



Pages 12 | 5 | LC

KOLKATA | NEW DELHI | SILIGURI | BHUBANESWAR



YEDIYURAPPA
EXPANDS CABINET



MERKEL'S
MODERATION



WHEN POLITICS AT
HOME IMPACT
FOREIGN POLICY

twitter.com/TheStatesmanLtd
facebook.com/thestatesman1875

SMITH: SUGAR AND
SPICE AND
EVERYTHING NICE?



P4

P6

P7

P12

WEATHER

Partly cloudy sky. Dense fog in the morning. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 19 and 03 degrees Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: Nil

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 100% Min: 57%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 18.5°C (-1) Min: 03.2°C (-4)

SUN RISES SUN SETS

07:15 hrs 17:46 hrs

MOON RISES MOON SETS

09:01 hrs 18:57 hrs

THUMBNAILS



At least 40 shanties were gutted as a major fire broke out at a slum in north Kolkata's Bagbazar area on Wednesday evening with fire-fighters struggling for hours to bring the blaze under control.

P4

Delhi schools: After 10 months, the Delhi government Wednesday decided to allow reopening of all schools outside Covid-19 containment zones for 10 and 12 classes from 18 January in view of the coming board exams. The government, however, made it clear that physical attendance will not be compulsory and that students will attend schools only with consent of parents. Schools had been shut since March last year amid lockdown in the wake of outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic.

P2

KD Singh arrested: The Enforcement Directorate has arrested former TMC MP and businessman K D Singh on money laundering charges. A Delhi court has sent him to three days ED custody after the agency said he was needed for custodial interrogation. The agency charged the 59-year-old with non-cooperation in the investigation and arrested him under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act.

P4

Verdict decriminalising adultery should not be applicable to armed forces, Centre tells SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 13 JANUARY

The Centre on Wednesday urged the Supreme Court that its 2018 verdict decriminalising colonial era offence of adultery under the Indian Penal Code should not be made applicable to the armed forces.

A bench comprising Justices R F Nariman, Navin Sinha and K M Joseph, after issuing the notice to the PIL petitioner, one Joseph Shine, and others on the Centre's plea, referred the matter to Chief Justice S A Bobde for setting up of a Constitution Bench which can clarify the position.

In a path-breaking 2018 verdict, a five-judge Constitution bench had unanimously struck down Section 497 (adultery) of the Indian Penal Code and declared that adultery is not a crime and the penal provision was unconstitutional

During the hearing, Attorney General K K Venugopal said that under the relevant rules of the armed forces, adultery is a ground for court martial if it is a ground for court martial for unbecoming conduct and

therefore armed forces should be exempted from the purview of the 2018 judgment of the Constitution bench. He said that a clarification is needed in this regard from the top court.

In a path-breaking verdict, a five-judge Constitution bench headed by the then CJI Dipak Misra unanimously struck down Section 497 (adultery) of the Indian Penal Code and declared that adultery is not a crime and the penal provision was unconstitutional as it denied the individuality of women and treated them as "chattel of husbands". The court, in its September 2018 judgment, however had said that adultery would continue

to be a ground for seeking divorce in matrimonial disputes.

The Centre, in its interim plea filed in connection with the PIL, sought clarification and a direction that the judgment be not made applicable on special statutes and rules governing the armed forces which take actions on its personnel for indulging in adulterous relationships to ensure discipline in forces. It has been said when jawans and officers are posted in forward areas, their families are taken care of at base camp by other officers and the rules, providing actions for indulging in adulterous or promiscuous activity, help in maintaining discipline.

"To continue on this path,

I think it's causing tremendous danger to our country, and it's causing tremendous anger," Trump said Tuesday, his first remarks to reporters since last week's violence.

Democrat Representative Jamie Raskin, a drafter of the article of impeachment.

Trump, who would become

the only US president twice impeached, faces a single charge of "incitement of insurrection." The four-page impeachment resolution relies on

more violence ahead by his followers, leaves the nation at an uneasy and unfamiliar juncture before Democrat Joe Biden is inaugurated January 20.

"If inviting a mob to insurrection against your own government is not an impeachable event, then what is?" said

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 13 JANUARY

Fresh bird deaths and avian influenza cases were reported in Uttar Pradesh on Wednesday, while in neighbouring Delhi, civic bodies banned the sale of poultry products, even as the city government asked people not to panic and eat completely cooked eggs and chicken.

Unusual mortality among birds has also been reported in some districts of Jharkhand and Jammu and Kashmir, as per a statement of the Union fisheries, animal husbandry and dairying ministry, which has asked state gov-

ernments not to ban supply of poultry products.

However, bird flu outbreak has been confirmed only in Delhi, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Maharashtra and Gujarat till now, according to the ministry.

"Further, cases of unnatural mortality of birds have been reported in Ganderbal district of Jammu and Kashmir and four districts of Jharkhand," it said.

On banning of poultry products, the ministry said it has been found that many states are banning supply of poultry and poultry products

from other states. This will add to the negative impact on the poultry industry and hence, states are requested to reconsider such decision, it said.

In the national capital, the ban on sale, storage of poultry or processed chicken meat by shops and restaurants has been imposed by the North Delhi Municipal Corporation, the East Delhi Municipal Corporation and the South Delhi Municipal Corporation. Earlier, the Delhi government had imposed a ban on sale of processed and packaged chicken brought from outside the city, after bird flu cases were confirmed in the national capital on Monday.

The nearly 150 metres long tunnel that was constructed beneath the border fence from across the border was detected by BSF troops in Bobiyan village during an operation this morning.

A BSF spokesman said that the border force in view of Republic Day has heightened vigil along the international border. An intelligence input about the tunnel was received this morning.

The tunnel has opening of about 2 to 3 ft and is about 30 ft deep. Sandbags with Karachi markings were found near the opening of the tunnel that has its origin in Pakistani territory. BSF has already laid a multi-layered security grid on the IB following incidents of tunnelling by Pakistan, the spokesman said.

CRPF and police personnel were scanning the area and conducting door-to-door investigation in the nearby villages to see whether any terrorists had already infiltrated through the tunnel. SNS

Donald Trump on verge of second impeachment after Capitol siege

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON, 13 JANUARY

President Donald Trump is on the verge of being impeached for a second time in an unprecedented House vote Wednesday, a week after he encouraged a mob of loyalists to "fight like hell" against election results just before they stormed the US Capitol in a deadly siege.

While Trump's first impeachment in 2019 brought no Republican votes in the House, a small but significant number of leaders and lawmakers are breaking with the party to join Democrats, saying Trump violated his oath to protect and defend US democracy.

The stunning collapse of



Trump's own incendiary rhetoric and the falsehoods he spread about Biden's election victory, including at a White House rally on the day of the January 6 attack on the Capitol, in building its case for high crimes and misdemeanors as demanded in the Constitution.

Trump took no responsibility for the riot, suggesting it was the drive to oust him rather than his actions around the bloody riot that was dividing the country.

"To continue on this path,

I think it's causing tremendous danger to our country, and it's causing tremendous anger," Trump said Tuesday, his first remarks to reporters since last week's violence.

A Capitol police officer died from injuries suffered in the riot, and police shot and killed a

woman during the siege. Three other people died in what authorities said were medical emergencies. Lawmakers had to scramble for safety and hide as rioters took control of the Capitol and delayed by hours the last step in finalising Biden's victory.

At least five Republican lawmakers, including third-ranking House GOP leader Liz Cheney of Wyoming, were unswayed by the president's logic. The Republicans announced they would vote to impeach Trump, cleaving the Republican leadership and the party itself.

"The President of the United States summoned this mob, assembled the mob, and lit the flame of this attack," said Cheney in a statement. "There has never been a greater betray-

al by a President of the United States of his office and his oath to the Constitution."

Unlike a year ago, Trump faces impeachment as a weakened leader, having lost his own reelection as well as the Senate Republican majority.

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky is said to be angry at Trump, and it's unclear how a Senate impeachment trial would play out. *The New York Times* reported that McConnell thinks Trump committed an impeachable offense and is glad Democrats are moving against him. Citing unidentified people familiar with McConnell's thinking, the *Times* reported McConnell believes moving against Trump will help the GOP forge a future independent of the divisive, chaotic president.

In the House, Republican leader Kevin McCarthy of California, a top Trump ally, scrambled to suggest a lighter censure instead, but that option crumbled. So far, Republican Representatives John Katko of New York, a former federal prosecutor; Adam Kinzinger of Illinois, an Air Force veteran; Fred Upton of Michigan; and Jaime Herrera Beutler of Washington state announced they, too, would join Cheney to vote to impeach.

The House tried first to push Vice President Mike Pence and the Cabinet to intervene, passing a resolution Tuesday night calling on them to invoke the 25th Amendment to the Constitution to remove Trump from office. But Pence has made it clear he would not do so.

MORE REPORTS ON PAGE 10



If the Left Front and the Congress are genuinely anti-BJP, they should be behind Mamata Banerjee.

TMC MP SOUGATA ROY

SAYS MAMATA BANERJEE IS THE 'REAL FACE OF SECULAR POLITICS AGAINST THE BJP'

Delhi schools to reopen for 10, 12 classes from 18 Jan

Afer 10months, Delhi govt decides to allow reopening of schools in view of board exams; students' physical attendance won't be compulsory and they will attend schools only with parents' consent

SNS & PTI

NEW DELHI, 13 JANUARY

After 10 months, the Delhi government today decided to allow reopening of all schools outside Covid-19 containment zones here for 10 and 12 classes from 18 January in view of the coming board exams.

The government, however, made it clear that physical attendance will not be compulsory and that students will attend schools only with consent of parents.

"Keeping in view CBSE board exams, permission is being granted for schools to reopen

for Classes 10 and 12 from January 18 for practicals, project work and counselling. Students will be called with parent's consent and will not be bound to come," Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia, who also holds the education portfolio, tweeted.

Schools are thus reopening in the national capital after 10 months. They had been shut since early last year amid the outbreak of the novel coronavirus pandemic and lockdown.

They have been instructed by the Delhi government's Directorate of Education (DoE) to follow all Covid guidelines when classroom studies resume

on Monday. It said that schools that reopen will have to follow the standard operating procedure or guidelines issued in view of the Covid pandemic, such as social distancing, compulsory wearing of a face mask and sanitisation of hands.

The Union education ministry has already announced that board exams for 10 and 12 classes will be conducted from 4 May to 10 June, even though the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) is yet to release an examination date sheet. Over 3 lakh students have registered from the Delhi region for the class 10 CBSE board

exam while over 2.5 lakh candidates have registered for the class 12 exam. Following the spread of the coronavirus infection (Covid-19), schools switched to virtual classrooms to ensure there is no disruption in education of children, and many continue to do so. A circular issued by the DoE today said, "In order to conduct the activities pertaining to pre-board prepara-

tions and practical work, the head of government, aided and unaided recognised schools may call the students of classes 10 and 12 only to school with effect from January 18, 2021."

The Delhi government's order applies to only schools outside the containment zones. Students, teachers and staff members living in these zones will not be allowed to come to their schools. The circular stated that schools have been asked not to hold any assembly and physical outdoor activities. Their principals have been advised to guide children not to share books, notebooks and stationery items. According to the DoE cir-

cular, schools are being reopened so that doubts and difficulties of students could be cleared by teachers with the intention of promoting students' mental well-being through the syllabus has been mostly completed.

"All internal assessment should be done during this period and proper records should be maintained," the circular stated.

It also urged schools to focus on "modifications in the question papers" from this academic year and ensure enough written practice. Though schools in Delhi will open for the first time since March last year, several states had partially reopened

schools after October last year.

The DoE has also asked schools to provide emotional and trauma support to students and teachers upon their return to the campus. "On-campus orientation of students and teachers to be conducted to give emotional and trauma support for their readiness with new normal of stringent physical distancing, face mask guidelines and hygiene guidelines. Handouts detailing guidelines for COVID-19-appropriate behaviour should be given to students or parents," it stated. Covid protocols include social distancing, staggered timings, and hygiene, the DoE said.

Classified

PUBLIC NOTIFICATIONS

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform that the following vehicles/salvage have been lying in our premises at MGF Toyota at Plot No. 10, Daulatbad Industrial Area, Dwarka Expressway, Sector-10, Gurugram and Plot No. 15A, Institutional Area, Sector-18, Gurugram for a very long time and the customers/owners have not lifted the same despite various requests. The details are as under:-

Name	Vehicle Number	Model
Ranji Sawhney	DL4CAE1389	COROLLA
Sukhwinder Singh	HR55KTS8585	INNOVA
Neeur Yadav	HR36M9966	COROLLA
Sushil Kumar	HRK6X8790	QUALIS
Kishan Chand Sharma	DL1V80569	QUALIS
Sandeep Shokeen	HR55AT2261	QUALIS
Kwai Shun Cho	DL3CAE7278	COROLLA
Kuldeep Yadav	HR55FT8894	INNOVA
Rajiv Manchanda	HR66A2981	INNOVA
Surender Kumar	HR66A2981	INNOVA
Anil Kumar	DL1CT2458	ETIOS
Meru Cars Company Pvt. Ltd.	DL1RY8096	ETIOS
Naresh Sharma	HR26C7914	ETIOS
M K Overseas Pvt. Ltd.	DL7CG1579	INNOVA
Prem Singh	HR26CJ0500	ALTIMUS
Manisa	HR51BC7432	ETIOS
ABP Travels and Facility Management Pvt. Ltd.	HR55AA6361	ETIOS
Sachin Kumar	DL1CM6479	COROLLA
Naresh Kumar Yadav	HR26BL7540	FORTUNER

The above customer/owner are hereby requested for the last time to lift their respective vehicles/salvage within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which the same shall be disposed off and the proceeds thereof shall be adjusted against the amount due towards the respective customer/owners towards the holding/parking charges. The said vehicles/salvage have been occupying a lot of space of our workshop resulting into a great inconvenience to one and all.

Murlidhar Kumar
Deputy General Manager, Bodyshop
Capital Vehicles Sales Ltd., Gurugram

PUBLIC NOTICE
The general manager informed that File No. 2301 Old No. 400, Sector-10, Green Field Colony, Faridabad, Haryana, state, did exist in the name of Mr. Deepak Kumar, son of Mr. Dayanand Kumar, R/o - DDA-MIG Flats, Pocket A, Vihar Pur Extention New Delhi - 110048. On 14. 03. 2018, Mr. Deepanand Kumar, son of Mr. Deepak Kumar and Dr. Kapil Kumar his wife submitted his nomination dated 14.03.2018 before the concerned authority. On 24. 03. 2018, Dr. Kapil Kumar, son of Mr. Deepak Kumar, son of Mr. Deepak Kumar and joint effector of the above-mentioned plot. Any objection in the form of objection letter of late Mr. Deepak Kumar submit their objections within 30 days to Urban Improvement Committee, New Delhi, Plot No. P-22, Connaught Place, New Delhi, India.

NOTICE – My client Miss Sona Newar has initiated a complaint case being C.C. No. 749 of 2019 before the Hon'ble SCDR, West Bengal against the opposite parties viz. 1) Vedic Conclave Private Limited, of 1/18, Upper Wood Street, Kolkata-700017; 2) Mr. Raj Kishore Mod, 3) Mr. Raju Mod, both are Directors & responsible persons of Vedic Conclave Private Limited, of 1/18, Upper Wood Street, Kolkata-700017; 4) Shriti Floriculture Pvt. Ltd., of 1/18, Upper Wood Street, Kolkata-700017; 5) Ahinsa Commercial Pvt. Ltd., of Todi Mansion, 2nd Floor, P-15, India Exchange Place Extn., Kolkata-700073; 6) Calcutta South Sales Pvt. Ltd., of 26, Mukundpur Road, Ramnagar, Ramnagar, 7) Centre Commercial Pvt. Ltd., of No. 84, Kansarpuram Road, Kolkata-70025; 8) Complete Commercial Pvt. Ltd., of No. BA/16, Deshpandhu Nagar, Asha Apartment, Kolakata-700059; 9) Midway Commsale Pvt. Ltd., of No. 689, Lake Town, Block 'A', Ground Floor, Kolakata-700089; 10) Toptrack Commercial Pvt. Ltd., of No. 19B/1, Paddapukur Road, Ground Floor, Kolakata-700020; 11) Brittan Infracon Pvt. Ltd., of No. 26, Belvedere Road, 15th Floor, Alipore, Kolakata-700027; 12) Expose Vinayak Pvt. Ltd., of No. 2, Garstang Place, Kolakata-700001; 13) Satyam Dealmark Private Limited, of No. 61, Prince Anwar Shah Road, 2nd Floor, C.I.T. Building, Flat-59, Kolakata-700033; 14) Highrank Projects Advisory (P) Ltd., of No. 16, Bldg. Das Chatterjee Lane, Shobpur, Howrah-711022. In spite of the notice none appeared on behalf of the O.P.s and as such the next date has been fixed on 11.02.2021 for filing written version by the O.P. Nos. 1 to 6 and 11 & 12 and the O.P.'s 7 to 10 and 13 to 15 are requested to appear before the concerned court on the date fixed, failing which the matter will be heard ex

R. Prasad & Associates
6, Old Post Office Street
Basement Floor
Kolkata-700091
Mob. No.: 983154266

THE STATESMAN

KOLKATA
Statesman House,
4, Chowringhee Square
Kolkata-700011
Tel: (033) 22127070-76,
(033) 41071700
Fax: (033) 2212-6181 / 7107-1780
Email: thestatesman@vsnl.com
thestatesmanclassified@gmail.com

DELHI
Statesman House,
148, Barakhamba Road,
New Delhi-110001
Tel: (011) 23115911
Fax: (0120) 4171421
Email:
delhistatesman@gmail.com
delhi@thestatesmangroup.com

BHUBANESWAR
Plot 3A, Zone B, Sector A, Mancheswar Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010.
Tel: (0674) 2588060/61/2586371,
Telefax: 0674-2588061
Email:
bhubaneswar@thestatesmangroup.com

SILIGURI
13A, Dabgram Industrial Growth Centre,
P.O. Satellite Township,
Siliguri-734015
Tel: 2568615, 2568063 and 2568787. Fax: (0353) 2568296,
Email:
siliguri@thestatesmangroup.com

SHIMLA
Cabin No. 305, P. C. Chambers
Near Jodha Niwas
The Mall Shimla-171001, H.P.

**AIR-SURCHARGE: Kathmandu - Rs. 2, Eastern Region - Re. 1
All other stations in India - Re. 1**

R. Prasad & Associates
6, Old Post Office Street
Basement Floor
Kolkata-700091
Mob. No.: 983154266

SNS & PTI
NEW DELHI, 13 JANUARY

TENDER

JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY
Sealed tenders are invited for Tender No.: JU / NIT / EQUIP / 16 / 20-21 Dept. of Power Engg.
Details are available on the website at www.jadavpu.edu.in under tender link.

Registrar

DATES

**IN THE COURT OF
MS. VANDANA JAIN**
Addl. District Judge-07
South-East,
Patiala Court, New Delhi
PC No. 26/2020
Date of hearing : 25-01-2021

**IN THE COURT OF
S. V. CHANDRA BOHLI**
Addl. District Judge-07
South-East,
Patiala Court, New Delhi
PC No. 26/2020
Date of hearing : 25-01-2021

**IN THE COURT OF
R. SHRIKADESH KUMAR**
Addl. District Judge-07
South-East,
Patiala Court, New Delhi
PC No. 26/2020
Date of hearing : 25-01-2021

**IN THE COURT OF
R. SHRIKADESH KUMAR**
Addl. District Judge-07
South-East,
Patiala Court, New Delhi
PC No. 26/2020
Date of hearing : 25-01-2021

**IN THE COURT OF
R. SHRIKADESH KUMAR**
Addl. District Judge-07
South-East,
Patiala Court, New Delhi
PC No. 26/2020
Date of hearing : 25-01-2021

**IN THE COURT OF
R. SHRIKADESH KUMAR**
Addl. District Judge-07
South-East,
Patiala Court, New Delhi
PC No. 26/2020
Date of hearing : 25-01-2021

**IN THE COURT OF
R. SHRIKADESH KUMAR**
Addl. District Judge-07
South-East,
Patiala Court, New Delhi
PC No. 26/2020
Date of hearing : 25-01-2021

**IN THE COURT OF
R. SHRIKADESH KUMAR**
Addl. District Judge-07
South-East,
Patiala Court, New Delhi
PC No. 26/2020
Date of hearing : 25-01-2021

**IN THE COURT OF
R. SHRIKADESH KUMAR**
Addl. District Judge-07
South-East,
Patiala Court, New Delhi
PC No. 26/2020
Date of hearing : 25-01-2021

**IN THE COURT OF
R. SHRIKADESH KUMAR**
Addl. District Judge-07
South-East,
Patiala Court, New Delhi
PC No. 26/2020
Date of hearing : 25-01-2021

**IN THE COURT OF
R. SHRIKADESH KUMAR**
Addl. District Judge-07
South-East,
Patiala Court, New Delhi
PC No. 26/2020
Date of hearing : 25-01-2021

**IN THE COURT OF
R. SHRIKADESH KUMAR**
Addl. District Judge-07
South-East,
Patiala Court, New Delhi
PC No. 26/2020
Date of hearing : 25-01-2021

**IN THE COURT OF
R. SHRIKADESH KUMAR**
Addl. District Judge-07
South-East,
Patiala Court, New Delhi
PC No. 26/2020
Date of hearing : 25-01-2021

**IN THE COURT OF
R. SHRIKADESH KUMAR**
Addl. District Judge-07
South-East,
Patiala Court, New Delhi
PC No. 26/2020
Date of hearing : 25-01-2021

**IN THE COURT OF
R. SHRIKADESH KUMAR**
Addl. District Judge-07
South-East,
Patiala Court, New Delhi
PC No. 26/2020
Date of hearing : 25-01-2021

**IN THE COURT OF
R. SHRIKADESH KUMAR**
Addl. District Judge-07
South-East,
Patiala Court, New Delhi
PC No. 26/2020
Date of hearing : 25-01-2021

**IN THE COURT OF
R. SHRIKADESH KUMAR**
Addl. District Judge-07
South-East,
Patiala Court, New Delhi
PC No. 26/2020
Date of hearing : 25-01-2021

**IN THE COURT OF
R. SHRIKADESH KUMAR**
Addl. District Judge-07
South-East,
Patiala Court, New Delhi
PC No. 26/2020
Date of hearing : 25-01-2021

**IN THE COURT OF
R. SHRIKADESH KUMAR**
Addl. District Judge-07
South-East,
Patiala Court, New Delhi
PC No. 26/2020
Date of hearing : 25-01-2021

**IN THE COURT OF
R. SHRIKADESH KUMAR**
Addl. District Judge-07
South-East,
Patiala Court, New Delhi
PC No. 26/2020
Date of hearing : 25-01-2021

**IN THE COURT OF
R. SHRIKADESH KUMAR**
Addl. District Judge-07
South-East,
Patiala Court, New Delhi
PC No. 26/2020
Date of hearing : 25-01-2021

**IN THE COURT OF
R. SHRIKADESH KUMAR**
Addl. District Judge-07
South-East,
Patiala Court, New Delhi
PC No. 26/2020
Date of hearing : 25-01-2021

IN THE COURT



In a democracy, laws are made by elected representatives of the people, not by the honourable courts or committees. Any mediation, debate or discussion should have happened among the farmers and the Parliament.

