Onicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

CHENNAI I WEDNESDAY 13 | JANUARY 2021

WEATHER



Sarvari: Margazhi 29 Tithi: Amavasai/ Prathamai

Star: Puradam/ Uthiradam Rahukalam: 12 noon to 1.30 pm Yamagandam: 7.30 am to 9 am **PRAYERS**

Fajar: 5.18 am Zohar: 12.20 pm Asar: 3.31 pm Maghrib: 5.57 pm Isha: 7.12 pm

Give question bank to

students taking board exams: Par panel

New Delhi: A parliamentary panel on Tuesday suggested to the edu-cation ministry that a "big question bank" should be given to students of classes 10 and 12 in advance, out of which selected ones will come in the board exams, in a move aimed at mitigating their learning gap in wake of Covid-19, sources said



Season's rangoli!



CITY 2 Court directs police to book 'Master' producer



WORLD | 5 **US acting Homeland** Security chief quits

SPORT | 6 India's injury toll mounts

Vol. 16 No. 289 Established 1938 8 PAGES ₹3.00



deccanchronicle.com, facebook.com/deccannews, twitter.com/deccanchronicle, google.com/+deccanchronicle

SC puts farm laws on hold, forms panel

■Farmers unions sceptical, say committee members support laws

• No farmer shall be

under the farm laws.

dispossessed of his title as a result of action taken

Stay may assuage hurt

feelings of farmers and

encourage them to come

PARMOD KUMAR | DC NEW DELHI, JAN. 12

In a major breather to the Narendra Modi government that has been caught in a cul-de-sac over the ongoing farmers agitation, the Supreme Court on Tuesday stayed the implementation of the three controversial farm laws for now, restored the minimum support price (MSP) system that was prevalent before the enactment of farm laws and set up a committee of four agriculture experts to examine the laws and submit a report within two months. The two months, the court MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE WHAT THE COURT SAID MSP system shall be Bhupinder Singh Mann (President, Bhartiya Kisan maintained until further Union)

 Dr Parmod Kumar Joshi (Director for South Asia, International Food Policy Research Institute) Ashok Gulati (agricultural economist) Anil Ghanwat (President, Shetkari Sanghatana)

of its first sitting and the first sitting has to take place within 10 days Tuesday's order. The clarification of the

said, will start from the date

three-member bench of the mittee's report, seems to suit the government which Supreme Court, that the

to the negotiating table. suspension of the implementation of the three laws is not indefinite, and that the court will take a final call on the farm laws only after it examines the com-

is resisting the farmers' demand for repeal of the

laws but is agreeable to making amendments. The farmer unions, however, were not pleased and

WHAT FARMERS SAID

being misguided by various

forces even in the

constitution of the committee.

These are people who are known

for their support to the three Acts

and have actively advocated for

It is clear that the court is

reiterated that they will not participate in the court-

All India Kisan Sangharsh

Coordination Committee

ordered committee process, charging that "all the members of this committee are pro-govt and had been justifying the laws of the government." They added that they would not call off their protest until the newly enacted legislations are repealed. "It is clear that the court is being misguided by various forces even in its constitution of a committee. These are people who are known for their support to the three Acts and have actively advocated for the same," a statement issued by All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination CommHealth secretary J. Rdhakrishnan inspects the packets containing Covishield vaccine after its first batch from the Serum Institute of India, Pune, arrived at a storage

facility in Chennai on Tuesday.

Vaccine Covishield arrives in Chennai

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs

The first consignment of Coronavirus Covishield vaccine reached Chennai from Pune on Tuesday morning, four days ahead of the launch of a nationwide inoculation campaign against the pandemic Covid-19.

A flight carrying 53,650 Covishield vials of 10 doses each (5,36,500 doses), manufactured by Serum Institute of India, landed at the Chennai airport at 10: 22 am. The state has been sanctioned 20,000 doses of Covaxin, manufactured by Bharat

International, too, which will be made available later.
Health secretary J.

Radhakrishnan said the vaccines are being stored in government godown on the premises of the Directorate of Medical and Rural Health Services

The state government has identified 307 locations across the state for administering the vaccines to priorgroups including healthcare workers. The state has about six lakh preregistered beneficiaries in the priority groups. While 1,18,000 doses would be for Chennai, the remainder is set to be distributed to other districts.

Health minister Vijayabaskar told reporters Viralimalai that the Covishield vials would be dispatched, with requisite cold storage amenity, to ten regional centres and then to

Most tourist spots shut during Pongal holidays

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, JAN. 12

Most tourist spots in and around Chennai will be out of bounds for the public during the Pongal holidays from January 15 to 17 as crowding could lead to the spread of Coronavirus.

The Aringnar Anna zoological park at Vandalur, the monuments and tourists spots in Mamall-apuram, the Guindy National Park in Chennai

and all the beaches would be closed for the common people during the three davs. an official release said. Earlier, the government

had announced that the public would not be allowed entry into the beaches in Chennai on January 17 when Kaanum Pongal would be celebrated by the people of the State. But on Tuesday, the ban was extended to the entire Pongal weekend by adding more tourist spots.

Schools to open for Classes X and XII on Jan. 19

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, JAN. 12

Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami on Tuesday announced that schools would open for Classes X and XII on January 19. Hostels to accommodate students in those classes can also be opened, the Chief Minister said. Schools should ensure that a class room did not house more than 25 pupils and that other Coronavirus prevention norms were strictly adhered to, he said in the

press release on Tuesday. Most of the parents, whose opinion was sought between January 6 and 8 on the reopening of schools, had favoured the move, the release said.

The idea of reopening schools after Pongal holidays was mooted on the basis of views expressed at the review meeting on December 28, 2020, in which district collectors, medical experts and public health professionals participated. Students should be provided with vitamin and zinc

to fully cooperate with the government move. The release also claimed that the spread of Coronavirus had been coming down step by step in all

ents, teachers and students

the districts. Meanwhile, PMK youth wing leader Anbumani Ramadoss said that it would be appropriate if schools were opened only after the vaccination process for Covid-19 started and urged

the government to with-draw the order.



Gold Standard Safety Protocol . Book an appointment . Live Video Call

To locate your nearest store and know more on 6366920017. Buy online at tanishq.co.in or Download our App 🔲 🔊 💣 • *Conditions apply • Check tanishq.co.in/offers for more details.

• Additional discount on diamond jewellery above ₹12 Lakhs • **Valid on gold bought from any jeweller, assuming old gold exchanged is of 22kt & above purity.

New stores now open at Ambattur, Cathedral Road & Chrompet in Chennai

TAKES **SHORT**

online courses on **Japanese lang**

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, JAN. 12

Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry will commence a and industry will confinence a beginners course N5 - spoken and written Japanese, on January 23, 2021. Classes will be conducted online and will be held on Saturdays from 6 pm to 8 pm and on Sundays from 9 am to 11 am. Online classes for N4 AND N3 will also commence on Saturdays shortly, according to a press release.

They also commence classes for various levels of Japanese proficiency tests. For further details, persons interested can contact the language school of the Indo-Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, call 044-2435 2010/ 2435 4779/ 044-4855 6140. They can also be reached via email at indo-japan@ijcci.com or on their

Driver crushed to death on **Vandalur-Minjur** outer ring road

DC CORRESPONDENT

on Tuesday morning after the truck he was driving lost control and overturned on the Vandaloor-Minjur outer ring

On Tuesday morning, when the truck was on Vandalur Minjur outer ring road, the

Eyewitnesses told police that the driver was thrown off the seat and fell on the ground when a huge rock from the truck fell

Based on the alert, Chrompet traffic investigation police reached the spot and removed the body of the deceased crushed under the debris. Police also employed Crane to remove the rocks from the road.

Chromepet traffic investigation police registered a case.



the occasion of Hanuma

IJCCI organises

The language school of the Indo-

website at www.ijcci.com

CHENNAI, JAN. 12

A 56-year-old driver lost his life

The deceased person has been identified as Kumar of Chengam in Tiruvannamalai district, according to the police. Kumar had been transporting rocks from Tindivanam in Villupuram district to Chennai on his truck.

vehicle allegedly lost control and overturned due to the over-

from the truck and crushed him to death.



A huge vadamalai (made of more than 1 lakh vadas) adorns Lord Anjaneya in Namakkal on Jayanthi on Tuesday.



Students of Sri Kanyaka Parameswari Arts and Science College for Women celebrate Samathuva Pongal at George Town on Tuesday.



Ahead of Pongal festival, farmers harvest sugarcane in Madurai district.

GOV CELEBRATES PONGAL PERUVIZHA WITH DIFF-ABLED

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, JAN. 12

Purohit celebrated Pongal Peruvizha 2021 with differently abled persons at Raj Bhavan on Tuesday. He also sanctioned ₹25 lakh to Freedom Trust of India, an NGO, from his discretionary fund to provide mobility aids and appliances for differently abled persons at Raj Bhavan, according to a

press release. Addressing the gathering, the Governor said this year's Pongal festival was special as he was celebrating it with the differently abled members and Raj Bhavan staff. On this occasion Mrs Pushpa Purohit, Mohammed Abdul Ali, Prince of Arcot, Dr Sunder, Managing Director, Founder & Managing Trustee, Freedom Trust, N. Ravi, chairman, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Chennai Kendra, K.N.Ramaswamy, Director – Bharatiya Vidya Medical University, Anandrao V. Patil, I.A.S., formed by Natyasiromani Nadiva and her team and Poi kaal Kudhirai aatam by M.Sakthi and her team.

Bhavan, Dr Sudha Sesh-Vice-Chancellor, the Tamilnadu Dr.M.G.R. Secretary to Governor and other dignitaries participated. A Kuchipudi classical dance was per-

ebrations.
Since Jallikattu is held in Koolamet near Attur in

for the sport.

There are hundreds of bulls in the district which are registered to participate in the sport, and farmers have been giving their bulls special training and nutritious fodder, for over three months as

animals are taken to an area filled with mounds of mud and trained in mud banging and swimming.

Farmer Murugan from Alagapuram said the rains have been heavy this year and agriculture was really on an all time best. Most of the farmers are happy with their agricul-

year's event. We are currently adding more cottonseed to the regular food given to the animals, thus increasing its nutritive value. This mainly helps prevent fracture of the animals' legs while run-

Bhogi smoke may affect Covid patients

CHENNAI, JAN. 12

AAhead of the Bhogi day customary bonfire, a ritual performed as a prelude to Pongal, the pulmonologists in the city, which is still reeling under the spread of Covid-19 pandemic, have warned that air pollution on the day could cause serious consequences to the health of Corona patients (post and pre-recovery), the elderly and infants alike.

The city has a history of putting hazardous materials including plastics, rubber and tyres into the bonfire in large proportions, resulting in a thick smoke in the air.

