



INSECURE  
GOVERNORSHIP

WEATHER

Partly cloudy sky. Moderate to dense fog in the morning. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 27 and 11 degrees Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: NIL

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 100% Min: 42%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 27.3°C (+3) Min: 10.4°C (-1)

SUN RISES

06:53 hrs

MOON RISES

12:36 hrs

SUN SETS

18:16 hrs

MOON SETS

02:55 hrs

THUMBNAILS



Japan's Naomi Osaka holds the trophy after defeating United States' Jennifer Brady in the women's singles final at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne. (See Pg 12)

**AI plane hits pole on landing in Andhra airport:** An Air India Express plane hit an electric pole while landing in Andhra Pradesh's Vijayawada, news agency ANI reported. "All 64 passengers on board the flight and the crew are safe," Vijayawada International Airport director G Madhusudan Rao said. Air India Express said it has ordered an investigation into the incident. In visuals, the electric pole with several lights beside the runway is seen completely smashed to the ground. A large dent is also visible on the far end of the plane's right wing that hit the pole.

## 25K CAPF personnel tagged for polls in 4 states

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 20 FEBRUARY

At least 25,000 Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) personnel have been earmarked to be deployed for the forthcoming Assembly polls in four states and the Union Territory of Puducherry, officials said on Saturday.

They said the Union Home Ministry has directed that a total of 250 companies of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Border Security Force (BSF), Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) and the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) for conduct of the upcoming elections.

A CAPF company has an operational strength of about

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100 personnel. These forces work under the command of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

Assembly polls in West Bengal, Assam, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Puducherry are due in April-May this year.

Officials said while 125 companies are being moved to West Bengal, 45 are earmarked for Tamil Nadu, 40 for Assam, 30 for Kerala and 10 for Puducherry.

"These numbers are based on the preliminary assessment

that was undertaken by the Election Commission after its meeting with senior home ministry officials sometime back.

"Some addition in numbers may take place once the EC announces the final dates for polls and the number of phases," a senior officer privy to the development told PTI.

About 75 more companies are kept on standby and they will be pulled in for the polls duty once their requirement is felt, he said.

The largest chunk of the forces, from the 250 companies umbrella, are drawn from the CRPF (85 companies) followed by the BSF (60 companies) and the ITBP (40 companies) apart from the other two CAPFs, they said.

Officials said the forces have been asked to initiate a phase-wise movement and pre-positioning of their companies so that the overall deployment is carried out smoothly. At least 12 CAPF companies have reached West Bengal till now.

The officer said every CAPF has assigned a nodal officer for movement of their respective units and the overall coordination between the EC, MHA and the state chief electoral officers (CEOs) will be done by the CRPF.

Modi said the Atmanirbhav campaign envisaged an India which not only met its own requirements but produced goods which satisfied world demand and stood the test of international quality standards.

Several states responded to the Prime Minister's call for increasing production of edible oils, and said they would make efforts to reduce India's dependence on their imports.

Modi said India was an agricultural country and yet imported edible oils worth Rs 65,000 to Rs 70,000 crores every year. The Prime Minister said the country had tried to improve pulses production and had succeeded to a large extent. He said the states should do agro-climatic regional planning and guide the farmers accordingly.

He said the agricultural exports had increased during the Covid-19 period but the country's potential was much larger. There was need to encourage investment in storage and processing. India was exporting raw fish which was re-exported in a processed form. Why could not India do this, he said. There was need for reforms which could help the Indian farmer perform better, he said.

Modi said the Centre had brought in reforms and reduced the compliance burden by abolishing 1500 laws.

The states too could do this. They should form committees to study the issue. When technology had advanced, why should there be harassment of citizens, he asked and said the Centre had asked Cabinet Secretary to study the issue.

The Prime Minister said the basis of the country's progress was Cooperative Federalism and the country succeeded when the State and the Central government worked together during the Corona pandemic. In his concluding remarks the Prime Minister said like the Coronavirus, the country could achieve success against tuberculosis also.

Modi called for balanced regional development.

Reforms by the states could also provide farmers the required economic resources, better infrastructure and modern technology to perform better in foreign markets

PRIME MINISTER MODI  
AT THE SIXTH GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETING OF NITI AAYOG

The private sector too had shown inclination to join the development process, and it should be given a place in the Atmanirbhav Bharat Abhiyaan (Self-reliant India campaign), he said.

The Governing Council meet was attended by all chief ministers and Lt. Governors from across the country, except for the chief ministers of West Bengal, Punjab, Gujarat and Telangana.

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The opposition is trying to create a wedge between the government and those in the fisheries sector

PINARAYI VIJAYAN  
KERALA CHIEF MINISTER

# Over 2.8L given Covid shots in Capital so far

Delhi records 152 new coronavirus cases, 1 fatality; positivity rate stands at 0.24 per cent

SNS & PTI

NEW DELHI, 20 FEBRUARY

Over 2.8 lakh beneficiaries have received the Covid-19 vaccine so far in Delhi since the start of this countrywide inoculation drive on 16 January, according to official data.



Of them, as per the data, more than 1.31 lakh are healthcare workers and over 1.53 lakh are frontline workers.

Today, the Covid shots were administered to over 26,000 beneficiaries in the city, with the inoculation figure crossing the 24,000-mark for the third consecutive day.

During the day, 26,110 beneficiaries received the Covid jabs across 302 centres, including 4,351 people who got their second dose. The overall turnout was about 85 per cent.

"Thirteen minor cases of AEFI (adverse events following immunisation) were reported," an official said.

**LEGAL NOTICES**

**PROCLAMATION UNDER ORDER 5, RULE 20 CPC**  
In The Court of Sh. Jitender Kumar, SDO(C)/Collector General, Case No. /2020 Date of Initiation 23.12.2020 Date of Hearing 09.03.2021

Smt. Krishna etc.  
Versus  
Kali Ram Yadav etc.

Revision Petition Village Begumpur Khatola To,

1. Sourais 2. Baljeet Sons 3. Smt. Biramati 4. Smt. Sohan Ram

Danapuri Off. 700/2 Sector 5 Pal

5. Rattan Singh 6. Vikram 7. Omkar Sons 8. Smt. Anguri 9. Smt. Santu 10. Smt. Lendewati 11. Smt. Banti 12. Smt. Maya Daughters of Sant. Sushma 13. Dush Raj 14. Vedi Pal 15. Kanwar Pal 16. Dilbagh 17. Pratim Sons 18. Smt. Rakmani 19. Smt. Ramesh Bai Daughters of Smt. Kolhai 20. Puran Singh 21. Raghbir Singh 22. Bawant 22.00 Ram Parkash 23. Hanu 24. Shiv Singh S/o Puran 25. Kanwar Pal 26. Sarender S/o Raghbir 27. Dush Raj 28. Smt. Kavita Kumar 29. Smt. Indra Devi W/o Mange Ram 31. M/s Bansi Estate Pvt. Limited 32. Smt. Ramshri Wife 33. Naresh 34. Dinesh Sons 35. Smt. Jumanji 36. Smt. Anita Daughters of Jeet Singh @ Ajit Singh 37. Vinod S/o Sardara 38. Parash Singh S/o Adu Lal 39. M/s Modwell Builders 40. Smt. Gaindwal W/d 41. Smt. Kusum Chander 42. Arun Chander 43. Jay Kumar Smt. Bal Singh 44. M/s. Enameric Private Limited 45. Sogat Sv Ram Parshad 46. Savits D/o Dalip 47. Sunil Kumar 48. Arad Singh 49. Ishwar Singh S/o Ranbir Singh 50. Nanak Chand Son 51. Smt. Babita 52. Smt. Anila 53. Smt. Nareshwari w/o Daleep Singh 54. Priyanka D/o Ranbir Singh 55. Smt. Ranvati W/o Chhater Singh 56. Jaiwati W/o Ranbir Singh 57. Surendra Si Harkesh S/o Ashok S/o Tej Ram 58. Smt. Chander 60. Raj Puri 61. Smt. Suresh 62. Bhule Ram 63. Dhondha W/o Chiranji 64. Dinesh S/o Tej Ram 65. M/s. Benedit Estate Developers Private Limited 66. M/s. Charkhadrabha Estate Private Limited 67. Gram Panchayat Begumpur Khatola 68. Premlal adopted son of Smt. Shanti Devi 69. Jodipinder 70. Raj Kumar Sons 71. Smt. Sumitra D/o Ranjeet 72. Rajesh Singh D/o Tejal 73. Nand 74. Smt. Suresh 75. Hemlata Sons 76. Sonu Proj. 77. Smt. Chameli Daughter of Harkesh 78. Smt. Bala Devi Wife 79. Rohul 80. Smt. Barha Rani 81. Nisha Rani minor Daughters of Balbir, through their mother and natural guardian Smt. Bal Devi W/o Balbir Singh 82. One Ram Singh 83. Smt. Simha W/o Satti 84. M/s. M.K. Automobile Industries 85. Meera Aggarwal W/o Kailash 86. Deepak Raj S/o Manohar 87. Jagdish S/o Manohar 88. Pappu Singh 89. Smt. Sunita W/o Satti 90. Smt. Bhagwan Singh 91. Sunil 91. Ashok S/o Mahender 92. Subhash 93. Anand S/o Ramesh 94. Gaurav Pal S/o Basant 95. Gulshan S/o Ganesh Das 96. Tej Pal S/o Prabhu 97. Smt. Nirmala D/o Mahender 98. Nihal S/o Bihari Lal 99. Pappu S/o Parbhu 100. Bir Singh S/o Ram Kumar 101. Ram Singh S/o Hari Singh 102. Maan Singh 103. Smt. Suresh 104. Rajesh S/o Lakshmi 105. Ved Bhushan S/o Hakum Singh 106. Smt. Gudi D/o Bhupender 106. Smt. Dharmanwala W/o Mahender 107. Babb S/o Mahender 108. Smt. Babita W/o Parveen 109. Smt. Bindu W/o Murari Lal 110. Smt. Maya W/o Jas Ram 111. Shridevi W/o Hari Lal 112. Veer Singh S/o Basant Singh 113. Vijay S/o Chander Bhan 114. M/s Prashan Marketing Private Limited 115. Neeraj 116. Smita Daughter of Rakesh 117. Smt. Sunita W/o D/o Dharmvir 118. Manoj S/o Ramesh 119. Pradeep S/o Rati Ram 120. Smt. Revati W/o Ramesh Chaudhary 121. M/s Sona Steering Private Limited 122. Balbir S/o Smt. Maan Bal 123. Ganpat S/o Kartar 124. Sushil S/o Jitender 125. Sanjay Malik S/o Balraj 126. Gainti S/o Goverdhan 127. Dharman P/o Hari Singh 128. Smt. Pushpa W/o Rakesh 129. Smt. Sunita W/o Parkash 130. Smt. Kamla W/o Jagdish 131. Smt. Purnima D/o K.S. Tomar 132. Satish Raygav S/o Satalp Singh 133. M/s Supremo Infraatec Private Limited 134. Smt. Poornam W/o Anil Kumar 135. Smt. Krishna S/o Purshotam 136. Vijay Pal S/o Mahipal 137. Smt. Kalpana Chaudhary 138. Smt. Omwati Wd 139. Rajpal 140. Raj Kumar 141. Neh Pal 142. Ravinder Singh Sons 143. Smt. Geeta 144. M/s. Flora System Private Limited 145. Narbir S/o Jagdish 146. Raj Kumar S/o Jagdish 147. Smt. Mamta Parmar W/o Devender Parmar 148. Smt. Savita W/o Beer Singh 149. Smt. Laxmi Adhikari W/o Girish Singh 150. Shri Kumar S/o Ram Saran 151. Devender Singh Parmar S/o Anoop Singh 152. Smt. Upasna W/o Mohit Kumar 153. Samay Singh S/o Kripa Ram 154. Smt. Kanchan 155. Smt. Suresh Kumar S/o D.R. Gupta 156. M/s Samdariva Export Private Limited 157. Krishan S/o Sri Chand 158. Bheem Singh S/o Kade Ram All are Biased and share holder of land situated in Village Begumpur Khatola, Tehsil Kadipur District Garurgram.

