distinct content marketing strategy works in a systematic way to establish one's brand as a thought leader in the industry. By inducing a strong network of contributors, bloggers and experts, B2B marketers are further diversifying their content strategies today. Adequately amplifying and repurposing content is an inclusive part of this content marketing strategy.

Good digital content is not only readily consumable but is also easily shareable. Organising webinars on pertinent industry related challenges, involving other industry experts in panels and creating engaging video stories has emerged as a viable peer-to-peer marketing tactic. Over time, this strategy elevates one's brand to the position of a thought leader. A cohesive and vibrant content strategy helps startups as well as mid-level players develop into an industry voice that is looked up to by consumers as well as peers.

The role of content marketing is

not limited to attracting new audience to one's brand; it also plays a significant role in nurturing an existing consumer base. In a difficult business terrain where even a minor hiccup can push away a consumer to another waiting brand, building a lasting relationship of trust and loyalty requires multidimensional engagement efforts.

What are the ways in which an organisation interacts regularly with its existing customers? While customer handling service is the first interface, an effective content marketing outreach is another one.

Offering a unique customer experience today includes not just delivering a quality product or service but ensuring that one is attentive and responsive to the needs or questions of the customer. Undeniably, quality content marketing activities help augment the customer experience.

Content marketing specialists today dedicate an entire array of content activities to engage existing brand customers including deployment of what is often termed as custom content. This custom content delivers a series of informative and research based inputs such as white

papers, surveys, email newsletters, industry reports etc. to ensure organisations are communicating constantly with their consumers.

Apart from reinforcing the brand image and values, this approach helps build a strong affinity and endear the consumer to the brand. In a digital age when an overwhelming majority of people turn to the internet to seek answers and solutions, quality content marketing is an inalienable part of an overall digital marketing strategy for B2B organisations.

For startups looking to create a niche for themselves in a crowded market, quality content creation accompanied by an intelligent content distribution strategy is emerging as a main differentiator. Content marketing works because it does much more than just attract a buyer to a product. It helps one's brand communicate one-on-one with the consumer, addresses their questions and needs and engages them in a wider discussion about the industry or society. However, consistency and quality are the essential elements of a successful content marketing strategy.

The writer is CEO, Valasys Media

JITIN CHADHA

Social media has become a potent medium for information, communication and collaboration. Proliferation of smart devices, emergence of next-generation technologies and ubiquitous internet connectivity have fuelled the rise of several social media platforms in the past few decades. Their accessibility, ease of use, versatility and ability for two-way communication in real-time has aided their exponential growth. The Covid-19 lockdown has invariably given a fillip to the digitisation and also led to a surge in screen time, with netizens spending a considerable amount of time daily on social media.

Social media has disrupted the design landscape by allowing a flow of information like never before. For this visual-centric and consumer-first industry, social media platforms allow for a customer connect that is more personalised and intimate as opposed to fashion runways and design events that may be comparatively less accessible to a layperson. The sharing of photographs and videos of live events and collections on popular platforms enable design aficionados to stay abreast of the latest developments from anywhere and anytime. It also aids designers in gaining real-time feedback and voicing their opinions on important issues about the industry. The use of social media in design has also ushered the democratisation of the creative process, with customers becoming more exacting in their choices and increasing their participation in the design process. The rise of social media bloggers and influencers has given a new dimension to the design industry. These professionals help in popularising designers, influencing trends and keeping the audience engaged with the design fraternity. Social media posts, be it on picturesque landscapes in multiple hues or a glimpse of a recent vacation, also

NAVIGATING A DYNAMIC ENVIRONMENT

serve as an inspiration for designers for their upcoming products and services.

Design professionals, especially novices, are increasingly leveraging social media to identify and build a consumer base, secure their loyalty through regular interactions and events and weave a seamless recall across multiple platforms. From merely serving as a communication and networking tool, the role of social media today has witnessed a paradigm shift to marketing products and services, building a brand personality, generating sales and building a loyal consumer base. Vernacularisation and transcreation have emerged as formidable social media trends in design to reach out to diverse audiences across geographical regions, languages and culture. Social media analytics such as the use of relevant hashtags, tracking likes, shares and comments give a strategic insight to design professionals on what their consumers like, what new features are likely to resonate with them and gauge their sentiment towards the brand. The leveraging of new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality in social media is an enabler to fuel creativity, adopt innovation and enhance the customer experience in the design industry.