Last year, the level of pol-lution in the city on Bhogi day touched a maximum of 500 micrograms per cubic meter of particulate matter. So the health experts have advised people, who had a recent recovery from Covid-19, especially individuals with severe lung damage, to stay indoors throughout the Bhogi day. Dr. Varadarajan V. V., senior consultant - general paediatrics, paediatric pulmonology and paediatric Infectious diseases, said that breathing toxic air would be detrimental to the health of Covid-19 patients and lactating women. "If lactating

UNITED FOR LIFE BY JALLIKATTU



activist, met during the

staged in front of vadi-

vasal at Alanganallur in

were wearing only khadi

dress. As the couple fell in

pro-jallikattu protest, they

Alanganallur by exchang-

tle deep in the lungs," said

The exposure to high lev-

els of air pollution during

pregnancy can cause mis-

carriages as well as pre-mature birth, autism spec-

trum disorder and asthma

in children. Air pollution can damage children's

- K. Manikandan

wish to get married in

front of vadivasal at

Dr Varadarajan.

pro-jallikattu protest

2017. Since then they

love during the

ing rings.

A couple, who fell in love with each other during the jallikattu protest in 2017, have submitted a representation to the Madurai district collector seeking permission to get married before vadivasal at the jallikattu arena, Alanganallur, in Madurai district.

Karthikeyan, a writer from Alanganallur, and Vidyadarani, a social

women are exposed to toxic pollutants, it will destroy the health of the baby as well. Children are especially at risk as hundreds of toxic pollutants, that get emitted during the burning of tyres, as well as a tremendous number of small particles, set-

also cause pneumonia, which kills almost one below five every year. Children who breathe in higher levels of pollutants also face a greater risk of short-term respiratory infections and lungs damage. The asthma proliferation among children in the country has increased by 40 percent since 1994. So it's important to avoid pol-Varadarajan.

brain development, and

"This is a very high level of air pollution for anyone and especially for people recovering from Covid-19, opined Dr Aishwarya Vinoth, consultant, pulmonology, Rela Hospital. "The Covid-19 patients who are under home oxygen support and pulmonary rehabilitation therapy will have exertional breathlessness in their recovery phase. So such toxic fumes can deteriorate their recovery. The exposure to air pollution can trigger an exacerbation of asthma, chronic obstructive pul-monary disease and cuase any previously existing respiratory illness such as interstitial lung disease and lung cancer. Considering the city's high pollution rates and pandemic situation, it is better to avoid the Bhog custom this

Salem bulls get set for jallikattu event For bull training, the hence, are keen to take

ZAKEER HUSSAIN | DC

Bulls are being trained here in the district to participate in the oncoming jallikattu competitions held as part of pongal cel-

the district on the eve of

here have been taking pains to train their bulls, to keep them fighting fit

their bulls for jallikattu.

"We are preparing our bulls to participate in this

Assistant professor found dead on college campus

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, JAN. 12

27-vear-old woman assistant professor cum doctor of a private dental in Chengalpet's Kattankulathur found dead in her room

on the campus.
Indu Pazhanivel (27), a native of Erode was an assistant professor in the SRM dental college in Kattankulathur and had been working there for two years. She was also the deputy warden of one of the hostel blocks, the police said.

According to the police, on Monday night, since Indu did not come out of her room for a long time, the hostel warden went to her room. Since she did not respond to the warden's calls nor answered the door, the warden alerted the police.

The Maraimalai Nagar police arrived at the spot and broke the door open to find Indu hanging from the ceiling. She was rushed to the SRM University hospital, but



Indu Pazhanivel

she was declared dead. The body of the deceased sent Chengalpet government hospital for post-mortem.

The Maraimalai Nagar police registered a case and looking into a possi-ble reason for the suicide. Sources said that Indu's father died recently due to cardiac arrest and she may have killed herself in grief. Police are also investigating whether she was facing any problems in the college.

Court directs police to book 'Master' producer DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, JAN. 12 A day before the mega launch of the Tamil movie 'Master', starring Vijay and Vijay Sethupathy,

Mohanan, Arjun Das, Communications Private Ltd, the chief metropolimagistrate court directed the police to reg-

Andrea Jeremiah and Shanthanu Bhagyaraj also acted among others in the action-thriller directed by ister case against produc-er Xavier Britto. Malavika Lokesh Kanagaraj. The film would be released on

Wednesday in view of Meanwhile, fans assem-

bled in large numbers to buy tickets for the film. The video clippings of the film were leaked on social media and also shared in Lokesh Kanagaraj, in a tweet, stata that "It's been a 1.5 year long struggle to bring

across leaked clips from the movie, please don't

Master to you. All we have

is hope that you'll enjoy it in theatres. If u come

Novex Communications from the complainant's Private Ltd stated that the company is engaged in obtaining copy rights of various kinds of music content and sub-licensing of such work of various

Tamil films and songs. Counsel for the petitioner T. Pazhanivel said durthe audio launch 'Master' in a star hotel in March last year, the company's 'on ground per-formance' rights of several Tamil film songs were performed by the persons conducting the event with-In the petition, M/s. out obtaining any rights Britto.

company. Hence, Xavier Britto violated the Copy Rights Act. The company also submitted a com-plaint before the CB-CID on September 28 last.

When the matter came up before the chief metropolitan magistrate court, Egmore on Tuesday, judge said he perused the complaint. A cognizable office is made out and directed the superintendent of police, IPR and Copy Rights Wing, CB-CID to register a case against

New Covid cases see dip in Pondy with 18 additions

Puducherry witnessed a drop in the number of daily coronavirus infections with only 18 people testing positive to the virus on Tuesday, pushing the aggregate to

court in Chennai directed

the CB-CID police to regis-

ter a case against the pro-

On a complaint from

aucer of the film.

One more person succumbed to the viral infection, raising the toll to

The deceased aged 38

Puducherry, Jan. 12: years had liver disease among other co-morbidi-Director of Health and Family Welfare S Mohan Kumar said.

The 18 new cases were identified at the end of examination of 3,637 sam-

ples.
The fatality and recovery rates were 1.66 percent and 97.58 percent respectively.

Gold and foreign currency worth ₹32.55 lakhs seized at Chennai Airport DC CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI, JAN. 12

The Customs officials at the Chennai Airport seized foreign currency and gold worth ₹32.55 lakhs and arrested a flyer in connection with the smuggling.
According to the press

release from Commissioner Customs, based on information, Nouffar (28) of Ramanathapuram, and two lady passengers Sabur Fathima (44) of Chennai and Thilsath (39) of Trichy were intercepted on suspicion of carry-ing gold in departure terminal after they had cleared Immigration and were proceeding towards security hold area to board FlyDubai flight

FZ8518 bound for Dubai. On examination of the backpack of Nouffar, a wallet was found inside from which 2800 US dollars were recovered and on further search 2500 Saudi Riyals, 3500 EURO and 4000 Swiss Franc were found concealed by ingeniously folding in white paper inside totally valued at Rs 8.86 lakhs. He was arrested as he had a previous offence registered against him.

Similarly, on the personal examination of ladies 11000 US dollars (5500 each) wrapped with adhesive tape were found concealed inside their under-





wear and 6200 USD(3100 each) were recovered from their handbags.

20000 US Dollars, 2500 Saudi Riyals, 3500 Euros, and 4000 Swiss Franc valued at Rs 21.30 lakhs were recovered and seized under Customs Act read with Foreign Exchange Management (Export and Import of Currency) Regulations, 2015.

another Mohamed Amsath (33) of

who arrived Chennai from Dubai by FlyDubai flight FZ8517 was intercepted at the exit. On personal search, one gold paste bundle weighing 260 grams was recovered from the rectum which on extraction yielded 220 grams of gold valued Rs. 11.25 lakhs and the same was seized under the Customs Act. Further investigation is under progress.

Swami Vivekananda's steno Goodwin remembered

B. RAVICHANDRAN | DC

OOTY, JAN. 12

On Swami Vivekananda's birth anniversary on Tuesday, an event was held at the 153-year-old St Thomas Church here, to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of JJ Goodwin, personal stenographer of Swami Vivekananda, who was laid to rest in the church cemetery, way back in 1898. This event was to mark the 'National Youth Day' to remember Goodwin and his connection with Swami

Vivekananda. Sri Ramakrishna Math and the Manas spiritual organization here jointly organized an event, in which Fr Jerome of St Thomas Church joined the function and held a special prayer at the grave site of JJ Goodwin, in the church

Secretary, Manas Trust, V



A memorial held at the grave of J.J. Goodwin at the cemetery, St Thomas church, in Ooty commemorate National Youth Day as well as the 150th birth anniversary of J.J.Goodwin.

Sivadass, said, "Goodwin, an met Swami Vivekananda in and became devoted to him Englishman by birth, first New York in December 1895, for the rest of his life.

Goodwin was a professionally trained stenographer and in shorthand, he took down Swamiji's lectures. Goodwin travelled with Swamiji in the US and India, and we owe much to Goodwin for making available for us many of Swamiji's precious lectures.

When Goodwin preferred to stay in Ooty in the sum-mer of 1898, when Swamiji was away in Japan, he developed Enteric fever (Typhoid) and passed away on June 2, 1898, at a very young age of 28 years. Devotees of the Swamiji across the globe are celebrating the 150th birth anniversary of Goodwin this year, by organizing several events," Sivadass noted.

On the demise of Goodwin, Vivekananda remarked that he felt as if he lost his right hand. This aptly reflected the importance of Goodwin in Swamiji's life, Sivadass IN BRIEF

Stalin, Vaiko welcome SC order

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, JAN. 12

DMK president M. K. Stalin and MDMK general secretary Vaiko welcomed the decision of the Supreme Court to stay the farm laws in the cases filed by various parties, including DMK. 'This is a victory for farmers protesting across India,' said Stalin in a Tweet, adding 'I once again urge the Union Govt to commit to repealing the farm laws in the next Parliament Session. Vaiko, in a statement, urged the Centre to withdraw the

Caste integration: Vathiriyars say no

Thoothukudi: Jan.12: A section of people belonging to the 'Vathiriyar community' in the district have opted themselves out from the integration plan of the sub-castes of the Scheduled communities as 'Devendrakula Vellalars' Stating that their social life is different from that of the six sub-castes of the SC list, the Vathiriyar community leaders protested against CM's promise of including the Vathiriyar community into 'Devendrakula Vellalar' fold. Sagayaraj, president, TN Cholarkula Vathirvar

Varma committee report that

recommended integration of

only six sub-castes in the SC list, excluding the Vathiriyars.

said Hansraj

CHENNAI, JAN.12

Pongal festivities would have an added political flavor to it this year as the top honchos of Congress and BJP are all set to celebrate the festival in the State with Rahul Gandhi watching a Jallikattu event at Avaniapuram in Madurai and J P Nadda attending the Thuglak anniversary celebrations in Chennai.

While the TNCC described Rahul Gandhi's visit as his 'salute to Tamil' (Rahulin Tamil Vanakkam), Nadda expected to sort out the BJP's alliance tangle with the AIADMK. Nadda is actually standing in for Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who was originally scheduled to come to

Chennai that day. So, on Pongal Day, many party cadre and functionar-

ies would be heading towards the events of their respective leaders with their party flags fluttering on their vehicle bonnets instead of biting leisurely into sugarcane or relishing the special dishes at home with their families.