Whereas it has been proved to the satisfaction of the Court that the respondents above named cannot be served in the ordinary way of service. Hence, this proclamation under order 5 Rule 20 C.P.C. is hereby issued against him and he should appear in this court personally or through some authorised agent/ pleader duly instructed on 09.03.2021 at 9.30 A.M. failing which an ex parte proceeding shall be taken against him.

Given under my hand and the seal of the court, this 11.02.2021.

Sub Division Magistrate Gurugram (West)

**PROCLAMATION REQUIRING ATTENDANCE OF DEFENDANT**  
(Order 5, Rule 20 of the Code of Civil Procedure)

In the Court of Sh. Gurvinder Pal Singh  
District Judge (Commercial Court-02)  
Room No. 25,  
Patiala House Courts,  
New Delhi  
Case No. CS (Comm):  
35/2019

De Lage Landen Financial Services India Pvt. Ltd.

Versus  
Bhalde Ram & Anr.

To,

Mr. Bhalde Ram, s/o Shri Bhim Singh, Village - Wazirpura, Rural Part, 32, Near Hera Wal Chopla, Tehsil - Gohana, Distt. Sonipat, Haryana-131301, Ph: 9050438769.

Whereas the abovenamed Plaintiff has instituted a suit against you. You are hereby summoned to appear before this court by pleader or through video conferencing on 03-03-2021 at 10:00 a.m. to answer the same.

The written statement must be filed within thirty days from the date of receipt of the summons. You are to also file affidavit of admission/ denial of the documents filed by the plaintiff with written statement.

It is made clear that any unjustified denial of documents and delay in the time of hearing may lead to an order of costs against the concerned party.

Take notice that, in default of your appearance on that day before mentioned, the suit will be heard and determined in your absence.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Court, this 09th day of February, 2021.

District Judge (Commercial Court-02)  
New Delhi District  
Patiala House Courts,  
New Delhi  
Seal of the Court

**BEFORE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-III, DELHI**

4th Floor, Jeevan Tara Building, Parliament Street, New Delhi-110001

OA No. 319/2021

ICICI Bank Limited

- Applicant

Versus

Avinash S Dixit & Ors.

- Respondents

To,

1. Avinash S Dixit, s/o Shri Juri Singh, H. No. 529, Sector-2, R.K Puram, Sector-5, Vasant Vihar, South West Delhi-110022.

Also at : Avinash S Dixit, s/o Juri Singh, Flat No. B-607, Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi-110022.

2. Mr. Tarun Kumar Panda, Director, M/s. NCT India Pvt. Ltd., C-03, Ground Floor, South City-II, Gurgaon, Haryana-122018.

3. Mr. Rabindra Nath Mohapatra, Director, M/s. NCI India Pvt. Ltd., B-5, Second Floor, South City-II, Gurgaon, Haryana-122018.

The Defendant above-named.

Whereas you are intentionally evading service of summons, it is hereby notified that if you shall not defend the case on the 25th day of February, 2021, the day fixed for the final disposal, it will be heard and determined ex parte.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Court on this 5th day of January, 2021.

Addl. District Judge-02

District Shahdara,

Karkardooma Courts, Delhi

CS - 2505/2016

M/s. MT and T Rentals Ltd. &

Ors.

To,

1. M/s. NCI India Pvt. Ltd., Through its Directors, Regt. Office at : Flat No. 5A, Rear Block, Ground Floor, B/290, Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi-110022.

2. Mr. Tarun Kumar Panda, Director, M/s. NCT India Pvt. Ltd., C-03, Ground Floor, South City-II, Gurgaon, Haryana-122018.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Court this 18-02-2021.

Whereas the abovenamed applicant has instituted a case against you and whereas it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve

you in ordinary way. Therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to appear before this Tribunal on 01-03-2021 at 10:30 a.m.

Take notice that in case of your failure to appear on the abovementioned day before this Tribunal, the case will be heard and decided in your absence.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Court on this 11th day of January, 2021.

By Order of this Tribunal  
Assistant Registrar,  
DRT-III, New Delhi

**DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-I, DELHI**

4th Floor, Jeevan Tara

Building, Parliament Street,

New Delhi-110001

IC-201/2021

ICICI Bank Limited

- Applicant

Versus

Avinash S Dixit & Ors.

- Respondents

To,

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Also at : Avinash S Dixit, s/o Juri Singh, Flat No. B-607, Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi-110022.

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Take notice that in case of your failure to appear on the abovementioned day before this Tribunal, the case will be heard and decided in your absence.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Court on this 11th day of January, 2021.

By Order of this Tribunal  
Assistant Registrar,  
DRT-III, New Delhi

**IN THE COURT OF SH. AVIRAL SHUKLA**

Civil Judge-01,  
(South-East)

Saket Court Complex,

New Delhi  
CS/385/2018

Next Date: 15-03-2021

Publication Issued to:

General Public.

CNR No. HRGR01-000152-2021

Additional District and Sessions Judge, Gurugram

Mrs. Michelle Paul Versus

General Public.

CNR No. HRGR01-000152-2021

Additional District and Sessions Judge, Gurugram

Praveen

Versus

Praveen, Proprietor, M/s. Shivikar Informatics, Registered Office at - A-93, Office No. 05, South Extension Part-2, New Delhi-110049, Delhi.

Whereas Computer Infotech Pvt. Ltd. has instituted a suit against you for you are hereby summoned to appear in this Court in person, or by a pleader duly instructed, and able to answer all such questions relating to the suit, or who shall be accompanied by some persons able to answer all such questions on the 04-03-2021 at 10:00 O'Clock in the forenoon, to answer the claim and further directed to file on that day a written statement of



If the states and the Central government set up manufacturing hubs, giving tax breaks and other necessary facilities to the medium and small industries, India can leave China behind in manufacturing

ARVIND KEJRIWAL  
DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

The Sunday Statesman  
NEW DELHI, 21 FEBRUARY 2021

03

# Capt urges PM to ensure resolution of farm unrest

Punjab CM urges PM to ensure resolution of farm crisis 'to the satisfaction of the protesting farmers', also asks the Centre to consult with states before fixing priorities for the Covid-19 vaccination

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
CHANDIGARH, 20 FEBRUARY

**E**xpressing serious concern over the "threat" to Punjab's agriculture as a result of the "disruption" caused by the Centre's three new farm laws, chief minister Captain Amarinder Singh today urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to ensure urgent resolution of the continuing farm unrest by the Centre "to the satisfaction of the protesting farmers by addressing all their grievances".

Calling for "fullest respect" for farmers, the Punjab CM, through his speech submitted for the virtual meeting of the Niti Aayog, iterated his government's stand that agriculture is a state subject and law-making on it should be left to the states in the true spirit of "cooperative federalism" enshrined in the Constitution.

In this context, he pointed to the state amendments to the central legislations, which



were passed by the Punjab Assembly in October 2020.

Capt Amarinder could not attend the Niti Aayog meeting as he was indisposed. He

asserted, in his speech, that any reform that is sought to be introduced in a sector subsuming almost 60 per cent of the country's workforce must be done only through a process of extensive consultation with all the stakeholders, of which Punjab is a key stakeholder, being at the forefront of ensuring food security for the country.

Capt Amarinder also urged the central government to consult with the states before fixing priorities for the Covid-19 vaccination, as it is a matter involving the entire population.

With the portal created by the Centre for registration of healthcare and frontline workers frozen, several such workers of the state willing for vaccination registration have been left behind, the CM said, calling upon the Union government to allow entry of such workers to improve the status of the vaccination drive.

In his circulated speech at the Niti Aayog meeting, Capt Amarinder also urged the Centre to allow 100 per cent use of available State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) towards expenditure for the Covid management, instead of the present ceiling of 50 per cent.

Further, in the event of SDRF yearly budget being exceeded due to enhanced expenditure on Covid related matters, the state may also be allowed to utilise previous

years available funds, he suggested.

Capt Amarinder also urged the Modi government to provide immediate financial assistance of at least Rs 300 crore to upgrade health infrastructure, equipment and other healthcare needs (medicines and consumables etc.) in view of the pandemic.

For effective service delivery at health and wellness centres, liberal grants for strengthening of infrastructure, drugs and diagnostic may be provided by the Centre to strengthen the state's efforts to provide comprehensive primary health care services through sub centres, primary health centres with a linkage to secondary health care services, especially during the Covid period, said the CM.

He also sought creation of a "Water Quality Kosh" in every state to enable Punjab to achieve the vision of providing potable water to each rural household on a sustainable basis even in the water quality affected habitations.

## Khattar seeks Centre's intervention in resolution of SYL issue

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
CHANDIGARH, 20 FEBRUARY

Haryana Chief Minister, Manohar Lal Khattar, on Saturday sought the Central government's intervention in resolving the long pending issue of Sutlej Yamuna Link (SYL) and Hansi-Butana Link Canal "so that the state could get its legitimate share of river water".

"To overcome the water shortage problem in Haryana, the state government will soon be signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Kishan dam. Besides this, MoUs have already been signed with the Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh Government for Lakhwari and Renuka dam," informed the CM while speaking during the sixth Governing Council meeting of the NITI Aayog held under the Chairmanship of Prime Minister, Narendra Modi through video conferencing today.

Apprising the PM about several steps are taken by the state government for promoting water conservation, Khattar said that at present maximum area of the state is converting into dark zone, therefore if the SYL and Hansi-Butana Link Canal issue is resolved then the problem of



water scarcity in Haryana would be addressed immediately.

The CM while highlighting the fact that though in GST collection, Haryana is at the forefront but despite that due to Input Tax Credit, the state gets only 20 percent GST, urged the PM to formulate a plan for incentivising the states having the maximum GST collection.

While assuring to play its

pivotal role in visualizing PM's Atmanirbhar Bharat dream, Khattar said the state government with the spirit of Antyodaya is already moving swiftly in this direction and efforts are being made for successful implementation of first-of-its-kind state's ambitious Parivar Pehchan Patra scheme to ensure that person standing last in the queue gets the benefit of govern-

ment schemes.

For 'Making India a Global Manufacturing Hub', the CM said for reducing compliance burden at state level and Ease of Doing Business, Haryana Enterprise 2020 has been launched.

Khattar said for promoting agriculture, aligning the cropping system to Agro-Climatic Conditions at district levels is being done for optimum resource use.

Apart from this 'Mera Pani Meri Virasat' scheme to diversify the paddy crop into alterna-

tive crops like maize, cotton, bajra, pulses, vegetables, and fruits and as a result of which sowing of other crops in place of paddy is being done on 97,000 acres of land.

An amount of Rs 7000 is being given as an incentive to the farmers for adopting crop diversification, said the CM.

## Himachal Pradesh Governor stresses on importance of girl education

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
SHIMLA, 20 FEBRUARY

Himachal Pradesh Governor Bandaru Dattatreya emphasised on girl education while addressing a public meeting at Gram Panchayat Pooh in Kinnaur district.

He said that a family and society progresses only when a girl is educated.

Expressing his two-day visit in district Kinnaur as a memorable experience, he said the affection, simplicity and hospitality of the tribal people have



made an everlasting influence on him. He also expressed happiness that many people of district Kinnaur are working in high positions in the country and the state. However, the overall development of the area is also necessary and for this, the development of education, infrastructure and preservation of culture should be encouraged.

Dattatreya also emphasised on conservation of forest and water on priority basis. He said that today the country is progressing on the path of development under the leadership

of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The Central Government has launched several schemes for the upliftment of every sector of society and area and people should avail the benefit of these schemes.