NAVJOT SINGH SIDHU
CONGRESS LEADER

The Statesman
NEW DELHI, THURSDAY 14 JANUARY 2021

03

NDMC budget plans smart public service delivery

New Delhi Municipal Council, in its 2021-22 budget, focuses on plans such as smart roads, dedicated toilets for third gender, public e-charging stations, drinking water fountains & sewage treatment plants

SNS & PTI
NEW DELHI, 13 JANUARY

Smart roads, dedicated toilets for third gender, public e-charging stations, drinking water fountains, sewage treatment plants, setting up of an Integrated Command and Control Centre and not imposing any new tax for the next financial year, are among the plans listed by the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) in its annual budget presented today.

NDMC chairman Dharmendra presented a budget with a moderate surplus of Rs 136.18 crore in the current financial year and Rs 172.47 crore for financial year 2021-22, claiming its commitment to a "well governed and financially sustainable municipal body".

"NDMC has not proposed any new tax for the next financial year in spite of a number of reliefs granted this year. In parallel, NDMC reported completion of major projects like Integrated Command and Control Centre this year and a series of projects for the next financial year focusing on uninterrupted power supply, other civic services and strengthening its internal governance," Dharmendra said in his budget speech.

"In the pandemic scenario the NDMC budget is focused on uninterrupted, tech-enabled, smart, reliable, strong, swasth, futuristic



and caring public service delivery."

New Delhi Municipal Council has prepared a budget which conveys our commitment to make NDMC a national pride and global benchmark as a resilient, inclusive, responsive, sustainable and future ready urban local body," he claimed.

The NDMC chairman pointed out that the financial year 2020-21 commenced in an unprecedented manner with a complete national lockdown due to the Covid pandemic, which subsequently intensified followed by phase-wise unlocking process.

"I can say with confidence that NDMC has been successful in ensuring all municipal services in an uninterrupted manner befitting its leading persona among

national local bodies. NDMC has taken its response and learning from Covid-19 challenge as a take-off point for its future development strategy to make NDMC a shock-proof city."

Dharmendra presented the financial projection of the total receipts of the budget estimates 2021-22 of Rs 4,299 crore against Rs 3,645.25 crore provided in revised estimates 2020-21. The actual receipts in 2019-20 were Rs 3,648.39 crore.

The budget estimates 2021-22 for revenue receipts is Rs 3590.81 crore against Rs 3143.25 crore provided in revised estimates 2020-21 and actual of Rs 3,308.63 crore in 2019-20.

The budget estimates 2021-22 for capital receipts are Rs 708.19 crore against Rs 502 crore provided in revised esti-

mates 2020-21 and actual of Rs 339.75 crore in 2019-20.

"The next phase of setting up of Integrated Command and Control Centre includes four important modules on property tax, estate management, workshop management and asset management.

While the first two will significantly bring in ease of doing business for the citizens, the other two will add to the efficiency and accountability in NDMC," Dharmendra said.

"The concept plan for development work at KG Marg and Barakhamba Road will be developed and work will be taken up in FY 2021-22. Concept plan for development work at Mandi House circle has been prepared and this too will be taken up in 2021-22," he said.

Standard NDMC kiosks, smart public toilet units for women, dedicated toilets for third gender, modular rainwater harvesting pits, development of "happiness areas", smart fountains, drinking water fountains, sewer treatment plants, making NDMC buildings safe for seismic effect, are among the proposals listed in the budget.

On the proposal for public e-charging station, the NDMC chairman said, "Under phase-I, out of 100 locations for EV charging station, 55 have already been installed.

Under phase two, out of 45 locations for EV charging station, 17 have been installed.

In nine locations installation work has been completed and would be commissioned shortly. For remaining 19 locations (including 6 plaza locations) the work is in progress."

"NDMC proposes to install 5MW capacity Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) as a pilot to meet the peak load demand and improvement of power factor. Battery energy storage helps balance the fluctuations in supply resulting from the variability of renewable energy generation sources in the network," he said.

"Resurfacing of 19 roads earlier and 23 additional roads has been completed including lanes and by-lanes wherever resurfacing was due. Tender for 2 small electric road sweeping machines on hiring basis has been invited and the work would be awarded in this FY 2020-21," he added.

Standard NDMC kiosks, smart public toilet units for women, dedicated toilets for third gender, modular rainwater harvesting pits, development of "happiness areas", smart fountains, drinking water fountains, sewer treatment plants, making NDMC buildings safe for seismic effect, are among the proposals listed in the budget.

On the proposal for public e-charging station, the NDMC chairman said, "Under phase-I, out of 100 locations for EV charging station, 55 have already been installed.

Under phase two, out of 45 locations for EV charging station, 17 have been installed.

HP CM asks officials to complete medical college projects on time

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 13 JANUARY

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur on Wednesday asked state officials to ensure that all the medical college projects being executed in the state should be completed within the stipulated period. Reviewing the progress of construction of new medical college buildings in the state here, the chief minister said the focus should also be on quality construction.

He said that executing agencies should avoid delay as it results in cost escalation. He directed the officers of the state government to remove all the hindrances so that sites for the projects were cleared from all angles. He said that an effective mechanism should also be evolved to constantly monitor progress in these projects by optimum use of information technology. Thakur said that a proper system of coordination must also be evolved for time bound completion of these projects as they were very prestigious for the state government.

He said that on completion of all these medical colleges, the health infrastructure would get a new boost in the state. He said that presently the state has six medical colleges in government sector, one in private sector. Besides, one All India Institute of Medical Sciences is coming up at Bilaspur and a PGISatellite Centre is being established in Una district. The chief minister said that the executing agencies must also ensure that there is no delay in the construction of projects due to petty reasons. He said that Principals of these Medical Colleges must keep close coordination with the executing agencies as well as



the contractors. He said that Dr Y.S. Parmar Government Medical College Nahan is being constructed by spending an amount of Rs 261 crore. He said that the teaching block of the Medical College should be completed by March next year. He said that the new medical college building complex would have State of Art facilities. Thakur said that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Government Medical College Chamba is being constructed by NBCC for which the Government of India has released Rs 170.10 crore and state government had also provided its share of Rs 18.90 crore. He said that the total cost of this project is Rs 290 crore and in first phase 200 bedded hospital, boys and girls hostels, residential complexes etc. would have an automated waste and laundry tube system, automated material transport system, nurse call system, fire and life safety measures and smart IP phones facilities etc. Thakur said that construction of a superspecialty block of Indira Gandhi Medical College, Shimla near Chamoliya was nearing completion and would have a total bed capacity of over 300. He said that the whole project would be completed within the next four-five months. He directed the Public Works Department to immediately take up the issue of widening of link road leading to the Super Specialty Block. The chief minister also reviewed the progress in construction of new OPD of Indira Gandhi Medical College, Shimla which would be completed by 31st March this year. Chief Secretary Anil Khachi said that the executing agencies must give a comprehensive plan of progress in the projects so that the same could be reviewed constantly. He said that an App could also be developed to review the progress of the works.

Ist consignment of Covid vaccine reaches U'khand

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
DEHRADUN, 13 JANUARY

Uttarakhand received the first consignment of Covid-19 vaccine on Wednesday.

A total of 1,13,000 doses of vaccines reached Dehradun and were dispatched to all the districts by evening.

State health secretary Amit Negi said, "Of a total 1,13,000 doses received by Uttarakhand, 1,640 doses are being made available to health care workers of central health units, 3,450 armed force medical services and 1,07,530 doses to health care workers of state government and private health services.

Thus, 1,12,620 vaccine doses will be distributed today."

Vaccine vehicles had reached the state capital well in advance and after getting the vaccine supply moved to their respective districts. Uttarakhand is expecting to



receive the new consignment of the Covid-19 vaccine soon.

Vaccination will be done in a phased manner; vaccination will be given to health care workers from January 16.

Plea in HC claims govt vehicles being scrapped in violation of guidelines

PTI
NEW DELHI, 13 JANUARY

The Delhi High Court Wednesday sought response of the Centre and the AAP government on a plea which has claimed that they were disposing of end-of-life vehicles in contravention of the guidelines.

Justice Prathiba M Singh issued notice to the Ministry of Transport, Delhi government, Delhi Transport Corporation and MSTC Ltd -- state owned e-commerce company through which tenders for the scrapping of vehicles were floated -- seeking their stand on the petition by FE.

The Society for Alternate Fuel and Environment (SAFE) has claimed that the tenders violated the Guidelines for Scrapping of Motor Vehicles in Delhi, 2018, the Automot-

tive Industry Standard issued by the Transport Ministry and the Guidelines for Environmentally Sound Facilities for Handling, Processing and Recycling of End of Life Vehicles.

MSTC was however accepting bids on behalf of unauthorised scrapers and declaring them as successful bid-

behalf.

SAFE has contended that under the guidelines only authorised scrapers were permitted to participate in the tender process.

MSTC was however accepting bids on behalf of unauthorised scrapers and declaring them as successful bid-

ders, the plea said, adding that the company was in the process of handing over the vehicles to them.

SAFE has claimed that there was an apprehension that the unauthorised scrapers would not scrap the vehicles in the manner prescribed under the guidelines and therefore, it could result in damage to the environment.

The court, after hearing brief arguments, said any auction of the vehicles for scrapping would be subject to the final outcome of the petition.

It also directed that the ministry, Delhi government, DTC and MSTC in their affidavits would confirm whether they were adhering to the guidelines for scrapping of motor vehicles and listed the matter for further hearing on April 14.

In 2017-18 a total of 9017 students took admission, in 2018-19 a total of 10607, in 2019-20 a total of 9165 and in 2020-21 a total of 12007 students took admission.

The spokesperson said in the 2020-21 academic session, department of technical education took an initiative for differently abled students (Speech and Hearing Impaired) to study various polytechnic courses at government polytechnic at Sector 26, Panchkula.

For the benefit of these students, no admission and tuition fee has been charged and facility of interpreter in Indian Sign Language has been provided for better understanding of the curriculum.

Diploma in Computer Engineering And Architectural assistance has been started with 15 seats in each branch and 100 per cent admissions have been achieved.

Enrolment in govt polytechnics up by 16 pc in Haryana

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 13 JANUARY

Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, government polytechnics in Haryana have recorded an increase of 16 per cent in enrolment this session.

An official spokesperson said that Government technical institutions in the state, including 37 government polytechnics and four government aided polytechnics, have managed to make around 90 per cent admissions for the session 2020-21.

In order to encourage these efforts and maintain this tempo, the department has decided to reward 17 principals of the government technical institutions and 14 officers or officials of the Haryana State Technical Education Society (HSTES) with letters of appreciation.

in 2017-18 a total of 9017 students took admission, in 2018-19 a total of 10607, in 2019-20 a total of 9165 and in 2020-21 a total of 12007 students took admission.

The spokesperson said in the 2020-21 academic session, department of technical education took an initiative for differently abled students (Speech and Hearing Impaired) to study various polytechnic courses at government polytechnic at Sector 26, Panchkula.

For the benefit of these students, no admission and tuition fee has been charged and facility of interpreter in Indian Sign Language has been provided for better understanding of the curriculum.

Diploma in Computer Engineering And Architectural assistance has been started with 15 seats in each branch and 100 per cent admissions have been achieved.

Haryana receives 2,41,500 doses of Covishield vaccine

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 13 JANUARY

The Haryana health department is all set to start the process of administering Covid-19 vaccine from 16 January after receiving 2,41,500 doses of Covishield vaccine on Wednesday.

Sharing details, additional chief secretary (ACS), health, Rajeev Arora said the health department received 2,41,500 doses of Covishield Vaccine at Chandigarh International Airport today.

The vaccine was then taken to the state vaccine store in Kurukshetra where it was handed over to civil surgeon Kurukshetra.

Arora said that around 113 Immunization Session Sites have been identified across the state and the health care workers (HCWs) will be administered the vaccine on Wednesday.

Each session site will administer vaccine to 100 beneficiaries by the Vaccinator.

The information in this regard has already been uploaded on the CoWIN portal. Soon messages will be sent to the beneficiaries regarding the administration of vaccine," said Arora.

Stating that the entire exercise of conducting the dry run proved to be beneficial, the ACS said that after conducting the dry run it came to light that one vaccinator can administer the vaccine to 100 beneficiaries.

On the care to be taken after the vaccine is administered, Arora said that the beneficiaries will ensure adherence of social distancing norms, respiratory hygiene, hand hygiene after the vaccine is administered.

Advocate T P Singh appeared for the ministry and accepted notice on its

social distancing norms are adhered to. "The messages of each beneficiary will be checked before giving the vaccine.

The beneficiary will wait after the administration of the vaccine and will be guided on the precautions to be taken," he added.

On the care to be taken after the vaccine is administered, Arora said that the beneficiaries will ensure adherence of social distancing norms, respiratory hygiene, hand hygiene after the vaccine is administered.

Mann said these blacklaws were not laws, but warrants of death for 'annadatas' (farmers). He said that on one side, sons of the farmers of Punjab were getting martyred while fighting the enemies on the border of the country and on the other hand, farmers were getting martyred by agitating against

the dictator ruler of their own country.

"The ruler of the country (Prime Minister Narendra Modi) is immersed in the ego of power. Due to his arrogance, he is not listening to the legitimate demands of farmers, who have been struggling on the roads for months, risking their lives in this severe cold. He is forcing them to struggle on the roads in this harsh weather," he added.

Mann said the Central government should not play with the feelings of the farmers and repeal the black laws immediately. He further expressed sorrow over the decision of the Supreme Court, saying that it was very unfortunate that even the apex court could not understand the problems of the farmers properly and the farmers could not get justice from the court.

"The ruler of the country (Prime Minister Narendra Modi) is immersed in the ego of power. Due to his arrogance, he is not listening to the legitimate demands of farmers, who have been struggling on the roads for months, risking their lives in this severe cold. He is forcing them to struggle on the roads in this harsh weather," he added.

"More than 65 farmer brothers who were agitating have lost their lives. But, the Modi government and BJP leaders are giving mental pain to the farmers and hurting their self-esteem by making false statements and allegations against them," said Mann. The AAP leader said that the Modi government was taking away the Constitutional rights of common people of the country and was attacking the democratic structure of India in violation of the dignity of the constitution.

Mann said these blacklaws were not laws, but warrants of death for 'annadatas' (farmers). He said that on one side, sons of the farmers of Punjab were getting martyred while fighting the enemies on the border of the country and on the other hand, farmers were getting martyred by agitating against

the dictator ruler of their own country.

"The ruler of the country (Prime Minister Narendra Modi) is immersed in the ego of power. Due to his arrogance, he is not listening to the legitimate demands of farmers, who have been struggling on the roads for months, risking their lives in this severe cold. He is forcing them to struggle on the roads in this harsh weather," he added.

"More than 65 farmer brothers who were agitating have lost their lives. But, the Modi government and BJP leaders are giving mental pain to the farmers and hurting their self-esteem by making false statements and allegations against them," said Mann. The AAP leader said that the Modi government was taking away the Constitutional rights of common people of the country and was attacking the democratic structure of India in violation of the dignity of the constitution.

Mann said these blacklaws were not laws, but warrants of death for



Actor Kamal Haasan-led MNM on Wednesday announced a 7-point agenda for industry in the poll-bound Tamil Nadu, proposing a slew of measures to give fillip to the sector. ■ TANS

'Coolie begar' stir: A symbolic rally was held up to the bank of the Sarayu river in Bageshwar on Wednesday to mark 100 years of an agitation by peasants of Kumaun region against the exploitative practice of engaging forced labour known as 'coolie begar' during the British era.

PTI

Pongal greetings: Tamil Nadu Governor Banwarilal Purohit, chief minister K Palaniswami, deputy CM O Panneerselvam, DMK president M K Stalin and several leaders on Wednesday greeted people on the occasion of Pongal.

PTI

Nadda's TN visit: BJP president J P Nadda will be visiting poll-bound Tamil Nadu on Thursday.

PTI

Villagers & Hindu Vahini activists clash

MEERUT, 13 JANUARY

Hindu Yuva Vahini has lodged a complaint against Villagers of Kajmabad Goon of Partapur area of the district followed by a clash between the activists of Hindu organisation and locals in the village during a bike rally. Hindu Yuva Vahini was carrying out a bike rally on Tuesday in village Kajmabad Goon as a part of their campaign for Ram Temple in Ayodhya. The villagers objected to the loud DJ and requested to shut it down as a village woman had passed away there. This led to the scuffle and a case was registered against some villagers on complaint of Vahini. Panicked villagers then called on ADG of Meerut zone and requested him for a fair enquiry in the case.

SNS

Calcutta HC allows Gangasagar Mela, stresses need for e-bathing

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA/SAGAR ISLAND,
13 JANUARY

A Division Bench of Chief Justice TBN Radhakrishnan and Justice Arjita Banerjee of Calcutta High Court today gave its nod to Gangasagar Mela this year and the holy dip. Those seeking the holy dip should be persuaded to go for e-bathing and given free kit to do it when they come to the Mela ground, it was directed.

Those who seek to have the holy water by mail would be given it, it was directed. Only the postal charges will be taken from them, it was further directed.

In an interim order on 8 January, this Division Bench expressing satisfaction with the security arrangements of this fair, felt e-bathing should be encouraged by the state government. There should be safety kiosks and e-bathing kit

should be given to those seeking to take the holy dip.

Ajoy Dey in a PIL had sought if the fair is held then the entire Sagar island be declared a containment zone. The PIL expressed doubts whether people from outside the state will be able to maintain social distance and the difficulties of communicating the corona restrictions to many people coming from outside the state.

Dey had moved court seeking a slew of restrictions on celebrating Durga and Kali pujas.

The HC had passed a string of directions which were pre-conditions to ensure preventing spread of the pandemic. At least 54,000 people across the country have so far received holy water from the confluence of the Ganga and the Bay of Bengal, as the West Bengal government arranged for e-snān facility to avoid crowding at the Gangasagar Mela.

Kolkata airport sees rise in both passenger & cargo flights

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 13 JANUARY

The Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International (NSCB) airport, Kolkata, which recently handled a consignment of Covid vaccines which arrived from Pune, is also witnessing a robust footfall in passenger and commercial daily flights.

An airport official said, "The airport was handling cargo flights even during the lockdown period when passenger flights were banned. The recent arrival of the Covid vaccines, around 10 lakh doses, at the airport in a SpiceJet turbo-prop aircraft further proved the efficiency of the handling staff at the airport. This added a feather to our cap. Cargo operations have seen a steady rise, especially from the North-East."

The official highlighted that alongside cargo aircraft, the airport is also handling a substantial amount of passenger flights which include both domestic and international. Yesterday, apart from the arrival of the vaccines, the airport handled a total of 231 passenger flights with 14,503 arriving passengers and 15,416 in departure. A total of 115 passenger flights arrived at the airport while 116 took off. Officials confirmed that nearly 29.7k passengers travelled through the airport. At the same time, the airport has been handling several international flights mainly from Dubai, Doha and Bangladesh. Recently, the airport received around 1,065 passengers in 11 flights to and from the three countries. However, the direct Kolkata-London flights are yet to resume operations though flights from the UK are flying till Delhi and Bangalore.

This indigenously developed Covid-19 vaccine was manufactured in Bharat Biotech's Biosafety level 3 (BSL-3) containment facility in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)-National Institute of Virology.

COVAXIN is a highly purified and inactivated 2-dose SARS-CoV-2 vaccine and according to the

NYAY scheme ~ UDF poll plank in Kerala

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
13 JANUARY

Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) in Kerala has decided to come up with a 'people's manifesto' for the upcoming Assembly election, with NYAY (Nyuntam Aay Yojana) scheme. During the Lok Sabha election Congress leader Rahul Gandhi had proposed to include it.

Addressing a Press conference here, Opposition leader Ramesh Chennithala said the UDF has decided to envisage comprehensive development of the state where the thrust would be for clean and good governance.