Also the VIP visits could lead to traffic diversions, road blockades and heavy police presence on the roads, robbing the festival of its holiday aura and laid back attitude.

In fact, political parties have already started celebrating Pongal in their own way all over the State as part of their pre-campaign activities to reach out to the people and organize and motivate their cadre for electioneering.

That the BJP made one of its Pongal events too symbolic was caught by the cameras that revealed the arrangement of cotton

filled pots and a woman posing to grind a packet of ground turmeric power in the stone hand grinder (ammi kal), prompting meme creators to go gaga over it.

Apart from the State government's grand gift bonanza to ration cardgrand gift holders, which include Rs 2500 cash, groceries and a sugarcane, distribution of personal pongal gifts by political leaders made

The news about the special 'Pongal seer from the house of Health Minister C Vijavabaskar' to the voters of Viralimalai Assembly constituency had a serious repercussion when the Minister threw out the mike of a television channel at a press conference in Pudukkottai.

The Minister was angry that the channel had put out a story on his munifi-

cence to voters that he refused to speak to the media outlet representa-Reacting Vijayabaskar's behavior at the press conference, DMK President M K Stalin warned him that the people were watching it all and would teach him a lesson in the elections.

Aloor Shah Nawaz, a prominent leader of the VCK, was trolled on Twitter under a hashtag 'Hindus Wakeup' for saying that the religious rituals associated with Pongal were prompting atheists and people of other faiths to feel excluded from the festivities.

Since Shah Nawaz, in the video that went viral, wanted the festival of Tamils to be a pure secular celebration, the trolls went to town attacking him and also giving a clarion call for 'Hindu Unity.'

Pongal turns political this year In 1st phase, six lakh health staff will be vaccinated: Min

R. VALAYAPATHY | DC VIRALIMALAI, JAN. 12

The government has identified as many as six lakh health care frontline workers to receive Covid-19 vaccination from January 16 onwards in 307 places, as part of the first phase of the nationwide vaccination drive, said Health minister Dr C Vijayabaskar.

Speaking to newsmen here near Pudukkottai on Tuesday, Dr C Vijayabas-kar said that Chief Minister Edappadi K Pal-aniswami would formally inaugurate the drive on

The Čentre has airlifted

5,36,550 Covid-19 vaccine doses to Tamil Nadu, which is stored in 10 zonal centres across the state, and 20,000 Covaxin injection doses, are expected to reach here shortly, he

On completion of the first phase, the public would be given the vaccine. whose trial has proved the vaccine to be cent percent safe, with no side effects, he added. Thanks to the Chief Minister's efforts, Covid-19 is under control in the state, and the number of affected persons is now reduced to 800 cases per day, said the minister. To a question, he said

beds to treat the cases, but in Tamil Nadu, there is no question of shortage of beds. The state had conducted as many as 1.45 crore RT-PCR tests so far. and this was appreciated by the other states, and even the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and also other countries across the globe, he claimed.

that in England and other

European countries, the

pandemic impact was high

resulting in shortage of

Later, the Minister inspected the jallikattu (bull fight) ground where the event would take place on January 17, and other arrangements.

4 electrocuted in freak mishap

DC CORRESPONDENT THANJAVUR, JAN, 12

Four persons were electrocuted to death when a private bus in which they were travelling skidded on the roadside and its roof came in contact with a high tension wire alongside the road at Varahur, 20 km from here, on Tuesday.

According to the police, 40 passengers were traveling in the bus from Grand Anicut to Mannargudi via Thirukattuppalli. Varahur, when it turned left to negotiate a lorry coming in the opposite

side, the soil gave in and the bus slipped. The roof came in touch with the live wire connecting electric poles. The deceased D.Nadarajan (65) of Vizhupanankurichi village in

Ariyalur district, Ganesan (55), son of Mariappan of Karupur near Thiruvaiyaru, Kalyanaraman (65) of Varahur agraharam and Kausalya

alias kavitha (30), wife of Manikandan of Varahur Kudiyana Street.

The four died on the

spot. An injured Muniayammal (52) has been admitted to the Thanjavur medical college hospital. The bodies were sent to Thirukattuppalli government hospital.

Flemmingraj (30)Kuthur and conductor Manikandan of Nemam.
The police said the road

from Varahur to Kandiyur is being widened and soil has been put on either side. When the bus turned left to avoid a lorry coming and Moniga Shri. in the opposite side the soil gave in and the bus slipped. M. Govinda Rao,

Thanjavur district collector, Rupesh Kumar Meena, DIG of police, Thanjavur range, and Deshmukh Sanjay, Thanjavur district visited the spot and conducted inquiries. R. Vaithilingam, Rajya Sabha MP, visited Thirukattuppalli hospital and consoled the relatives of the deceased. Durai. Chandrasekaran, Thiruvaiyaru MLA (DMK), and M.Rangasa-MLAmy, former MLA (AMMK) also visited the hospital.

Woman sets herself on fire, kids escape

DC CORRESPONDENT PERAMBALUR, JAN. 12

36-year-old housewife allegedly committed suicide by setting herself on fire, after attempting to kill her two daughters aged 10 and 2 in a The police arrested the similar way at Muthunagar driver of the bus John in Perambalur on Tuesday.

The deceased was identified as Mahalakshmi, wife of Kumar, working as a physical education teacher at the government higher secondary school, Esanai in Perambalur district. They have two daughters Jayashri

While Kumar was in Tiruchy to visit his ailing sister, the deceased poured kerosene on her and set herself on fire and attempted to kill her daughters in a similar way. However, the alert Jayashri forcibly took her 2year-old sister, locked themselves in another room and saved themselves.

The deceased cried for her life, while her daughters also raised alarm. The neighbours who broke open the doors found the deceased dead with severe burns. The Perambalur town police took the body to government headquarters hospital here and are investigating.

Chennai based YouTube channel crew arrested for obscenity

SINDHIYA SAMUEL | DC CHENNAI, JAN. 12

association,

Chennai city police have arrested the crew members of a YouTube Channel, 'Chennai Talks' who reportedly asked obscene questions to a woman who visited the Besant Nagar beach and posted it on the channel.

According to the police, M. Dinesh (31), owner of Chennai Talk YouTube chan-

nel, K. Asen Badshah (23), the anchor of the channel and cameraman K. Ajay Babu (24) were arrested by Shastri Nagar police.

Police said that Dinesh had started the channel in the year 2019 and the channel has more than 200 videos and reportedly seven crore people had seen them. The city police have approached YouTube to take down the

Police said that the crew used to target young women and couples who visited Besant Nagar beach and ask them obscene questions. They upload the content with the sole intention to make their video viral.

A video by the team 'How went | Girls Open Speech', the anchor was seen asking women at the Besant Nagar Beach questions about how they spent the last year

QUICK CROSSWORD

19

Across 6.Annoyance (10)

8. Foe (5) 10. Worship (5)

(10)

Down

14. Collision (5)

2. Cunning (4)

17. Comedian (5)

13. Flared trousers (11)

19. From corner to corner

1. Costing nothing (4)

Word Mine

Q

AEE

How many words of four or more

etters can you make from the

letters shown in today's puzzle?

In making a word, each letter

may be used once only. Each word must contain the letter at

the top of the pyramid. There should be at least one nine letter word. Plurals, foreign words and

proper names are not allowed.

RRLU

16

3. Festive occasion (4)

4. Grain store (4)

5. Cut across (9)

7. Weedkiller (9)

11. As above (5)

15. Absent (4)

12. Menagerie (3)

to a coat (4)

18. Flour factory (4)

jumble

TELFE

NLUPK

LEWBOL

WAREYL

17. Wheedle (4)

9. Slime (anag) (5)

16. Head covering attached

amid lockdown rules. The questions they asked had put women in an uncomfortable position and Subsequently landed them in the police net.

Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami inspects the work progressing at former CM late J. Jayalalithaa's memorial on

Shastri Nagar police acted on a complaint from a woman who was threatened by the crew on the Elliots beach. When the woman opposed shooting such videos, the anchor and the cameraperson threatened her.

The Sastri Nagar police reg-

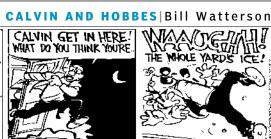
18

Across: 1. Flaunt, 3. Brad, 7. Oust, 8. Bottom, 10. Frailty,

13. Deletes, 16. Gained, 17. Deal, 18. Dull, 19. Crater.

Down: 1. Flop, 2. Absurd, 4. Rots, 5. Damper, 6. Mottled, 9. Likened, 11. Hugged, 12. Select, 14. Sill, 15. Blur.

istered a case under sections 294(b) (abusive language), 354(b) (assault or criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty), 509 (intending to insult the modesty of any woman), 506(1) (criminal intimidation) of the IPC and Section 4 the Woman Harassment Act. The Saidapet court Tuesday remanded the accused to 15 days judicial custody.







THE WIZARD OF ID | Parker and Hartsd









ARCHIE|Bill Henry Scarpelli & craig boldman







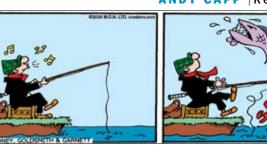
BLONDIE Dean Young and John Marshall







ANDY CAPP | Reg Smythe





TARZAN|Edgar Rice Burroughs







COFFEE-BREA

Your day today By Dr C.V.B. Subrahmanyam



s: You may question whether your friends really like you or simply feel sorry for you. You may have been keeping a secret from your partner. Now is the time to reveal it. **Faurus:** Your plans will be welcomed by your

partner. This is a time for surprises and secrets



to be revealed. Today you will be noticeably Gemini: You will find it almost impossible to resist temptations today. A confrontation with a close one, possibly regarding finances,



Cancer: A change in fortunes is indicated. You may enter into a new project that will be of benefit to you and your family. Peace is likely to return to your home life.

: A chance for your whole family to work



together. Time should produce a closeness you feared was lost forever. You may realise you aren't getting any younger. **/irgo:** You will start taking more responsibility

for your actions. You will find the courage and ability to do things. The day will help you reassess your life, and what you value the most.



like Hannah Montanna: The Movie amongst others. bra: You do things in a direct manner, but now you're mysterious, especially with someone who thinks it's fun to hide something from you.



about something. You won't mind unless someone on your side has defected. There might be a surprise for ittarius: Make sure the romantic front doesn't affect work You may inherit some ancestral

property. Your opponents will find you a real

pio: You get the feeling you haven't been informed



Capricorn: The end of a prolonged legal battle will prevent monetary losses. Discussing goals with important people will help. Apologising for mistakes strengthens bonds of love. A good time to improve quarius: Taking your beloved for granted could

make ties snap. You may plan to enjoy quality

time with the family. Don't lose heart over a

sluggish start in financial matters.



bridge

PHILLIP

DEFEND?