He asked the newly elected representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions to make significant contribution in the development of the area by taking advantage of the government schemes.

The Governor interacted with the representatives of Pan-

country is proud of them. Despite all the adverse circumstances, these soldiers remain dedicated in protecting the border of our country at all times and due to these soldiers, the country is able to breathe in the open air, he added.

Latnight, a cultural program was organized by the district administration in honour of the Governor.

Officiating Deputy Commissioner Ashwani Kumar and other dignitaries of the district were also present on the occasion.

## Hilly state like HP needs more resources to create infra: Jai Ram Thakur

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
SHIMLA, 20 FEBRUARY

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday chaired the 6th Meeting of the Governing Council of NITI Aayog virtually in which issues related to agriculture, infrastructure, manufacturing and human resource development were discussed in detail.

Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh conducted the proceeding of the meeting.

While addressing the meeting virtually from Shimla, Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur said that being a hilly state, greater funds and resources were required to create infrastructure in Himachal Pradesh as compared to other states.

He said the state government is laying special stress on making Himachal Pradesh a tourist hub of the Country. He said that the biggest bottleneck in this was lack of better air and rail connectivity.

He urged the Prime Minister for approval and to provide assistance for construction of Greenfield Airport Mandi and for expansion of Kangra Airport. He said that this would give a big boost to tourism activities, besides being important from a strategic point of view.

The chief minister said the state government was giving top priority on the development of infrastructure in Himachal Pradesh. He thanked the Prime Minister Narendra Modi for taking a personal interest in completing the work of Atal Tunnel Rohtang in record time. He said that with the completion of this Tunnel, there has been a lot of improvement in livelihood in Lahaul and Pangi Valley, as thousands of tourists have turned towards this.

He said the about 5,000 vehicles were crossing the Rohtang Tunnel daily. He said the snow festival organised in Keylong Valley attracted a lot of tourists, which would never have been possible without this tunnel.

Thakur said that the Baddi area of the state can boast of

being the biggest Pharma hub of Asia.

He said that now the State has aggressively made a bid for Bulk Drug Pharma Park for the state. He said that in addition to this the state has also bid for setting up of a Medical Devices Manufacturing Park and Electronic Manufacturing Hub for the state.

He urged for approving all these Parks for the State, which would go a long way in transforming the economic condition of the state. He urged the Prime Minister to favourably consider the request of the State in this regard.

The chief minister said that the state has performed exceptionally well in implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission. He said that Himachal Pradesh has emerged as the first state in the country to receive four tranches under the Jal Jeevan Mission. He said that the State has achieved the target of covering 100 percent households with tapped drinking water in three districts and the target has been fixed to provide tapped pure drinking water to cent percent households in another three districts during the year 2021-22.

Thakur said that 'Subhash Palekar Natural Farming Scheme' was being implemented in the state as per the priority of the Prime Minister. He said that so far more than one lakh farmers have been benefited and tangible results have been

received under this scheme which has helped in doubling the income of farmers. He said that more than 9000 apple growers of the state have started apple production in 155 bighas as per the Subhash Palekar Natural farming method.

The chief minister thanked the Prime Minister for always being considerate towards the developmental demands and requirements of the state. He said that Rs 450 crore interest free loan provided by the Union government has come handy to the state in meeting out its expenses.

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*The wrong industrial policy of the state government has severely affected industrial growth and prospect in Bengal...*

SENIOR BJP LEADER KAILASH VIJAYVARGIYA

ASSURING THAT IF BJP COMES TO POWER IT WOULD SET UP A COMMITTEE TO TAKE NEEDED STEPS

## Bengal BJP seeks EC's intervention to stop use of contractual staff for poll duty

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
KOLKATA, 20 FEBRUARY

The BJP's West Bengal unit on Saturday sought the intervention of the state Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) to ensure that contractual staff and civic volunteers are not assigned poll duties as it will

not be possible to hold them accountable if something goes wrong.

In a letter to the CEO, the saffron party has argued that since contractual staffs are not regular government employees, in case of any complaint against them, there will be no scope of any recourse.

To ensure free and fair poll, the Election Commission must prevent the state government from "misusing" central forces by deploying them only in cities and along highways, instead of sensitive zones, the BJP said in the letter written by Rajya Sabha MP Swapan Dasgupta and

state leader Shishir Bajoria. "It has come to our notice that contractual staff have been registered at district level, as Group D staff, to perform the function of polling officers in the forthcoming assembly elections.

"This step is highly irregular, as these are not regular



government employees and hence are not answerable to

anyone. In the event of any complaint against them, there will be no scope of any recourse," the letter said.

No such contractual staff should be engaged in any poll-related duty, it said.

If there is a shortage of polling officers, the Election Commission may requisition

"There will be no point served if the central forces are made to make route marches in national and state highways and are kept away from sensitive areas," the letter said.

Assembly election is likely to be held in the state in April-May.

## TMC poll slogan: Bengal wants its daughter as CM

Events will be held to spread 'unprecedented' devp work that Bengal has seen in 10yrs under Mamata

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, 20 FEBRUARY

The Trinamul Congress on Saturday launched its slogan "Bangla nijer meyekey chai" (Bengal wants her own daughter) for the upcoming Assembly elections.

Addressing the media, Trinamul state president Subrata Bakshi said: "Bangla nijer meyekey chai," is the slogan for poll campaign of the Trinamul Congress in 2021.

He added: "This is not a tough fight, but it is an election that whole of India is looking at. This election will decide the fate of the Constitution of the country."

Barasat MP Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar stated: "Every person of Bengal trusts her daughter. Under the leadership of Mamata Banerjee in Bengal our culture has been protected. She won't allow misogynist outsiders to attack the culture of

Bengal."

Talking on women empowerment in Bengal, Panchayat minister Subrata Mukherjee said: "While every other party in Bengal is scrambling to find a CM's face, we do not have to go through such an exercise. We already have Bengal's own daughter as the chief minister."

To make this message echo in every nook and corner of the state, Trinamul leaders will spread it across Bengal. Further, the campaign-launch events will be organised at all district headquarters on Sunday followed by unveiling events at every block headquarters and town headquarters to spread the "unprecedented" development work that Bengal has seen in the last 10 years under the chief ministership of Mamata Banerjee.

Trinamul Congress secretary-general Partha Chatterjee today said: "I'm pained to find out about this horrendous incident being reported from Unnao in @BJP4India-ruled Uttar Pradesh".

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, 20 FEBRUARY

In his tweet Chatterjee condemned the absolute collapse of the state machinery and compile lawlessness under Yogi Adityanath's government.

He said such incidences are occurring frequently in Uttar Pradesh.

Trinamul Congress has established itself as a party which has worked tirelessly to fulfil the aspirations of the people

Minister for women and child development Sashi Panja said: "It's time for @BJP4India to take cognizance of the horrid rate at which crimes against young girls and women are topping charts!"

"Shocked at @narendramodi ji's apathy! How do you sleep at night knowing that this is the state of affairs for women in your country?" Panja said.

"Yet another horrific incident being reported in @narendra modiji is high time you break your silence on the alarming state of

women's safety in the @BJP4India-ruled states!" said minister of state for health Chandrima Bhattacharya.

Urban development minister Firad Hakim said there are unending cases of violence against young girls and women in @BJP4India-ruled UP at Hathras, Azamgarh, Bulandshahar, Badaun, Balrampur, Aligarh and Unnao.

"This is the state of women's safety and security under @BJP4India's rule and PM @narendramodi's watch! NEVER FORGET," Mr Hakim commented.

of Bengal. Seeing Mamata Banerjee's commitment towards the welfare of the people, an unwavering and

unanimous voice from the ground level across the state is stating 'Bangla Nijer Meyekey Chai'."

### WBIDC allotts land, finally

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, 20 FEBRUARY

The West Bengal Industrial Development Corporation (WBIDC), under the state industries and commerce department, finally allotted 4.12 acres inside the Vidyasagar Industrial Park (VIP) in Kharagpur to Amer Sil KETEX Private Ltd on 18 February, 26 days after The Statesman carried a report on 22 January on how the Kharagpur-based company was allegedly denied to get the land for setting up of an expanded unit of its technical textile manufacturing factory.

On Friday, Vandana Yadav, state industries secretary and managing director (MD) of the WBIDC, wrote a letter to the company allotting the plot inside the VIP.

"We are pleased to inform that the competent authority of the WBIDC is agreeable 'in-principle' to allot you plot measuring more or less 4.12 acres at Vidyasagar Industrial Park, Kharagpur, Paschim Medinipur, for setting up of a manufacturing unit of spinning of polyester yarn and weaving of polyester/man made yarn subject to terms and conditions given here under. This letter is to be considered as provisional letter of intent (LOI)," Yadav stated in her letter.

"We are thankful to the

WBIDC for allotting us the land required for setting up of another unit inside the VIP as an expansion project of our existing factory located close to the industry park. We will start construction work at the new site within a couple of weeks and production will kick off by end of April," said Sukumar Roy, an 83-year-old textile engineer and owner-cum-managing director (MD) of the company.

"The WBIDC has taken a prompt initiative after The Statesman carried a report throwing lights on the delay in getting the land from the corporation. Hope, an army of around 150 or 200 people will get jobs in our new factory," Mr Roy added.

On 22 January, The Statesman had reported that a huge stadium is set to come up on around 12 acres land inside the VIP under the WBIDC at a time when the entrepreneur is denied plot at the same park for setting up of the new unit of his technical textile manufacturing factory.

Pradip Sarkar, ruling Trinamul Congress MLA from Kharagpur, had told The Statesman, "PWD will set up the stadium on vacant land lying inside the VIP. The project worth more than three crore rupees will have an audience of 13,000 spectators."

### BJP leader Pamela cries conspiracy

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, 20 FEBRUARY

In what is said to be dealing a major embarrassment to the BJP and providing potent ammunition for the ruling Trinamul Congress to corner the saffron party before the Assembly polls, secretary of the BJP Yuva Morcha Pamela Goswami on Saturday accused Rakesh Singh, a party leader, of being involved in a conspiracy to frame her and demanded a CID inquiry to unravel the truth.

On Friday, Goswami, along with her accomplice and party leader Prabir Dey were arrested by Kolkata Police from an area in NR Avenue at New Alipore. The police recovered 90 gm cocaine from her possession.

Goswami made the accusation when she was being produced in the Alipore Sessions

Court. She was heard telling waiting journalists while she was being produced at sessions court at Alipore this morning that Rakesh Singh, a close aide of the BJP's Bengal minister Kailash Vijayvargiya, had hatched a conspiracy to frame her. She demanded Singh's arrest and sought a CID inquiry.

Singh, deflected the blame to the ruling Trinamul Congress and a section of police for allegedly being hand-in-glove in hatching a conspiracy.

"It appears to be a conspiracy being at play by the Trinamul Congress and a section

of the police. Kolkata Police are already investigating the case. The CBI-CID can investigate the case. If they summon, I am ready to face them. The arrest took place on Friday and today it was being projected as a factional feud within the party. This is nothing new for the Trinamul Congress and the police. It is likely that she might have been coerced into making such accusations or else how could I be dragged into the controversy?" Singh contended.

BJP state president Dilip Ghosh said that if she was found guilty in connection with possessing contraband, law should take its own course but "if a conspiracy emerges to frame her, we will launch an agitation". Alipore Court today remanded Goswami and Dey along with her bodyguard Somnath Chatterjee in police custody till 25 February.

### ELECTRIC ISSUE



Congress activists during a demonstration protesting against the hike of electricity tariff in front of CESC House in Kolkata on Saturday.

### Vijayvargiya hits out at wrong policies

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
HOOGHLY, 20 FEBRUARY

Senior BJP leader Kailash Vijayvargiya on Saturday visited Sahaganj Dunlap ground—the venue of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's meeting to be held on Monday.