"Our aim is to ensure a corruption-free state government. We will be implementing NYAY scheme proposed by Rahul Gandhi, in Kerala

when UDF comes to power. The UDF will guarantee that all poor people get Rs 6,000 per month under the scheme," said Chennithala at the Press conference, which was attended by UDF convenor MM Hassan, Muslim League leader MK Muneer and Congress leader Benny Behman MP.

Chennithala said that draft of 'people's manifesto' is getting ready and the final manifesto will come after receiving opinions from people. He also sought public views on issues that need to be brought into the election manifesto.

He said Congress MP Shashi Tharoor would play a major role in preparing the UDF manifesto. "He (Tharoor) has informed that he will associate with the preparations for UDF's election manifesto," said Chennithala.

Bharat Biotech ships COVAXIN to 11 cities

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD, 13 JANUARY

Bharat Biotech today air-shipped its indigenously developed Covid-19 vaccine, COVAXIN, to 11 cities across the country, donating 16.5 lakh doses to the government of India. The vaccine maker has received a purchase order of 55 lakh doses from the Centre though it is yet to complete phase III clinical trials after receiving emergency authorization.

According to a statement released by Bharat Biotech the company has shipped the first batch of vaccines to Ganavaram (Vijayawada), Guwahati, Patna, Delhi, Kurukshestra, Bangalore, Pune, Bhubaneswar, Jaipur, Chennai and Lucknow. Each vial of vaccine contains 20 doses and can be stored between 2 and 8 degree Celsius.

This indigenously developed Covid-19 vaccine was manufactured in Bharat Biotech's Biosafety level 3 (BSL-3) containment facility in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)-National Institute of Virology.

COVAXIN is a highly purified and inactivated 2-dose SARS-CoV-2 vaccine and according to the

maker the product development and clinical trial data has so far generated 5 publications which have been submitted to international peer reviewed journals, 4 of which have been accepted and will be published.

The publication of phase II trial is undergoing the peer review process but the absence of the critical phase III data has given rise to scepticism among some experts over the public rollout.

The company expressed its deepest gratitude to the nation, all the clinical trial volunteers and its partners for making this a successful and milestone public-private partnership for the development of India's first Covid-19 vaccine."

2 K'taka districts receive 2.5 lakh doses

Two districts of Karnataka on Wednesday received 2.5 lakh doses of Covid-19 vaccine, Covishield, as health minister K Sudhakar said the state would soon also get 20,000 doses of Bharat Biotech's Covaxin, adds PTI from Bengaluru.

The minister said the only difference between the two vaccines is Covishield has five ml of vaccine in a vial and Covaxin has 10 ml.

'Beti Bachao' and 'Mission Shakti' are just hollow slogans for Yogi Adityanath government in UP

CONGRESS LEADER PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA

ON SPENDING CRORES OF RUPEES ON FALSE PROPAGANDA ABOUT WOMEN'S SECURITY



i
ndia

BSY expands Cab, 7 ministers sworn-in

K'taka CM drops excise minister H Nagesh from ministry

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

BENGALURU, 13 JANUARY

Ending a long wait, Karnataka chief minister B S Yediyurappa expanded his 17-month old Cabinet on Wednesday, inducting seven ministers. He dropped excise minister H Nagesh from the ministry.

The exercise led to resentment within BJP, with some MLAs expressing reservations about MLAs not elected by the people being made ministers, lack of representation with most ministers still from Bengaluru and Belagavi districts, and also on their "seniority or sacrifice" not being considered.

The ministers sworn-in were MLAs Umesh Katti (Hukkeri), S Angara (Sullia), M T Nagara, who helped the saffron party come to power and also another ruling party MLC Yogeshwar, who is said to have played a key role by managing rebel MLAs during the 2019 political turmoil, were inducted by the CM.

Among the BJP old guard who were inducted were Katti, Angara, Nirani and Limbavali.

While Shankar and Nagaraj had served as ministers in the previous coalition government from the Congress's side, Yogeshwar, Katti (eight time MLA), Nirani and Limbavali (state BJP vice-president) were ministers in the erstwhile BJP government. For Angara (six times MLA), this is his first stint as minister.

This was the third expansion since Yediyurappa



assumed charge in July 2019 after the collapse of the Congress-JD(S) government and defected to the BJP came as a surprise as the chief minister had announced during campaigning for the November 2020 bypolls that he would be made minister on being elected.

Yediyurappa said Nagesh, who has been dropped from the ministry, has been appointed as Dr BR Ambedkar Development Corporation chief with Cabinet rank, thereby keeping one berth vacant in the state Cabinet, which can have a maximum strength of 34 members.

Sources said the decision to drop Nagesh was linked to a complaint by the daughter of an excise department official to the PMO after he allegedly demanded a bribe for his ill father's transfer.

The swearing-in was held three days after Yediyurappa finalised the expansion at a meeting with top BJP leaders, including party chief JP Nadda and Union home minister Amit Shah in New Delhi.

'Bhogi' festival: TDP chief sets fire to copies of 'anti-farmer' govt orders

HYDERABAD, 13 JANUARY

While TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu today chose to burn copies of government orders issued by the state government led by YS Jagannath Reddy affecting farming in the customary bonfire prior to Sankranthi festival, Congress in neighbouring Telangana demanded that chief minister K Chandrasekhar Rao should call a special session of the Assembly to pass a resolution against the farm laws.

Naidu celebrated Bhogi at Paritala village in Krishna district and chose to burn, what he described as anti-people and anti-farmer government orders, including the one on fixing meters for pumpsets of farmers.

On Bhogi, it is customary to burn old and useless things signifying the end of the old and heralding in the new. Last year, too, Naidu had done the same with the expert committee report over shifting the capital from Amaravati.

Meanwhile, in Telangana Congress floor leader Bhati Vikramarka wrote to CM Rao to call a special session of the Assembly and pass a resolution against the farm laws. Though Rao was against the farm laws initially he has since then given up the cause leaving the farmers furious over withdrawal of procurement centres.

FESTIVE MOOD



Students wearing traditional Punjabi attire, perform 'Gidha' during an event to celebrate the 'Lohri' festival in Amritsar, on Wednesday. ■ IANS

Ex-TMC MP KD Singh sent to 3-day ED custody under PMLA

SNS & PTI

NEW DELHI, 13 JANUARY

The Enforcement Directorate has arrested former TMC MP and businessman K D Singh on money laundering charges, official sources said on Wednesday. A Delhi court has sent him to three days ED custody after the agency said he was needed for custodial interrogation.

The agency charged the 59-year-old founder of Alchemist Ltd. with non-cooperation in the investigation and arrested him under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) on Tuesday night.

They said the ED will produce him in a court here and seek his custody.

The agency charged the 59-year-old founder of Alchemist Ltd. with non-cooperation in the investigation and arrested him under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) on Tuesday night.

They said the ED will produce him in a court here and seek his custody.

The central probe agency had carried out searches at the premises of Singh and those linked to him in September 2019.

The businessman was the chairman of Alchemist Ltd., which deals in pharmaceuticals and other sectors, before he resigned in 2012. He is stated to be the Chairman Emeritus and founder of the business group at present.

He said Congress MP Shashi Tharoor would play a major role in preparing the UDF manifesto.

"He (Tharoor) has informed that he will associate with the preparations for UDF's election manifesto," said Chennithala.



In the criminal case initiated in 2018, the Kolkata Police had booked Singh, his son Karandeep Singh, Alchemist Township India Limited, Alchemist Holdings Limited and various other group companies and directors for cheating thousands of customers.

Singh through companies raised huge amount of money from thousands of customers in the garb of investments by luring them with high returns and also against sale and booking of plots and flats. "So far, investigation has revealed that these funds raised from public were not used for the intended purpose and were diverted or siphoned off to various group companies for cheating thousands of customers.

"Who is K D Singh? His identity is that he is a former MP from the TMC. So the best thing would be to question the TMC leaders to bring out the truth," state BJP vice-president Jaiprakash Majumdar said.

Senior CPI(M) leader Sujan Chakraborty said TMC can't deny its involvement with Singh as its leaders had used his plane during election campaign.

"He has not been associated with us for a long time. For the last few years, we have no relation with him. If he has committed any wrong then the law will take its course. We have nothing to say regarding it," TMC MP Sougata Roy said. He, however, described the demand for questioning of the TMC leaders as "baseless and politically motivated".

Several shanties gutted in Baghbazar inferno

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

KOLKATA, 13 JANUARY

The city's link with its northern fringes was suddenly disrupted after a massive fire broke out in one of the shanties at Baghbazar today.

The first flames were noticed at around 6.50 pm in one of the shanties near Baghbazar Women's College. According to locals, explosion of at least five gas cylinders could be heard and the inferno engulfed adjacent huts in no time. Tongues of flames and thick black smoke covered the entire slum area. Traffic in several parts of Central Avenue, Chitpore Lock gate and Shyambazar Crossing was adversely affected during peak evening hours and the vehicles were diverted through other routes.

According to the firemen on the spot, apart from congested area, the northerly winds made their task difficult and the shooting flames gutted the slums quickly. In addition, repeated blasts of gas cylinders, presence of petrol pump nearby along with inflammable substances including wood, plastic in the shanties aggravated the fear of fire becoming devastating. The team faced a tough time hunting gas cylinders which were exploding continuously. Another challenge before the firemen

was the unavailability of usable water in close vicinity. Initially, 10 fire engines rushed to the spot, however, as the blaze grew, 25 fire tenders were deployed to bring the blaze under control. They used hosepipes and super jet engines from all possible sides to bring the fire under control.

After a struggle of over two-and-a-half hours, the fire was brought under control at around 9.25pm.

Municipal affairs minister Firhad Hakim, who was in Gangasagar, reached the spot on the instruction of the chief minister and assured that all the shanty dwellers will be accommodated in four KMC community halls.

According to the firemen on the spot, apart from congested area, the northerly winds made their task difficult and the shooting flames gutted the slums quickly. In addition, repeated blasts of gas cylinders, presence of petrol pump nearby along with inflammable substances including wood, plastic in the shanties aggravated the fear of fire becoming devastating. The team faced a tough time hunting gas cylinders which were exploding continuously. Another challenge before the firemen

The Congress has always abused patriots...termed them as 'saffron terrorists'...



BJP MP OF BHOPAL PRAGYA SINGH THAKUR
ALLUDING MAHATMA GANDHI'S ASSASSIN NATHURAM GODSE AS A 'PATRIOT'

THUMBNAILS



People enjoy during cold weather at Lodhi Garden in New Delhi on Wednesday.

■ IANS

Raid at fake call centres: In a major crackdown, the Cyber Police Kashmir on Wednesday busted fake call centres and arrested 23 persons who duped people by impersonating as executives of e-commerce companies.

SNS

VHP's fundraising drive: Rajasthan Governor Kairaj Mishra has made a financial contribution for the construction of a Ram temple in Ayodhya, beginning a Vishva Hindu Parishad fundraising campaign in the state for the upcoming shrine, a VHP statement said on Wednesday.

PTI

Farmers burn copies of farm laws to mark Lohri

Several bonfires were lined up at Delhi-Haryana border stretch; one lakh copies of agri laws were burnt at Singhu border alone; AAP joined stir

SNS & PTI
CHANDIGARH/ NEW DELHI,
13 JANUARY

Agitating farmers on Wednesday burnt copies of the contentious farm laws to mark the festival of Lohri (*in photo*). One lakh copies of the three agri laws were burnt at the Singhu border alone, said Paramjeet Singh of Samyukt Kisan Morcha.

Lohri is widely celebrated in Punjab and Haryana to mark the harvesting of Rabi crops. People traditionally celebrate it by circling around bonfires, throwing food items -peanuts, puffed rice, popcorn etc- into the fire, singing folk songs, dancing and feasting on the festive food.

"The celebrations can wait. We will celebrate all these festivals the day our demand of repealing of these blacklaws are met by the Centre," said 65-year old Gurpreet Singh Sandhu who hails from Haryana's Karnal district.

Several bonfires were lined up at the Delhi-Haryana border stretch, the nerve centre of the farmers' agitation. The protesting farmers raised slogans, sang songs of resistance and hope as they orbited the bonfire, burning copies of farm laws and praying for the success of their protest.



The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) also joined in the burning the copies of Centre's agricultural laws while celebrating the festival of Lohri dedicated by the party to the martyrs of farmers' movement, against new farm laws, across Punjab.

Mann said the Central government should not play with the feelings of the farmers and repeal the black laws immediately. He further expressed sorrow over the decision of the Supreme Court, saying that it was very unfortunate that even the apex court could not understand the problems of the farmers properly and the farmers could not get justice from the court.

He said that it had been more than a month and a half, since our farmers were sitting in severe cold against the Modi-led Central government.

The AAP leader said that the Modi government was taking away the Constitu-

tional rights of common people of the country and was attacking the democratic structure of India in violation of the dignity of the constitution.

Mann said that the Modi government should not act like an Ambani-Adani intermediary and should immediately repeal these black laws.

'SC order on farm laws is ill-conceived and one-sided'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 13 JANUARY

The order of the Supreme Court on the three farm laws and the farmers struggle against them is ill-conceived and one-sided, according to CPI (M) journal People's Democracy.

In an editorial, the party journal said today that the Supreme Court bench had stayed the implementation of the three farm laws until further orders.

"This has misled some sections to hail the intervention of the Supreme Court. Actually, the stay is not linked to any further hearing on the substantive issues raised in the petitions or by the farmers in the struggle," the editorial said.

It is linked to the setting up of an "expert commit-

tee" which has been directed to submit its report in two months' time, the editorial said.

None of the petitioners had asked for the committee. Moreover, the farmers representatives had already in talks with the government rejected the offer of a committee, the editorial said.

The Court has appointed four persons to the committee who are all known for their support to the three farm laws, the party journal said. The two farmers' representatives on the panel are also supporters of the farm laws.

The farmers organisations have rightly rejected the "expert committee" set up by the Court and reiterated their resolve to continue the struggle for the repeal of the laws, the CPI (M) journal said.

Siddaramaiah demands withdrawal of farm laws

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BENGALURU, 13 JANUARY



Senior Congress leader Siddaramaiah on Wednesday demanded that the Centre's new farm laws be withdrawn, a day after the Supreme Court stayed their implementation.

In a series of tweets, Siddaramaiah accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of turning a blind eye to the plight of farmers in the country.

"The Supreme Court's order to stay the newfarm laws only reiterates the fact that the new laws are against the interests of farmers."

The Apex Court has understood that farmers are right in their demands and hence have allowed farmers to continue their protests," the leader of opposition said.

The Congress leader held Modi responsible for the death of many farmers during the ongoing protests in Delhi.

Alleging that the Prime Minister did not make a single genuine attempt to address the concerns of farmers, he said, "He (Modi) should apologise to the farmers and to the

people of the country. The new farm laws should be withdrawn!"

In another tweet, Siddaramaiah said the farmers were of the opinion that the expert committee constituted by the top court has members who have previously expressed their support for new farm laws enacted.

The peasants demand that the members of the panel should be neutral.

The Supreme Court on Tuesday stayed the implementation of controversial new farm laws till further orders and decided to set up a four-member committee to resolve the impasse over them between the Centre and farmers' unions protesting at Delhi borders.

Bengal poll will be over by end-April, hints EC

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 13 JANUARY

The Election Commission today hinted that the schedule of the upcoming Assembly elections in the state would be announced in mid-February and the entire process would be completed by the end of April as CBSE board exams are scheduled in May.

Deputy Election commissioner Sudip Jain, who is in charge of West Bengal today expressed concern over the law and order situation and told the SPs and DMs that the commission will leave no stone unturned to ensure a free and fair poll.

The commission is considering completing the entire poll procedure in four states namely West Bengal, Kerala, Assam and Tamilnadu and one union territory Puducherry by April-end, said an official of the commission.

According to the official, Jain expressed his concern over the law and order situation in the state and said that the commission will take strong action against any event of lawlessness. He asked the SPs to maintain the law and order situation and execute the Non-bailable

Arrest Warrants. This apart, the SPs have been asked to send weekly law and order reports to the commission.

The commission will prepare a vulnerability map on the basis of reports and then make an assessment on the requirement of forces.

Sources, however, said that a much higher number of forces are likely to be deployed at the election this time. The commission wants to create an atmosphere such that people can cast their votes without fear, said a source.

In view of Covid, all the district administration has been advised to follow the Bihar model where the commission was able to complete the election in the midst of the pandemic. The district administration has also been asked to make enough space arrangements so that people can maintain social distancing.

As per preliminary estimate, there will be a 15 to 25 per cent increase of booths that means around 28000. So the commission is not only making arrangements for additional security forces but also making provisions for extra poll personnel.

TMC urges Left, Cong to back Mamata: Trinamool

Congress on Wednesday appealed to Left Front and Congress to back West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee in her fight against the "communal and divisive" politics of the BJP.

"If the Left Front and the Congress are genuinely anti-BJP, they should be behind Mamata Banerjee in her fight against the communal and divisive politics of the saffron party," senior TMC MP Sougata Roy told reporters.

TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee is the "real face of secular politics against the BJP," he said.

Referring to cattle-smuggling that has kicked up a political storm in poll-bound West Bengal, Roy said it is the duty of the BSF and not the state police to prevent this.

Launching a stinging attack against Union Home Amit Shah, who had visited the state last month, the senior lawmaker said, "Instead of having lunch at different places, he should have visited the border to check whether the BSF is doing its job properly or not."

Responding to a query whether Ghosh will be BJP's CM candidate, he said it is an internal matter of the BJP. "Abhishek Banerjee has a much greater political experience than Ghosh, who has joined politics only in 2015, but even he never claimed to be the CM face of the TMC," he added.

"Avoid contact and prevent exposure from sick-looking sluggish chicken. Avoid direct contact with bird secretions and droppings," the advisory states, adding that bowls used for feeding birds,

of establishing "rule of law" in the state.

In a latest incident, IndiGo airlines' station manager at Patna airport Rupesh Kumar Singh, 40, was shot dead in front of his apartment in the state capital last night. The victim had rushed back home in the evening riding his car and was about to open the door of the vehicle when the motorcycle-borne criminals sprayed bullets on his car, leading him dead.

As per reports, the miscreants pumped six bullets into his body, raising a big ques-

tion mark over the state of policing in the state capital. That happens despite the fact that the chief minister has been routinely holding meetings with the police departments and issuing orders to check crimes.

In another incident, a 17-year-old deaf and mute girl preparing for class 10 Bihar board examination was raped by a youth who also damaged her both eyes with a hard object so that she could not narrate about the accused. The incident took place in Madhubani district on Tuesday noon when she had gone to the

field to graze goats.

Even more horrible incident was reported from Muza�arpur district where a teenaged girl was burnt alive after alleged gang-rape.

According to a report prepared by the Bihar police, more than two lakh cognisable offences took place in the first nine month of the year 2020. As per the report, a total of 25,614 incidents of theft, 6,517 incidents of kidnapping, 2,649 murders, 1,244 incidents of rape, 1,369 incidents of road robberies and 15 incidents of bank robberies and dacoits took place in the state last year.

Bihar on the boil as law & order touches its nadir

MANOJ CHAURASIA
PATNA, 13 JANUARY

The previous Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) government in Bihar is always compared with the proverbial "Jungle Raj" by the Opposition NDA. The present situation in the state looks nothing better than the jungle rule with the criminal incidents becoming an order of the day and law and order situation touching its nadir.

A series of criminal incidents in the recent past amply exposes the hollowness of the Nitish Kumar government's tall claim

that the state of police is improving. That happens despite the fact that the chief minister has been routinely holding meetings with the police departments and issuing orders to check crimes.

In another incident, a 17-year-old deaf and mute girl preparing for class 10 Bihar board examination was raped by a youth who also damaged her both eyes with a hard object so that she could not narrate about the accused. The incident took place in Madhubani district on Tuesday noon when she had gone to the

field to graze goats.

Even more horrible incident was reported from Muza�arpur district where a teenaged girl was burnt alive after alleged gang-rape.

Guj rescuers urged to exercise caution while saving birds

AHMEDABAD, 13 JANUARY

The Gujarat government has asked the avian rescue volunteers to exercise utmost caution while saving the birds injured by glass-coated strings of kites flown during Uttarayan to be celebrated tomorrow.

Due to kite flying frenzy with glass-coated strings (maanazaa) during Uttarayan, several birds get injured or killed with throats or wings slashed.

Many bird-lovers volunteer their efforts to rescue such injured birds as people pay no heed to repeated appeals of not using glass-coated strings for flying kites.

Don't panic, eat poultry product cooked at high temp: Delhi govt advisory

PTI & SNS
NEW DELHI, 13 JANUARY

The Delhi Health Department on Wednesday issued an advisory in view of bird flu cases in the city, asking people not to panic and follow a set of dos and don'ts, including not consuming half-cooked chicken, half-boiled or fried eggs.

The revenue department has deployed teams of volunteers at the city's borders to prevent unauthorized entry of livestock, and canned and processed chicken from outside. The health department, while issuing the dos and don'ts, asked people to observe precaution and not panic.

"Eat only completely cooked eggs and poultry products cooked at 70 degrees Celsius for 30 minutes. Do not consume half-cooked chicken or bird or half-boiled and half-fried eggs," the advisory said. Do not keep raw pou-

try meat near cooked meat. Wash hands frequently at the time of handling raw poultry products. Take due care of personal hygiene and maintain cleanliness in surroundings, it cautioned.

Meanwhile five birds, mostly crows, have been found dead in Uttar Pradesh's Jalaun district, amid cases of avian influenza in the state, officials said on Wednesday.

Though samples have been sent for testing, it seems that the birds died due to cold, they said. The deaths were reported from Bamori and Islamabad localities of Kadara village over two days, veterinary officer Dr Vipin Sachan said, adding that officials have been asked to be alert.