Pisces: Avoid getting angry over domestic problems. It's time to let your beloved know you care. Professional life could be disappointing. An unnecessary quarrel with neighbours could mar domestic

ALDER WHO actually written by Taylor Caldwell, a historical novel-**SHOULD** Yesterday, I gave a deal in which one player had made a **DECLARE**; **WHO SHOULD**

■his quotation is often credited to Cicero in 55 B.C.: "The national budget must be balanced. ... People must again learn to work, instead of living on public assistance." It was

takeout double at the three-

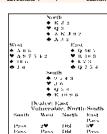
level, and his partner had to

What should South do over

verting it into a penalty double, or to bid. I recommended that with a balanced hand, pass: with an unbalanced hand, bid.

Here is another example.

his partner's second double?
If South had followed my advice, he would have passed and gone plus 100 for down one and 14 out of 15 matchpoints in a virtual duplicate at Bridge Base Online. North-South would have taken one



spade, two diamonds and two clubs. However, South does not read my prose, so he advanced with three spades, which was passed out. How did declarer do after West led the diamond 10?

South won with his diamond queen and played a spade to the king -- a great guess. When that held,

declarer plaved another

The defenders took their heart winners, then East tried to give his partner a diamond ruff. South won on the board and played a third trump. When they split 3-3, declarer claimed, having the last six tricks with one spade, two clubs and three diamonds Plus 140 was a cold top. So

Copyright United Feature Syndicate (Asia Features)



Chronicle

13 JANUARY 2021

Not court's call to have panel review farm laws

he order of the Supreme Court on Tuesday staying the implementation of the three recently passed laws to regulate farming in India and the formation of a four-member committee to study them is perplexing, to say the least. The court issued the order while hearing petitions challenging the constitutional validity of

While the court is very well within its rights to stay the operation of a law suspecting it to be ultra vires on the Constitution, it defies logic when it appoints a committee to study an aspect of the law other than legal. It must be reiterated that the highest court of the land has not been called upon to adjudicate on the impact of a government action borne out of a government policy; it has been asked strictly to subject that action to judicial review and see if it meets the constitutional and legal requirements.

The court's move is worrisome on many counts even when one does not count the selective activism it demonstrates. One, by appointing a committee on a government action, and saying it will issue an order based on the report of that committee, the court is seeking to have a say on government policy. It was only recently that another bench of the same court, in its judgment on petitions against the Central Vista project, made it clear that the court does not have the wherewithal to sit in judgment on a government policy and that the Parliament is the right forum to debate it. Now, the court has, instead of performing its job as the interpreter of the Constitution, chosen to be a mediator and influencer on government policy. This is a dangerous proposition, as it goes against the spirit of the Constitution, which is

clear on the separation of powers.

The same logic applies to the farmers, too. They have no compulsion to go by the court even if it finds the laws are beneficial to them. They can continue with their agitation and the Chief Justice of India, who heads the bench, has repeatedly clarified that the farmers have every right to hold peaceful protests. On the other hand, the court can hardly order scrapping of the laws even if it finds them to be detrimental to the interests of farmers. That people who are sympathetic to the farmers' cause have already come out arguing that all the members in the panel have supported the three laws in varying degrees poses another question mark on its legitimacy.

The farmer's grouse is simple — the government is trying to withdraw from supporting the farming sector and is handing it over to the private correction.

porates. They see a policy in it and oppose it. The government can either convince them that they are indeed in their interest or convince itself that they are not so, and repeal them. Either way, it should be a political deci-sion. The farmers know it well, and hence they insist that they were not raising a legal question. The apex court must see their logic, instead of ordering them to cooperate with the committee it has appointed.

Test of character

battered and bruised Team India would not surrender. In a display of Courage perhaps unequalled in 74 years of Test matches against Australians who are considered the cricket world's toughest opponents, Team India drew the third Test in Sydney and go to Brisbane with the scores 1-1. A series-winning chance is intact though the squad has sustained a huge number of injuries, besides losing its skipper to paternal leave who caincide to the course of the squad has been discovered. coincidentally was blessed with a daughter on the famous day his team did their "Dunkirk Act" at SCG under able replacement Ajinkya Rahane.

Courage can too readily be equated with sporting achievement but in this case bravery was the foremost quality that saw Ravichandran Ashwin, barely able to get up from bed with a sore back and Hanuma Vihari, who had strained a hamstring, fight a lengthy rearguard action right up to the draw of stumps. Such resolute resistance in the face of "sledging" (as derived from sledgehammer blows aimed at mental disintegration of batsmen) brought out the worst in the Australians, especially in captain Tim Paine, who was the white knight riding in to rescue his country's cricket from an "Ugly Aussie" image.

A draw is also a result in Test cricket and a hard fought one often exemplifies an indomitable spirit unwilling to accept defeat. Such a position would not have been possible if not for Rishabh Pant playing like the fearless modern white ball cricketer and a stoic Cheteswar Pujara joining him in attack mode as if his younger colleague had inspired him. A glimpse of victory may have faded when Pant threw it away because he does not quite possess the temperament of specialist batsmen who treasure a milestone

The Aussies aimed at breaking the resistance with a new ball at red hot pace directed at the bodies of Ashwin and Vihari who have bruises to show valorous hadges. To rally from the denths of desnair of 36 all out to win th second Test and then draw the third is an epic achievement and BCCI's tweet in salute was apt — "Bruised. Broken. But never short of character".

DECCAN CHRONICLE

KAUSHIK MITTER Editor

R. MOHAN

DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at: Chennai: SP 3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai 600032. Phones: (044) 22254747,

Coimbatore: 77 Vivekananda Road, Ramnagar, Coimbatore 641009. Phone: (0422) 2231255, 2231256 Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad 500 003. Phone: (040) 27803930-4. Fax: (040)

27805256.
Bengaluru: 5th Floor, BMTC Commercial Complex, 80 Ft. Road, Koramangala, Bangalore-560095. Ph: 08043460500; Fax: 080-22960551/52/55
Visakhapatnam: Survey No. 1/3A Beach Road, Near Kailasagiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017. Phones: (0891) 2552333/2552334, Fax (0891) 2755285
Vijayawada: No. C 3 & 4, Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.). Phones: (0866) 2555284/ 2555287, Fax (0866) 2555234

Rajahmundry: Vemagiri, Dhawleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry 533125. Phones: (0883) 2417208, 2417618

Anantapur: Thapovan Colony, Bangalore Bye-Pass Road, Anantapur 515004. Phones: (08554) 276903, Fax: 08554-276904 Fax: 08534-2/6904

Nellore: Survey No. 527/2, Burranpur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chemudugunta Panchayat, Nellore.

Phone: (0861) 2348581/82, Telefax (0861) 2348580

Karimnagar: Survey No. 1341, Vavilalapally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar 505 001. Phone: (0878) 2228908; Telefax (0878) 2220433

Kochi: No. 3-B, 3rd Floor, DD TRADE TOWER, Kaloor-Kadavanthara Road, Ernakulam,

Ph: 0484-4039408

Kozhikode: No 6/1002 E, First Floor City Mall, Opp. YMCA Kannur Road, Kozhikode - 673 001 Fax: 0495 4019018 Fax: 0495 4019018

Thiruvananthapuram: St Joseph Press Thycaud post, Cotton Hills, Thiruvananthapuram-14, Ph: 0471-2735105/6/7, Fax: 0471-4016112 Gram: CHRONICLE

Postal registration no: No. H/SD-348/2006-08ss





Educational activism of a different kind is needed



Devi Kar

been an "examination warrior" of sorts for years. But in a different sense to the title of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's book of the same name. Mr Modi has written a useful book to help students "slay" exams. There is a contradiction here, though, because while he urges students to treat exams like festivals (I rather liked this approach), he also advises students to be "warriors" implying that examinations are something to be conquered. My fight has been with the school examination which requires students in their last year of depends to a degree on

system school to write papers for hours at a stretch and their entry into college the results of this single examination. Educators have observed to their satisfaction that many examination reforms were necessitated by the current Covid-19 demic. However, the same pandemic has given birth to a horrific practice, which must be nipped in the bud. This is the testing of pre-prima-ry children for admission into school.

Even in pre-Covid times I used to be horrified to hear that little children were interviewed and assessed by the school authorities for admission into the nursery classes. Most of these children were already attending playschools, some of which would "prepare" these tiny mites, all of 18 months of age, for "The Interview in The Big School". Mock interviews would be held so that the tots would get used to interacting with unfamiliar persons. Parents too would be practice in

parents too are subtly assessed by schools to see whether they matched their preferred "client profile". On questioning parents, I learned that some of them were even advised to dress in a particular manner. No wonder that some parents were so formally dressed that they looked as if they were attending a convocation ceremony. The fathers were suited and booted and were sporting ties, the mothers were in elegant attire while the toddlers were fitted out in their best partywear. All this for a virtual interaction from the comfort of

their homes.

It is unkind to put parents through this kind of

responding "intelligent-

tions. It is believed that

to expected ques-

ordeal. They are already tense because even having dutifully rehearsed for the "test" with their little toddlers, there was no guarantee that the litthings would perform at the right time "on command". At this age children should indulge in free play, they should learn from the environment, dance, sing and run around. Why should they be subjected to virtual lessons, be made to sit in front of the screen and learn the letters of the alphabet and names of colours and fruits? Even if children of this age get accustomed to learning from "the screen ma'am", this sort of regimentation is quite premature. When I asked some of the parents why they subject themselves and their children to this kind of "torture", one parent gave a telling reply. He said that they were so eager to admit their children into certain favoured schools

that they were afraid of

Hussein.

sion procedure and risk their application being

It was bad enough in the past, but in this pandemic year it was disturbing to be told that children who had not even turned two were being made to attend virtual lessons. Some parents went for customised activity packages which I learnt were delivered at intervals so that the curriculum could be tackled in a methodical way. Other parents said that they were lucky to find a Montessori teacher in the neighbourhood who came to their housing complex and taught a group of toddlers on a regular basis. This arrangement gave their children the much-needopportunity socialise with other children of the same age.

On deeper questioning, it became evident that this whole exercise of attempting to "educate" toddlers was largely to prepare them for entry into the primary department of one of the reput-In this context I have

ed schools. some questions to ask authorities and teachers of the schools that assess such small children before admit-ting them. The first and most important question is: "Can you really identify the brighter children on the basis of naming a few colours, fruits and vegetables?" Children develop at their own individual pace and at this age you cannot make out anything about their

I am calling out all schools that test pre-primary children for admission into their nursery or kindergarten classes. You are adopting a practice that goes against the principles of pre-primary education, besides adding stress to the already stressful lives of parents.

potential. decades that I have been

in school education, I have seen enough to know that there are late bloomers, there are moody children and quiet ones who have eventually turned out to be outstanding students. Conversely, I have seen little children mastering formal schoolwork at the basic stages but falling behind when there was need for more complex work involving problemsolving or independent thinking. My next question is: "Will you reject a child who refuses to answer your questions or suddenly tires of the whole thing and starts bawling?" I remember the case of one little girl who stubbornly refused to tell the head teacher her name. On the way home, when her mother asked why she hadn't opened her mouth, she said: "My name was written on the card that you pinned to my dress, why was she asking me?