While speaking to the media heashed out at the wrong policies of the ruling Trinamul Congress government.

Vijayvargiya said: "The wrong industrial policy of the West Bengal government have severely affected the industrial growth of the state.

Thousands of mills and factories are closed rendering millions jobless. However the BJP, which is very confident of coming to power in the state, will promptly from a committee to take

steps to reopen the closed mills and factories. Then the economy will flourish; new shops and market places will come up, earning opportunities will increase for many. This will improve the living standards of common people. Many more industries will be set up creating job opportunities."

He added: "Petroleum prices are regulated by the international market. Most of the BJP-ruled states have slashed the cess to bring down the price of petroleum and keep it stable. The Bengal government, instead of reducing the state cess on petroleum to keep the prices stable, is deliberately raising hue and cry to misguide common people and divert their attention from its failures."

### BJP, TMC bandy words over Nandigram

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
KOLKATA, 20 FEBRUARY

The BJP on Saturday challenged West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee to announce that she will contest the upcoming Assembly election only from Nandigram if she is confident of her victory, prompting the TMC to hit back and ask the saffron party to first name its chief ministerial candidate.

BJP national general secretary and Bengal minter Kailash Vijayvargiya in a tweet asked Banerjee to announce whether she will be fighting from Nandigram.

The Trinamul Congress was quick to hit back saying it wondered why the BJP is scared of declaring its Nandigram candidate or its chief ministerial face.

BJP has not announced its candidate for the seat and has said it will choose its chief minister only after coming to power in the state.

Mamata had announced at a TMC rally at Nandigram in January that she will contest from the seat.

Nandigram had witnessed anti-farmland acquisition movement in 2007 in the aftermath of then Left Front government's plan to acquire land for a special economic zone. The TMC rode the crest of the movement and came to power in the state in 2011 ending the 34-year rule of the Left Front.

In 2016 the Nandigram seat in East Midnapore district was won by then TMC heavyweight Suvenu Adhikari, who recently switched over to the BJP and has publicly vowed to defeat Mamata by 50,000 votes.

Vijayvargiya in his tweet said: "Mamata Banerjee has announced to contest Assembly elections from Nandigram. But, she did not say that she will contest from here

only! If she is confident of her victory, make this announcement too! ... Otherwise, it will be understood that that Banerjee will fight the election from more seats

BJP national secretary Anupam Hazra said if the TMC did not announce it now, it will be understood that that Banerjee will fight the election from more seats

"If Mamata Banerjee is sure of her victory in Nandigram, she should announce that she will contest only from the seat. This way she cannot deny her statement. Or else it is not known what they (TMC) will do next," he posted on the micro blogging site.

The TMC shot back saying "Why is the BJP scared of declaring its Nandigram candidate? Or even its CM face? Mamata di is the TMC's face for all the 294 seats."

"The TMC should first announce whom they will field against Mamata Banerjee in Nandigram. We are all set to win big," it said in a statement.

After having a limited presence in the politically polarised state for decades, the BJP has emerged as the TMC's main rival in West Bengal. It had won 18 of the 42 Lok Sabha seats in the 2019 general elections in the state.

The TMC workers remove our posters and we have started using digital wall paintings, which are not easy to remove and also look better than traditional wall paintings or posters," Malviya added.

Eye on poll with rasgullas & cups of tea

NEW DELHI, 20 FEBRUARY

The BJP has planned to reach out to a larger audience for the West Bengal Assembly polls. The party has already started reaching out to the electorate through rasgulla and Namo tea parties in Kolkata.

The election for 294 seats in the West Bengal Assembly will be held in April-May this year. The BJP, riding high on its success in the last general election in the state, is leaving no stone unturned to uproot the Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamul Congress government. In 2019, the BJP had won 18 of the 42 Lok Sabha seats in West Bengal.

BJP's co-charge for the West Bengal unit, Amit Malviya, said that the party will use new-age technology and traditional campaign methods to reach out to the electorate. "BJP workers have already started meeting people in small groups to explain the party's vision for the development of the state over Namo tea party," he said.

Malviya added that in the coming days the party will start organising flash mobs and street plays. To make the party's presence more visible in the state, BJP workers have started moving around wearing "saffron T-shirts" with "Namo again" printed on them.

"Everyday BJP workers have started meeting people wearing saffron T-shirts at parks or places frequented by the people in Kolkata," Malviya said. The BJP has also started using "digital wall paintings" to counter rivals' efforts to remove its posters.

"TMC workers remove our posters and we have started using digital wall paintings, which are not easy to remove and also look better than traditional wall paintings or posters," Malviya added.



The BJP government should rename that day of the week as 'achha din' when diesel and petrol do not increase

CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA  
TWEETING AGAINST RISING FUEL PRICES

**the Sunday Statesman**  
NEW DELHI, 21 FEBRUARY 2021

05

## THUMBNAILS



Mayor Kishori Pednekar distributes masks to the people without masks at Shivaji Park, Dadar in Mumbai on Saturday.

Jal Shakti ministry campaign: The 100-day special campaign of the Jal Shakti Ministry to provide tap water connections in schools, anganwadi centres and ashramshala has been extended to 31 March 31 for some states to complete the task.

## YSR reminds PM Modi of Andhra's 'special status'

HYDERABAD, 20 FEBRUARY

Andhra Pradesh CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy today once again raised the issue of "special status" for the state in a video conference with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, pointing out that rapid industrialisation in the state was not possible unless the Centre fulfils its commitment made during bifurcation of the state.

It is significant that the CM raised the issue of special status at a time when emotions were running high against the Centre after it announced its decision to go for 100 per cent disinvestment of the Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL).

Reddy raised the issue while addressing the 6th Governing Council meet of the NITI Aayog and admitted that the industrialisation in Andhra Pradesh was yet to gain required momentum.

"The bifurcation resulted in my state being deprived of tier one city infrastructure, employment opportunities and financial resources. Rapid industrialisation in my state is possible only if special category status is accorded. This was a commitment made on the floor of the Parliament and a precondition to the bifurcation," reminded Reddy.

# Uttarakhand tragedy: 3 more bodies recovered, toll rises to 65

Efforts continue to clear sludge-filled tunnels of flood-hit Tapovan hydel project

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
GOPSHWAR (UTTARAKHAND), 20 FEBRUARY

Three more bodies were recovered from the NTPC's flood-ravaged Tapovan-Vishnugad hydel project site on Saturday taking the toll in the February 7 glacial disaster in Uttarakhand to 65, officials said.

The bodies were recovered from the desilting tank near the Tapovan project barrage on Saturday, NDRF Commandant P K Tiwari told PTI.

Search operations at the project site have been underway on a war footing for more than 13 days since it bore the brunt of an avalanche triggered by a glacial burst over Rishiganga river in Chamoli district.

The 13.2 MW Rishiganga hydel project was totally demolished in the avalanche while the Tapovan-Vishnugad hydropower project suffered

extensive damage.

With the recovery of three more bodies, the toll in the tragedy has gone up to 65 while 139 people are still missing.

Meanwhile, Chamoli District Magistrate Swati S Bhadauria on Saturday asked the NTPC to press into service additional equipment and divert the course of Dhauliganga river to the other side so that its water does not flow through the barrage into Tapovan tunnel hampering slide clearing efforts.

Riverwater flowing into the tunnel from the barrage has been a major headache for rescuers at the tunnel making the muck clearing operations even more challenging, Bhadauria said.

Deploying additional equipment at the tunnel and diverting the course of the river will speed up the debris removal exercise which has been underway for more than 13 days, the DM said.

She said rescue operations



at the main project site in Raini have been completed.

The DM added that the debris on the upper side of Rishiganga is now being scoured for any bodies that could be trapped, if any.

Meanwhile, a team of researchers arrived in Pang village in Raini on Saturday to inspect the lake formed over Rishiganga after the recent avalanche and gauge how big a threat it poses to areas downstream.

The team led by USAC Director MPS Bisht and consisting of

four scientists each from the Geological Survey of India and Uttarakhand Space Application Centre will try to reach the lake on foot by Saturday evening or Sunday.

With roads in the area around Raini Gram Panchayat washed out in the recent flash flood and vast stretches turned into swamps, the team is being accompanied by a mountaineer from the Nehru Institute of Mountaineering and SDRF jawans to ensure their safe journey to the lake.

"We will inspect the lake

formed over Rishiganga by the huge volume of sludge that came from Rauthi stream due to the avalanche," USAC Director Bisht told PTI.

"We hope to reach Udyatri by the evening which is located above the lake. By Sunday, we may reach the lake to inspect it and take its geographical measurements. How big a threat the lake can pose to the population living downstream of Rishiganga is something that can be measured only by how much water it contains," he said.

Sonographic equipment from the Indian Navy are being used to measure how much water is contained in the lake, he said.

Sonography experts from Hyderabad are also expected to measure the volume of water in the lake, Bisht said.

Bisht said his team will also incorporate the findings of a DRDO team which has visited the lake into its analysis.

expect that the state leaders would neglect her protest.

Sources said Sobha coming out in support of the agitating PSC rank holders has caused the BJP state leadership to decide against backing the protesting PSC job aspirants.

Sources also said that the Mahila Morcha and Yuva Morcha had initially planned separate protest marches to the Secretariat on Thursday. However, the state leadership allegedly dissuaded both the Mahila Morcha and Yuva Morcha from taking out the march, as it would be seen as an open support to Sobha.

A majority of party cadres and supporters are dissatisfied over the BJP's reluctance in taking up the PSC rank holders' cause due to the Sobha factor.

Sobha Surendran, who has been engaged in a tussle with the state leadership particularly party state president Surendran, has been keeping out of active politics for the last several months over complaints that she was demoted and kept out of the party's core group at the behest of the state president. She started attending the party meetings since BJP President JP Nadda's visit to the state recently.

A fiery orator and the party's woman face, Sobha has a large following in the party. These cadres are reportedly dissatisfied with the state leadership's stance towards Sobha. Sobha Surendran's absence in the campaign has dented party's chances in the local body polls, said a BJP leader in Kozhikode.

## Factional feud in Kerala BJP far from over

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, 20 FEBRUARY

Even as 'Metroman' E Sreedharan's decision to join the BJP has given a boost to the morale of the workers of the saffron party in Kerala, the state party leadership's cold response to party leader Sobha Surendran's 48-hour fast which ended here on Friday in support of the agitation by job aspirants figuring in the PSC rank lists, doused the spirits of a large section of party workers in the state.

The fact that not a single state leader or district leader of the party visited her at her satyagraha venue points to the depth of the simmering factional issues in the state unit. It is interesting that this kind of perceptible factional war is happening in the state unit, despite the central leadership's clear instructions that the party should go ahead unitedly.

Despite receiving a cold shoulder from the party's state leadership, Sobha Surendran managed to facilitate a meeting between a group of protesting PSC job aspirants and governor Arif Mohammed Khan. Khan has assured them he would do whatever was possible in his capacity as the governor to help them.

When leaders of a party don't get along, the negative impacts can cascade through the organization and those conflicts have the potential to reduce the morale of the party workers. As Sobha announced the protest on her own, BJP leaders kept their distance from it. Her supporters did not

## HP vaccinates 75 pc healthcare workers

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
SHIMLA, 20 FEBRUARY

Healthcare workers (HCW) have been vaccinated with the first dose of Covid-19 vaccine.

The Himachal Pradesh government has achieved the target of more than 75 per cent Covid vaccination of the Health Care Workers and is amongst the only nine states and Union Territories of the country to have achieved this figure, State Health and Family Welfare Minister Rajiv Saizal said on Saturday.

Saizal said the Covid vaccination drive in the state of Himachal Pradesh was progressing at a satisfactory pace.