Two peacocks were found dead in a jungle in Uttar Pradesh's Fatehpur district on Wednesday, officials said, ruling out avian influenza as cause of death.

and their cages should be washed properly with soap or detergent. All slaughter waste must be disposed of properly, the DGHS authorities said.

The advisory also cautioned people to not touch dead birds with naked hands. If any bird is found dead, control room should be informed at phone number 23890318.

"Eat only completely cooked eggs and poultry products cooked at 70 degrees Celsius for 30 minutes. Do not consume half-cooked chicken or bird or half-boiled and half-fried eggs," the advisory said. Do not keep raw pou-

try meat near cooked meat. Wash hands frequently at the time of handling raw poultry products. Take due care of personal hygiene and maintain cleanliness in surroundings, it cautioned.

Meanwhile five birds, mostly crows, have been found dead in Uttar Pradesh's Jalaun district, amid cases of avian influenza in the state, officials said on Wednesday.

National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval today made a quiet visit to Afghanistan for talks with the Afghan leadership on strategic issues in the wake of growing violence in the war-torn country.

The Afghan National Security Council said Doval and his counterpart Hamidullah Mohib held "extensive conversations on issues of strategic mutual interest, including on synchronising efforts to combat terrorism and build peace".

The NSA also met President Ashraf Ghani during the two-day visit. Ghani told Doval that India and Afghanistan's joint endeavours, in collaboration with the NATO and the US, could achieve more success in the fight against the terrorist. A statement by the President's office said, "Both sides discussed counter-terrorism cooperation and efforts for building regional consensus on supporting peace in Afghanistan."

NSA Ajit Doval on quiet visit to Kabul

NEW DELHI, 13 JANUARY

APPOINTMENT

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT & SESSIONS JUDGE, FARIDABAD

EMPLOYMENT ADVERTISEMENT

Applications are invited from eligible candidates to fill 09 posts of Process Servers (General-05, General-03, SC-01, BC-A-01, BC-B-01, reserved only for the candidates of Haryana State) and 11 Posts of Peon/Addl. Peon/Chowkidar / Waterman etc. (General-06, General-01, SC-02, BC-A-01, BC-B-01 reserved only for the candidates of Haryana State), purely temporary but on regular basis in the pay matrix of Rs. 16900-53500/- Denotes Level for Group D, plus other usual allowances asmissible to Haryana Government Employees from time to time. The number of vacancies may be increased or decreased due to creation or withdrawal of posts or otherwise during the selection process. No intimation in this regard will be issued separately.

The selection for the aforesaid posts shall be made strictly in accordance with amended Rule 7 of the Haryana Subordinate Courts Establishment (Recruitment & General Conditions of Service) Rules, 1997.

Reservation policy as enforced at the time of selection would be considered and applicable, provided that no candidate of reserve category is

Emergency in DC

Joe Biden deserved better. Donald Trump has declared a state of emergency in Washington DC, barely 10 days ahead of his successor's scheduled inaugural. A rather dismal chapter has thus been added to the presidential narrative. Tuesday's declaration by the outgoing President comes after riots erupted at the US Capitol where pro-Trump supporters wreaked havoc on January 6. At least five people died as a result of the mayhem, and they included a Capitol police officer. It was altogether an insult to the country's libertarian tradition. The riots had coincided with the polls in Georgia, where Trump's party was trounced. It will be difficult for the world to accept that the emergency in the capital of the fountain-head of democracy is a desperate measure to restore a semblance of law and order. This in itself is suggestive of the extent to which the country has slid over the past four years. Both the rule of law and a non-controversial administration have been in short supply and the President, now going through the wrap-up motions, needs to ask himself why this has happened. Not the least because Mr Trump had precipitated the Capitol Hill violence by instigating those who supported his flawed presidency, one that was rendered impotent by electoral losses, first in November and then in January. The impending change of guard at the Oval Office appears to have so derailed Mr Trump that his supporters but mostly he ended up disgracing the country. It is cause for alarm that the Federal Bureau of Investigation has warned armed protests are being planned in all 50 US state capitals and the national capital in the final days leading up to Mr Biden's inauguration. "President Donald J Trump declared that an emergency exists in the District of Columbia and ordered federal assistance to supplement the District's response efforts due to the emergency conditions resulting from the Presidential inauguration from January 11 to January 24, 2021," a White House release stated. Some experts have argued that those trying to remove President Trump from office - and their number is legion across the nation - may be using the wrong approach. Certainly, the threats of violence appear to target the impeachment proceedings underway in Washington. In the event, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has been authorised to identify, mobilise, and provide at its discretion, equipment and resources necessary to alleviate the impact of the emergency. "Emergency protective measures, limited to direct Federal assistance, will be provided at 100 per cent Federal funding," the White House has informed the nation. America is in crisis and on 20 January, Mr Biden and the Democrats will succeed to a massively depleted inheritance. Such accidents as Mr Trump shape history as much as profound thought and action.

Merkel's moderation

Even as the world quite rightly calls out the violent, bloody coup attempted in the USA by nativist extremists last week, conservatism with a small 'c' or moderate centre-right politics too is being mauled. But if US President Donald J. Trump encapsulates the worst and most unacceptable form of the centre-right Republican Party, Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany represents the best of how a mainstream centre-right party, in her case the ruling Christian Democratic Union (CDU), can reinvent itself for the modern world. As she prepares to step down after four terms in office later this year - her party meets this month to choose a successor who is expected to lead the CDU into the national election due in September - Ms Merkel, arguably Europe's most influential leader since Charles de Gaulle, has proven to be an ambassador for a robust common-sense approach towards policy-making. While retaining a commitment to the nation-state, she's exhibited a profound and sophisticated understanding of the need to value plurality while being uncompromising on individual liberty, promoting a free market economy with a safety net for the marginalised, and strengthening democratic institutions. In the process, she has provided a stable Germany at the heart of the European Union which can be proud of its civilisational ethos sans supremacism, celebrate diversity without fetishizing it, and has underlined the value of modest individualism in the face of communitarian discourses.

Ms Merkel's hits and misses - from her controversial if deeply humanistic open-door policy towards refugees fleeing the civil war in Syria to her sensible handling of the Covid-19 pandemic, her rock steady leadership of the EU which saw Germany use its economic heft to get behind a debt-financed rescue package for Europe's troubled economies, and preventing a no-deal Brexit - will continue to be a matter of debate as her record is parsed over the coming years. Her boots, however, are likely to be too large to be filled by the next Chancellor whether she or he is from the CDU, the centre-left Social Democrats (SPD), or even the Green Party which is likely to have a say in government formation. But the abiding legacy Ms Merkel leaves behind, given the rise of often violent, nativist off-shoots of traditional centre-right parties the world over as the storming of the Capitol brought home, is that her political sense and non-doctrinaire sensibility has ensured the far-right Alternative for Germany's strategy of co-opting elements of the CDU to gain popular support is likely to fail. That is no mean feat as extremists seek to pierce the "armour of democracy". As for the narrative of the hard left in cahoots with effete liberals and illiberal religious radicals which seeks to paint anyone who disagrees with them as unthinking bigots cut from the same cloth as those who rioted in Washington DC, they would do well to remember it was Ms Merkel who publicly refused to shake Mr Trump's hand while all manner of others were

Better Healthcare ~ II

Such a scheme has the potential to usher in a new era in healthcare with a highly developed system of reach, quality and professional management leading to enormous socio-economic benefits for the country in the long run



The scheme outlined in this article envisages creation of two statutorily constituted authorities. The first one would lay down binding standards for hospital infrastructure and day to day functioning including patient care, outdoor and indoor treatment and allied matters. The second authority would be responsible for all financial aspects relating to the fixation of charges for all indoor and outdoor treatment according to the grades of hospitals determined by the first authority, categorization of families or households for sharing of charges between patient and the government, online and digital verification of patients as per an assigned social security number, online examination of bills, arranging payments within a fixed time schedule and other connected matters. The need for constant connectivity and provision for mutual consultation between the two constituted authorities to ensure a robust system of universal healthcare across the country cannot be overemphasized.

The members of the first authority may be entirely from the medical community with a record of professional competence and integrity. The second authority may include both medical and financial experts.

As this chain of private hospitals become fully operational across the country, the Union and state governments may gradually withdraw from direct health delivery at the tertiary level and concentrate more on spread of quality medical education by setting up new UG and PG medical colleges with at least one in each district headquarter. These medical colleges may also serve as referral hospitals treating mostly critical or referred patients. Of course there will be difference in fees structure between government and private medical colleges because of the subsidy element but that gap should not be so wide as to be out of reach for students coming from the poorer sections. In fact it is advisable that the difference between the two sets of fees may partially be subsidized by the Government so that established and reputed private medical colleges can also exist and become accessible to poor but meritorious students.

It is also time to consider if admission to all UG and PG medical courses should be determined solely on merit without reservations or quota in any form just as in super speciality or post PG medical courses.

Innovative ways to meet the

huge financial liability for the proposed improvement in health infrastructure need be explored. For example the present enrolment under EPF and ESI cover around 13.5 crore employees with monthly salary limit of Rs 15,000 and 21,000 respectively. If the definitions under both are modified to include all factories and establishments without any stipulation as to number of workers or salary limits at least for the purpose of this scheme, the expected increase is likely to be more than threefold to around 40 crore.

In case statutory provisions are made to deduct two per cent of salaries being one percent each from employers and employee or minimum of Rs. 50 (25+25) per month, whichever is higher the annual contribution to the scheme is

likely to be more than Rs 24,000 crore. Similarly in case of present active MGNREGA workers, a deduction of Rs 5 from the current daily wage of Rs 202 is likely to contribute Rs 1,150 crore if we take minimum 50 days of work per annum. It may of course be argued as to why any amount should be deducted from the wages in a subsistence level welfare scheme like MNREGA. While the amount proposed to be collected is not a substantial one and can easily be done away with, such contribution may generate a sense of ownership of the scheme.

Out of around 45 crore registered individual PAN card holders the number of actual income tax payers is only about 6 crore. Graded monthly contributions at Rs 100, 300, 500 and 1,000 respectively may be levied from individual PAN card holders corresponding to current four individual Income Tax slabs. If half the number of PAN holders agree for voluntary enrolment under the proposed health scheme there is potential for collection of at least Rs 30,000 crore excluding those already enrolled under ESI, EPF and MGNREGA. The calculations are of course purely speculative but may be a starting point for a more rational exercise.

We are also assuming that in case of more than one income earner per household each will be liable to contribute as the project would cover every member of the household. Finally we may come to contribution from cor-

porate tax-payers. As social security is in the Concurrent List, the Union Government may legally impose a social security tax on all corporate income. Such tax at 5 per cent at flat rate on all corporate income is likely to yield Rs 32,500 crore over and above the present annual collection of about Rs 6.5 lakh crore.

Thus the expected collection as envisaged above is likely to be around Rs 87,650 crore at the minimum. If we add to this the present budgetary outlay for the Health Ministry of about Rs 69,000 crore and that of the States and UTs at Rs 158,800 crore (in 2018-19) the total would be roughly Rs 3,15,450 crore which is nearly 2.3 per cent of India's GDP of around Rs 141 lakh crore in 2018-19. It is true that even this outlay on health would be awfully short; expenditure on health in developed countries is generally above 10 per cent of GDP. However, with expected substantial increase in private investments in health, one would hope that growth on health-related expenditure as percentage of GDP will go up gradually as more and more families opt to come

under the scheme. This has the potential to usher in a new era in healthcare with a highly developed system of reach, quality and professional management leading to enormous socio-economic benefits for the country in the long run.

Enrolment under the scheme has to be voluntary with option to remain outside. At the beginning, many may opt out of the scheme leading to questions on its viability. But as the spread and quality of health delivery improves, general realization as to its benefits will follow with increasing enrolment. Thus need for patience and ability to endure the initial hiccups and criticism, which is common in India in case of any radical departure from the past, will be needed to sustain the scheme in the long run.

Many private hospitals may refuse to come under the scheme fearing regular scrutiny of their service delivery and regulated charges. Apprehensions of late payment of bills by the Government may be another factor. As we have seen in case of the Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) for serving and retired Central Government employees,

majority of reputed private hospitals have opted to stay out because of long pending payments. To address this issue there must be an acceptable time limit within which the designated authority has to clear all bills. A time bound reconciliation procedure in case of disputes should also be provided for. As for the initial reluctance to submit to third-party surveillance with regulated service charges it is again a matter of time. If more and more patients opt for hospitals listed under the scheme those outside will either fall in line or be forced to close down.

Amendments to the Clinical Establishment Act to ensure that similar norms and standards of service are applicable to all hospitals across the country will also go a long way towards improvements in our health delivery. Many may reasonably ask why such stress should be placed on creation of a new hospital network, specially private ones, and whether it would not be better for the government to provide insurance cover to the poor and let new hospitals come up as per free market demand and supply equations.

Basically the choice is between the two sets of public health care systems prevailing in most developed countries. First, the British and the French model of National Health Service (NHS) which with minor variations is in force in many European countries. The other one is the US model of Medicare and Medicaid and further modifications under the 'Affordable Care Act', generally referred to as 'Obamacare.' These provide insurance cover against premiums paid by the beneficiaries and are partly subsidized by the State as per income slabs.

The problem with the British model of government chain of hospitals under NHS is the long waiting time for patients requiring hospitalization and enormous strain on public exchequer making it almost impossible to set up additional hospitals. The US model of health insurance, apart from absence of state-run hospitals (except military ones) and high premium costs, provides for coverage only in selected ailments. The scheme proposed here attempts a third alternative where public and private healthcare facilities will function simultaneously under the supervision of independent regulatory authorities.

The need of the hour is to make available quality, easily accessible and universally affordable healthcare to all our citizens.

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

ASIAN VOICES

Economic outlook 2021

The year 2020 has been very challenging, but 2021 is not going to get better anytime soon. In 2020, global economic growth was projected to contract by 4.9 per cent with the US suffering negative growth of eight per cent, Europe minus 10.2 per cent, Japan minus six per cent and Indonesia minus two per cent. China is probably the only country that will record positive growth, projected at 1.2 per cent.

The invention of vaccines may help one-third of the population to return to their normal activities but only at the rate of 60 to 70 per cent compared to before the pandemic. In addition, the incoming Joe Biden administration may embrace the multilateral system. But these will not necessarily solve all the problems. The world is facing one year of a serious economic downturn, and it will take at least three years for the world to recover.

Covid-19 has brought the worst economic impacts in the modern era, hitting the world from both the demand and supply sides simultaneously. As of the end of 2020, Covid-19 has infected more than 1.2 million people in Southeast Asia, with a mortality rate of 2.43 per cent.

Indonesia recorded a mortality rate of three per cent - among the highest in the world. It has caused more than 30 million people in ASEAN to become unemployed, pushing about 18 million people into poverty,

The Jakarta Post
of which three million are in extreme poverty. Covid-19 has hit the ASEAN economy from at least three channels: lower global demand has decreased ASEAN's exports; dry capital markets have reduced foreign direct investment (FDI) into ASEAN; and sluggish tourism has hit the services sector and many small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Most ASEAN countries have experienced recession in 2020. In the best scenario, the ASEAN economy would contract by 2.7 per cent in 2020, and will only grow by three to four per cent in 2021 when global growth is expected to be about three per cent. Although Indonesia recorded a slight pickup in the third quarter of 2020 as it decreased the negative growth to 3.5 per cent from minus 5.3 per cent in the second quarter, this should not make us complacent for three reasons.

First, nonperforming loans have been increasing, reaching the highest level since the global financial crisis. The nonperformance rate went from 2.6 per cent of total loans in 2010 to 3.2 per cent in September 2020. Second, FDI has not improved. FDI totalled only \$20 billion in 2017 and 2018, and up slightly to \$23 billion in 2019. Domestic investment is still struggling.

Last, it is true that Indonesia recorded a trade surplus of \$13.5 billion between January and September last year, but the surplus was driven by a sharp decline in imports instead of an increase in exports. Imports declined by 18 per cent and exports by 5.8 per cent.

What concerns us is that the decrease in imports was largely driven by decreases in imports of machinery and raw materials, which will be translated into decreased industrial production this year and may cause a significant number of workers to be laid off.

The Biden administration may help bring the US back onto the right track of multilateralism, but this does not mean that world trade will be back to the levels seen prior to the crisis anytime soon.

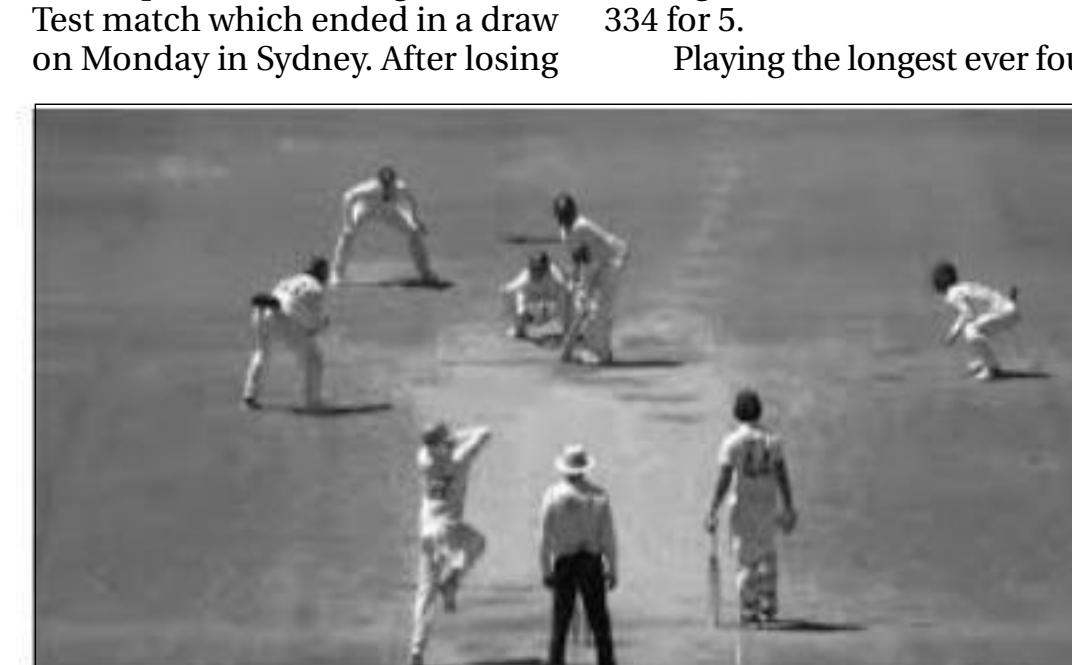
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR editor@thestatesman.com

Sans Kohli, a great team effort

SIR, It was wonderful to watch all the Indian players in general and a few in particular during the third Test match which ended in a draw on Monday in Sydney. After losing

elbow, a sore hamstring and dents on the chest, the Indian team managed to finish the final day at 334 for 5.

Playing the longest ever fourth



the first test in Adelaide badly and winning grandly the second in Melbourne, the Indian team conjured up a great draw.

In spite of a few injuries including a broken hand, a bruised

innings of the past 41 years, after the draw against England in 1979, the Indians played 131 overs on the final day with major efforts by Cheteshwar Pujara(77), Rishabh Pant (97), Hanuma Vihari (23 no)

and Ravi Ashwin (39 no), each playing more than 100 balls to frustrate the Australians.

This game could be considered as one of the great comebacks of Test history. The team has displayed great coordination even without their full-time captain Virat Kohli.

Yours, etc., Vandana, Chandigarh, 12 January.

FAMOUS DRAW

SIR, The way India snatched a draw in the third test against the mighty Aussies at the Sydney cricket ground shows the fighting spirit of all players, especially Ravichandran Ashwin and Hanuma Vihari who battled pain and bruises during their gutsy three-hour stay on the crease.

The duo created history. The bat is also laudable as he made the most of the opportunities which the Australian captain gave

INFINITE SORROW

SIR, Your editorial "Wail of the infants" (12 January) reflects the heartbreak of mothers, and it affected me so much that I could not re-read it.

Only a mother knows the intricate language of her holy womb that carries a child for difficult but joyous months. In Mother Teresa's words: "it is God's property." No scientist or linguist in the world can explain this language.

The cry of a mother - "we have lost our daughter even before she was named" - is an expression of infinite sorrow.

What could be more pathetic than infants dying in the dark and serving a cruel reminder to the world of science that it does not even possess fullproof measures to prevent such tragedies?

Neither an inquiry committee nor compensation can fill the void in a mother's soul.

Yours, etc., Indrani Guha, Kolkata, 13 January.

him by dropping catches. The series is now evenly poised and sets up an exciting final Test match.

This draw is to be celebrated like a fabulous win as India came back from a difficult situation. During the course of this match,

racist remarks were made to some Indian players by a section of spectators. This must be investigated by the ICC as such incidents adversely impact the spirit of the game.

Yours, etc., Iftekhar Ahmed, Kolkata, 13 January.

SANJAY PULIPAKA AND MOHIT MUSADDI

The ongoing protests by farmers in the National Capital Region (NCR) of India have evoked comments from politicians outside India as well. The most high-profile of those has been the Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who recently said that "the situation is concerning, we are all very worried". Other comments have emanated from politicians in Canada, Australia and the US. Likewise, a group of 36 cross-party British Members of Parliament wrote a letter to Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab urging him to discuss the matter with Indian External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar. A group of seven American lawmakers wrote a letter to US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo "expressing serious concern over the ongoing civil unrest" in India.