Some children are precocious, but precociousness is not equivalent to giftedness. In fact, it is accepted that IQ tests are not reliable in the case of very young children as the intelligence quotient of a child takes some years to stabilise. As for assessing parents, I suppose schools, like clubs, may feel entitled to have their own criteria for parents But this article is more

about unfairness to children. I am calling out all schools that test pre-primary children for admission into their nursery or kindergarten classes. You are adopting a practice that goes against the principles of pre-primary education, besides adding stress to the already stressful lives of parents. Finally, you are guilty of giving some of these little children their first taste of failure. Activists need to urge the schools to stop this insensitive practice at

The writer is a veteran school educator based in

WELCOME MOVE

This is with reference to your news item It's a first: Centre not to print budget documents (Jan. 12) wherein it is stated that union budget papers are not to be printed but to be given to MPs in soft copies. This must be welcomed. Why cannot the same method be followed by Election Commission of India? Printouts must be made wherever needed concerning only to particular wards. Big volumes in book forms must be avoided. Even verifications must be made online without giving printouts in each one's hands. World is becoming paperless. ECI must adopt this at a greater speed.

R. Ganesan, Chennai

SC ON FARMS LAWS

EXPRESSING ITS disappointment over the way negotiations between the protesting farmers against three contentious farm laws and the Union government have progressed till date, the Supreme Court had not only asked the Union government to keep the newly enacted farm laws in abeyance till the expert panel con-stituted by it discusses the same and submits a report but also went further and asserted it would stay the implementation of the farm laws if the government was not ready to do so. The SC cannot be faulted for taking such a strong stance against the union government. Even after having eight round of negotiations, impasse over the farm laws remains unbroken. As a court-appointed panel sitting Parliament will have both intended and unintended consequences, it is time the government strives to find a political solution rather than leaving the ball in the court of higher judiciary.

M. Jeyaram, Sholavandan

TEAM SPIRIT

THE PLAY on the final day of the third test between India and Australia was an exhibition of the team spirit prevalent in our team. None played for their personal records. Despite injuries troubling Ashwin and Hanuma Vihari they endured the pain to save the team from the jaws of defeat. The pair proved a problem for the most successful fast bowlers of today as they could defend any type of ball bowled by the Aussies. The runs scored by Ashwin and Vihari are equal to centuries under normal circumstances and the country is indebted to them for their guts and

V. Rajagopalan, Chennai

Jawed Nagvi



Trump bid for a 'coup' in DC follows a long **US tradition!**

t's still a week to go before Donald Trump demits control of the nuclear codes, and US whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg is seeing mischief afoot in the Gulf. With Iran as a potential target of the defeated President's sublimated rage, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has shared the larger concern with the US military, but there's little news about what the Pentagon's response was. Ms Pelosi discussed with the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff the "available precautions for preventing an unstable President from initiating military hostilities or accessing the launch codes and ordering a nuclear strike".

The world is waiting out the fraught days before Joe Biden can put the doomsday trigger out of reach of the "unstable" Mr Trump. True to form, Mr Trump plans to fly away to Scotland a day before Mr Biden's January 20 inauguration. The white supremacist hero is adulated by the global right, and there's no dearth of those who see

in him their role model. It's quite likely that other than dodging inevitable criminal cases he will be slapped with and the barrage of legal probes expected to be ordered into his dodgy tenure, Mr Trump hopes to use the overseas stay to keep the racist pot boiling. His American fans and other rightwing groups will hang on to every word he utters to pliable or conniving TV anchors.

The delusional right-wing assault on Capitol Hill by men and women smitten to death by Mr Trump's fantasy world may seem ordinary by America's own standards. As the wag said: "Given travel restrictions in view of the pandemic, the US had to stage this year's coup in Washington DC." Another gleefully had a rejoinder. "The coup failed because there were no US embassies in America."

It was America that applauded Boris Yeltsin in a similar but more successful endeavour at murdering democracy. It was only 30 years ago that Mr Yeltsin was guided by US intelligence to bombard the Russian Parliament in a fatal assault on his rivals, the Communist deputies in the Duma. Mr Yeltsin deployed tanks and heavy weapons to blow up his own Parliament. US intelligence helped him break into the Russian military communications channels, according to Seymour Hersh's 1994 revelations of the US-aided coup.
As soon as deputies staged their resistance to Mr Yeltsin's pro-market reforms on August 18, 1991, and moved to impeach him, America's NSA, according to Hersh, was able to decrypt conversations between

the two leaders, Vladimir Kryuchkov, KGB chairman, and Dmitri Yazov, defence minister, taking place over a supposedly secure landline. President George H.W. Bush, himself a former CIA chief, ordered the information to be given to Mr Yeltsin. However, according to Hersh, fearing Russian reaction if word of American interference leaked out, Mr Bush broke the law by not telling Congress. In a parallel move, he also set into motion the dismantling of the secular, pro-Moscow Arab structures, inflicting the first military defeat on Saddam

Why should it surprise that Mike Pompeo, author of Mr Trump's anti-Iran military buildup, also has his roots in US intelligence? He became secretary of state after a stint as head of the CIA. Consider it a curious irony in the end that Donald Trump, who seemed to loathe US agencies and had nothing nice to say about the CIA or any other outfit, became so dependent on the machinations of the Deep State. How would that change for Mr Biden?

Daniel Ellsberg described in The Guardian recently the increased danger of a US military assault on Iran under Mr Trump's supervision. If that comes about, it would also have the fingerprints of Benjamin Netanyahu and Mike Pompeo.

"President Trump's incitement of criminal mob violence and occupation of the Capitol makes clear there is no limit on the abuse of power he may commit in the next two weeks. Outrageous as his incendiary (action) was on Wednesday, I fear he may incite something far more dangerous in the next few days: his long-desired war with Iran," Ellsberg

Ellsberg reports the dispatch a fortnight ago of B-52s nonstop round-trip from North Dakota to the Iranian coast. He says it was the fourth such flight in seven weeks, one at year's end — along with his buildup of US forces in the area. It is a "warning not only to Iran but to us".

According to Ellsberg, by mid-November, as the B-52 flights began, Mr Trump had to be dissuaded at the

highest levels from directing an unprovoked attack on Iran's nuclear facilities. But an attack "provoked" by Iran (or by militias in Iraq aligned with Iran) was not ruled out.

US military and intelligence agencies have frequently provided presidents with false information that offered pretexts to attack America's perceived adversaries, says the author of the Pentagon Papers. It is not unusual for US militaries to suggest covert actions that could provoke the adversaries to some response that justifies US

Ellsberg refers to the assassination of Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, Iran's top nuclear scientist, in November, and the killing exactly a year ago of Gen. Soleimani. Iran didn't rise to

Mr Trump is running out of time to generate a ruse to block resumption of the Iran nuclear deal by the incoming Biden administration. 'US military and covert planning staffs are up to the task of attempting to meet that challenge, on schedule." Powerful interests rather than the constellations may want the teacup not to reach the lip.

By arrangement with **Dawn**













EC DISCUSSES

SECURITY FOR STATE POLLS

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JAN. 12

The Election Commission of India on Tuesday held a meetretary Ajay Bhalla to discuss requirement and availability of the Central Armed Paramilitary Forces (CAPF) during the upcoming Assembly polls in several states. Other related issues, including law and order situation, transfer posting of officials were also discussed.

Assembly elections Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, and the Union Territory of Puducherry will be held this year. The term for Tamil Nadu Assembly ends on May 24; Kerala June 1; West Bengal May 30; Puducherry June 8; and Assam May 31.

The ECI had in December issued an advisory to states saying in order to ensure free and fair election, states should ensure that the officers directly connected with conduct of elections in an election going state/UT are not posted in their home districts or places where they have served for a considerably long period.

Besides, officials against whom the ECI had recommended disciplinary action in the past and which is pending or has resulted in a penalty or the officers who have been charged for any lapse in any election or election related work in the past, may not be assigned any election related duty.

CULLING OF BIRDS ORDERED IN LATUR

BHAGWAN PARAB | DC MUMBAI, JAN. 12

In a sign of bird flu spreading rapidly in Maharashtra, birds from one more district -Latur — have also found positive for the avian influenza. The Latur district authorities have ordered culling of birds in the villages of Kendrewadi and Sukni as precautionary measures.

Earlier, birds from five districts in Maharashtra — Mumbai, Thane, Ratnagiri, Parbhani and Beed were found to be infected by the bird flu. In Latur, at least 225 birds have died in Kendrewadi till Monday, while 12 hens have died in Sukni and four in Wanjarwadi of Udgir taluka. After Parbhani and Beed, Latur is the third district in Maharashtra

to report cases of bird flu. Latur district collector Pruthviraj B.P. has ordered culling of birds in 1 km radius.

Farmers say members of SC panel on agri laws pro-govt

Unions: Never demanded SC form a committee to resolve impasse

Agitating farmer unions on Tuesday disapproved committee appointed appointed by the Supreme Court to break the deadlock over the acts and said they will continue their protest against the three legisla-

tions.
Addressing a press conference at Singhu Border here, Union leaders claimed the members of the committee are "progovernment", and asserted they will not appear before it.

The Supreme Court earlier in the day stayed the implementation of the controversial farm laws till further orders and set up a four-member committee to resolve the impasse between the Centre and the farmer unions protesting at Delhi's borders over the legislations.

The members of the SC-appointed committee are not dependable as they have been writing on how agri laws are profarmer. We will continue our agitation," farmer leader Balbeer Singh Rajewal told the presser.

The farmer leader said unions never demanded the apex court form a committee to resolve the impasse over the laws, alleging the Central government is behind these develop-

"We are against the committee on principle. It is the government's way to distract attention from the protest," he said. The framer leaders said the Supreme Court from setting up a commal decision on this will be taken by the Morcha.

VINEETA PANDEY | DC

The central government

has started procurement

and transportation of the

Covid-19 vaccines for the

nationwide inoculation

drive that begins from

January 16. Union health

Bhushan said on Tuesday

that the entire doses of

1.10 crore of Oxford vac-

cine Covishield by the

Serum Institute of India (SII) and 55 lakh of

Rajesh

NEW DELHI, JAN. 12

secretary



Wrestling competition organised during farmers protest against the new farm laws at Tikri border in New Delhi on Tuesday.

can repeal the farm laws

Another farmer leader Darshan Singh said they will not appear before any committee, adding Parliament should discuss and resolve this issue. "We don't want any external commit-tee," he said. However, the farmer leaders said they would attend the January 15 meeting with the government.