He further stated that till date 63,890 health care work-

## Yadav accuses Yogi of lying in Assembly over procurement of crops on MSP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
LUCKNOW, 20 FEBRUARY

**Yadav also objected to the chief minister's language for allegedly using the Hindi word dalal, meaning middleman, on the floor of the house and went on to declare him an outsider.**

much of the MSP" the former chief minister demanded to know.

He (the CM) said middlemen are not able to digest farmers' well-being. Such deception! Such a lie! Can anyone speak such lies in the House? asked Yadav.

Objecting to the alleged use of the word dalal, Yadav declared Adityanath an outsider for Uttar Pradesh and said, Can anyone imagine that the person whom the people of UP accepted as their chief minister is not of UP? Yadav asked. He should thank the people of UP who accepted him but see his language," Yadav said.

"As far as the language of our CM is concerned, I would say he speaks less on development. I want to know from him if farmers from any of the districts, including Gorakhpur, Mahajganj, Kushinagar, Deoria, Sant Kabir Nagar, Basti, Gonda and Faizabad, are getting the MSP. Which district has got it? Yadav asked. We want to know how many farmers have got how

If he speaks on development, it will be more beneficial for the state, said the SP chief.

During his press conference, Yadav also sought to give credit to his government for starting road building and sugarmills in the state.

Reacting to Yadav's statements, UP Deputy Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma accused the former CM of making baseless remarks out of disappointment over being out of power.

I think some people have still not forgotten the defeat (in elections) and are yet to realise that they are out of power. And so, they are making baseless remarks, said Sharma. Some people in the opposition are repeatedly challenging the constitutional post of the chief minister. This is not appropriate. Allegations should be levelled based on facts," he added.

"The Opposition is sad and disappointed. In disappointment, they are not hesitating from speaking false things and levelling false allegations," Sharma said, adding that nobody could challenge the government as far as development is concerned.

## Modi like 'ahankari raja' from old stories: Priyanka

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
LUCKNOW, 20 FEBRUARY

Likening Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the character of an arrogant king, *ahankari raja*, from stories of yore, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Friday said he is unable to understand that the 'jawan' who has kept this country safe is also the son of a farmer," she told.

Launching a scathing attack against the PM, Priyanka Gandhi said government 'mandis' and the minimum support price (MSP) system would come to an end with the new farm laws.

"Your rights will also end. The way in which he has sold the entire country to his two-three friends, in the same way he wants to sell you, your land, and earnings to his billionaire friends," she alleged.

"The electricity bill has increased, the price of the gas cylinder keeps on increasing, but you are not getting the price for your sugar-cane. It is at the same place," she said.

"The BJP government earned Rs 3.5 lakh crore by imposing tax on diesel last year. I want to ask where the money has gone" she asked.

grovelling. It seems our prime minister has also become an arrogant king of that type."

He is unable to understand that the jawan who has kept this country safe is also the son of a farmer," she told.

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## India's relationship with Maldives to take quantum jump: Jaishankar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
MALE, 20 FEBRUARY

India's time-tested relationship with the Maldives is poised to take a quantum jump, external affairs minister S Jaishankar said on Saturday as he held talks with his Maldivian counterpart Abdulla Shahid and discussed the entire gamut of bilateral cooperation and hand-

ed over 1,00,000 additional doses of Covid-19 vaccine to the country.

The two ministers discussed Covid-19 recovery, various projects being undertaken under Indian assistance, and cooperation in multilateral platforms.

The two sides witnessed the exchange of agreements on a wide range of domains the two countries are working together, including fish processing, public broadcasting, sustainable urban development, road infrastructure and tourism.

Jaishankar said the signing of these agreements is emblematic of the strong and multifaceted development partnership between the two countries.

Jaishankar, who arrived here on the first leg of his two-nation tour that will also take him to Mauritius, handed over 100,000 additional doses of Covid-19 vaccine to the Foreign Minister and Health Minister Kerafa Naseem.

India last month had provided 1,00,000 doses of Covishield vaccine, manufactured by the Serum Institute of India (SII), to the Maldives as part of India's grant assistance. "Our time-tested relationship is

posed today for a quantum jump, scaling new heights and touching the lives of the people like never before," Jaishankar said.

"We are partners in development but also in promoting peace and security in the region," he said at a joint press conference with his Maldivian counterpart.

He said Maldives enjoy a central position in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Neighbourhood First Policy.' India's first and largest Covid-19 vaccine support was given to the Maldives. It is the first country where India-made vaccines landed," he said.

He said India has looked beyond post-Covid economic recovery and India's air travel bubble with the Maldives contributed significantly in reviving the tourism sector.

An extraordinarily deep partnership reaffirmed. Comprehensive talks with FM Abdulla Shahid. Deeply appreciate our close cooperation during Covid. Agreed to look beyond post-pandemic economic recovery," Jaishankar tweeted after the talks with Shahid.

After the talks, Shahid said they had a productive meeting and the two sides discussed several issues, including projects being carried out with Indian financial support, Covid-19 pandemic and recovery, consular matters and multilateral cooperation.

Later, speaking at an event at Ekuene Stadium here Jaishankar offered a USD 40 million Line of Credit to the Maldives in a bid to boost the sports infrastructure of the country.

He said that India acknowledges the high priority accorded by President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih to sports and India is privileged to be a partner in that effort. I am happy to announce that in order to support the development of sports infrastructure to fulfil the interests and aspirations of the Maldivian people, India has offered a standalone Line of Credit of USD 40 million for sports infrastructure in the Maldives, Jaishankar said.

He said that the Maldivian people have tremendous sporting talent. "India is a trusted and reliable partner," the minister said in his address.

## Unnao: Survivor's condition improves, taken off ventilator

### FIR against Congress leader

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
UNNAO (UP), 20 FEBRUARY

in the post-mortem report and the post was an attempt to create anger through "misleading" rumours.

The post-mortem report did not confirm rape and the families had themselves cremated the bodies without any pressure, the SP said, adding that through the tweet, an effort was made to propagate concocted and fake news.

Superintendent of Police Anand Kulkarni said the claims made in the tweet were far from the facts emerging

Heavy deployment of police force has been made at the hospital to ensure the safety and security of the girl.

On primary assessment, the girl was found in shock. As a suspected case of poisoning, she was shifted to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at the paediatric ward, the medical bulletin issued by the hospital, where she is undergoing treatment, said.

The girl has shown improvement and doctors decided to take her off the ventilator, Kanpur Deputy IG Preetinder Singh said. The girl is still not in a condition to speak to the police and narrate the incident, the DIG said. The doctors are constantly monitoring the girl's condition, he said.

The minor girl, who was found

Mehbooba Mufti is expected to be unanimously re-elected as President of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) on Monday.

## Insecure Governorship

Of all the constitutional posts in the country, the Governor has no security whatsoever. Article 156(1) of the Constitution says the Governor (including Lieutenant Governor) shall hold office during the pleasure of the President. On Tuesday, 16 February, President Ram Nath Kovind issued an order that Kiran Bedi ceased to hold the office of Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry which meant he had withdrawn his pleasure. The President at the same time appointed Tamilisai Soundararajan, Governor of Telangana, "to discharge the functions of the Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry, in addition to her own duties, with effect from the date she assumes charge of her office until regular arrangements for the office of Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry are made." Bedi was not even asked to continue in office till her successor was sworn in. As a result of this unusual order of the President, the Union Territory remained headless till Thursday, 19 February. Abrupt removal of a Governor creates a constitutional vacuum which can be filled only when the successor assumes office. Traditionally, the Tamil Nadu Governor is given additional charge of Puducherry whenever such a situation arises. This is the first time the Governor of distant Telangana has been given concurrent charge. She happens to be a former president of the BJP in Tamil Nadu. Puducherry goes to the polls in less than three months and the BJP is determined to capture power in this southern Union Territory. Although the Supreme Court in BP Singh v Union of India upheld the President's power to remove a governor any time without giving any reason and without granting an opportunity to be heard, it made it clear that this power could not be exercised in an "arbitrary, capricious or unreasonable manner."

Since the Constitution does not spell out how to remove a Governor, Article 156(1) is used to get rid of unwanted Governors, but the normal practice is to request such Governors to resign. Only if they refuse to resign is Article 156(1) applied. Apparently, Ms Bedi was not extended the courtesy of being asked to resign, especially after she had contributed to making Puducherry a potential BJP territory in the last four years. When she assumed office as Lt Governor on 29 May 2016, the BJP had no presence in the Puducherry Assembly. Taking advantage of Section 3(3) of the Union Territories Act, 1963, which says, "the Centre may nominate not more than three persons not being in the service of the government to the Assembly of the UT," Ms Bedi nominated three BJP men to the Puducherry Assembly. They even got voting rights vide a Supreme Court order. With the resignation of two Congress MLAs earlier this week preparatory to joining the BJP, Chief Minister Narayanaswamy has lost majority in the House. The new Lt Governor has directed the Assembly Secretariat to convene the House on Monday, 22 February, for a single agenda session to determine whether the Chief Minister enjoys the confidence of the Assembly or not and the voting should be done by show of hands. Que sera, sera.

## Lunchtime Variety

Mamata Banerjee has seemingly taken care of life's fundamental essential for sustenance ~ food. The Chief Minister's Maa (Mother) scheme was initiated at the state secretariat, Nabanna, on Monday with attendant grandstanding. In Bengal, the Maa scheme envisages an almost incredibly subsidised four-course lunch at Rs 5 per plate ~ rice, lentils, vegetables and egg curry. The scheme recalls Jayalalitha's Amma Unavagam in Tamil Nadu... with the added attraction for elbow-benders; it is reminiscent too of the Congress Indira canteens which were put in place during the party's regime in Karnataka and Maharashtra's Shiv Bhojan Scheme, introduced by the Shiv Sena. The fact that the West Bengal Chief Minister has allocated Rs 10 crore in this year's vote-on-account for the midday energiser would suggest that the financial implications have been calibrated. She has reportedly asserted that funding will not be an issue. Having said that, the very frequent increase in the price of fuel will be a factor to contend with, with or without the occasional central subsidy for cooking gas. Another point of cavil must be that the scheme intends to cater to an indeterminate number of people and it shall not be easy to calculate the total outlay. In trying to abide by the Benthamite doctrine of the greatest good of the greatest number, both the distribution of meals and the total outlay shall not be easy to calculate. Going by her inaugural address, the scheme is meant "both for destitutes as well as others across Bengal" Hence perhaps the Chief Minister's supplementary ~ "Sure, there could be some teething troubles, but beyond that, this will certainly make a big difference." Considering the menu, the government's subsidy of Rs 15 per plate seems to be wholly inadequate, almost a pittance when one reflects on the ballooning food inflation, with which it must of necessity be contextualised. It might be tempting to debunk the initiative as an instance of election-eve gimmickry. The barb can be accepted with a modified 'yes'. Though the timing is bound to raise suspicions, overall it ought not to militate against the inherent benevolence of 'Maa' For once, Miss Banerjee has been impressed by the Bengal Left. Albeit political, an interesting sidelight is that she was influenced by the community kitchens set up by the CPI-M when the pandemic was at its peak ~ April, May and June. The Left's endeavour was generally welcomed. Thus it was that she decided on the follow-through, matched with the pledge to improve the quality of the fare and the distribution points - the boroughs of Kolkata Municipal Corporation and in the district headquarters. Implicit is the cardinal message ~ Food for All. Much will, however, hinge on the effectiveness of the execution. Chiefly to ensure that the ingredients don't make a round-trip to the open market in the manner of foodgrain earmarked for the ration shops.

# Environmental issues

Any agenda for Bengal's development must be oriented towards environmental sustainability. Unfortunately, prominent political parties have consistently ignored these issues



The countdown to the Assembly Election in West Bengal has predictably generated considerable political fervour which is likely to intensify in the coming days. Two principal contenders for power, the ruling Trinamool Congress and the challenger Bharatiya Janata Party are leaving no stone unturned in their desperation to woo the voters, trading charges and counter-charges at each other while promising the moon to the electorate if voted to power.