Nevertheless, some challenges remain in the use of social media in the design industry. Foremost among them is the breach of copyright by copying designs blindly and portraying another individual's creation as



Leveraging of social media in the design process is here to stay, given the proliferation of smart devices, emergence of next-generation technologies and ubiquitous internet connectivity

one's own. The breaching of copyright hampers creativity, dents the industry's reputation and incurs massive costs due to protracted legal battles. In an era where consumers are increasingly vocal about their opinions and choices, the design industry needs to portray the intent behind their initiatives, and also be careful of what is put out on social media. Even a slight miscommunication or not tailoring the content according to language, geography, or culture may backfire and harm their reputation.

Spates of cybercrimes such as hacking, phishing, etc are also formidable challenges for individuals and businesses worldwide. These uncertain times of the pandemic has necessitated the design industry to adapt and evolve in tune with the changing requirements over time. It has also underscored the need to go the extra mile through creativity, out-of-the-box thinking and innovation to survive and thrive.

Nevertheless, the interplay of technology, innovation and con-

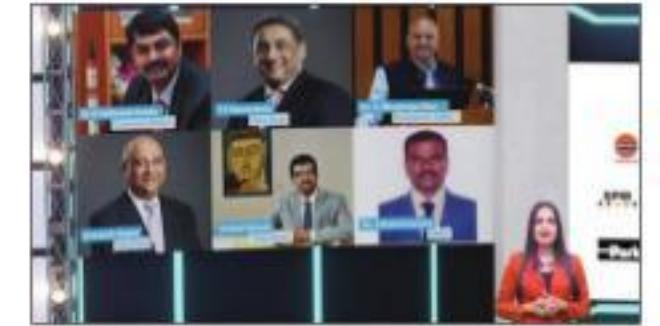
ducive policy landscape presents an exciting time for the design industry's evolution. The leveraging of social media in the design process is here to stay, given the thrust on digitisation, the advent of newer technologies and a conducive policy landscape. The future will hinge on how designers and their companies use social media to navigate the dynamic environment and stand out from the competition.

The writer is director, Indian Institute of Art and Design

PLUS POINTS**Award bestowed**

Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society (Seeds), a national humanitarian organisation working in disaster management for the past 27 years, has been awarded the prestigious annual Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar 2021 by the government of India recently.

The award was instituted by the government of India to recognise and honour the invaluable contribution and selfless service rendered by individuals and organisations in India in the field of disaster management. It is announced every year on 23 January celebrating the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. The third edition of Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar received an overwhelming response as there were 371 valid nominations from institutions and individuals.

Significant assemblage

Tata Steel and Condition Monitoring Society of India (CMSI), Visakhapatnam jointly organised the first-ever virtual International Conference on Condition Monitoring (ICCM) 2021 recently. The theme of it was "Agile and Sustainable Advances in Equipment Reliability through Condition Monitoring".

The two-day conference witnessed over 2000 participants including industry experts, practitioners, thought leaders, academicians, OEMs, research scholars and eminent speakers from across the globe. Over 80 research papers on various subjects were presented during the conference. Dr G Satheesh Reddy, chairman, DRDO and T V Narendran, CEO and managing director, Tata Steel, graced the inaugural function as the chief guest and guest of honour respectively. The keynote address during the inaugural function was delivered by Bhujanga Rao, ISRO chair professor, NIAS, IISc Bangalore and president, CMSI.

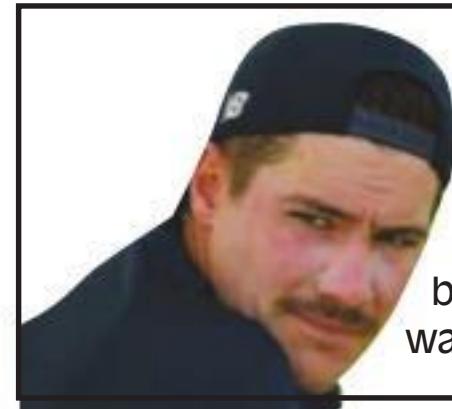
Creating awareness

Prof Partha P Majumder, national science chair, government of India, distinguished professor and founder, National Institute of Biomedical Genomic, Kalyani Emeritus professor, Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata inaugurated the exhibition "Superbugs: The End of Antibiotics?" at Science City, Kolkata recently. The exhibition was organised by National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) in collaboration with Science Museum, Group, London, Wellcome (UK) and was supported by ICMR. The exhibition explored how society is responding to the enormous challenge of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and antibacterial resistance (ABR) in particular featuring scientific research from across the globe and personal stories of those waging war on Superbugs.