The four members of the committee are BKU president Bhupinder Singh Mann, Shetkeri Sangathana (Maharashtra) president Anil Ghanwat, South Asia Food International

Policy Research Institute Pramod Kumar Joshi, and agriculture economist Ashok Gulati. During the hearing, the

top court sought the cooperation of the protesting farmers and made it clear that no power can prevent it

January 14 reach all states

and

Bhushan said already

54.72 lakh doses of the

vaccines have reached

designated national and

state-level stores till Tuesday afternoon.

from the ordered vac-

cines, Bharat Biotech is

also giving 16.5 lakh

doses of its Covaxin for

free to the government as

a goodwill gesture.

He clarified that apart

Union

states a Territories.

impasse. Thousands of farmers, mostly from Harvana and Punjab, have been protesting at several border points of Delhi since November 28 last year, demanding a repeal of the three laws and a legal guarantee to the minisupport price (MSP) system for their

Farmer leaders welcomed the SC's order to stay the implementation three farm laws on Tuesday, but said they would not call off their protest until the legislations are repealed.

The Sankyukt Kisan Morcha, an umbrella body of around 40 protesting farmer unions, has called a meeting later in the day to decide the next course of action.

The farmer leaders said they are not willing to participate in any proceedings before a committee appointed by the Supreme Court, but a for-

All states to receive Covid vaccine by Jan. 14

Covaxin are being procured from Bharat Biotech. For 38.5 lakh doses the price is ₹295

each, excluding taxes.

Bharat Biotech is provid-

ing 16.5 lakh doses for

free as a goodwill gesture

which ultimately brings

the cost of Covaxin down

per

The 1.1 crore doses of

Covishield vaccine are

being procured from SII at the cost of ₹200 per

dose, excluding taxes.

dose,"

₹206

Bhushan said.

🧱 SC puts farm laws on hold, forms panel implementation of all the

Having stayed the implementation of farm laws "until further orders", the court also directed that the farmers' land holdings shall be "protected" and no farmer shall be "dis-possessed or deprived" of his/her title of land as a result of any action taken under the farm laws.

'While we may not stifle a peaceful protest, we think that this extraordinary order of stay of implementation of the farm laws will be perceived as an achievement of the purpose of such protest at least for the present and will encourage the farmers bodies to convince their members to get back to their livelihood, both in order to protect their own lives and health and in order to protect the lives and proper-ties of others," the court

Noting that the negotiations between the farmers' bodies and the government have not yielded any result so far, the court said, "We are of the view that the constitution of a committee of experts in the field of agriculture to negotiate between the farmers' bodies and the Government of India may create a congenial atmosphere and improve the trust and confidence of

days. Covaxin will also be supplied to Brazil and

NITI Aayog member (health) Dr. V.K. Paul said

both Covishield and

Covaxin have been tested

on a large number of people and "are the safest

with no risk of any sig-

The health secretary

said that four other vac-

cine candidates by Zydus

Cadila, Russia's Sputnik V, Biological E and

nificant side effect.

other countries.

three farm laws for the present may assuage the hurt feelings of the farmers and encourage them to come to the negotiating table with confidence and good faith.'

Chief Justice Sharad A. Bobde, taking note of the agitating farmers' lukewarm response to the court's suggestion on Monday to set-up a committee to examine the contentious laws, said on Tuesday that they are not forming the committee to "appease" everyone. He said that the committee will be a part of the "judicial proceedings" and its report will be for the purposes of the court. He was heading a bench which also comprises Justice A.S. Bopanna and Justice V. Ramasubramaniam. Making it clear that the

suspension of the operation of three farm laws would not be for an indefi-nite period, the court said that the setting up of the committee will not be an "empty" exercise, making it clear that all those involved in the dispute, including government and the agitating farmers, will have to appear before it. The court noted that senior lawyers Dushyant Dave, Colin Gonsalves, H.S. Phoolka and Prashant Bhushan representing different bodies of the farmers... We are also of the view that a stay of ont present in the hearing.

cal trials and once they are cleared by the Drugs Controller General of

India, they will be avail-

As the first shipment of

the vaccines rolled out, SII CEO Adar Poonawala said it was a historic and

emotional moment for

his team and he hoped

that the vaccine reached

everyone this year. Covishield vaccines were

initially brought to the

four Central Government

able to people.

Agri experts welcome SC decision; term it sensible

New Delhi, Jan. 12: Eminent agriculture econothe Supreme Court's decision to stay the implementation of the new farm laws till further orders and set up a four-member committee to resolve the impasse over them between the Centre and farmers' unions protesting at Delhi borders. Former Union minister

and eminent economist Y.K. Alagh said he thinks it (the SC's decision) is very sensible. "Because they (the SC judges) have said that you (the Centre) must do adequate preparation because the new farm laws were passed in a big hurry," Alagh said.

He pointed out that the bench headed by Chief Justice S.A. Bobde and Justices A.S. Bopanna and V. Ramasubramanian said the Centre can develop a framework for the new farm laws only after the Covid-19 year is over.

'Because you can't talk about trade and transport when there are lockdowns,' Alagh said.

Echoing similar views, eminent economist and former Planning Commission member Abhijit Sen said, "I think it is good. It (the SC)

EMINENT ECONOMIST and former Planning Commission member Abhijit Sen said, I think it is good. It (the SC) has stayed it (the Centre's new farm laws)".

has stayed it (the Centre's new farm laws).

Mahendra Dev S., professor of economics at the Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research (IGIDR) also said, "That's a good suggestion (the staying of new farm laws by the SC)." Noting protesting farmers are demanding the repeal of the new farm laws and the government

only ready to amend the new farm laws, he said the panel can suggest what are the alternatives. Talking about the state of Indian agriculture, Alagh

said agriculture did well last year; it was the only sector which did well in a horrible year. "But it could do better.

And, if we implement the farm laws well, we will move over from three per cent growth rate to a higher growth rate which is what we need," he said.

Spurious liquor kills 12 in MP

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, JAN. 12

At least 12 people, including 3 members of a family, have died and 10 others hospitalised after consuming spurious liquor in 2 villages in Morena district under Chambal region of Madhya Pradesh, police said on

The victims hailed from villages of Manpur Prithwi and Pahawali.

"Eleven people have died so far. We are waiting for autopsy reports to ascertain the cause of their deaths", Chambal region inspector general of police Manoj Sharma said.

Another person succumbed in the district hospital in Morena on Tuesday evening, taking the toll to 12. According to the police, the victims started reporting at various government hospitals in Morena district on the intervening night of Monday and Tuesday

Some of them were shifted

• THE LOCALS staged a blockade on NH-552 by laying the bodies on the road demanding compensation.

Gwalior when their condition worsened. The locals later staged a blockade on National Highway-552 by laying the bodies on the road demanding compensation of ₹20 lakh each to the next of kin of the deceased.

Morena district collector Anurag Verma rushed to the spot along with police force to bring the situation under control.

Police registered a case against seven people under relevant sections of Indian Penal Code and Excise Act in connection with the inci-

However, no one has been arrested so far, police said. "The accused will be arrested soon", the police officer

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan placed local district excise officer Javed Khan under suspension in connection with the inci-

US Acting Homeland Security chief quits

Wolf resigns over the storming of the US Capitol by outgoing President Donald Trump's supporters

Washington, Jan. 12: Chad Wolf, the acting secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, has resigned over the storming of the US Capitol by outgoing President Donald Trump's supporters. His resignation comes amidst Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) warning of a nationwide "armed protests" being planned in the run-up to President-elect Joe Biden's January 20 inauguration.
Wolf — whose departme-

nt oversees numerous federal law enforcement bodies and also is in charge of security for Biden's inauguration ceremony — said last week that he was staying in his position until the end of Trump's administration on January 20.

"I am saddened to take this step, as it was my intention to serve the department until the end of this administration," Wolf wrote in an email to the staff of the Department of Homeland Security on Monday. "Unfortunately, this action is warranted by recent events, including the ongoing and merit-less court rulings regarding the validity of my authority as Acting Secretary.

These events and concerns increasingly serve to divert attention and resources away from the impor-tant work of the department in this critical time of a transition of power," he said. His resignation comes into effect from Monday midnight.

'Armed protests' planned at **Biden names two PIOs** all capitols, Washington: FBI to Office of WH Counsel Washington, Jan. 12: to *The Associated Press*. The FBI is warning of Investigators believe

plans for armed protests at all 50 state capitals and in Washington in the days leading up to Presidentelect Joe Biden's inauguration, stoking fears of more bloodshed after last week's deadly siege at the US Capitol.

An internal FBI bulletin warned that, as of Sunday, the nationwide protests may start later this week and extend through Biden's January 20 inauguration, according to two law enforcement officials who read details of the memo

ator of Federal Emergency Management Agency, replaces Wolf as DHA acting secretary for the remaining duration of the Trump administration. $\bar{H}e$ is the third Cabinet member of the Trump ad-

ministration to resign after

Peter Gaynor, Administr-

the January 6 incident that resulted in the death of five people, including a police officer. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos and the Transportation Secretary Elain Chao resigned last week. Congressman Bennie Thompson, Chair man of the Committee on

Homeland Security, in a

statement said for months

some of the people are members of some extremist groups, the officials said. The bulletin was first reported by ABC. "Armed protests are being planned at all 50 state capitols from 16 January through at least 20 January, and at the US Capitol from 17 Janu-

ing to one official. The officials were not authorised to speak publicly and spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity. The FBI issued at least

ary through 20 January,"

the bulletin said, accord-

Wolf has been serving illegally in his position. "So the timing of his resigna-tion from the Department today is questionable. He has chosen to resign during a time of national crisis and when domestic terrorists may be planning additional attacks on our government. Unlike others, he

on principle," he said. "If it is true he is resigning because of recent Federal court decisions, then it is an admission that his policy decisions are indeed invalid. Under this scenario, Ken Cuccinelli must also resign," Thom-

is apparently not lea ving

the Trump administration

go out to law enforcement nationwide on the topic before the riots last week.

On December 29, it warned of the potential for armed demonstrators targeting legislatures, the second official said. Army General Daniel Hokanson, chief of the National Guard Bureau, told reporters Monday that the Guard is also looking at any issues across the country. The riots followed weeks of online calls for violence in Washington in the waning days of Donald Trump's presidency.

Wolf joins a growing exodus of officials in the final days of the Trump administration. US Deputy National Security Advisor Matt Pottinger, first lady Melania Trump's chief of staff Stephanie Grisham, White House Deputy Press Secretary Sarah Matthews, White House social secretary Rickie Niceta, US special envoy for Northern Ireland Mick Mulvaney, acting chairman of the White House Council of Economic Advisors Tyler Goodspeed are among the officials who have resigned over the Capitol violence.