At a recent press conference, Union Home Minister Amit Shah accused the Trinamool Congress government in the state of failing to deliver, claiming that West Bengal lags behind most states in the country on various parameters, except on corruption and extortion. Trinamool Supremo and state Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee vehemently dismissed Shah's observations as 'garbage of lies', rebutting his statement with data to establish her claim of Bengal's leading position in various spheres, particularly in promotion of MSME and rural roads, and in promoting women's empowerment through schemes like Kanyasree and Sabujasathi.

The ruling dispensation promises to further accelerate the pace of 'Unnain' (development), which it claims to have followed with vigour during its last two terms, while the challenger BJP propagates its undying commitment to usher in the 'Sonar Bangla' (Golden Bengal), the El Dorado of prosperity, peace and progress. Panellists in television channels are debating endlessly, and often quite boisterously, about the prospects of these two main contenders for power while social media are abuzz with stories, real or planted, about the colourful exploits of several political heavyweights moving to and from one camp to the other.

What is lost in the din is the voicing of any real concern from either of these two camp followers about one of the gravest

threats facing humanity in recent times, the crisis of environmental pollution and climate change, not a distant international issue to be dealt with by statesmen at the high table of global powers, but a very palpable issue in India as well as in Bengal.

While West Bengal's geographical diversity, ranging from the Himalayas in the north to the Bay of Bengal in the south, and numerous plains and plateaus in between, presents a treasure trove to those keen to explore the bounties of nature, it complicates the task of those entrusted with the responsibility of delineating the development agenda for the state as many regions are ecologically fragile and vulnerable. Soil erosion in the Darjeeling Himalaya is taking place rapidly by the removal of topsoil which is disturbing the ecological balance and agricultural development of the region.

Landslides are another grave environmental hazard in Darjeeling and surrounding hill areas. Although landslides, particularly in the monsoon, are a natural phenomenon, in the Darjeeling hills they are mostly triggered by man-made structures and practices. Improper drainage and waste management systems, unscientific cultivation, random clearance of forests for short-term commercial profit, dependence on forests for fuel and fodder, uncontrolled grazing and pilferage of trees, unplanned extension of cultivation and encroachment on land due to population pressure are all harming the ecosystem of the region. Experts have issued repeated warnings about possible catastrophic outcomes of such practices but their voices seem to have fallen on deaf ears.

In the south, the Sundarbans, the largest mangrove ecosystem in the world, is highly vulnerable to various hydro-meteorological hazards. Global warming compounds the dangers to the Sundarbans. These low-lying mangrove forests are highly susceptible to the effects of sea-level rise - including inundation of coastal areas, increased exposure to storm surges, increased coastal erosion, and rising salinity in ground and surface waters. The vulnerability of the region is further aggravated by a variety of anthropogenic activities, including intensive boating and fishing, dredging, tourism and port activities, operation of mechanized boats, excavation of sand from the riverbed, and the establishment of coal power plants. The devastation caused by super cyclone Amphan is clear indication that such catastrophes are

likely to become more severe in the future, exacerbated by thoughtless human intervention.

The changing morphology of the river Ganga and intensifying river bank erosion is wreaking havoc in the districts of Malda and Mursidabad, as the river is swallowing settlements on its bank. In 2020, erosion took place in some villages of Mursidabad district - villages that hadn't seen such erosion earlier - washing away homes, temples, a school and agricultural land. Some locals and experts attribute the fresh spate of erosion to the obstruction of the natural flow of the river Ganga linked to the construction of the Farakka Barrage. Experts have proposed integrated planning for climate change mitigation and adaptation model in the Ganga floodplain.

Being a border state, West Bengal is also susceptible to illegal immigration, and resultant encroachment in ecologically sensitive areas. The areas around Mahananda - an important river in North Bengal which flows to Bangladesh - are facing a crisis

TMC is adamant to finish young lives, the backbone of India.

All my heartfelt sympathy goes to the bereaved family. I congratulate, and encourage the Left Front with all my might.

Yours, etc., Nargis Sattar, Kolkata, 18 February.

### FARMS LAWS

SIR, Some still argue the recently passed farm laws will free farmers from outdated laws, remove the barriers on inter-state and intra-state trade and encourage healthy competition. The government holds, the agricultural laws will facilitate the creation of an ecosystem where farmers and traders enjoy the freedom of choice and alternative trading channels. They will promote efficient, transparent and barrier-free inter-State and intra-State trade and commerce of agricultural produce as well. These repetitive assertions are to create the "illusion of truth" effect. However, farmers have found no merit

said ~ "India is not fit for democracy." This government is trying to suppress, oppress and depress the brave Opposition - the Left Front which supplies oxygen to us.

The police report does not have an iota of truth. The Left Front will do great justice by appealing to the High Court. What nonsense. How could Midda die of leg injuries? The police should test their IQ. Dishonest as some of them are, should be brought to book at once.

Midda's family should not accept a farthing as government compensation. Death cannot be compensated by money. I congratulate the Left Front for their timely bold steps. The bleak future will claim more young lives if the inefficient government, encourage police torture. But the cruel government devoid of efficiency and foresight and justice will not last long though its better than BJP.

### DESPOTIC APPROACH OF KARNATAKA GOVT

SIR, The enormity of the arrest of the 22-year old Bengaluru climate activist Disha Ravi by the Delhi police without following proper guidelines, speaks of the State's despotic and tyrannical approach. The so-called "toolkit" is certainly not a handbook of terrorism. The teenager's arrest clearly indicates an emerging pattern - categorically attack the youngsters of the country who oppose the government's views and actions. The unlawful arrest of the young Bengaluru woman has sullied the image of the Delhi police and raises a question if it has become the praetorian guard of the ruling BJP. Disha Ravi's detention reeks of using the process to castigate someone for campaigning against the government's stand, and possibly to feed a narrative that the farmers' protest is some kind of an international conspiracy.

Yours, etc., Ranganathan Sivakumar, Chennai, 19 February.

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

**ASIAN VOICES**  
**Home toilet access improving**

Five provinces in northeast Cambodia still have a high percentage of households without a toilet, while the majority of households in Svay Rieng, Prey Veng, Battambang, Kandal, and Phnom Penh have access to toilets, according to the findings of the recent population census. Officials say they expect that Cambodia will reach the status of "Open Defecation Free" (ODF) by 2025. Across the Kingdom, 82.8 per cent of the more than 3.55 million households now possess a toilet, while 17.2 per cent do not.

These percentages ~ from the 2019 census results released last month ~ are a drastic improvement from the 14.5 per cent of households with a toilet in 1998 and 33.7 per cent in 2008. The five provinces which have the highest percentage of households without toilets are Ratanakkiri at 48.8 per cent; Stung Treng at 47.2 per cent; Preah Vihear at 46.8 per cent; Mondulkiri at 44 per cent; and Kratie at 38.6 per cent. The four provinces with the lowest percentage of households without toilets are Svay Rieng at 7.9 per cent; Prey Veng at 8.6 per cent; Battambang at 10.4 per cent; Kandal at 11 per cent. Phnom Penh has the lowest percentage in the country at 6.1 per cent. Lun Sayteng, chief of the Ministry of Rural Development's rural healthcare department, told The Post on February 16 that there is a higher percentage of household with toilets in the four provinces thanks to a programme designed by the ministry with partner NGOs that had focused on them. "We motivated the people and urged them to understand the issue,

**The Phnom Penh Post**  
CAMBODIA'S NEWSPAPER OF RECORDS  
and their living conditions have improved. They work in factories and earn money to spend on the construction of toilets which cost less than \$100 each.

Because when they go to work at the factory they have a toilet there, so when they go back home they (should not have) to live without toilets," Sayteng said. He said that for the provinces with lower percentages of toilet use, it was partly due to difficulties in transporting materials for construction of toilets and the presence of many poor people. He said geographical conditions such as floods or droughts could also contribute to lower percentages for toilet access.

Yi Kimthan, deputy country director for Plan International Cambodia, said some residents in the north-eastern provinces may think that toilets are not important because they can defecate in the forest. "These locations are in rural areas where there are still forests where they can defecate. Moreover, they are farming away from their homes all day. So they don't build toilets at home because they spend around six months in their fields," he said.

### IN MEMORIAM

**CHATTERJEE SANKAR** — In fond remembrance of my beloved husband, who passed away on this day in 1990. — Enakshi.

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR** editor@thestatesman.com

## Cong makes it to Punjab quangos

SIR, The overwhelming victory of Congress Party in Punjab municipal elections by winning around 67 percent seats of eight municipal corporations and 100 municipal councils and nagar panchayats is certainly a serious jolt to the ruling BJP in the centre, besides Akali Party in the state. The position of the BJP is so dismal even in certain pockets the party could not open its account. Earlier too in the month of December public ire was translated into the defeat of the ruling BJP-JJP in Haryana when two of the three mayoral seats and all three posts of municipal committed president. This is not because of ongoing farmers' agitation only but is due to over-all anti-people policies such as inflationary trend of the economy, alarming unemployment, ruthless privatisation, and communal agenda, besides undermining the India's parliamentary system are some of

the factors which are unacceptable to the masses. The results are the writing on the wall for the ensuing elections in five states.

Yours, etc., SK Khosla, Chandigarh, 18 February.

### DEATH OF A LEFTIST

SIR, This refers to *The Statesman*, (17 February) which drew my attention to the headline - 'Midda's death: Left to move HC seeking judicial enquiry.' Only the Left Front protests vehemently and brightens the concept of democracy. The police atrocities in chief minister Mamata's time has touched the Peak of Everest. Cruelty goes on and on during the petticoat government. Astonishing and extremely disgusting. A bad government always encourages police to frighten people to seal their lips.

Do we need to define democracy according to the choice of the leaders? This is why a famous Brit

said ~ "India is not fit for democracy." This government is trying to suppress, oppress and depress the brave Opposition - the Left Front which supplies oxygen to us.

The police report does not have an iota of truth. The Left Front will do great justice by appealing to the High Court. What nonsense. How could Midda die of leg injuries? The police should test their IQ. Dishonest as some of them are, should be brought to book at once.

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ATANU BISWAS

Donald Trump is unique. Not many US presidents were impeached, let alone twice – and that too within a single term of presidency. What's more, he got acquitted twice – not to forget that the Senate trial for the unprecedented second occasion was held even as presidency was over, where he has now been acquitted of inciting a riotous mob to attack the Capitol Hill on January 6.

In a Senate having 50 Democrats and 50 Republicans at the moment, the vote was 43 not guilty to 57 guilty, ten fewer than the 67 guilty votes needed to convict. Most Republicans took an escape route on the weak procedural argument that the trial itself was unconstitutional because Trump was no longer president, although many constitutional scholars disagreed with that premise and the Senate had already voted earlier that the trial was constitutional.

What are the takeaways from this impeachment trial? Although seven Republican Senators voted that Trump was guilty of incitement, making this the most bipartisan impeachment vote in US history, the acquittal by the Senate exhibited the enduring power the former President still maintains over the Republican Party. He might have tremendous influence in the elections of 2022 and 2024 as well, and he is even free to run in the 2024 presidential election. Among the seven Republican Senators who voted for impeachment, North Carolina Sen. Richard Burr and Sen. Pat Toomey of Pennsylvania are not running for re-election. The other five are Senators Mitt Romney of Utah, Ben Sasse of Nebraska, Susan Collins of Maine and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska.

"Sorry haters, I'm not going anywhere," Trump declared after his Senate acquittal. No wonder that Trump, barred from Twitter this time, played the victim again, as usual. He claimed that the impeachment trial was "yet another phase of the greatest witch hunt in the history of our Country".