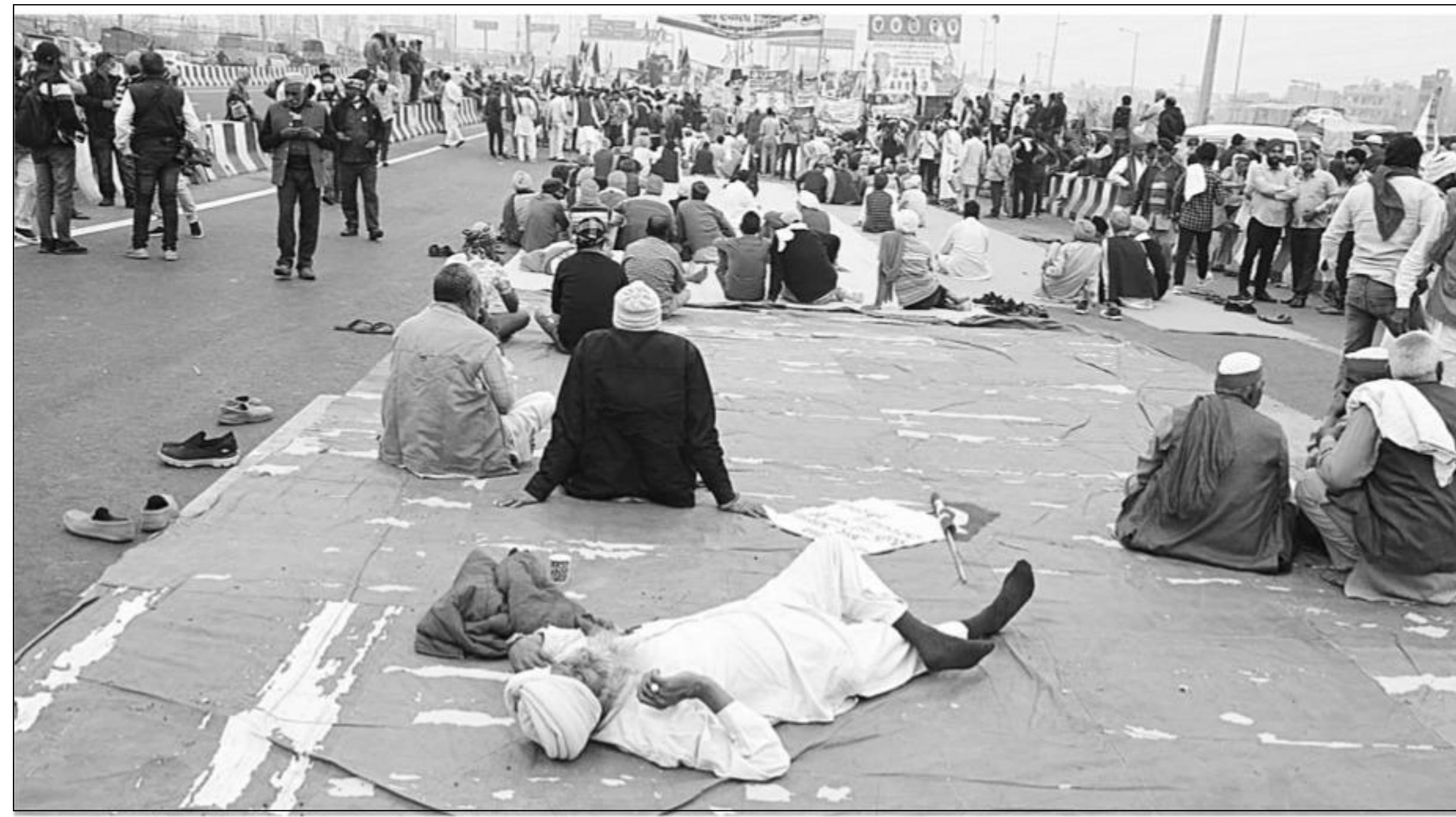
The cause of the protests is the three new agriculture reform laws which were passed by the Indian Parliament in September 2020. The main argument of the government is that these laws will provide greater opportunities for farmers to sell their produce through multiple sources and not necessarily at pre-determined designated marketplace controlled by the government. On the contrary, some farmers say that it will leave them at the "mercy" of corporates and big businesses and ultimately may bring an end to the Minimum Support Price (MSP). At the core of this debate is the role of the government, relevance of regulation and available choices for farmers.

Similar animated discussions about the precise role of states, market dynamics and the choices available to small enterprises as well as to individuals have taken pace in many countries, especially while transitioning from socialist to market economies. Moreover, these are issues that seem to be dominating the political discourse even in established market economies such as the United States (in healthcare reforms).

In India, there is an opinion that while the government should remain cognizant of the protesters, it is unfortunate that issues of domestic policies in India have attracted unwarranted comments from politicians of the West. Beyond the immediate issue of farmer protests and international attention, there is a need to take note of larger trends.

Democracies such as the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada host a large number of immigrants from different parts of the world (including sizable numbers from the Indian subcontinent). As immigrants deepen their engagement in host societies, their concerns are bound to get reflected in the politics of these societies. Even though the immigrants may have acquired citizenships, they will continue to express concerns about various political events and developments of their 'ethnic kin' in

When politics at home impacts foreign policy



their countries of origin.

Such a duality of being a citizen of one country and getting agitated about developments in their country of origin is integral to immigrant political engagement. Moreover, unlike previous decades, the advent of social media and the consequent rapid flow of information has ensured that the duality is further amplified.

What we are seeing therefore, is demands from minority groups, such as those in US, Canada and the UK asking their respective governments to 'monitor and protect the interests of their ethnic kin'. Subsequently, the political leaders, by articulating the external ethnic interest of the immigrants want their respective governments to behave more like 'Kin-States'.

It is important to recognise that the politicians in question are not merely articulating values but are also assuaging their domestic voters. In this case, a relatively large number of constituents trace their roots to the province of Punjab in India, and hence feel obliged to articulate concerns of their ethnic kin. Nevertheless, the political leaders representing these immigrants will need to sur-

mount several challenges.

One, electoral compulsions will warrant that the representatives must articulate relevant concerns of some of their constituents. While such articulations may not constitute the core of the government's foreign policy, it may be perceived as an unfriendly act in the countries that are being commented upon.

Two, the second- or third-generation immigration, while feeling a sense of belonging to their country of origin, may not be able to comprehend the complexity of issues to which they are responding or commenting upon. Therefore, they may support political ideologies/movements without realising the on-ground realities. It could also be that while the rhetoric is liberal and suggests support to political positions which are of a liberal nature (such as the right to protest, equitable distribution of wealth or accountability), they may yet end up inadvertently supporting illiberal ideas and projects, guided by notions of ethnicity.

Three, there is also an asymmetry in power relations with the West, wherein even politicians who are not part of the government can generate

considerable angst in distant countries by commenting on issues of the developing world. Given such an asymmetry, and at times a disconnect, the significant diversity in voices of the country in question is often unable to explain the complexities of issues at hand to the international audience.

At a certain level, there is a need to celebrate the freedom of elected representatives to express concerns without inhibitions about developments in distant countries. However, at the same time, there is also a need to be wary that they may end up unwittingly supporting illiberal movements. At a larger level, there is a need to create processes through which politicians in the western developed world are better aware of developments in countries from which the majority of the immigrant community trace their roots.

Such issues are of course going to be a constant feature in a highly globalised world which is characterised by the free movement of people across continents. It must, therefore, be noted that external engagement is no longer confined to bureaucracies in foreign ministries. Instead,

it will be impacted by statements from even grass-root level politicians of other countries, and paradoxically, the foreign ministries may have to find collaterals to limit the damage.

With the emergence of large diaspora communities articulating interests of their ethnic kin in their country of origin, the distinction between domestic and international politics often gets blurred. For countries like India, there is a need to engage its diaspora with greater intensity. In turn, societies hosting these diasporas must have regular conversations with various political actors to ensure that illiberal movements remain out of the limelight. Lastly, while the political leaders in the West will continue to comment on domestic politics in Asia and Africa to gain votes domestically, the countries being commented upon will also, in turn, seek to engage their diaspora with greater intensity. These efforts should not be defined by notions of certainty, but rather by humility, a desire to unpack complexities and a willingness to learn.

The writers work, respectively, as Senior Fellow and Research Associate at the Delhi Policy Group. The views expressed here are personal.

There are many Ugly Americans

MAHIR ALI

The Ugly American is the title of a 1958 novel by William Lederer and Eugene Burdick. It is a lightly fictionalised account of US diplomatic failures in Southeast Asia that became a runaway bestseller and was distributed among his colleagues by a young senator by the name of John F. Kennedy.

The title refers not to the diplomatic corps but to an engineer who lived among the locals and understood why they were attracted to communism; it nonetheless rapidly became a byword for American arrogance abroad. The novel was set in a country called Sarkhan, which was assumed to represent Vietnam — well before it turned into a full-fledged disaster, partly thanks to precisely the kinds of bluster and betrayals portrayed in the book.

It is claimed that The Ugly American played a key role in persuading Kennedy, as president, to launch the Peace Corps. The book was turned into a worthy (but unsuccessful) film starring Marlon Brando the same year

that JFK was assassinated. Within days of the murder, Malcolm X, defying an order from the Nation of Islam hierarchy to make no comment about the tragedy, called it out as an instance of "chickens coming home to roost".

I was reminded of that remark when I came across one of the jokes doing the rounds in the wake of last week's antics at the Capitol in Washington, which said that in view of current travel restrictions, the US had been obliged to attempt a domestic coup.

And yes, it's not hard to imagine the glee among many of those who have been loudly decrying the invasion of the hallowed chambers of Congress in Washington had similar events unfolded, for instance, at the Venezuelan national assembly in Caracas.

There have, inevitably, been plenty of wisecracks since last Wednesday's events, but they have been drowned out by the relentless self-righteous hyperbole about coups, insurrections, sedition and domestic terrorism, capped by the disclaimer

that "this is not us".

Whether or not any of the other descriptions hold much water, 'this' is undoubtedly a large part of who you are. Sure, the mob inspired, instigated and unleashed by Donald Trumpelstiltskin was seeking to thwart democratic processes. But since when has it been un-American to do so?

The long list of postwar US interventions, military or otherwise, in every part of the world suggests that murder and mayhem in the interests of subverting the popular will is as American as apple pie. But there's no dearth of domestic precedents either, even though they have invariably taken different shape.

The 19th-century American Civil War and its aftermath have repeatedly been cited in comments over the past week, and not without cause. The sight of a Confederate flag fluttering for the first time in the Capitol justifiably stirred up some angst. (Incidentally, there were also Israeli and Indian flags — at least one each — seen among the congregation, while one of the Capitol invaders was dressed in a

hoodie that bore the legend 'Camp Auschwitz'.)

But it's hardly a secret that the Confederate cause has remained a part of American politics ever since a very different Republican Party's attempted Reconstruction shuddered to a halt a dozen or so years after the Union triumphed in the Civil War. Liberated slaves and their descendants were effectively excluded from the electoral process — and frequently from civic life — for the next 100 years.

There was a similar, albeit more subtle, backlash after the civil rights movement scored some legislative successes in the 1960s. Particularly in the southern states, varying levels of voter suppression have been the norm in recent decades. Which makes it all the more remarkable that Georgia has been wrested from the Republican grasp in this month's senatorial run-offs, albeit by narrow margins.

The two new seats mean the Senate will be equally divided between Republicans and Democrats, with incoming vice president Kamala Harris's casting vote giving the Biden

administration a potential majority. Hurrah? It has been suggested Joe Biden would rather have done without the extra pressure to act on any number of fronts that a congressional majority brings.

The early days after next Wednesday's inauguration may be overshadowed by Trump's trial in the Senate, once his second impeachment — a proud record, no doubt — proceeds through the house. Beyond that there's a period as grey as Biden's hair, and although the incoming administration will likely be far less incompetent than the outgoing one, it would be too optimistic to expect the healing touch that America requires, let alone the kind of salvation that would repair the damage that Trump has thrived on, wreaked almost without a break since the Reagan era.

The dystopian nightmare may noticeably recede with Tantrump's exit, but it's unlikely to disappear. Not least because, to paraphrase the sudden social media pariah, there are very ugly Americans on both sides of the overwrought (and overestimated) partisan divide.

Dawn/ANN.

NO 28195

100 YEARS AGO

OCCASIONAL NOTE

Dr. Arthur Lankester has written, and Messrs. Butterworth are publishing, a book on tuberculosis in India which claims to be the first serious attempt to present in book form the facts at present available regarding the epidemiology of tuberculosis in this country, with special reference to the causation of the disease and the possible measures for its prevention. The volume is the outcome of the author's nearly thirty years of intimate experience of Indian life and conditions, and more especially of the two years which were spent in a special inquiry regarding tuberculosis undertaken by the request of the Government under the auspices of the Indian Research Fund Association. Dr. Lankester regards the death-rate from tuberculosis as one of the clearest indications that nature can give of widespread disregard of her laws of health. The truth of this statement is discussed with special reference to certain important social problems in India. It is for Indians to decide, the author says, how far relaxation or modification of age-long customs is possible; but it is surely well that every intelligent patriot should be furnished with the materials by which he may estimate the cost in life and suffering which the maintenance of such customs involves for his country. The book consists of three parts. The first states the facts regarding the prevalence of tuberculosis in this country. The second discusses causation, and the third the means of prevention.

NEWS ITEMS

DELHI BURIAL BOYCOTT CASE

Delhi, Jan 13

The Delhi Burial Case came up for hearing again today in the District Jail. Out of the four accused, Mr. Hasan Aziz did not appear, as he was on a visit to Meerut. The Court allowed a surety to produce the accused by ten o'clock tomorrow morning. Mr. Ishaq submitted a list of the defence witnesses, numbering about seventy. The other two accused were allowed a short time to submit their lists. After the necessary amounts had been deposited for the witnesses, it was stated that the court would then proceed to examine the number of the defence witnesses it could allow, as it was intended to summon irrelevant witnesses calculated to delay the case unnecessarily. The court adjourned till Saturday next.

RANGOON COACHMEN & SYCES ON STRIKE

Rangoon, Jan 13

About 500 syces and coachmen in Rangoon struck yesterday and held a meeting on the Brigade Parade Ground, where they discussed the refusals of their masters of the increase of pay demanded, in the case of syces by Rs 3 and coachmen by Rs 5. Many masters granted the demands made by men previously in a circular but others declined to consider the circular. Yesterday two cases of intimidation of coachmen took place. The first was that in which the pony of Mr. Smith a stenographer, was stopped by one of the strikers, who refused to allow the animal to go on, and the second case was that of Mrs. Mark David of the Criterion Hotel, who had her private conveyance stopped. The men who caused the trouble were arrested.

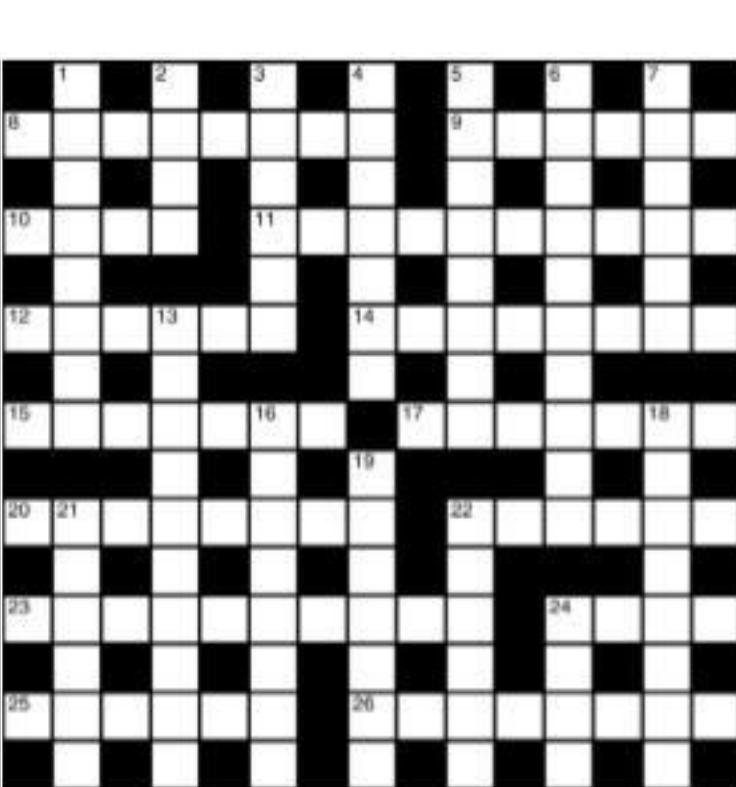
IMPRISONMENT FOR AUSTRIAN PROFITEERS

The seriousness of the question of the cost of living in Austria was evidenced in the opening of a Government inquiry into the subject today, when Chancellor Mayer said that a Bill would be introduced into the National Council providing for a sentence of ten years imprisonment and a fine of five million crowns for profiteers. The Chancellor said that great masses of the population were working their hardest and were unable to earn sufficient to procure the barest necessities. The only remedy was to stabilise exchange and increase production by means of ample foreign credits. Labour delegates demanded corporal and even capital punishment for profiteers, one railway representative saying that unless drastic measures were taken his comrades would hang profiteers in front of the Bourse.

THE IRISH PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

The Daily Graphic's Paris correspondent states that Archbishop Clune, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Perth, West Australia, interviewed by a correspondent of La Liberte accused Mr. Bonar Law and other Cabinet Ministers of influencing Mr. Lloyd George against peace negotiations with Sinn Fein. Archbishop Clune said that the Prime Minister's desire for peace was equal to his own. He attributed the failure of the attempted negotiations to Mr. Bonar Law's making the surrender of Sinn Fein a condition of the truce. This Sinn Fein refused to do.

CROSSWORD



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

ACROSS

- 8 Be master of hot early swing (4,4)
- 9 Jazz tune is up for associates (6)
- 10 Music genre heard racing across the Atlantic (4)
- 11 Blues or pop singer catches finale from The Jam (10)
- 12 Stride number about crush (4,2)
- 14 Single backing track about German with sin (8)
- 15 Funk from a person by boisterous area of town (7)
- 17 Rag time ally abroad
- 20 Rocking A-side he includes very tacky (8)
- 22 Charm of baroque tuba: euphony in extremis! (6)
- 23 Love loud tango - what about gospel's wrong? (3,3,4)
- 24 Kelvin and Duke, say, pirouetting to bop (4)
- 25 Singer's feature in garage thus captivates you (6)
- 26 Did dub blend, one in an innovative style (8)

DOWN

- 1 Orchestral instrument from my supermarket (8)
- 2 Avant-garde piece from talented gypsy (4)
- 3 Country song oddly about drug: moving ecstasy (6)
- 4 E.g. a little Calypso number turned up, keeping variable speed (7)
- 5 Nothing in set due to change with ten DJs (8)
- 6 Maybe salsa dancing in Samoa creates addiction (10)
- 7 Revive electronic R&B covers, also on the rise (6)
- 13 Elegiac classical artist fitting clothing the wrong way (10)
- 16 Member of girl group on track as support for Stevie Wonder? (5,3)
- 18 Look up engaging American metal performances (8)
- 19 Folk star's alarming words (7)
- 21 Thrash from French heavy metal artist's empty (6)
- 22 Hot Egyptian soul piece (6)
- 24 Pop group from 3 bringing down a cake (4)

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



29 crore farmers have so far insured their crops under the government's Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana.

NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR
AGRICULTURE MINISTER

Sensex gives up gains to turn red; HDFC, RIL down



MUMBAI, 13 JANUARY

The BSE Sensex on Wednesday afternoon shed all the gains made during the initial trade to end over 250 points down.

Decline in the heavyweights HDFC and Reliance Industries (RIL) weighed on the index.

Both the Sensex and the Nifty50 on the National Stock Exchange (NSE) touched all-time high levels of 49,795.19 and 14,653.35 points.

Sensex has glided over 570 points from the day's highs.

Around 1.54 p.m., Sensex was trading 49,261.35, lower 255.76 points or 0.52 per cent from the previous close of 49,517.11.

Nifty50 on the NSE was trading at 14,509.75, lower by 53.70 points or 0.37 per cent from its previous close.

Jay Purohit, Technical & Derivatives Analyst, MOFSL said: "Nifty opened gap up and moved above 14,650 in the initial tick but could not sustain at higher zones and slipped by more than 120 points thereafter."

"The advance decline ratio favours the bulls and even Bank Nifty is moving in line with the broader market currently moving around 32,500 levels," he said.

He noted that Nifty is largely moving in a strong uptrend and small declines are getting bought into quickly.

The relentless rally is backed by a good amount of long build-up in Nifty and strong buying by foreign institutional investors, Purohit added.

IANS

Metal sector's dream run may continue in Q4, earnings shine

The current run of rising metal prices is in line with demand revival in auto sector

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 13 JANUARY

The dream run for metals may well continue in the current quarter as targeted stimulus in China will continue to prop up demand, while continuous printing of the dollar coupled with the low interest rate regime, should favour investments in commodities, said a report by Emkay Global Financial Services.

According to the report on metal and mining sector by the brokerage, the current run of rising metal prices in line with demand revival in autos, white goods, infrastructure segment and trade re-stocking with lower coking coal prices should result in dream profitability for most companies that witnessed one of the worst phases during the lockdown period last year.

Steel prices have already touched an all-time high in the domestic market and are currently hovering around Rs 57,250 per tonne. Through Q3, HRC (hot roller coils) and



Primary rebar prices increased by Rs 12,000 per tonne and Rs 15,500 per tonne, respectively. On average, per-tonne HRC/Rebar prices were up by Rs 6,500-Rs 7,200.

Higher prices have also been supported by increase in iron ore prices, which on an average, rose by Rs 1,270 per tonne in Q3, driven by strong steel production and also iron ore shortage after the auction of 19 mines in Odisha which did not match up to the production rates prior to the

auction.