It consisted of 30 exhibits, divided in three major sections- microscopic, human and global. To help visitors gather information about the exhibits an audio guide app had been developed, which could be downloaded from the URL 192.168.0.2.

Wonderful opportunity

Applications for admission into the undergraduate (UG) programmes led by the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) in India at the Indian School of Business & Finance (ISBF), New Delhi will be closing on 6 February 2021. ISBF is offering bachelor's programmes in economics, economics and finance, economics and management, business and management, and accounting and finance. ISBF has an intake of only 120 undergraduate students across its five programmes. It follows a rounds-based rolling admissions policy. Every admission round comprises three steps: filling the application form, appearing for the ISBF entrance test iMET, based on which candidates will be shortlisted for the next step, and appearing for the personal interview (PI). For details visit: <https://www.isbf.edu.in/bsc-undergraduate-courses/bsc-admissions/>



For more updates

BURNS' PLAN

England opener Rory Burns (photo, left) said that their job will be to bat deep and provide a platform for the middle-order to rack up a big first innings score and drive the game forward during their upcoming Test series in India.

www.thestatesman.com

THUMBNAILS

Chief selector quits: Sri Lanka's selection committee chairman Ashantha de Mel has resigned from his post after the national team's 0-2 defeat against England in the recent home Test series. Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) said in a statement that Ashantha has resigned from the post with immediate effect, citing personal reasons.

Tv rights undecided: The television rights in the UK for England's tour of India remain undecided with just a week left for the series-opener in Chennai from 5 February. 'Telegraph Sport' reported that Star India, the host broadcaster of the series, was considering showing the tour via its streaming app Hotstar instead of selling it to a conventional broadcaster like Sky.

Empty Maracan: South American players have often reached the heights of European soccer in recent years, and European coaches are now doing the same in South America. Abel Ferreira is looking to become the second Portuguese coach to win the Copa Libertadores title. He will lead Palmeiras against Santos on Saturday in an all-Brazilian and all-Sao Paulo final at an empty Maracan Stadium in Rio de Janeiro.

Messi returns as Barca rallies in Copa del Rey

AGENCIES
MADRID, 28 JANUARY

Lionel Messi returned from suspension to help Barcelona avoid an upset in the Copa del Rey, scoring a goal and setting up another in a 2-1 come-from-behind win over second-division club Rayo Vallecano in the round of 16.

Messi, coming off a two-game suspension for hitting an opponent during the Spanish Super Cup final, scored an equalizer in the 69th minute and led the buildup to Frenkie de Jong's 80th-minute winner that put Barcelona into the last eight of the Copa for an 11th straight season.

De Jong also helped set up Messi's goal with a perfect through ball to Antoine Griezmann, who crossed for the Argentine playmaker to score his 18th goal in 11 matches against Rayo.

Fran Garca had put the hosts ahead on a breakaway in the 63rd.

Barcelona needed extra time to advance past third-division club Cornell in the round of 32. It also played extra time in both Spanish Super Cup matches this year – a win against Real Sociedad in the semifinals and a loss to Athletic Bilbao in the final.



Messi was sent off in that final against Athletic on Jan. 17. He missed the game against Cornell and against Elche in the Spanish league. Barcelona won both matches 2-0.

"It's been a very tough month, with several away matches, but the team showed a good mentality and deserved these victories," Barcelona coach Ronald Koeman said. "We're improving in several areas recently."

It was the first time Messi played in a Copa match this season. He had been rested in previous games.

The last time Barcelona failed to reach the last eight in the Copa was in the 2009-

10 season, when it was eliminated by Sevilla in the round of 16.

With a team mixing regular starters and reserves, Barcelona was in control from the start at the Valdecas Stadium in Madrid. The Catalan club was denied by the woodwork three times, twice in the first half with De Jong and Riqui Puig, and once in the second with a free kick taken by Messi.

De Jong had a goal disallowed by offside in the 65th.

Rayo was coming off a loss to Mallorca but previously had won six in a row in all competitions. It sits fourth in the second-division standings, in good position to earn pro-

motion.

Barcelona trails Spanish league leader Atltico Madrid by 10 points and is three points behind second-place Real Madrid entering the second half of the season.

Barcelona's American defender Sergio Dest did not play on Wednesday because of a thigh problem.

Real Madrid and Atltico Madrid were eliminated before the last 16.

SEVILLA CRUISES

Luuk de Jong scored two first-half goals as Sevilla cruised to a 3-0 win over Valencia, reaching the quarterfinals for the second time in three seasons.