Not everybody, even the Republicans, would share this view, of course. Maryland Republican Governor Larry Hogan, a potential presidential contender said he was proud of the Republicans who voted against Trump. But Hogan admitted that "it's not easy to go against your party and the base of your party and the former President... it's hard to do the right thing sometimes." And Senator Republican leader Mitch McConnell is vowing to focus on

## Takeaways from Trump's second impeachment trial



electability over loyalty to Trump. McConnell, although he voted to acquit, has said Trump could face criminal prosecution for the events surrounding January 6 and stated that he was 'practically and morally responsible' for provoking the violence. "President Trump's actions that preceded the riot was a disgraceful – disgraceful – dereliction of duty," McConnell observed.

Ten House Republicans also voted to impeach Trump in January, including Washington Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler, and nearly all of them now face at least one challenger for their seats in next year's mid-terms. The Senate vote might have similar consequences. Louisiana's Bill Cassidy and North Carolina's Richard Burr have already been censured by their respective state Republican parties. And Nebraska's Ben Sasse would possibly face such a vote. Through his vote favouring impeachment, Sen. Burr possibly made Lara Trump, the ex-President's daughter-in-law, almost the certain nominee for the Senate seat in North Carolina to replace him if she runs. Interestingly, South Carolina Sen. Lindsey Graham observed

that the biggest winner of this whole impeachment trial is Lara Trump.

While the House Speaker Nancy Pelosi scoffs at 'cowardly' Senate Republicans who voted to acquit Donald Trump, opinion polls prior to the impeachment trial seeking public opinion for or against impeachment showed that it is a deeply divided United States. In most of the polls including those of YouGov, The Hill/HarrisX, Axios/Ipsos, Politico/Morning Consult, PBS/Marist, HuffPost/YouGov, Change Research, Quinnipiac University, Vox/Data for Progress, more than 40 per cent people were against impeachment, and there is little doubt that most of them were Republican voters. And, it is never easy for the elected representatives to go against the will of their voters, as Larry Hogan pointed out.

The US does not have the system of binding whips. And the votes of the House members and Senators may be treated as a reflection of the individual wisdom of elected representatives – not an 'enforced consensus' that curbs the free will of legislators. Yet there is no allegation of 'horse trading' and 'resort politics.'

That might be an encouraging side of the American democracy. However, the legislators would certainly care for their electorates' mood, and of course their own winnability in the subsequent elections.

While Joe Biden maintained his stance that "democracy is fragile", Trump's impeachment trial may be treated as an indication of the strength of American democracy once again. McConnell claimed the Senate was "not invited to act as the nation's overarching moral tribunal." To some extent, I agree with this view. While there should be a fair trial in the Senate, there should also be a limit of its power and reach. If a majority of the Senators, including seven Republicans, feel that the former President is guilty, but that falls short of the required two-third mark to impeach him, let it be. The rest should be left to the judgement of the American people.

Certainly, the domain of democracy is beyond the scope of the Senate. Remember that there are hundreds of legal cases pending with the rioters. Take an example. Oath Keepers leader Jessica Watkins of Champaign County, Ohio, is charged with

several counts including conspiracy, conspiracy to hurt an officer and violent entry in the Capitol riot. Prosecutors said: "As the inauguration grew nearer, [Jessica] Watkins indicated that she was awaiting direction from President Trump." Such cases, even if they lead to convictions, cannot of course bar Trump from future office that an impeachment could. But they may certainly help in building public perception, and that is very important in a democracy.

And Nancy Pelosi, the House Speaker, said that the US Congress would move to establish an outside, independent 9/11-style commission to review the "facts and causes" related to the deadly 6 January insurrection at the US Capitol by Trump supporters. This is to investigate why government officials and law enforcement failed to stop the attack on the Capitol.

So, the wings of democracy are visibly quite widespread; they are not limited to the Senate acquittal only. That's the beauty of democracy. And its balance, of course.

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

## Why India-Nepal ties need reset

AJAYA BHADRA KHANAL

Nepal's open border with India has become a symbol of its special relationship with its southern neighbour. In recent years, many people in Nepal and India are beginning to speak up about the need to close the frontier. Then there is the amplification of anti-India sentiments in Nepali society as well as Nepal's growing proximity to China. Together, these phenomena are taken as signs that Nepal does not have an open relationship with India any more.

However, the problem with Nepal-India ties is not that the relationship has changed, but that it has not changed enough. The apparent conflict in Nepal-India relations has emerged because our foreign policies have not changed with the times. In order to improve bilateral relations, vaccine diplomacy notwithstanding, India and Nepal need to implement a paradigm shift in their respective foreign policies.

In order to understand this sense of malaise – a feeling that all is not well with Nepal-India relations – we need to look into several internal contradictions. The first dynamic relates to the connection between Nepal's survival as a nation-state and its foreign policy, which is well known. This is the reason why Nepal has tried to balance as well as play China and India against each other. Many see

this as a successful strategy... So far.

Another dynamic is the relationship between Nepali nationalism and the different identity groups within Nepal. The dominant nationalist identity in Nepal represents that of the Hindus of the hills. It does not represent all the ethnic groups, religions or even the Hindus of the plains.

A central contradiction was that until recent years, Nepal's ethnic groups and communities were not integrated or connected to each other horizontally. Because of the absence of infrastructures of connectivity, Nepal's economy and ethnic groups were only connected through India. This is why Nepal's nationalist sentiments have prioritised a process of integration. One example is the mid-hill highway running from the east to the west of Nepal.

The third dynamic is the relationship between political ideologies and its influence on political relationships. Since the 1950s, those with communist ideologies have opposed India and the United States, and preferred relations with China, Russia and even North Korea. Many Nepali people, socialised in a communist culture, find it difficult to like India or the United States.

The fourth dynamic is the nature of actual cross-border relationships. For many people living in the hills and southern plains, a border with India does not exist. People's lived

experience, their livelihoods and their cross-border relationships are vastly different from the political border. In recent years, border management practices have tried to make the border more visible, and more difficult.

This gap between people's lived experience and state-centric political policies is apparent in media coverage of the border. If you look at the media, the Nepal-India border is rife with crime, human trafficking, floods, smuggling, terrorism and border disputes. Nepal's dominant nationalism sides with the state and drives a narrative of the border as a problem: A problem for national security, a problem for sovereignty, a problem for Nepali nationalism. A large chunk of the Nepali population and their lived realities have come into conflict with this narrative.

The fifth, and perhaps, the most important dynamic is the shifting relationship between the Nepali peoples (in plural) and the Nepali state. The Nepali state is usually dominated by the political elite who have failed to represent people's interests. Earlier, the Nepali people did not have a voice, and spoke out only occasionally. The state and the political elite could distort foreign policy and international relations to further their own political interests rather than that of the people. Things have changed; people have become more aware.

While the dynamics I have listed above are in a state of flux and have

changed, the way Nepal and India handle their bilateral relations has not. Even the geopolitical environment is similar to what it was in the 1950s and 1960s. China remains a major factor. India's policy towards Nepal is dominated by notions of traditional security, strategic interests and cultural traits. The last one is also psychological.

While pursuing its interests, India chooses to deal with the political elite and uses means that may not be democratic. India is able to push its interests or exact concessions because Nepal's political elite are only concerned about their own needs and desires. These interests are frequently in conflict with that of Nepal as a country and its peoples. When India seeks to further its interests by dealing with the political elite and using leverages, it can frequently harm the interests of the Nepali people.

As a result, the conflict between the Nepali people and the Nepali state also becomes reflected in bilateral relations between India and Nepal.

Therefore, it is now time to create a paradigm shift in bilateral relations. The first shift is to adopt a more democratic and transparent foreign policy. India needs to change its foreign policy, which is centred around Nepal's political elite, to a policy around the Nepali state and its people. India's foreign policy must be people-centric.

Secondly, India and Nepal need to move away from the idea of traditional security and hard power to the idea of dynamic connectivity. Traditional security depends on creating a secure but static environment. Now is the time to make a shift to a state of dynamic equilibrium, a foreign policy that is flexible to change. It is difficult because it requires knowledge and efficiency. The notion of connectivity relies on creating infrastructures and technology that facilitate the flow of people, goods and ideas.

The third shift is from unilateral and hegemonic policies to ones that are mutual and cooperative. Foreign policy movers and shakers will tell us that they are already doing so. But these idealist narratives do not reflect the realities on the ground. In addition, they fail because of the fourth factor.

The fourth shift concerns good policies and their efficient implementation. Nepal and India need to make a transition to efficiency. Currently, public or foreign policies are mismanaged. Development projects that are intended to develop relations end up harming them.

Relations between Nepal and India have not worsened, they have merely failed to change with the times. Our relationship only appears to have worsened because our foreign policies have failed to take into account the changes taking place in our societies, especially the relationship between the people and the nation-states.

The Kathmandu Post/ANN

NOW AND AGAIN

## A postman to the rescue

MYLAVARPU LALITHA

Some events from our childhood linger in our memories. One is so vivid that I feel impelled to share it. About eight decades ago, we lived in a village where my father was posted. It was close to a large town named Rajahmundry, which was on the banks of the mighty Godavari. Often, we would visit relatives in this town, travelling by horse carriage from the village.

On one occasion, while travelling through the town, our eyes fell on a museum. With great excitement, we jumped off the carriage, wanting to explore the museum there and then. But we were persuaded by our mother to defer the visit to the morrow when she would arrange someone to take us.

The next day dawned and my brother, a year younger than me, and I donned our best clothes in anticipation of the museum visit. But there was nothing to suggest that any elder was being asked to take us there.

Restless, we slipped out of the house and walked for hours searching for the museum. At about 2 o'clock, we finally spotted it and entered with great enthusiasm. But we could not understand what any of the exhibits represented, nor was any one around to explain things. Finally, we came out without any satisfaction.

Now, we faced the daunting task of finding our way back. Our legs ached, and we were hungry. Finally, there was the fear we would be scolded by our mother for having left home without telling her. I was so scared that I started to cry. But my brother bravely told me not to worry, saying he would get us back home.

Just then, we saw a postman approach and we sought his help to find our way back to the address we had. He said he was headed in a different direction, but seeing our anxiety, he took pity on us. He walked us to the post office and left us in the care of another gentleman.

After some time, this gentleman locked up the office and took us to our house. But he did not just leave us; instead he asked to meet our mother. He then gently reprimanded her for letting her children roam the streets. We felt sorry that she had been blamed for our thoughtlessness.

100 YEARS AGO

## PRIMARY EDUCATION IN BENGAL

To The Editor Of The Statesman

SIR, - I have been given the duty of examining the question of the expansion and improvement of primary education in Bengal. The Bengal Primary Education Act of 1919 has made it possible for local authorities to introduce compulsory education into their own areas if they so desire. Before education can be made compulsory facilities must be provided for the education of the children not now at school. Even apart from any question of compulsion it appears to be desirable to spread literacy among the masses of the people to a far greater extent than is now the case. The problem has to be considered in relation to agricultural districts on the one hand and to industrial localities on the other. I shall be grateful if any of your readers who are interested in this matter will let me have any advice for suggestions that they may care to put forward.

EVAN E. BISS.  
Calcutta.

## INDIAN WOMEN AND MR. GANDHI

To The Editor Of The Statesman

SIR, - Mr. Gandhi's resolution of non-cooperation has at last been passed by the Congress and his adherents may hope for their contemplated Swaraj in nine months. But we are at a loss to understand what rights of our sex they will recognise and what franchise they will give to our sex. Mahatma characterises British Government as the Satanic government but to us it has proved to be the angelic government. Female infanticide and suttee have been totally checked and a law legalising widow re-marriage has been passed. The Gandhites have been preaching and, while addressing women, have been saying that one of the chief causes for taking steps towards non-cooperation with the Government is the ill-treatment and insult to the women in the Punjab. May I ask if Indian society does really consider the women an object of respect? Measures would be taken to allow inter-marriage where the parties concerned have no objection.