Washington, Jan. 12: US President-elect Joe Biden on Monday two Indian Americans — Reema Shah and Neha Gupta — to the Office of the White House Counsel. Shah, who had served

on the debate preparation team for Biden on the Biden-Harris Campaign, has been named as Deputy Associate Counsel while Gupta, currently an attorney in the Office of the General Counsel for the Biden-Harris Transition, has been named as Associate Counsel in the Office of the White House Counsel. Shah was an associate at Latham & Watkins and a Bristow Fellow in the Office of the Solicitor General Department of Justice. She served as a law clerk to Justice Elena Kagan on the US Supreme Court and Judge Sri Srinivasan

Circuit. Originally from New Jersey, Shah is a graduate of Harvard College, Cambridge University

on the US Court of

Appeals for the DC

1. Neera Tanden, Director Domestic Policy Advisor to

6. Bharat Ramamurti, Deputy Director for the National Economic Council for Financial Reform and Consumer Protection 7. Vinay Reddy, Director of

and Yale Law School. On the other hand, Gupta served as a Deputy City Attorney in the San Francisco City Attorney's Office. where she was general counsel to several city agencies, litigated constitutional and statutory challenges to city laws and administrative decisions, and participated in the office's affirmative public protection advocacy

Indian-Americans in Biden admin

of the Office of Management and Budget 2. Dr Vivek Murthy, Surgeon General 3. Vanita Gupta, Associate

Attorney General

4. Ali Zaidi, Deputy
National Climate Advisor 5. Gautam Raghavan, Deputy Director of the Office of Presidential Personnel

Speechwriting 8. Rohini Kosoglu,

the Vice President
Shanthi Kalathil, Coordinator Democracy and Human

10. Mala Adiga, Policy Director to Dr Jill Biden 11. Tarun Chhabra, Senior Director for Technology and National Security 12. Sumona Guha, Šenior Director for South Asia Aisha Manager, Partnerships Manage Office of Digital Strategy 14. Sabrina Singh, Deputy Press Secretary, Office of

the Vice President 15. Vedant Patel, Assistant Press Secretary

Kuala Lumpur, Jan. 12: Malaysia's king on Tuesday approved a Coronavirus emergency that will suspend parliament at least until August and halt any bids to seek a general election in a political reprieve for embattled PM Muhyiddin Yassin.

Emergency imposed in Malaysia

METROPOLITAN TRANSPERT CORPORATION (CHENNAL) LTD. PALLAVAN ILLAM, ANNA SALALCHENNAI - 600 002

TENDER NOTICE

Wax sealed and superscheed tenders invited for the procurement of Printing Items, Base Coat Paint Items, Display and Advertisement on Buses. GPS based on - Board bus stor Announcement System with Audio Advertisement and Tende cum Public Auction for Condemned all scrap materials & Condemned Vehicles from the eligible tenderers who shall submit documentary evidence.

DESCRIPTION

11 Procurement of Printing Items & Procurement of Base Coat Paintering

J Ospilay of advertisement on 170,400,500 & 630 buses. Display
of advertisement in the passenger grozens handles inside 80
buses and GPS based on - board bus stop announcemen
system with audio advertisement in 500 buses.

10.00 am to 12.00 Hrs from 13.01.2021 to 29.01.2021 (For St.No: Last date of

Documents 10.00 am to 13.00 Hrs 1.00 Hr Date of opening at 15 00 Hrs. on 29.01.2021 (For Si.No:1) at 15 30 Hrs. on 29.01.2021 (For Si.No:2) Tender cum public auction for condenned all scrap materials & condemned vehicles.

Place of auction for scrap in Traffic training school conference and Condemned vehicles Chromoet, Chennai - 44 at 10,00 am Condemned all scrap
Materials & Condemned
vehicles auction date

29.01.2021, 25.02.2021, 25.03.2021
vehicles auction date Sale of tender document for all scrap and condemned vehicles

Last date of submission of tender for Scrap and condemned vehicles

One day before the date of auction till 05.00 pm. Entrance fees for auction Rs. 100/- por person will be collected a Entrance less for auction [ms. 1981- per person will be collected at the auction centre.

Tender document is available in Government website (www.lenders.tn.gov.in). Any modification (if any) in tende terms and tender invitation period will be uploaded in the website and the tenderers are requested to go through the above website periodically.

MTC (Chennal) i.i.d. reserves the right to accept / reje ny tender without assigning any reason thereof. MANAGING DIRECTOR

DIPR/ 224 /TENDER/2021

TAMILNADU TEA PLANTATION CORPORATION LIMITED (A Government of Tamilnadu Undertaking)
Registered Office, TANTEA Complex, Coonoor - 643 101, The Nilgiris

ndustrial Distributors / Dealers for the supply of following products. Fertilizers - Urea, Muriate of Potash, Mussorie Rock Phospate, Ammonium Sulphate and Agro chemicals

(ii). Tender for the transport of packed tea/Green Tea Leaf from tea factories to auction centres. (Kochl / Co-imbatore Cooncor)/Warehouses and Tender for Transport of Green Tea Leaf from Divisions to Factories.

TENDER NOTICE FOR THE SUPPLY OF VARIOUS MATERIALS FOR THE YEAR 2021-2022

(iii). Factory materials - Supply of Lubricants. (iv). Tenders for printing & Stationery, Retail Sales packet contract and transport contract

Tenders are invited from SSI and NSICS for supply of packing materials such as Sandwich bags, Polythene liners Woolen blankets, Filed Cumblies, Calamity materials, etc

The filled in Tender documents will be accepted upto 11.00 AM on 02.02.2021. The above tenders will be opened on 02.02.2021 from 11.30 AM onwards.

MANAGING DIRECTOR

SHORT TAKES

Sindu, Praneeth lose in Thai Open

Bangkok: World champion Sindhu suffered a shock defeat on her return to international badminton. losing in three games to Denmark's Mia Blichfeldt in the opening round of YONEX Thailand Open Super 1000 event here on

Tuesday. Months after the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the international calendar, Sindhu, seeded sixth, returned to action with a 21-16 24-26 13-21 defeat to world no 18 Blichfeldt in a 74-minute battle. The loss ended India's campaign in women's singles as the other contender Saina Nehwal was forced out after testing positive for

tournament. In men's singles, world No. 13 B Sai Praneeth too suffered a straight game loss to Thailand's Kantaphon Wangcharoen on his return to competition. — PTI

COVID-19 on the eve of the

F1 season to **start in Bahrain**

London: The start of the Formula One season has been delayed a week and will start in Bahrain after the Australian Grand Prix was postponed from March to November because of the

COVID-19 pandemic. The Australian race in Melbourne, initially set to open the season on March Nov. 21 with F1 organizers citing "the ongoing situation regarding COVID-19". The Chinese Grand Prix has also been postponed but no new date has been set for the

race. Strict travel restrictions for the pandemic make Australia and China among the hardest countries for F1 teams to enter. The season will start with the Bahrain Grand Prix on March 28 at Sakhir, less than four months after the same venue held two races as part of the 2020 season.

Regd. No. TNENG/2010/35692

Printed & Published by K. Sudhakar on behalf of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited and Printed at Deccan Chronicle Presses situated

t SP 3, Developed Plot, Industrial Estate Guindy, Chennai - 600 032. RNI Registration No: TN ENG/2005/14987 Ph Nos: 22254747, 22254748, 22254750,

22254751 Editor: **KAUSHIK MITTER**

India's injury toll mounts

Brisbane, Jan. 12: The injury-ravaged Indian injury-ravaged Indian team was dealt another telling blow on Tuesday as pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah was ruled out of the fourth Test against Australia due to an abdominal strain.

If that wasn't enough, Mayank Agarwal tipped to be Hanuma Vihari's replacement in the playing XI in Brisbane – has sustained a knock on the hands and it could

be a hairline fracture. To make matters worse, Ravichandran Ashwin's back spasms have aggravated after battling for three hours on the final day, leaving little options for India on the bench.

Bumrah, key to India's attack, sustained the strain during the drawn third Test in Sydney.

It has been learnt that Bumrah's scan reports showed a strain and the Indian team management does not want him to aggravate the injury, keeping in mind the upcoming four-Test series against

'Jasprit Bumrah suffered an abdominal strain while fielding in Sydney. He is going to sit out of the Brisbane Test but is expected to be available against England," a BCCI source said

While the Indian team management is heaving a sigh of relief that Bumrah hasn't sustained a tear but wants to be on the side of caution as playing in Brisbane and breaking down in the middle of the Test match could have an even more adverse effect



Ravindra Jadeja underwent a surgery in fractured thumb.

"If we take the risk of him playing at 50 percent, what if the injury aggravates and he breaks down in the middle of the match and then ruled out for better part of England series? "England is the last series which will decide the qualification

Championship final and we are in contention and would require a fit Bumrah," the senior BCCI source added.

It is now expected that two-Test old Mohammed Siraj will be leading the Indian attack and will be joined by Navdeep Saini, Shardul Thakur and T Natarajan in the Brisbane Test, starting January 15.

Unless, Bumrah is field-

ed at 30 percent fitness.

risking the entire England

Natarajan will

make his debut. The problem with Indian team is after injured KL Rahul's departure and Hanuma Viĥari's grade 2 tear, there are no back-up middle-order batsman left

in the reserves. The only two available batsmen are two out of form openers in Prithvi Mayank and Agarwal.

It remains to be seen if India, knowing their depleted strength and long tail, decide to take the conservative route of playing four bowlers and six batsmen with Rishabh Pant as

the wicketkeeper.
If Agarwal's scans reveal that it's a bruise and not a fracture, then it well be Prithvi Shaw batting at number followed by
Pujara, Cheteshwar Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane and Agarwal himself at number six.

If they go with five bowlers, then collective experience of pace attack will be three Test matches and 10 balls (Siraj-2, Saini -1, Shardul -10 balls on debut, Natarajan-yet to

TEAM INDIA DENIED BASIC FACILITIES IN BRISBANE

The Indian cricket team, which landed in Brisbane for the fourth and final Test against Australia, was in for a shock on Tuesday as it was lodged at a hotel which "lacked basic facilities", prompting an intervention from the BCCI top brass

It is learnt that BCCI president Sourav Ganguly, secretary Jay Shah and CEO Hemang Amin have all got in touch with their Cricket Australia counterparts after complaints reached them and have been assured that the the Indian contingent will be made to feel comfortable from here on. The series is

tied 1-1 currently. "There was no room service or house keeping facilities. The gym is very basic and not of international standards and the swimming pool can't be accessed. This wasn't what they were promised when they checked in," a senior BCCI source said on conditions of anonymi-

India will be playing the fourth Test in the Queensland capital from January 15 where the surge of COVID-19 cases and a border lockdown with New South Wales has led to a strict hotel quarantine for the Ajinkya Rahane-led team.

Asked if the were being allowed to mingle, the Board source said: "Yes, they have been provided with a team room and are allowed to meet each other inside the

WARNER SAYS SORRY

Australian batting star David Warner on Tuesday condemned the racist slurs hurled at Indian players, particularly pacer Mohammed Siraj, during the third Test here and said such behaviour by the spectators was not acceptable.

Siraj, on his maiden tour of Australia, and senior pacer Jasprit Bumrah were abused for two consecutive days crowd.

Play was, in fact, halted on the fourth day for a few minutes after the Indian team complained to the umpires, which led to the expulsion of six spectators from the stands and an unreserved apology from Cricket Australia.