Ivan Rakitic also scored in the first half for Sevilla, which also made it to the last eight in 2019. The five-time Cop champion will be trying to reach the semifinals for the first time since 2013.

Valencia won its eighth Copa title in 2019 and reached the quarterfinals last season, before losing to Granada.

De Jong scored in the 20th and 33rd minutes at the Ramn Snchez-Pizjn Stadium, and Rakitic added the third in the 38th with a neat lob over Valencia goalkeeper Jaume Domnech from inside the area.

ManU slumps to surprise loss; Chelsea draws

AGENCIES
LONDON, 28 JANUARY

Just when Manchester United's players were starting to have the look of potential champions, they threw in their sloppiest performance of the season to lose to the Premier League's worst team.

A 2-1 home loss to last-place Sheffield United not only prevented Man United from returning to first place at the expense of fierce rival Manchester City.

It also undid much of the impressive work Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's team has produced in recent months, exposing its lack of depth and defensive frailties in an alarming 90 minutes at Old Trafford.

"We're surprised," Solskjaer said after United's first loss in the league since Nov. 1. "We have been the most consistent team the last few months but it just hit us today."

Suddenly, it's advantage Man City in a title race that has ebbed and flowed all season. City, which has won its last seven games, leads by a point from United and has a game in hand over its neighbor around the halfway stage.

A series of defensive blunders led to Sheffield United's deflected 74th-minute winner scored by Oliver Burke that also enlivened the battle to avoid relegation.

That's two victories in three league matches for Chris Wilder's team, which was winless until beating Newcastle on Jan. 12 and heading for one



of the worst campaigns in the Premier League's 29-year history.

Now, the gap to safety is only 10 points and the so-called "great escape" could be on.

Thomas Tuchel's first game in charge of Chelsea ended in a 0-0 draw at home to Wolves, while Burnley twice came from behind to beat Aston Villa 3-2.

England goalkeeper Jordan Pickford's error allowed third-place Leicester to equalize in the second half in a 1-1 draw at Everton, while Brighton and Fulham drew 0-0.

SLOPPY UNITED

Man United's players have made a habit of coming from behind to win games in the league they have done so seven times, all away from home but they came up short this time against Sheffield United, conceding a winning goal Solskjaer described as "so poor, so sloppy."

Goalkeeper David De Gea passed the ball out straight to

visiting midfielder John Lundstram, who passed for Burke to have a shot that was blocked by Axel Tuanzebe. Lundstram collected the loose ball and again fed Burke, who was given time and space to send in a shot that struck the outstretched leg of Tuanzebe and went in off the underside of the crossbar.

That gave Sheffield United the lead for the second time, with Kean Bryan's 23rd-minute header from a corner having been canceled out by Harry Maguire's header, which also came from a corner in the 64th from left back Alex Telles.

Solskjaer rotated his squad by fielding Tuanzebe, United's fourth-choice center back, and Telles while resting central midfielders Fred and Scott McTominay, who have been instrumental to United's unbeaten three-month run in the league. Bruno Fernandes and Paul Pogba regularly misplaced passes in midfield and United missed the presence of Edinson Cavani, who was also benched.

Weakened Goa face tricky test against SC East Bengal

PRESSTHISOF INDIA
MARGAO, 28 JANUARY

by step, we are moving towards our objective and the way the coach wants the team to play."

The last time these two sides met, 10-man SCEB held Goa to a 1-1 draw and the highlight of the game was Bright Enobakhare's stunning solo goal.

The Nigerian has since then made a major impact in all games, despite Robbie Fowler's side netting the least goals this season (11). But that doesn't mean Goa will be focusing on Bright alone.

"He is a good player, there's no doubt about it and has improved SC East Bengal since his arrival but there's no such plan as to stop one player because if we start concentrating on him, there are nine other outfield players who can hurt us," said Miranda.

"We will play the way we play."

SCEB will be keen to bounce back after seeing their seven-match unbeaten streak being broken by leaders Mumbai City FC.

Despite ending on the losing side, the Kolkata side dominated possession and was alive in the game right until the end. With Goa's key players absent, SCEB assistant coach Tony Grant believes they can certainly fancy their chances against their in-form opponents.

Athletes can get in line for vaccines like everyone

WASHINGTON, 28 JANUARY

The world may yet gather in Tokyo this summer for an Olympics already postponed once because of the pandemic.

Listen to Olympic officials, and it's almost a certainty. Thomas Bach made that clear Wednesday when he vowed that the Olympics would be staged in July and that this time there is no back up plan.