Prices for steel, iron ore and non-ferrous metals rallied throughout the quarter, driven mainly by pent-up domestic demand and domestic economic recovery as the businesses grow post the lockdown. Hike in international prices driven by targeted stimulus in China and restocking demand in the domestic market has also supported the rally in the metal space.

According to the brokerage report, the best is yet to

come for the sector in Q4. While the coking coal prices have remained subdued due to restrictions on the imports of coal in China with Australia origin, leaving the coal market significantly oversupplied, we witnessed continued hike in steel prices, driving domestic EBITDA per tonne to record highs across the board. This should result in accelerated deleveraging by all major steel mills, except for JSW Steel which still has Rs 19,700 crore acquisition pending, the report said.

Emkay report said. It added that along with steel, non-ferrous metals should also maintain strong growth in prices on the back of strong demand coming from Chinese imports.

On the mining side, however, the companies had a mixed quarter. While NMDC has ramped up both production and prices to record, driven by strong steel production, Coal India saw an increase in offtake month on month.

However, e-auction premiums remained volatile. MOIL saw a drop in pricing due to oversupply in China before hiking prices again in December.

"The deleveraging of the balance sheet should be the focal point of all major steel mills. We expect cash-rich commodities stocks such as Coal India, HCL, NMDC, MOIL and Nalco to declare higher dividends, while leveraged non-ferrous companies such as Vedanta and Hindalco to focus on deleveraging the balance sheet in this upcycle," the report said.

Sterlite Power completes merger of subsidiary



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 13 JANUARY

Power transmission company Sterlite Power on Wednesday announced the completion of merger of its wholly-owned subsidiary Sterlite Power Grid Ventures Ltd with the parent entity.

With this merger, the company has strengthened its position in the marketplace by integrating operations and streamlining the corporate structure.

Post the merger, Sterlite Power also announced the audited annual results for Financial Year 2020 that shows consolidated revenue growing by 44 per cent year-on-year at Rs 5,158 crore. The consolidated net profit also grew by 280 per cent y-o-y at Rs 942 crore. In a statement, the com-

pany said that it is focused on integrating renewable energy to the grid and has been awarded vital projects connecting the national grid to clean and green energy. The company has added Inter-State Transmission System projects to its portfolio in FY20 including the Lakadia-Vadodara Transmission Project Ltd which is part of India's Green Energy Corridor.

The company also commissioned its first project in Brazil 28 months ahead of schedule, which was designed to evacuate renewable wind energy.

Through its asset monetisation strategy, the company has realised additional liquidity of Rs 2,450 crore from the monetisation of three projects in India (NRSS 29, OGPTL and ENICL) and three projects in Brazil (Pampa, Arcoverde and Nova Estado).

Commenting on the company's performance, Pratik Agarwal, Managing Director, Sterlite Power, said, "As the world makes rapid transition towards clean energy, and India targets 450 GW of renewable energy by 2030."

Tata Motors unveils Altroz trim with turbocharged petrol engine

NEW DELHI, 13 JANUARY

Tata Motors on Wednesday unveiled a new petrol variant of its premium hatchback Altroz with sales expected to begin from next week across the country.

The new trim comes with 1.2 litre bi-turbocharged petrol powertrain which produces 110 PS of power helping the model cross 0-100 km/hr in less than 12 seconds. The company already sells Altroz with 1.2 litre petrol engine which generates 86 PS of power.

The 1.5 litre diesel powertrain on the other hand produces 90 PS of power. "We have sold 45,000 units so far in the current financial year and demand continues to be strong. We hope the i-turbo trim would add substantially to the volumes," Tata Motors Head Marketing Passenger Vehicle Business Unit (PVBU) Vivek Srivatsa told reporters during a virtual launch event. Elaborating further, he said the new trim could add around 10 per cent to the company's overall sales.

"We have had only one petrol engine variant so far for the Altroz. We have seen some of the competitors having multiple petrol options. This satisfies different kinds of needs of our customers," Srivatsa noted. He said the company would announce the price of the new Altroz trim on January 22 and sales would commence from the same day. When asked if the company plans to take a price hike for its passenger vehicle range, Srivatsa said, the increase in input cost has been an issue across the industry. We have not yet announced a price increase. We are looking at the competitive landscape but I think it is a matter of time before the prices increase."

Wipro Q3 net profit up 20.8% to ₹2,968 cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 13 JANUARY

IT services major Wipro on Wednesday posted an about 21 per cent increase in consolidated net profit at Rs 2,968 crore for the December 2020 quarter.

The net profit attributable to shareholders in the year-ago period was at Rs 2,455.9 crore, according to a regulatory filing by Wipro. Its revenue from operations grew nearly 1.3 per cent to Rs 15,670 cr from Rs 15,470.5 cr in the quarter ended December 2019. Wipro, which gets a bulk of its topline from IT services, said it expects revenues from that business to be in the range of \$2,022-2,062 million for the December quarter, a sequential growth of 1.5-3.5 per cent.

"Wipro has delivered a second consecutive quarter of strong performance on order booking, revenue and margins. Five of our sectors grew over 4 per cent sequentially. We closed our largest ever deal win in Continental Europe," Wipro CEO and MD Thierry Delaporte said in a statement. The demand environment is steadily improving, especially for digital transformation, digital operations, and cloud services, he added.

Delhi-NCR residential sales grow 43% in Oct-Dec: JLL

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 13 JANUARY

The National Capital Region (NCR) witnessed a quarter-on-quarter growth of 43 per cent in the sale of housing units during the October-December period on the back of festive discounts, low interest rates and some premium launches by established developers, said a JLL report.

However, sales are yet to reach the pre-Covid levels witnessed in 2019, it said.

Noida continued to dominate sales with 45 per cent share of overall sales in Delhi-NCR, followed by Ghaziabad, which contributed 31 per cent of the total sales.

The residential market also rebounded with some prominent new launches. In Q4 2020, new launches more than tripled when compared to the last quarter.

Majority of the launches were recorded in Gurugram,

which accounted for 61 per cent of the new launches followed by Noida which contributed 24 per cent of the launches.

"Homebuyers are increasingly becoming more confident about returning to the market. Site visits and enquiries from prospective

buyers have been increasing consistently, driven primarily by end-users who are keen in ready-to-move-in projects and newly launched projects by established developers," said Manish Aggarwal, Managing Director, Delhi NCR, JLL India.

The report also noted that

FPIs may get tax treaty benefits on dividend income

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 13 JANUARY

The Centre may propose amendment in the tax laws to allow Indian corporates to apply tax treaty rates while withholding tax on dividends and interest to be paid to FPIs. The move is expected to facilitate foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) as they will not need to claim a tax refund for surplus taxes withheld by Indian corporates, while filling their annual income-tax returns in India.

Sources said the changes may be proposed in Budget 2021 and form part of the Finance Bill that will amend the tax laws to give effect to the proposal.

With effect from April 1, 2020, (dividend distribution tax) DDT has been abolished and dividend has been made taxable in the hands of shareholders at applicable rates.

But while distributing dividends to FPIs, Indian com-



panies withhold tax at prevailing domestic rates and pass on the balance amount to overseas investors. FPIs then have to seek a refund of surplus tax withheld by Indian corporates, while filing their annual income-tax returns in India.

Present rate of DDT is at 15 per cent on gross basis plus surcharge and cess, resulting

in a net tax rate of 20.56 per cent. With the changes that are being considered, FPIs would come at par with other non-resident investors (e.g., FDI investors), who currently enjoy tax treaty benefits at the withholding tax stage on their Indian-sourced dividends and interest. Being non-residents, FPIs can also avail the ben-

efits of applicable bilateral tax treaties where rates are normally lower or the transfer is completely exempt from any tax.

But under the domestic tax law, Indian companies are not permitted to apply lower tax rates as prescribed by a tax treaty while withholding tax on dividends and interest to be paid to FPIs.

Accordingly, in the national capital, petrol was sold at the new record high level of Rs 84.45 from the previous days of Rs 84.20 a litre while diesel price increased to Rs 74.63 per litre as against Rs 74.38 a litre earlier.

Across the country as well the pump price of petrol and diesel increased on Wednesday but the quantum varied depending on the prevailing tax structure in each state.

Auto fuel price rise was on

hold for the last five days after the petrol and diesel prices had increased on two successive days last Wednesday and Thursday taking gasoline to record high levels in Delhi while keeping its prices very close to record high levels in other metro cities.

But, the OMCs ran out of patience on Wednesday as global crude prices have risen sharply lately taking benchmark Brent crude price to over Rs 57 a barrel now and rising.

The rise is primarily on account of Saudi Arabia's decision on unilateral production cuts to balance oil prices on pandemic affected demand reduction in an oversupplied market.

At Rs 84.45 a litre in Delhi, petrol price has breached the highest level in the national capital after October 4, 2018, when it touched Rs 83.71 a litre on December 7, 2020.

But the march had been halted ever since then with no price revision by the OMCs.

Oil companies executives said that petrol and diesel prices may increase further in coming days as retail prices may have to be balanced in line with global developments to prevent OMCs from making losses on the sale of auto fuels.

Amazon Prime Video launches mobile-only plan in India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 13 JANUARY

Amazon on Wednesday announced its first mobile-only Prime Video plan at a starting price of Rs 89 per month as it looks to woo entertainment-hungry smartphone users in the country.

The single-user plan will initially be available for Bharati Airtel's prepaid users, the company said. After a 30-day free trial, the Rs 89 for 28-day plan will come with 6 gigabytes of data. The introduction of the mobile-only plan in India is a global first for the company that competes against players like Netflix, Disney+Hotstar and Zee5, among others. "India is one of our fastest growing markets globally with very high engagement rates. Buoyed by this response,

said As part of the Prime Video Mobile Edition launch in India, all Airtel customers on bundled prepaid packs can avail a 30-day free trial by signing up to Amazon from the Airtel Thanks app using their mobile number.

After the 30-day free trial, Airtel customers can access Prime Video Mobile Edition through prepaid recharge starting at Rs 89 for 28-day access to the service along with 6GB data. Customers who want features like multi-user access, streaming across devices including smart TVs and HD/UHD content along with access to Prime benefits like Prime Music and free fast delivery on Amazon.in can recharge with a 30-day Amazon Prime membership at Rs 131 or recharge with a Rs 349 pack of 28-day validity. The adop-

tion of these digital platforms was further accelerated during the pandemic amid restricted social activities like visits to movie theatres.

"At Airtel, we are deeply passionate about delivering a differentiated experience to our customers through our Airtel Thanks program. We are happy to partner with Amazon to democratize quality digital entertainment in India by leveraging Airtel's core strengths of quality customers, deep distribution and best-in-class network for video," Bharati Airtel Chief Marketing Officer Shashwat Sharma said. Over the top players like Netflix, Amazon Prime and Disney+Hotstar have seen massive growth in the past few years on the back of cheap data tariffs and availability of affordable smartphones. The adop-

tion of these digital platforms was further accelerated during the pandemic amid restricted social activities like visits to movie theatres.

"At Airtel, we are deeply

passionate about delivering a differentiated experience to our customers through our Airtel Thanks program. We are happy to partner with Amazon to democratize quality digital entertainment in India by leveraging Airtel's core strengths of quality customers, deep distribution and best-in-class network for video," Bharati Airtel Chief Marketing Officer Shashwat Sharma said. Over the top players like Netflix, Amazon Prime and Disney+Hotstar have seen massive growth in the past few years on the back of cheap data tariffs and availability of affordable smartphones. The adop-

tion of these digital platforms was further accelerated during the pandemic amid restricted social activities like visits to movie theatres.

"At Airtel, we are deeply

passionate about delivering a differentiated experience to our customers through our Airtel Thanks program. We are happy to partner with Amazon to democratize quality digital entertainment in India by leveraging Airtel's core strengths of quality customers, deep distribution and best-in-class network for video," Bharati Airtel Chief Marketing Officer Shashwat Sharma said. Over the top players like Netflix, Amazon Prime and Disney+Hotstar have seen massive growth in the past few years on the back of cheap data tariffs and availability of affordable smartphones. The adop-

tion of these digital platforms was further accelerated during the pandemic amid restricted social activities like visits to movie theatres.

"At Airtel, we are deeply

passionate about delivering a differentiated experience to our customers through our Airtel Thanks program. We are happy to partner with Amazon to democratize quality digital entertainment in India by leveraging Airtel's core strengths of quality customers, deep distribution and best-in-class network for video," Bharati Airtel Chief Marketing Officer Shashwat Sharma said. Over the top players like Netflix, Amazon Prime and Disney+Hotstar have seen massive growth in the past few years on the back of cheap data tariffs and availability of affordable smartphones. The adop-



We are convinced that President Biden... recognises that Cuba is not and has not been a sponsor of terrorism

AFTER THE OUTGOING US ADMINISTRATION RETURNED CUBA TO A TERRORISM LIST

CUBAN DIPLOMAT CARLOS FERNANDEZ DE COSSIO

The Statesman

NEW DELHI, THURSDAY 14 JANUARY 2021

09

Intense Israeli airstrikes in Syria

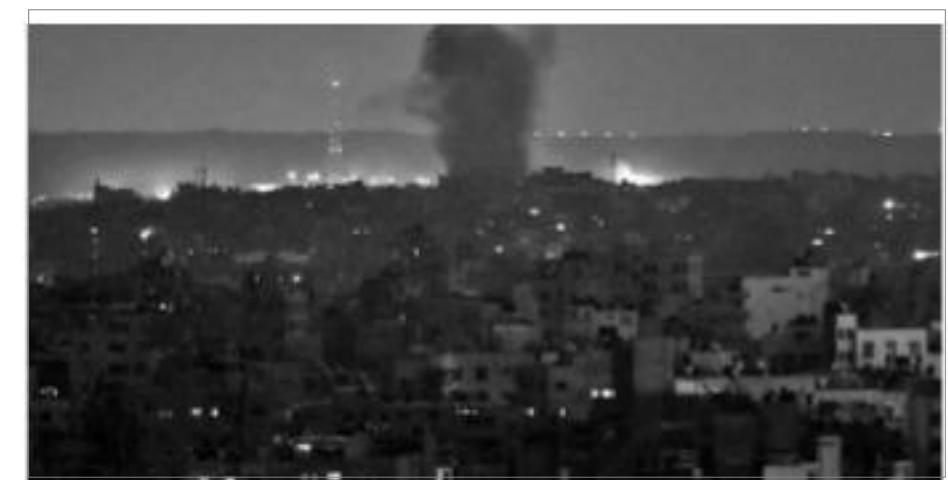
An American official said the airstrikes were carried out with intelligence inputs from the US

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BEIRUT, 13 JANUARY

Israeli warplanes carried out intense airstrikes on eastern Syria early Wednesday, apparently targeting positions and arms depots of Iran-backed forces. Dozens of fighters were killed or wounded, according to an opposition war monitor.

An senior US intelligence official with knowledge of the attack said that the airstrikes were carried out with intelligence provided by the United States, a rare incidence of publicised cooperation between the two countries over choosing targets in Syria. The official said the strikes targeted a series of warehouses in Syria that were being used in a pipeline to store and stage Iranian weapons.

The US official, who requested anonymity to speak about sensitive national security matters, said Secretary of State Mike Pompeo discussed Tuesdays airstrike with Yossi Cohen, chief of Israel's spy agency Mossad, at a public meeting in popular Washington restaurant Caf Milano on Monday.



State Mike Pompeo discussed Tuesdays airstrike with Yossi Cohen, chief of Israel's spy agency Mossad, at a public meeting in popular Washington restaurant Caf Milano on Monday.

The official said the warehouses also served as a pipeline for components that support Iran's nuclear program.

Syria's state news agency SANA said the strikes hit areas in and near the towns of Deir el-Zour, Mayadeen and Boukamal along the border with Iraq. An unnamed military official was quoted as saying Syria

ian air defenses responded to the incoming missiles. It gave no further details.

An opposition war monitor reported at least 18 strikes in Deir el-Zour and along the border with Iraq, saying several arms depots were hit. Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said 23 people were killed, including seven Syrians, and the rest were Iran-backed fighters. It said 28 were wounded.

They burnt Iranian positions in Deir el-Zour, said Omar Abu Laila, a Europe-based activist from Syria.

eastern Deir el-Zour province who runs an activist collective that reports on news in the border area. He recorded at least 16 targeted buildings, warehouses or bases for Iranian, Lebanese and Iraqi militias in the towns of Boukamal, Mayadeen and Deir el-Zour.

Israel has launched hundreds of strikes against Iranian-linked military targets in Syria over the years but rarely acknowledges or discusses such operations.

The Observatory said it recorded 39 Israeli strikes inside Syria in 2020 that hit 135 targets, including military posts, warehouses or vehicles. In those attacks, at least 217 people were killed, mostly Iranian-allied militiamen, according to the Observatory. The strikes come at a time of heightened tension in the region in the final days of President Donald Trump's administration.

Many fear retaliation for the

US killing of Iranian commander Qassem Soleimani last year may come before Trump leaves office, or that conflict could erupt to scuttle efforts by Joe Biden's incoming administration to negotiate with Iran.

Israel views Iranian entrenchment on its northern frontier as a red line, and it has repeatedly struck Iran-linked facilities and weapons convoys destined for Lebanon's militant Hezbollah group.

The strikes also come amid intensifying low-altitude Israeli warplane missions in Lebanese skies that have caused jitters among residents and prompted Lebanon to file an urgent complaint to the U.N. about the violations of its airspace. Israeli officials have said the overflights are necessary because Hezbollah is violating the 2006 U.N. resolution that bars it from building up its military capabilities and operating near the Israeli border.

Pak court sentences Saeed's two close aides to over 15 years in jail

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LAHORE, 13 JANUARY

An anti-terrorism court in Pakistan has handed down more than 15 years jail term each to two close aides of Mumbai terror attack mastermind and banned Jamiatud Dawah (JuD) chief Hafiz Saeed, including the outfit's mediaface Yahya Mujahid, in a terror financing case.

The anti-terrorism court in Lahore on Tuesday also sentenced Saeed's brother-in-law Abdul Rehman Makki to six-month in jail.

"Judge Arshad Hussain Bhutta awarded 15-and-half-

year imprisonment each to Yahya Mujahid and Zafar Iqbal, and six-month term to Prof Abdul Rehman Makki in a case registered by the Counter Terrorism Department of Punjab Police, a court official said.

Earlier, the court had handed down a 47-year jail term to Mujahid in three terror financing cases.

Similarly, Iqbal was sentenced 26 years imprisonment in three such cases. Both Mujahid and Iqbal will be kept in jail for about 15 years as their sentences will run concurrently. The officials said the three convicts were present

in the court when the judge announced the verdict. Strict security measures were taken during the appearance of the JuD leaders in the court.

Last week, Mumbai attack mastermind and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) operation commander Zakir Rehman Lakhvi was sentenced to 5 years in jail in a terror financing case, amidst mounting international pressure on Islamabad to bring to justice terrorists roaming free in the country.

The CTD had registered as many as 41 FIRs against the leaders, including Hafiz Saeed, in different cities.

DISSENT



An Israeli anti-government protester holds a banner as he is enveloped in the smoke from a bonfire outside of the official residence of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on the day his corruption trial was originally scheduled before it was postponed, in Jerusalem on Wednesday. ■ AP

Iran to hold missile drill in Gulf of Oman

ASSOCIATED PRESS
TEHERAN, 13 JANUARY

Iran's navy was poised to begin a short-range missile drill in the Gulf of Oman on Wednesday, state TV reported, amid heightened regional tensions over Teheran's nuclear program and a US pressure campaign against the Islamic Republic.

The two-day missile drill was to be held in the gulf's southeastern waters and two new Iranian-made warships were expected to join the exercise. The missile-launching Zereh, or armor, and the Makran, a logistics vessel with a helicopter pad named

after a coastal region in southern Iran.

President Donald Trump in 2018 unilaterally withdrew the US from Iran's nuclear deal, in which Tehran had agreed to limit its uranium enrichment in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions. Trump cited Iran's ballistic missile program among other issues in withdrawing from the accord. When the US then ramped up sanctions, Iran gradually and publicly abandoned the deal's limits on its nuclear development as a series of escalating incidents pushed the two countries to the brink of war at the beginning of the year.

China said on Wednesday that it would defend itself against a British government demand that companies ensure their supply chains are free from forced labour linked to the northwestern Chinese region of Xinjiang or face punishing fines.

The comment came after British Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said officials have issued guidance to British firms with ties to Xinjiang on how to carry out due diligence checks.

The government intends to exclude suppliers and review export controls to prevent

the shipping of any goods that could contribute to such violations in Xinjiang, where China is accused of widespread rights violations against Uighurs and other Muslim minority groups.

China denies allegations of rights abuses and forced labour, saying it aims only to raise incomes among minorities and stamp out radicalism.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said China would take all necessary measures to defend national interests and dignity and firmly safeguard its sovereignty, security and development interests."

Individual countries including the UK have funded, con-

coted and deliberately spread lies and rumours to smear and discredit China on the pretext of so-called human rights issues," Zhao told reporters at a daily briefing. It fully exposes their hypocrisy and sinister intentions to curb the

development and progress of Xinjiang and interfere in China's internal affairs."

In his announcement, Raab said Britain sought to ensure that no company that profits from forced labour in Xinjiang can do business in the UK, and

that no UK business is involved in their supply chains."

He said mounting evidence, including first-hand testimony and reports from non-profit groups, supports claims of unlawful mass detention in internment camps in Xin-

jiang, widespread forced labour and forced sterilisation of women on an industrial scale.