"I'd also like to say sorry to @mohammedsirajoffi cial and the Indian team as racism, and abuse is not in any way acceptable or tolerated anywhere at any time, and I would expect better from our home crowd," Warner said in an instagram post.

TAMIL NADU DRUB ASSAM

Kolkata, Jan. 12: Tamil Nadu posted their second successive victory in the Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 tournament on Tuesday when they drubbed Assam by 10

Spinners Sai Kishore and M. Ashwin bowled in tandem to restrict Assam to 126 for seven in 20 overs. TN openers made the chase look easy with an unbeaten century stand.

Brief scores: Assam 126/7 in 20 overs (R Ahmed 29; Mohammed 2-23, Sai Kishore 2-17, M Ashwin 2-16) lost to Tamil Nadu 128 for no loss in 15 overs (Hari Nishaanth 47*, N Jagadeesan 78*).

CEC REAP RICH HAUL

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, JAN. 12

The Chennai Equitation Centre (CEC) reaped a rich haul at the Junior National Equestrian Championship in New Delhi as they won 12 medals. Tiyasha Vathul emerged champion in the junior individual

showjumping category.

In team events, CEC junior contingent clinched two gold medals, in dressage and showjumping events. In children group 1, Tanusha Kumar claimed the top spot in dressage category. In children group 2, Jaiveer and Hansika won gold and silver respectively in showjumping. Jaiveer was also awarded top scorer for the same event.

Meanwhile, Abbas Bharmal, who has been training at the CEC for the past three years, came second in the South Zone event and finished sixth in the Federation Equestre International (FEI) World Jumping Challenge

Results: Show jumping: Individual: Junior: Tiyasha Vathul (Gold); Children 2: Jaiveer (Gold), Hansika (Silver). Teams: Junior: CEC (Gold); Children 2: CEC (Gold). Dressage: Individual: Children 1: Tanusha Kumar (Gold); **Children 2:** Pradhyutha Prasanna (Silver). **Teams:** Young: CEC (Silver); **Juniors:** CEC (Gold); **Children 2:** CEC (Silver).



(From left) Tanusha Kumar, Pradhyutha Prasanna and

BABU'S 5-DECADE JOURNEY

DC CORRESPONDENT

Chennai District Carrom Association on Monday celebrated B. Bangaru Babu's 50 years of service as a sports administrator. A former international player himself, Babu played a key role in raising the standard of carrom in India. Babu is 90 years old now. A founder member of Madras State Carrom Association and All India Carrom Federation, Babu is currently the patron in chief of the chennal federation. The International Carrom Federation was founded in 1988 and Babu became its first secretary. He edited "Carrom Courier", an english quarterly which educated the international carrom community. He was also responsible for bringing out the Official Laws of Carrom by

Chennaiyin FC hungry for victory

NEHA SURANA | DC

After playing out a goalless draw just three days ago, Chennaiyin FC and Odisha FC will once again lock horns on Wednesday with an aim of moving up the ISL table. With just eight in 10 outings, Chennaiyin are the bottom of the scoring chart and head coach Csaba Laszlo is well aware of

the problem.
"It's our biggest problem. I think we create a lot of chances, but somehow we didn't score enough goals," said Laszlo.

Laszlo said the team are working hard to improve their set-piece conversion. "We don't concede many goals from set-Against East we scored two goals from corners and against Mumbai City two from indirect set-pieces. I think we are improving,' added the coach. Crivellaro's

absence has left a big hole in the CFC line-up but that's not the only



headache for Laszlo. "It is painful (Rafa's absence) for us but our biggest misery is goal scoring. I don't want to put extra burden on play-ers. I hope the next part of the season will be better for us. In the next 10 games we have to be in a different shape," he said. Spanish

midfielder Manuel Lanzarote was picked as the replacement for Crivellaro. Laszlo said Lanzarote will starting training with the team in three weeks after completing his quarantine.

Amazon tells Sebi to suspend Future-RIL deal



CHENNAI, JAN, 12

After receiving a validation for Singapore tri-bunal's interim award from Delhi High Court, Amazon has once again asked markets regulator Sebi to suspend the Future-Reliance deal. It has also asked the Sebi to instruct stock exchanges not to issue any approval letter to Future Retail.

January 5, Amazon informed the regulator about the constitution of the arbitral tribunal by Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC) in the arbitration proceedings initiated by Amazon against inter alia FRL, Kishore Biyani and Rakesh Biyani. A three-member tribunal consisting of Singa-pore-an barrister Michael Hwang Albert van den Berg and Jan Paulsson have been formed at the

In the letter dated

"We wish to highlight that in view of the consti-tution of the Arbitral Tribunal, the interim award passed by the Emergency Arbitrator automatically

extended for the duration Arbitration Proceedings unless it is reconsidered/ modified/ vacated by the Arbitral Tribunal," Amazon said in the letter seen by Financial Chronicle.

Hence, Future Retail continues to be expressly injuncted and restrained by the interim award from taking in any steps in furtherance...In October, Amazon had received an interim order from SIAC barring Future Retail from taking any step to dispose of or encumber its assets or issuing any securities to secure any funding from a restricted party.

Amazon wants the Sebi to take action by sus-pending review of the impugned transaction (Future's transaction with Reliance), and not granting any no-objection in relation to the same. It also wants the regulator to direct Indian stock exchanges not to issue any no-objection/approval letter to FRL.

Amazon has been writing letters to regulators and stock exchanges from October 3 on this matter.

Chronicle

quick **BITES**

INDIOATORC

INDIGATOR	15	%
Sensex	49517.11	0.50
Nifty 50	14563.50	0.54
S&P 500*	3,803.94	0.11
Dollar (₹)	73.25	0.27
Pound Sterling (₹)	86.01	-0.05
Euro (₹)	81.51	-0.05
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	48,946▲297	0.60
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	56.43	1.38
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.931	0.12
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.168	0.034
* As of 8:30 PM IST		

Karnataka Bank Q3 profit rises 10% to ₹135 cr

Private sector lender Karnataka Bank reported a 10 per cent increase in net profit at Rs 135.38 crore for the December quarter on account of a decline in bad loans. The Mangalore headquartered bank had reported a net profit of Rs 123.14 crore in the year-ago period. Total income declined to Rs 1,868.62 crore from Rs 1,993.68 crore. The gross NPAs eased to 3.16 per cent of assets from 4.99 per cent.

Printed & Published by K Sudhakar on behalf of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited. Printed & Published at Deccan Chronicle Presses situated at SP-3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai. Editor: **T.Venkatram Reddy**, RNI Reg. No. TNENG/2008/25473 Air surcharge Re 1. © All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission of The Editor, Financial Chronicle ® is prohibited.

FINANCIAL Only 40-57% of claim amounts reimbursed

Insurers go stingywith Covid claims

FALAKNAAZ SYED MUMBAI, JAN. 12

Though the number of Covid-19 claims settled by non-life insurance companies has risen sequentially during the December quarter, the claim amount settled by them against the amounts claimed, has not increased in the same proportion. This indicates that policyholders are now paying a significant portion of the claim amount from their pockets owing to disagreements between hospitals and insurers on

Sample this, during October to December 27, the total number of claims reported were 4.23 lakh, of these 83 per cent, or 3.51 lakh, claims were settled. However, in value terms, claims worth Rs 6,235.8 crore were reported, of which only 57 per cent, or Rs 3,578.50 crore were settled. Similarly, during July to September 2020, there were 2.94 lakh Covid-19 related claims reported to insurers. Of these, 62 per cent, or 1.82 lakh, claims were settled. However, in terms of value, the reported claim amount was Rs Rs 4,629.30 crore, of which insurers settled claims worth Rs 1,842.3 crore, or a mere 40 per cent of the reported claim amount.

A senior official of an insurance company said, "The pendency appears big (claims pending) because the Covid treatment is long drawn. Patients after discharge continue to remain in quarantine and use med-



Cadila aims to supply 150 mn doses

CHRIS KAY JAN. 12

Cadila Healthcare Ltd, a drugmaker working to develop an indigenous coronavirus vaccine, said t expects to supply between 100 million to 150 million doses of its candidate this year. The Ahmedabad-based

icines for nearly two months after discharge

and they submit the final

On policyholders bearing

a part of the cost of treat-ment, the official said, "We

have come across a few

hospitals where the cost of

the PPE kits worn by the

medical staff is not equally

distributed between all the

bills only after that."

firm's ZyCoV-D vaccine was approved to com-

human trials in December, and it is recruiting 30,000 volunteers for its phase 3 tests, according to a presentation filed with the stock exchanges on Tuesday. Cadila's plasmid DNA candidate doesn't use an infectious agent, like other vaccines, and instead introduces the DNA sequence encoding the antigen. —Bloomberg

mence with final stage

patients in a ward but only to the insured patients in the ward. There are several items which are not payable by us and have been communicated to the

hospitals. Take the case of N. Akhter, a 76-year old female who suffered from breathlessness due to Covid-19 infection. Her

ANDREO CALONZO The Philippines is preparing cold storage for Covid-19 vaccines, with government telling industry groups with facilities for storing meat

Philippines may

tap meat, fish

freezers for vaccine

and fish to be ready to help in keeping and dis-tributing the shots. Philippine cold chain industry expects revenues to hit 20 billion pesos (\$416 million) by end-2023.

Local cold-chain logistics operators can help distribute the vaccines throughout the archipelago, as low-temperature storage facilities are mostly in cities, said Anthony Dizon, president of the Cold Chain Association of the Philippines. The group is waiting for the govern-ment's final decision on which shots to buy, he — Bloomberg

one-day bill in the intensive care unit of a top South Mumbai hospital was around Rs 33,000. Out of which, the insurer, however, did not pay Rs 5,318 charged for disposable gown, PPE kits, shoe cover and face mask and Rs 600 charged for resident doctor visits. So, the patient has to pay nearly Rs 6,000 per day.

TATA CHEMICALS IN TALKS FOR ARCHEAN'S IND. SALT UNIT

BAIJU KALESH & P R SANJAI

Tata Chemicals Ltd is in advanced talks to acquire the industrial salt unit of Chennaibased Archean Group that could value the business at Rs 450 crore (\$61 million) at a minimum, according to people familiar with the matter. The board of Tata Chemicals is set to discuss the potential offer as soon as this month, said the people, who asked not to be identified as the information is private.

A representative for Archean declined to comment, while a representative for Tata Chemicals didn't pro-vide any immediate comment.

The Archean unit, with a production capacity of 3 million tonnes, makes industrial salt used as an intermediary in the manufacturing of products from deter-gents, textile dyes to

plastics and glass.
A potential deal could offer a reprieve to Archean, which has been struggling to service its debt obligations for the past two years. The company, founded in 1982, has businesses spanning from industrial salt, fertilisers to mining. In 2018, India Resurgence Fund, a JV between Bain Capital and Piramal Enter-prises invested \$156 million in Archean's marine chemical business.

- Bloomberg