One other thing the president of the International Olympic Committee claims is certain: They won't be stealing your vaccine shots to make the games happen.

Bach said Wednesday that the IOC was "not in favor of athletes jumping queue" for vaccines, which he said should go first to health care workers and then to those in high risk of severe complications from Covid-19.

That's comforting to know, assuming the IOC sticks to the commitment not to jump lines. It's also a 180-degree turn from what another top Olympic official said a week earlier when quizzed on how the games could go ahead as planned in July.

Dick Pound, a Canadian and former IOC vice president, was tasked with floated the idea that getting athletes vaccinated early would pave the way for the games to begin July 23

as now scheduled.

In Canada where we might have 300 or 400 hundred athletes to take 300 or 400 vaccines out of several million in order to have Canada represented at an international event of this stature, character and level. I don't think there would be any kind of a public outcry about that, Pound told Sky News.

Think again. Pound's trial balloon landed with a thud felt far from Ottawa, and with good reason. Imagine, if you will, the optics of healthy young athletes getting vaccines so they can play sports while older people desperately refresh their browsers to try and find shots so that they can hug their grandchildren.

Indeed, while sports leagues early in the pandemic secured testing that the general public couldn't get, the line seems to have been drawn when it comes to getting the vaccine early. The World Health Organization is on record as saying athletes should not receive priority, and the major sports leagues aren't pushing at least publicly to get theirs first.

"We're not jumping the line," NBA medical vice president Dr. Leroy Sims said over the weekend. Neither is the NHL, even if means Canadian and American teams may not be meeting this season because of virus restrictions.

Banning bouncers for U-18 players ridiculous: Vaughan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KARACHI, 28 JANUARY

Lambasting the "ridiculous" suggestion of banning bouncers in under-18 cricket, former England skipper Michael Vaughan says it would be potentially more dangerous if youngsters are exposed to a short-pitched delivery straightaway in men's cricket.

Recently, concussion specialist Michael Turner, the media director of the International Concussion and Head Injury Research Foundation, had urged authorities to consider banning the use of bouncers against players below the age of 18 in order to limit long-term complications.

His suggestion had come after the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), the custodians of the game's laws, started a consultation process to discuss if bowlers should continue to be allowed to use bouncers.

However, Vaughan did not find any merit in the suggestion.

"It is a ridiculous suggestion and yet another example of the world we live in these days where anything risky is deemed too dangerous," Vaughan wrote in 'The Telegraph'.

Nauman secured Pakistan's advantage when he induced Markram forward to block and the ball nicked the bat's shoulder and gave Abid his second

Pakistan seize control of 1st Test

AGENCIES
KARACHI, 28 JANUARY

Pakistan grabbed three late wickets through its spinners and left South Africa in trouble at 187-4 in its second innings at stumps on day three of the first Test on Thursday.

Aiden Markram and Rassie van der Dussen led South Africa's resistance in overturning a 158-run-first-innings deficit. Their half-centuries in a gritty 127-run stand nosed the Proteas ahead after both batsmen were dismissed within the day's last 33 balls, along with Faf du Plessis for 10. South Africa was effectively 29-4 with two days to play.

Leg-spinner Yasir Shah (in photo) bagged 3-53 and Nauman Ali 1-27.

Aiden Markram made 74 and Van der Dussen 64, digging in together for nearly 31/2 hours. At stumps, captain Quinton de Kock was yet to score and nightwatchman Keshav Maharaj was 2 not out.

Shah ended the threatening stand by having Van der Dussen caught close to the wicket, and then had du Plessis plumb leg before wicket off a sharp googly. Du Plessis made a successful lbw video referral before he scored and was also dropped on 6.

Nauman secured Pakistan's advantage when he induced Markram forward to block and the ball nicked the bat's shoulder and gave Abid his second



catch at silly point.

Earlier, Pakistan was bowled out for 378 in the morning. Shah leading the tailenders with an unbroken 38 runs.

South Africa scored only 47 runs in the middle session and lost only Dean Elgar, for 29 to Shah when wicketkeeper Mohammad Rizwan dived full length in front of the stumps and plucked a stunning two-handed catch.

Markram and Van der Dussen rode their luck.

Markram survived a video referral on 22 and was dropped four runs later by captain Babar Azam at 71-1. Van der Dussen was adjudged lbw by umpire Aleem Dar off seamer Faheem Ashraf soon after reaching his half-century but the South African got the decision overruled.

Van der Dussen overhauled the deficit in the same over when he guided Ashraf through gully to third man for a boundary before falling to Shah.

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