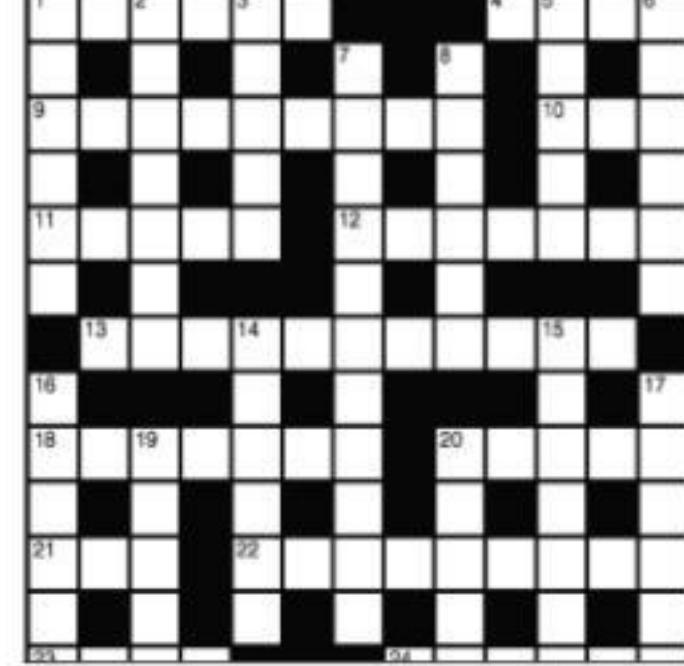
The evidence paints a harrowing picture and showed the practice of barbarism we had hoped lost to another era, Raab said.

China has denied mass internments of Uighurs, saying it merely operated voluntary centres for de-radicalisation and job training and that all participants have since graduated."

China says its policies in the vast, resource-rich region abutting several Central Asian countries have put an end to anti-government violence that claimed thousands of lives over recent years.

LEISURE

10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- Single-masted vessel (6)
- Watery part of milk (4)
- Preserve (9)
- Flow (3)
- Thick (5)
- Circus swing (7)
- Factual programme or film (11)
- Matters (7)
- Thicket (5)
- Flap (3)
- Worldwide (9)
- Organs of sight (4)
- Quick (6)

DOWN

- Humorous drama (6)
- Canadian city (7)
- Rub out (5)
- Equine animal (5)
- Type of bet (6)
- Co-operative relationship (11)
- Nit-picker (6)
- One of a kind (6)
- Retort (7)
- Bovine animals (6)
- Genuinely (6)
- Short moral story (5)
- Inexpensive (5)

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

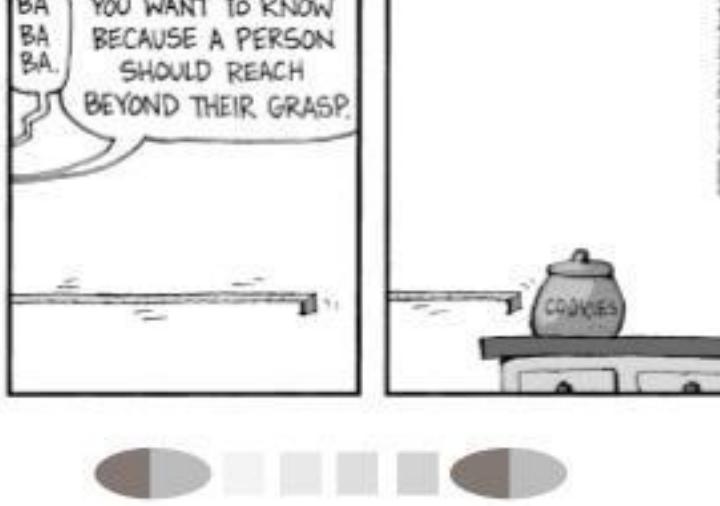
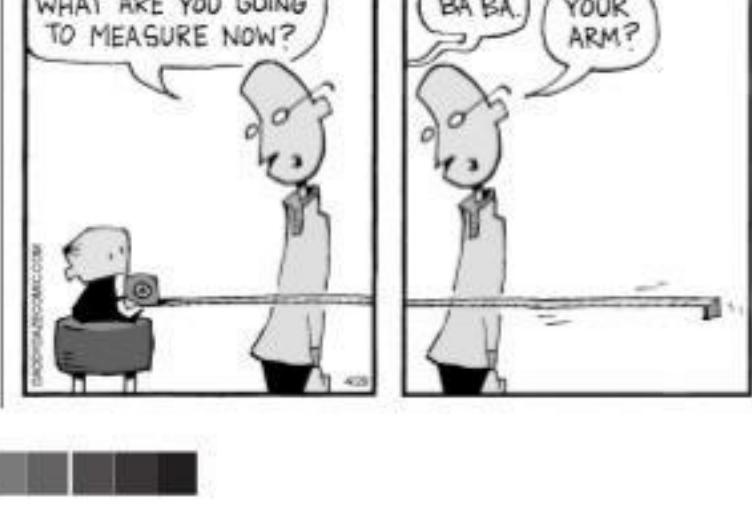
BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker



RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson



DADDY DAZE/John Kovaleski



NEED TO KNOW

HOSPITALS

• AIIMS 26588500, 26588900

• Moolchand Medcity (formerly Hospital) 42000000 & 24-hour

Chemist Shop 42000447

• VidyaSagar Institute for Men-

tal Health and Neuro-Sciences

26924300, 26924304

• Batra Hospital & Medical

Research Centre 29051280,

29958747

• Deen Dayal Upadhyay

25496320, 25494403

• Guru Tegh Bahadur

22586262, 22585007

RAILWAY INQUIRY

General Inquiry 139

Toll Free Nos. 1800112511

• SMS Inquiry Nos. 57886,

54959, 5676747

ROADWAYS INQUIRY

• ISBT (General Inquiry):

23868836, 23865181

• Haryana Roadways 23861262

City Office 43513185, Call Cen-

tre 09910383383, 18001803838, Reservation 43513186; Indigo Airlines Air-

port 011-25671580; Terminal I-

B 25671576, Palam Road

25671579, 18001803838

• JET AIRWAYS Flight Inquiry

and Reservation 39841111

• EMIRATES Flight Inquiry and

Reservation 3373377

FLIGHT INQUIRY

• AIR INDIA Flight Inquiry and

Reservation 18001801407

• INDIGO AIRLINES New Delhi

City Office 43513185, Call Cen-

tre 09910383383, 18001803838, Reservation 43513186; Indigo Airlines Air-

port 011-25671580; Terminal I-

B 25671576, Palam Road

25671579, 18001803838

• PUNJAB ROADWAYS 23867842,

port 011-25671580; Terminal I-

B 25671576, Palam Road

25671579, 18001803838

• RAJASTHAN ROADWAYS

23864470

• U.P. ROADWAYS 23868709

SCRABBLE® BRAND

Triple Word Score

RACK 1

RACK 2

RACK 3

RACK 4

FOUR RACK TOTAL

TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

SCRABBLE®

POLENT SUNROOM EFBROA FAUNA

RACK 1 = 14

RACK 2 = 59



Free speech is under assault like never before. The 25th Amendment is of zero risk to me but will come back to haunt Joe Biden

OUTGOING US PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP

IN HIS FIRST PUBLIC SPEECH AFTER THE US CAPITOL INCIDENT

WEATHER

CITY	MAX (°C)	MIN (°C)
SINGAPORE	28	23 H
HONG KONG	16	10 H
TOKYO	13	2 CL
LONDON	9	0 R
DUBAI	24	15 CL
SAN FRANCISCO	16	11 H
NEW YORK	6	0 H
MOSCOW	-10	-13 H

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

THUMBNAILS



A man is tested for the coronavirus by a healthcare worker at a testing center, set up on a basketball court, in Israel, on Wednesday ■ AP

New Zealand to review parliament security: Officials plan to review security at New Zealand's Parliament after a man armed with an axe smashed the main glass entrance doors early Wednesday. Police said that after smashing the doors, the 31-year-old man didn't try to enter the building and was arrested within minutes without further incident.

Cash assistance to Lebanon: The World Bank approved a \$246 million loan to Lebanon to provide emergency cash assistance to nearly 800,000 Lebanese reeling under the country's compounded economic and health crises.

North Korea ends party meeting: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vowed all-out efforts to bolster his country's nuclear deterrent during a major ruling party meeting where he earlier laid out plans to work toward salvaging the broken economy.

Navalny: Will fly to Russia despite threats

MOSCOW, 13 JANUARY

Top Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny said Wednesday he would go home to Russia over the weekend despite the Russian prison service's latest motion to put him behind bars for allegedly breaching the terms of his suspended sentence and probation.

Navalny, who has been convalescing in Germany from an August poisoning with a nerve agent that he has blamed on the Kremlin, charged that Russian President Vladimir Putin was now trying to deter him from coming home with new legal motions. The Kremlin has repeatedly denied a role in the opposition leader's poisoning.

Putin is stamping his feet demanding to do everything so that that I don't return home," Navalny said on Instagram.

He said he will fly home from Germany on Sunday.

At the end of December, the Federal Penitentiary Service demanded that Navalny report to its office in line with the terms of a suspended sentence he received for a 2014 conviction on charges of embezzlement and money-laundering that he rejected as politically motivated. The service warned that he faced prison time, if he failed to appear.

Navalny says his suspended sentence ended on December 30. He also noted the European Court for Human Rights had ruled that his 2014 conviction was unlawful.

Navalny fell into a coma while aboard a domestic flight from Siberia to Moscow on August 20. He was transferred from a hospital in Siberia to a Berlin hospital two days later.

Pence asked to invoke 25th Amendment

Resolution adopted in US House of Representatives; Pence had informed House Speaker Nancy Pelosi that he would not invoke the provision

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON, 13 JANUARY



The 25th Amendment, adopted more than 50 years ago in the wake of President John F Kennedy's assassination, provides a mechanism for the succession of the president for his/her replacement in the event he/she proves unfit to serve

The Democratic-controlled US House of Representatives, which is rushing ahead towards impeaching Donald Trump over the unprecedented Capitol Hill attack, has passed a resolution urging Vice President Mike Pence to invoke 25th Amendment to remove the president from office.

The resolution was voted by 223 to 205 votes on Tuesday night. The voting was mostly on party lines, with one Republican voting in favour of the resolution and another five abstaining. The resolution calls upon Pence to mobilise the Cabinet to activate the 25th Amendment to remove the president from office.

Under our Constitution, the 25th Amendment is not a means of punishment or usurpation. Invoking the 25th Amendment in such a manner would set a terrible precedent, Pence said in a letter to Pelosi, a Democrat.

Speaking on the House floor, Pelosi said on January 6, President Trump incited a deadly insurrection against America that targeted the very heart of its democracy, the US Capitol.

"Defiling the genius of the Constitution, separate but equal, attacking the first branch of government, trying to prevent the US from ascertaining the constitutional duty to ascertain that Joe Biden and Kamala Harris will be President and Vice President of the United States.

Speaker Nancy Pelosi that he would not invoke the 25th Amendment.

Under our Constitution, the 25th Amendment is not a means of punishment or usurpation. Invoking the 25th Amendment in such a manner would set a terrible precedent, Pence said in a letter to Pelosi, a Democrat.

They have gleeful desecration of the Capitol and violence against the Congress, our staff and our workers are horrors that will forever stain our nation's history. Five Americans have died following the violent attack. More than 50 police officers were seriously injured, including fifteen officers who were hospitalised, Pelosi said.

She said the "facts are very clear" that the President called for the seditious attack.

"For days, he urged supporters to come to Washington for the insurrection. Wednesday (January 6) morning he participated in a rally to encourage the rioters to march on the Capitol and fight. And, not only did he urge people to march on the Capitol and fight, he further fanned the flames and he and his family cheered and celebrated the desecration of the Capitol, Pelosi said.

Later that day and, now, the President is saying that he is not responsible and that his incitement to violence was totally appropriate, she said.

Referring to the impeachment proceedings against him, Trump in a public speech

Trump's Republican wall erodes ahead of vote

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 13 JANUARY

Republicans offered only modest reproach when President Donald Trump said there were very fine people on both sides of a white supremacist rally.

They stayed in line when Trump was caught pressuring a foreign leader and later defended his handling of a deadly pandemic.

But with a sudden force, the wall of Republican support that has enabled Trump to weather a seemingly endless series of crises is beginning to erode.

Trump's weakened standing among his own party

will come into sharper focus on Wednesday when the House is expected to impeach the president for inciting a riot at the Capitol last week.

A handful of Republicans have already said they'll join the effort, a number that could grow as the vote nears.

The choice facing Republicans isn't just about the immediate fate of Trump, who has just seven days left in his presidency. It's about whether the party's elected leaders are ready to move on from Trump, who remains popular with the GOP but is now toxic in much of Washington.

How they proceed could determine whether the party

remains viable in upcoming elections or splinters in a way that could limit their relevance.

We're at the moment where we're seeing a fracturing, a breaking, because of the unprecedented situation the sedition, the violence, the death, said Steve Schmidt, a longtime Republican strategy who left the party because of Trump.

The stunning nature of the deadly insurrection and Trump's role in fueling it has shaken many lawmakers. For the first time, there are real signs that a significant faction of Republicans want to purge Trump from their party.

an article of impeachment against Trump on Wednesday, thus opening the possibility of Trump becoming the only president in US history to be impeached twice.

The articles of impeachment charges Trump with a count of incitement of insurrection for his actions on January 6, when he delivered a speech inciting his supporters to lay siege to the Capitol, an action that temporarily halted the counting of Electoral College votes and resulted in the deaths of five individuals, including a police officer.

Earlier, the House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerry Nadler released a majority staff report for the impeachment of Trump. The 50-page report made a strong case to impeach the Republican president.

Trump has falsely asserted that he won the 2020 presidential election and repeatedly sought to overturn the results of the election. As his efforts failed repeatedly, he continued a parallel course of conduct that "foreseeably resulted in the imminent lawless actions of his supporters, who attacked the Capitol and the Congress", the report said.

The facts establish that he is unfit to remain in office a single day longer and warrant the immediate impeachment of President Trump, it said.

YouTube suspends Trump's channel

ASSOCIATED PRESS
HONG KONG, 13 JANUARY

in an emailed statement. Under the suspension, Trump's channel is temporarily prevented from uploading new videos or live streams for at least seven days, although the channel remains live, YouTube said.

Comments would be indefinitely disabled on the channel, YouTube said. Under YouTube's policies, a second strike would result in a two-week suspension, while a third strike would get the account banned permanently.

Tech companies have moved to suspend Trump's online postings, with Facebook and Instagram suspending Trump at least until the end of his term and Twitter permanently banning his account. Other sites, including Reddit and Snapchat have also banned Trump. Online shopping platform Shopify has pulled Trump stores off its platform.

After careful review, and in light of concerns about the ongoing potential for violence, we removed new content uploaded to the Donald J Trump channel and issued a strike for violating our policies for inciting violence, a YouTube spokesperson said

Top US military leaders remind troops of duty to defend Constitution

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 13 JANUARY

In a rare move, US military's top leaders have issued a joint statement reminding all service members of their duty to uphold the Constitution, asserting that the right to free speech gives no one the right to resort to violence.

The memo, issued on Tuesday and signed by America's most senior general, Mark Milley, and the entire Joint Chiefs of Staff, comes amidst fears of more deadly violence by extremists supporting outgoing President Donald Trump. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) on Monday warned of "armed protests" being planned at all 50 US state capitols and in Washington DC in the run-up to President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration on January 20.

The memo signed by America's most senior general, Mark Milley, and the entire Joint Chiefs of Staff, comes amidst fears of more deadly violence by extremists supporting Trump

"As we have done throughout our history, the US military will obey lawful orders from civilian leadership, support civil authorities to protect lives and property, ensure public safety in accordance with the law, and remain fully committed to protecting and defending the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic," said the eight senior leaders of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff in the one-page letter. "As service members, we must embody the values and

ideals of the nation. We support and defend the Constitution. Any act to disrupt the constitutional process is not only against our traditions, values and oath; it is against the law," the statement said.

The joint statement also denounced the attacks on the Capitol on January 6. "We witnessed actions inside the Capitol building that were inconsistent with the rule of law. The rights of freedom of speech and assembly do not give anyone the right to resort to violence, sedition and insurrection," the statement said.

According to *The New York Times*, the joint statement is the latest example of an apolitical American military and its top leadership thrust into an awkward, even potentially dangerous, position of possibly having to weigh dubious orders from the president against their oath to uphold the Constitution.

UK begins major trial for inhaler-based Covid treatment

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LONDON, 13 JANUARY



Covid-19 patients who require supplemental oxygen.

We need treatments as well as vaccines to fight highly pathogenic viruses such as SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19). Development of treatments like ours will remain necessary in cases where vaccines are not effective, for those who do not get vaccinated, and in case the virus mutates to

UK may move patients into hotels: England's health care system may move patients into hotels to ease pressure on hospitals struggling to handle rising Covid-19 admissions.

Britain already has Europe's deadliest coronavirus outbreak, with over 83,000 deaths, and the number of hospital beds filled by Covid-19 patients is still rising. Hospitals in England are now treating 55% more Covid cases than during the first peak of the pandemic. AP

the point where vaccines become less effective, said Richard Marsden, CEO of Synairgen.

We believe this trial presents an opportunity for a signifi-

cant UK scientific breakthrough and if given the right support, our drug could rapidly assist with the global crisis, he said.

After reporting the results for the primary and key secondary endpoints of the study, enrolled patients will continue to be assessed for long-Covid-19 symptoms.

Synairgen is a clinical-stage respiratory drug discovery and development company founded by University of Southampton Professors Sir Stephen Holgate, Donna Davies and Ratko Djukanovic.

It has appointed Parexel Biotech, a division of the leading global clinical research organisation Parexel to help conduct the Phase III trial.

Indonesia starts Covid vaccination campaign with President Widodo

ASSOCIATED PRESS
JAKARTA, 13 JANUARY



President Joko Widodo receives a shot of vaccine at Merdeka Palace in Jakarta. ■ AP

of the world's people must be vaccinated for that to be achieved. The participation of all Indonesians will greatly determine the success of this programme, he said.

Conditional use of the Sinovac Biotech Ltd vaccine is scheduled to be rolled out in the coming months with health care workers, civil servants and other at-risk populations prioritised first. It will be free for all Indonesian citizens.

For Indonesia to vaccinate two-thirds of its population, 181.5 million people, to reach herd immunity, Sadikin said the two-shot vaccine would require almost 427 million doses, including the estimate that 15% may be wasted.

protect our family, our neighbour, Indonesian people and the human civilisation. Health Minister Budi Gunadi Sadikin said on Wednesday.

This vaccine is the instrument we can use to protect us. But more importantly, the vaccine is the instrument to

wanting trust in governments and all types of media is threatening to limit the roll-out of coronavirus vaccines around the world, particularly in the US, according to a survey conducted by communications firm Edelman.

In an annual assessment on the state of trust in institutions, the firm found that this infodemic is breeding mistrust that could make longer the path out from the pandemic. "This is the era of information bankruptcy," said Richard Edelman, CEO of Edelman. He said last week's storming of the Capitol building in Washington and the fact that only a third of people are willing to get a Covid-19 vaccine straight away crystallise

the dangers of misinformation. The firm found scepticism over vaccines remains a major hurdle for their successful rollout. Across the 28 countries assessed, it found that as of November only a little below two-thirds of respondents said they would be willing to take the vaccine within a year.

That hesitancy was most prevalent in Russia, with just 15% of people surveyed willing to get vaccinated as soon

as possible and only a further 25% comfortable with the idea of doing so within a year.

In the US, it found a total of 59% of people were willing to get vaccinated within a year with just 33% happy to do so as soon as possible. The highest levels of trust were recorded in India, with 51% looking forward to taking up the vaccine opportunity immediately and a further 29% within a year, for a total of 80%.

Governments and health

practitioners around the world will be hoping that sceptics will be won over by a smooth rollout of the vaccines. Britain became last month the first country to approve for use the vaccine created by American pharmaceutical company Pfizer and German company BioNTech. Other countries have started using it too while other vaccines have also been authorised.

Despite the seeming hesitancy over vaccines, Edelman found that businesses have emerged as the most trusted institution partly because of the speed at which they proactively developed vaccines in record time. Business is trusted by some 61% of respondents, replacing the government in top spot, which fell from its mid-year top spot and is currently at 53%.



the dangers of misinformation.

The firm found scepticism over vaccines remains a major hurdle for their successful rollout. Across the 28 countries assessed, it found that as of November only a little below two-thirds of respondents said they would be willing to take the vaccine within a year.

That hesitancy was most prevalent in Russia, with just 15% of people surveyed willing to get vaccinated as soon

as possible and only a further 25% comfortable with the idea

Could Trump face charges, pardon himself?

While no former American president has been charged with crimes after he demitted office, Trump could be the first, says THOMAS KLASSEN

Among the central pillars of American politics is that presidents accept electoral loss with dignity and generosity. At the same time, those defeated have not been hounded and jailed for their actions while in power.

This differs markedly from democracies like Brazil and South Korea, where defeated presidents have been regularly jailed when their opponents seize power.

By egging his supporters to storm Capitol Hill, Donald Trump unleashed forces that could terminate his presidency before January 20, see him charged with crimes after leaving office and further tarnish the legacy he has sought so hard to create.

Trump finally committed to a "smooth, orderly and seamless transition of power" in a video message released more than 24 hours after the mayhem at the Capitol left at least five people dead. But a question on the minds of many is why did he continue for so long to battle against the November election results?

A different man might have graciously accepted defeat in November when it was obvious Joe Biden had won. Freed from the need to pander to his ideological base, he could have used the last two months to lead the battle against the Covid-19 pandemic, heal wounds, burnish the Republican Party and show generosity to opponents.

It may be that the first president in American history without prior political experience does not fully appreciate the differences between politics and business. In politics, winners and losers don't crush each other or harm political traditions and institutions.

Long-time politicians of all parties know they will need each other in the future, and that ultimately they need to co-operate to govern a nation.

Having blazed an unprecedented post-election path, Trump now faces the possibility that the 25th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution will be invoked. Democratic leaders and even some Republicans are calling for it.

The 25th Amendment permits a president to be removed from office by the vice-president, plus a majority of the cabinet, or by the vice-president and a body established by Congress, if they determine the commander-in-chief is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office.

Taking the steps required by the constitutional amendment — especially the need for Vice-President Mike Pence, a Trump loyalist for more than four years, to invoke it — likely makes it a non-starter. Any formal effort to remove Trump days before Biden's inauguration could also cause even more ideological division in a country already on tenterhooks.

In all of American history, no former president has been charged with criminal behaviour after a term in office. This is due to an unwritten understanding by the political elite that the office of the presidency and



American politics could be diminished by such an action. Charging one former president with criminal wrongdoing may raise the likelihood of the next former president being charged as well for partisan reasons, creating a vicious circle.

At the moment, in keeping with American tradition, Trump has not been charged or indicted with any offence. However, once leaving office, there is at least one criminal investigation that will proceed in New York to one of his companies. Other possible investigations also could start.

No president has pardoned himself while in power, and no president has sought a pre-emptive self-pardon for charges that have not yet been laid, as Trump is reportedly contemplating.

The closest situation occurred in 1974 when President Gerald Ford pardoned his

predecessor, Richard Nixon, on charges of obstruction of justice.

Any effort by Trump to invoke a self-pardon would run into the problem that he himself noted in mid-2018: "Why would I do that when I have done nothing wrong?" A self-pardon, even if ultimately deemed constitutional, would tarnish the legacy of the president who sought it. The increasing hyper-polarization of American politics and Trump's outrageous behaviour may have tipped the scales on the protection granted by the political establishment to former presidents.

Biden and his supporters could conclude that Trump does need to be charged once his term is finished as a reprimand and warning for future office-holders.

Conversely, if Trump investigations result in charges, the Biden administration could then issue a pardon in keeping with the

precedent set by the Ford-Nixon arrangement.

This would preserve some of the dignity of the office of the president, while simultaneously serving to rebuke Trump by adding his name alongside the notorious Nixon's as the only presidents pardoned. Ironically, Trump's eventual fate and legacy might be in hands of the opponent he has so mercilessly dismissed.

The consequences of Trump's disruptions of one of the hallmarks of American politics — the peaceful and dignified transfer of power after an election — will have consequences for years to come. Future presidents will hopefully see the end of Trump's single term as a lesson of what not to do.

The writer is Professor, School of Public Policy and Administration, York University, Canada. This article was published on www.theconversation.com

FAITH IN CONSTITUTIONAL VALUES

Is basic structure part of a deeper democracy, asks Ashit KUMAR SRIVASTAVA.



The society in which this Grundnorm is contriving. Saying that a particular trait is part of the basic structure, yet that trait is not part of societal values will only be a contradiction in legal jurisprudence, which Dr. B.R. Ambedkar had emphasized in his penultimate speeches in the Constituent Assembly.

The question that comes back to us is what elements are usually used to create a Grundnorm. Even if we move to the presumption that there is a Grundnorm working as a base for us to create a legal superstructure, the issue that confronts us is if of conditions required

to develop this Grundnorm.

A social revolution might be one indicator for the creation of a new value system, something which happened in the French Revolution. This was a social revolution to topple the French aristocracy and gentry, thus leading to the creation of values of 'Equality, Liberty & Fraternity' and ending hierarchy of the Crown and the nobles.

India cannot claim to have the same kind of historical privilege as France; Indian history did certainly lack a social revolution. Therefore, any value system accepted

through the Indian Constitution in the 1950s might not result from social revolution. Rather Dr. Ambedkar was hoping to create a social revolution through the help of the Constitution, which is a reverse process if compared with the French Revolution, where ideas of liberty, equality, and fraternity were accepted after the social revolution took place.

The other indicator could be the 'invocation of the founding father' for the creation of a Grundnorm. For example, in the case of the Bangladeshi Constitution, Sheikh Mujibur Rahim is quoted time and again to support calls for retrieving the Constitution back to the tenets of Mujibism (that is, Socialism, Democracy, Nationalism, and Secularism).

The Supreme Court has been invoking the Founding Father of the Indian Constitution to reinforce faith in Constitutional values, whether it is Nehru's concept of Secularism or Ambedkar's idea of independence of Judiciary. Invocation of founding fathers for reinforcing the values of the Constitution has been frequent tool for consolidating the doctrine of Basic Structure.

However, how far do the Founding Fathers represent the people's will also needs to be questioned. Are the founding fathers themselves a part of the deeper democracy? Does the electoral ballot decide this question? If yes, then our sense of deeper democracy might be flawed, knowing that only two per cent of the Indian population voted for the selection of the Constituent Assembly in the 1940s. That can hardly be a reflection of the deeper democracy we are trying. The creation of Grundnorm has elements of society values, because it is the will of society which contrives the Grundnorm, on which we create the legal Grundnorm.

The writer is Assistant Professor of Law, National Law University Jabalpur.

MORALITY MUST BE OBJECTIVE

It is important for societies to revisit the discourse of gendering crime, says FARZANA AKHTER

Laws are meant to regulate the behaviour of human beings with the conformity of equality, equity, fairness and justice. Though legal regimes in South Asian countries greatly attributed to religious, social, cultural repercussions towards a set of norms, sometimes the execution of these rules revolve only around the weaker gender of society. That masculine conundrum of abiding rules sometimes caused dismay among fellow citizens.

If we gaze at the platitudes of ethical discourse, the conclusion often reaches to one point of convergence that is 'morality cannot be subjective, it must have some objective connotation'. In Bangladesh's perspective, if we think morality as a product of some ethical, religious and idyllic thoughts, it has also some neutral standing stone to placate the sense of justice. The submissive and subjugating approach by assumed dominant gender towards the weaker gender of society with regards to crime causes anarchy. This subliminal non-legal aspect of crime should be initiated in the discourse of socio-psychological causation of crime.

Recently, a video went viral in social media showing a female was smoking in the public place of Rajshahi City. At that place, many males were also smoking. But this particular woman was humiliated for not being a violator of law but being a 'woman' smoking in public. So let us look for a moment at the relevant law applicable in this situation.

Bangladesh became a Party to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control on 27 February 2005. Mandated by constitutional provision of improving public health as a primary duty, the government enacted "Smoking and Using of Tobacco Products (control) Act 2005". According to section 4 of the Act, it is prohibited to smoke in public places and public vehicles. Section 4 also made it a penal offence by imposing a fine. The language of this section is clear enough to trace and does not implicate any gender prerogatives. Interestingly, in a viral video, the scolding males were dispersing ponderous ethics toward the female when they think the same deviant act as quite right for them because they are the 'Alpha Male'!

A close perusal of religious scriptures in this regard also suggested gender-neutral directives to



follow. Neither Law nor religion opens up the venture to interpret rules with the prism of patriarchy. It is the subconscious dominant features of distorted masculinity that determine the unjust thinking line of right and wrong.

According to the marginalisation theory of female criminality, inducing women to a constant marginalised position as a victim or as a perpetrator is self-deterioratory. When socialisation process makes women a second sex and tries to hold them as downcast, women become more prone to violating the norms.

Moreover, the strain model of crime causation propounded by famous socio-criminologist Robert K Marton suggested that when there is no junction between the cultural goals and institutionalised means, retreatism and revolution arises to support the new norms. Fluctuation in the moral dimension of 'Gender' creates unnecessary strain on some of the classes of citizens. If a particular social structure is inherently unequal or there is unequal execution of social norms or legal rules, this may change the individual perceptions as to means and opportunities. Role of male or female in preventing crime should be complementary to each other. Uneven gender notion should not be utilised to hold one as a victim or a perpetrator. It is the high time to replace our notion of 'gender' by equitable cultural ethics.

The writer is Lecturer, Department of Law and Human Rights, University of Asia Pacific. The Daily Star/ANN.



THIRD SPINNER

Joe Root (photo, left) is priming himself to operate as England's third spinner for the first Test against Sri Lanka. With Moeen Ali set to miss both matches of the tour as he recovers from Covid-19, England's slow-bowling options have a very green tinge. And for the sake of achieving the right balance, Root could be the one to step up.

For more updates

www.thestatesman.com

THUMBNAILS



Efficiency test: The Badminton World Federation said on Wednesday it would work with Thai health authorities to ensure "comfortable" Covid-19 testing conditions at the Thailand Open after Kidambi Srikanth had been left with a bloody nose following a mandatory test.

World Cup: With exactly two years to go, Hockey India and the Odisha government are themselves gearing up to host the 2023 Men's Hockey World Cup. In 2023, India will host the competition at Bhubaneswar and Rourkela for a record fourth time.

Pak show: The Pakistan Cricket Board's cricket committee headed by Saleem Yousuf expressed dissatisfaction at a meeting in Lahore over the team's performance during the past 16 months. Another review will be made after the home series against South Africa.

Milan win: AC Milan have booked a spot in the Coppa Italia quarter-finals, eliminating Torino 5-4 on penalties. Tuesday's match was the second in back-to-back fixtures between the two sides, as Milan had beaten Torino 2-0 in Serie A last week at the San Siro.



Pogba strikes: Manchester United moved three points clear at the top of the Premier League after a Paul Pogba goal gave them a 1-0 win over Burnley on Tuesday. The win, in the re-arranged fixture, put United on 36 points from 17 games with rivals Liverpool on 33.

Football probe: Global soccer body Fifa, often cited for corruption, has failed in its attempt to disqualify the special prosecutor named last year to handle an investigation into Fifa president Gianni Infantino and his dealings with Switzerland's former attorney-general.

'Ignore it': No more Premier League games should be postponed because of Covid-19 outbreaks if the English football season is to finish on schedule, according to Tottenham Hotspur manager Jose Mourinho. He called England's top flight "unprofessional."

New plan: Formula One has unveiled a calendar following the postponements of the Australian and Chinese Grands Prix. The curtain-raiser in Melbourne moves to 21 November and the round in Shanghai will go ahead if another one drops off the schedule.

Tokyo Games: Tokyo 2020 organising committee chief Yoshiro Mori has promised that the Olympic and Paralympic Games will be held as scheduled this summer. Mori made the remarks when addressing approximately 3,500 committee staff members in an online event.

Different strokes: Tributes from Canadian prime minister Justin Trudeau to International Olympic Committee chief Thomas Bach poured in for retiring anti-dope official Dick Pound but there was no applause from Lance Armstrong, Gary Bettman or Vladimir Putin.

AGENCIES
BRISBANE, 13 JANUARY

After showing an epic fightback in Sydney to draw the third Test against Australia, Team India today began their preparations for the fourth and final match of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy scheduled to begin on Friday at the Gabba.

The official Twitter handle of the Board of Control for Cricket in India posted a series of pictures in which bowling coach Bharat Arun was seen talking to fast bowlers Jasprit Bumrah and Shardul Thakur. In one, head coach Ravi Shastri was seen giving a pep talk to the players.

"After an epic fightback in Sydney, it is time to regroup. We have begun our preparations for the final Test at the Gabba," the BCCI tweeted.

The third Test ended in a draw on Monday, after some remarkable rearguard batting by Rishabh Pant, Cheteshwar Pujara, Hanuma Vihari and Ravichandran Ashwin. Chasing 407, India reached 334/5 on day five, having faced 131 overs, before the teams decided to call it a day.

Ashwin scored an unbeaten 39 off 128 deliveries along with an injured Vihari, who was barely able to move after pulling his hamstring. They shared an unbeaten 62-run partnership, batting for more than 40 overs and ensured the hosts didn't take a 2-1 lead in the series.



Before that, Pujara (77) and Pant (97) were in a 148-run partnership for the third wicket to pull off a draw.

However, going into the final Test, the visitors have plenty of injury worries. They are fretting over Bumrah, who has an abdominal muscle tear and in case he doesn't get to play, India would be forced to field an inexperienced pace attack. All-rounder Ravindra Jadeja has already been ruled out of the Brisbane Test with a broken thumb, while Ashwin (back) and Vihari are also doubtful.

The series is currently tied at 1-1 with Australia winning the first Test in Adelaide while

India registered a tremendous comeback in Melbourne to win the Boxing Day Test by eight wickets.

'Elder brother'

"Ashwin was guiding me like an elder brother when both of us were battling to draw the third Test," Vihari has said, adding: "Batting in that (last) session was a real experience for me. It was something you can only dream of batting on a day five of a Test match; the series is 1-1. If you can do it for the team, that satisfaction will slowly come and then we will realise it how big an effort it was," Vihari, who

had scored a dogged 23 off 161 balls, told *bcci.tu*.

"I was really happy, as an elder brother, he (Ashwin) was communicating like whenever he felt that I was a bit loose, he was telling me (to) 'Let us focus on one ball at a time. Take it as deep as possible, 10 balls at a time...it is really special,' he said.

Ashwin scored a patient 39 off 128 balls while enduring a shooting back pain.

Vihari said had Cheteshwar Pujara been there till the end, India might have won the game.

"Taking a draw out of it was a fabulous result for us. I felt like I was not injured and if

Pujara were there, we would have had a result, it would have been a fabulous win. But nonetheless 10 points out of this is a massive result for all of us," he said.

Pujara scored 77 off 205 before getting out as the last Indian batsman, before Vihari and Ashwin ensured the draw.

Horror hotel

The BCCI is in talks with hosts Cricket Australia for the Indian cricket team to be allowed some leeway. The Indian cricketers checked in at the Sofitel Brisbane Central hotel to be given a do-it-yourself directive that denied them housekeeping facilities and room service.

The directives also denied them the use of the swimming pool as Queensland, of which Brisbane is the capital, sought to avoid community transmission of Covid-19.

A couple of areas in Brisbane have been declared hotspots ones.

Both teams are obliged to obey strict quarantine rules as they have arrived in Queensland from Sydney in New South Wales, which saw a rise in Covid-19 infections recently.

"Queensland has recorded one new local Covid-19 case and two in hotel quarantine while two Brisbane locations remain on high alert after they were visited by a man with the highly contagious UK strain," said a report on *Chanel 9* news website.

The Statesman Sport

Postal Reg. No. DL (ND)-II/6088/2018-19-20



Ankita falls short again

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MELBOURNE, 13 JANUARY

almost two hours. Not being able to win points on her first serve hurt Ankita.

Ankita said her opponent came out with her best game.

"It was good tennis from both of us, top level from the first game. She was serving very well and she was able to win free points with her serve," Ankita said.

It was the Indian's sixth attempt to qualify for a competition at the grand stage.

Allegations against Smith a 'load of rubbish'

AGENCIES
BRISBANE, 13 JANUARY

Australia head coach Justin Langer has described allegations against Steve Smith (in photo) after wiping out Rishabh Pant's guard marks during the third drawn Test against India as an "absolute load of rubbish."

Smith was caught on stump camera trying to remove Pant's guard during the fifth day of the third Test at the Sydney Cricket Ground as Australia tried hard to get rid of the left-handed wicket-keeper-batsman who had gone on a counter-attack.

The Pant-led Indian resistance forced the Aussies into some desperate acts, including Smith removing guard marks and skipper Tim Paine sledging Ravichandran Ashwin. However, Langer backed both Smith and Paine.

"Literally cannot believe some of the rubbish I read about Steve Smith. It's an absolute load of rubbish. If anyone knows Steve Smith - he is a bit quirky, he does some weird stuff. We have all laughed about it for the last couple of years. I have spoken about it publicly and I have spoken about it privately that he is a bit quirky.

"Obviously we had a chat with him. We are in the bubble together. I see him every day. But I am really disappointed with the way everyone's jumped on the back of him. He has played close 80-odd Test matches and he has done that every Test match. To be honest, I have done it every Test match as well. There is nothing wrong with it," said Lyon at another Press conference.

"Smithy loves batting. We

all know that. And even know that though we weren't batting in the rest of the Test match, he is still thinking about batting. He does that to help me as well. He is looking at where I should look to pitch the ball. What pace I need to bowl on that wicket. It is all about conversation. He is going okay. He has got everyone's support in the Australian change room. We are really disappointed with everyone coming out and saying things about Smithy because none of it is true," he added.

Langer added that Smith had ensured that his bat did the talking ever since he had returned from the ball-tampering scandal.

"Seriously, I thought that was absolutely ludicrous. In the last couple of years since he's been back, he's been exemplary on and off the

field. He has let his bat do the talking, he was abused like anything in England, but he kept smiling and let his bat do the talking. Give me a break."

The former Australia opener, who took over from Darren Lehmann as coach after the ball-tampering scandal and has initiated an image makeover along with captain Tim Paine, backed the team skipper after the wicket-keeper-batsman's on-field chatter with Ashwin was caught on stump mic and became a subject of controversy in mainstream media as well as social media.

"You have no idea how much faith I have got in Tim Paine. He didn't have his best day, no doubt about that. After three years he has hardly put a hair out of place. He has been outstanding as the Australian captain in everything he does. He had a frustrating day, we've got to cut him some slack surely. But having said that, when you set a standard as high as he does and as we do, we understand that we get criticised when we fall below that. But Tim Paine is an outstanding leader and will continue to be for some time to come. So he has my 100 per cent support," said Langer.

With the series tied at 1-1, the two teams will now face each other in the final Test beginning on Friday at the Gabba.

Injuries blamed on 'wrongly timed' Indian tournament

AGENCIES
BRISBANE, 13 JANUARY

The timing of the 2020 season of the Indian Premier League was not ideal, said Australia head coach Justin Langer (in photo) today, blaming the cash-rich Twenty20 tournament for soft-tissue injuries suffered by players on either side.

The IPL's 13th edition was played from 19 September to 10 November last year behind closed doors in the United Arab Emirates owing to the Covid-19 pandemic. India's tour of Australia began with the first One-Day International of the three-match series on 27 November.

"I have said that this is going to be the survival of the fittest this summer. It is really interesting how many injuries there have been throughout this summer. We suffered through the white-ball series and through the Test...I can't help but think that the IPL this year probably wasn't ideal timing for anyone. But Tim Paine is an outstanding leader and will continue to be for some time to come. So he has my 100 per cent support," said Langer.

With the series tied at 1-1, the two teams will now face each other in the final Test beginning on Friday at the Gabba.

"I love the IPL. I look at the IPL now as I used to look at

the county cricket for our young players. Guys who play county cricket, it helps them in their cricket development enormously. I think it is the same with IPL with our players. It helps their white-ball cricket development. But the timing of it, because of what happened with Covid-19, probably wasn't ideal. I just wonder if that is having an impact on the injuries that we are seeing in both teams throughout the summer."

Langer said that the Australian team management would look to review this ahead of future series.

"I am sure we will review that. Cricket Australia is on it...we have said after the one-day series that we should review it. When you have a trend of having more injuries than usual, then of course you are going to review it," said the Australia head coach.

"A lot of these things, you can say are one-off incidents. When it becomes a trend I mean India and Australia had more injuries."

(Mohammad) Shami broke his arm, Ravi (Ravindra Jadeja) broke his thumb, they are unusual. But the soft-tissue injuries is what we will look at. And I would like to say I am sure we will review that like we do with most things, like we review most things post-series," he added.

Thailand Open: Saina, Srikanth progress, Kashyap retires midway

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BANGKOK, 13 JANUARY

Star India shuttler Saina Nehwal and former world number one Kidambi Srikanth entered the second rounds of their respective events but Parupalli Kashyap made an early exit from the Thailand Open Super 1000 tournament, here on Wednesday.

Saina got the better of Selvadurai Kisona of Malaysia 21-15 21-15 in the women's singles opening round to set up a clash with Thailand's Busan Ongbamrungphan.

Saina, who was first forced to withdraw from the event for positive COVID-19 results on Tuesday but later returned a negative test, thanked the Badminton World Federation officials and doctors for allowing her to participate.

"Yesterday, I was given a

positive COVID-19 result after my PCR test but I already told them that I had COVID last November, so I have antibodies. I tried to explain this to the doctor and after my blood tests and chest X-rays the doctor said I was OK and I don't have COVID-19," Saina said after her win.

"I am thankful to the doc-

tors, the BWF and everyone who made the decision for me to play. It was a tiring day but I am happy I could comeback and play my match."

Earlier in the day, Srikanth took just 31 minutes to prevail over compatriot Sourabh Verma 21-12 21-11 in the men's singles, but Kashyap was forced to retire midway in his opening-round match against Jason Anthony Ho-Shue of Canada. Kashyap, a Commonwealth Games champion, was trailing 8-14 in the third game when he chose to retire after pulling his calf muscle.

He had lost the first game 9-21 before making a comeback to take the second 21-13.

Srikanth will next play

eight seed Zii Jia Lee of

Malaysia, who defeated another Indian HS Prannoy 13-21

21-14 21-18.

Sameer Verma too made a

first-round exit after losing 15-

21 17-21 to Shesar Hiren Rhustavito of Indonesia.

The two were delighted

by the win over their idol.

"Lee Yong Dae was an idol for both of us when we were started, so it was excellent playing him today, and we are happy to get the win," Satwiksairaj said.

"Our strategy was to attack as much as possible, but not to hurry. We gave up some points in the first game by hurrying too much. But we always knew what we had to do," Chirag added.

However, it was curtains for Arjun Madathil Ramachandran and Dhruv Kapila, who lost to the Malaysian duo of Ong Yew Sin and Teo Ee Yi 21-13, 8-21, 22-24.

Another Indian men's doubles pair of Manu Attri and B Sumeeth Reddy also lost in the opening round to Thai duo of Weeraphat Phakjarung and Wongsaithorn Thongkham 19-21 14-21.

The two were delighted

Chennaiyin inches closer to