PRATHIVA SUNDARI SAMAD.

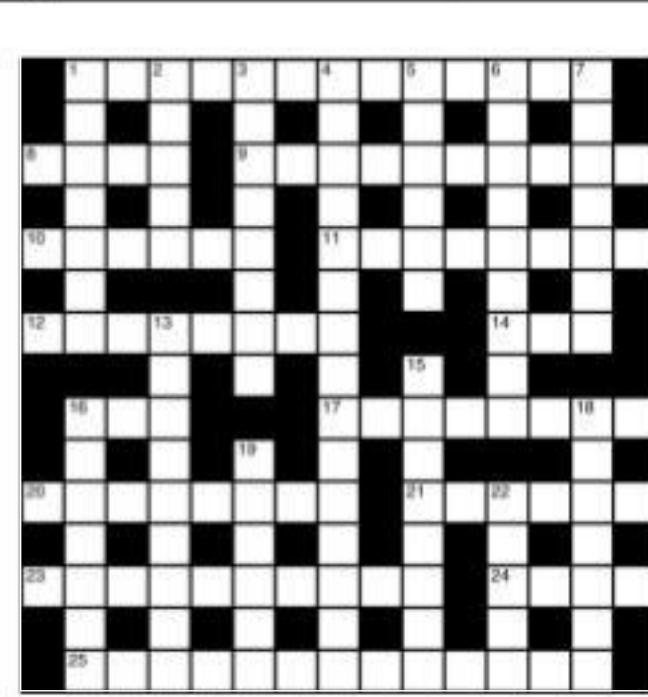
## DELAYS IN FISH DISTRIBUTION

To The Editor Of The Statesman

SIR, - A considerable proportion of the fish supply to this city is sent through the parcel express train; fish from Santabar, Sara, Serajunge and Goalundo side comes through this train. But since December 16 last, the fish-shed has been removed to the vicinity of the Beliaghata Station with the result that there has been a delay in the delivery of fish for at least two or three hours every morning. This arrangement has been not only a source of loss to the fish merchants, of whom your correspondent is one, but a source of inconvenience, nay, a cause of insanitation, to all consumers of fish. The delivery is also delayed through the negligence and indifference of the railway employees directly concerned with the matter. I appeal to the authorities of the Eastern Bengal Railway, hoping that they will promptly take steps to redress these grievances.

K.C. SIRCAR.  
Baghazar Street.

## CROSSWORD



### SOLUTION FOR 14 FEBRUARY

#### ACROSS

- 1 Business bureau Tory pal ruined (6,7)
- 8 Rubbish taking? Take acid! (4)
- 9 Show broadcast mid-spring around 1st of April (6,4)
- 10 Hat or hood imported from US to UK (6)
- 11 Arcane secret I spread around Ohio (8)
- 12 Conservative with inclination for housework? (8)
- 14 Scottish man in French article (3)

#### DOWN

- 16 Coach player on the bench knocked over (3)
- 17 Low clerk must change to become major US artist (8)
- 20 Statesman and duke seen with Benjamin Netanyahu? (8)
- 21 A French young man going around about naked (6)
- 23 Evil, manly and physically aggressive? Not!! (10)
- 24 Sex with Hoskins repelled couple (4)
- 25 Do many bets annoy? No way! (3,2,3,5)
- 1 Vessel fitted with a royal navy hooter (4,3)
- 2 A writer describing small ski resort (5)
- 3 Performer having time trouble in Beat It? (4,4)
- 4 High-flyer once seen going with papers for shredding (9,6)
- 5 Price demanded to remove top of fanlight in America (6)
- 6 Member of secret fraternity is unusual bloke (9)

#### 7 What is left of engineers sat on electric supply? (7)

- 13 Spongy dessert knight tucks into after a drop of brandy (9)
- 15 Get used to a convention in conversation (8)
- 16 Boffin that relations must visit in the country (7)
- 18 People who laze around in casual footwear (7)
- 19 Look in Iron City for serious American crime (6)
- 22 Country friend you might hear of in Bow (5)

NO 28832

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

*I believe India can really become the affordable healthcare capital of the world*SANJIV MEHTA  
CHAIRMAN & MD, HINDUSTAN UNILEVER

## THUMBNAILS

**Move to promote EVs:** State-run e-governance services entity CSC SPV on Saturday said it has started a rural e-mobility programme urging people to switch to electric vehicles to preserve the environment and reduce carbon emissions. Under the programme, CSC e-Governance Services will facilitate loans for purchase of electric vehicles and focus on setting up charging infrastructure. "CSC Rural e-Mobility programme will write a new chapter in rural empowerment as it would increase mobility at low costs," CSC managing director Dinesh Tyagi said in a statement.

**EPFO new enrolments:** Net new enrolments with retirement fund body EPFO grew by 24 per cent to 12.54 lakh in December compared to the same month in 2019, according to the payroll data released on Saturday. The labour ministry in a statement said that the provisional payroll data of EPFO highlight a positive trend for net subscribers base growth with addition of 12.54 lakh subscribers in December 2020.

**ONGC target:** India's top oil and gas producer ONGC said it will scale up natural gas production from a KG basin block to 2.5-3 million standard cubic meters per day by May this year and will hit the peak output sometime in 2023-24. Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) last year started gas production from the \$5.07-billion KG-DWN-98/2 project in the Krishna Godavari basin, off the east coast of India.

**RBI-UCB:** The Reserve Bank of India has set up a committee to draw a vision document for strengthening urban cooperative banks (UCBs) and exploring the potential of consolidation in the sector. The committee, to be headed by former RBI deputy governor N S Vishwanathan, will suggest "effective measures for faster rehabilitation and resolution of urban cooperative banks (UCBs) and also assess their potential for consolidation in the sector."

**PC market:** The PC market in India continued its growth momentum registering 27 per cent growth in shipment at 2.9 million units in the December 2020 quarter from 2.3 million units in the year-ago period, as per research firm IDC.

However, the market comprising desktops, notebooks and workstations witnessed a 6.4 per cent decline in shipment on a full-year basis with shipment at 10.27 million units in 2020 as against 10.97 million units in 2019.

During the October-December 2020 quarter, the notebook segment grew by 62.1 per cent year-on-year to contribute more than three-fourths of the total shipments of 2.9 million units.

## Forex kitty down by \$ 249 million

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
MUMBAI, 20 FEBRUARY

The country's foreign exchange reserves fell by \$249 million to \$583.697 billion in the week ended 12 February, RBI data showed.

In the previous week, the reserves had declined by \$6.24 billion to stand at \$583.945 billion. It had touched a record high of \$590.185 billion in the week ended 29 January 2021.

In the reporting week, the decrease in reserves was mainly due to a fall in the foreign currency assets (FCAs), a major component of the overall reserves.

FCAs decreased by \$1.387 billion to \$540.951 billion,

## F Masks private sector to unleash 'animal spirits'

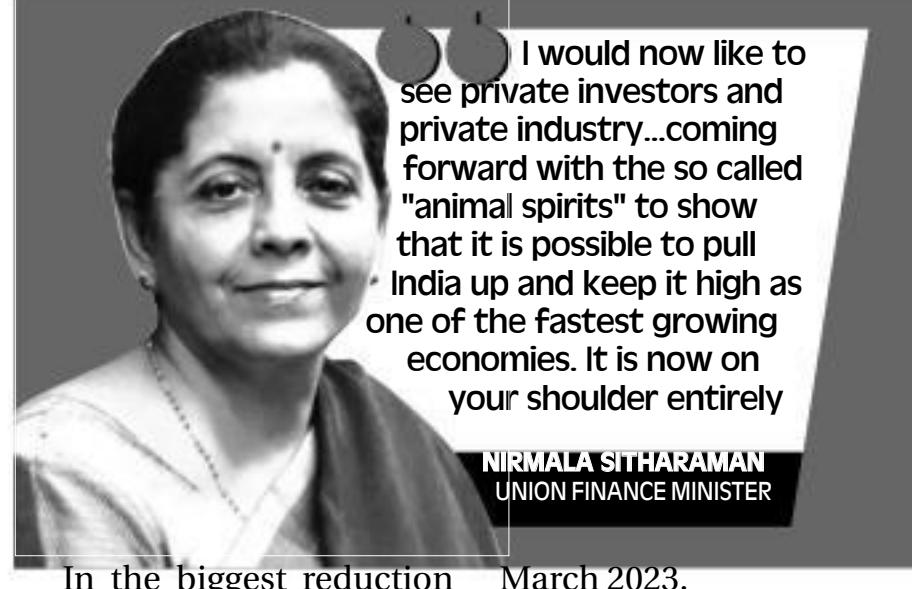
Government has been waiting for expansion by the private sector, says finance minister

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 20 FEBRUARY

**U**nion finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman today exhorted the private sector to take advantage of corporate tax rate cut and other initiatives of the government, and unleash "animal spirits" by enhancing investments to make India one of the fastest growing economies of the world.

The government has been waiting for the expansion by the private sector, she said while reminding corporate India of various measures, including corporate tax rate cut, policy consistency, ease of doing business, among others to facilitate investment.

"We need capacities to be ramped up, we need expansion, we need more production of many such items which are required for the economy. I would invite business leaders... post the corporate tax rate reduction I've been waiting to see expansion happening," she said.



I would now like to see private investors and private industry... coming forward with the so called "animal spirits" to show that it is possible to pull India up and keep it high as one of the fastest growing economies. It is now on your shoulder entirely

NIRMALA SITHARAMAN  
UNION FINANCE MINISTER

In the biggest reduction in 28 years, the government in September 2019 slashed corporate tax rates by up to 10 percentage points to attract private investment and reinvigorate the sagging economy. The tax break resulted in financial implication of Rs 1.45 lakh crore on the exchequer.

Base corporate tax rate for existing companies was reduced to 22 per cent from 30 per cent, and to 15 per cent from 25 per cent for manufacturing firms incorporated after 1 October 2019, and starting operations before 31 March 2023.

"So I would like to see now that the policy is clear, tax rates have been brought down, policy consistency has been underlined and ease of doing business is still going further. I would now like to see private investors and private industry... coming forward with the so called "animal spirits" to show that it is possible to pull India up and keep it high as one of the fastest growing economies. It is now on your shoulder entirely," she said.

Addressing industry leaders at an All India Management

Association (AIMA) virtual event, the finance minister said the recent Budget has addressed several issues which were so critical for India to have a clearer path for the next decade or more.

The Budget 2021-22 comes against the backdrop of the pandemic and contraction of the economy to give a sense of certainty to businesses that policies will remain predictable and therefore businesses can continue to concentrate on their core activities, she said.

With regard to disinvestment, the finance minister said the government has identified the core sector where it will have bare minimum presence and the rest will be allowed for public-private partnership.

The past strategy of disinvestment in trinkets has not really been so successful in spreading the ownership pattern, she said, adding, it was not enthusiastically received.

"So, I want to have an efficient, more meaningful, purpose serving way in which our taxpayers' money should

be spent... the disinvestment of units or privatisation of units is not because we want them to be closed down," she said.

The government wants these units to be running, to be kept up and running professionally as the economy has very high demand for many of these items of production such as steel, coal or copper, or many such things in which PSUs are there for decades now.

She urged the industry to make best of the disinvestment policy announced in the Budget.

Earlier this month, the finance minister presented a Rs 34.8 lakh crore Budget for financial year 2021-22.

The Budget has laid emphasis on increasing capital expenditure, raising allocation for healthcare capacity building and development of agricultural infrastructure, among others, which are expected to have a multiplier effect on the economy.

Sitharaman said spending is required this year as well as next year for sustaining growth.

states and UTs.

Under the special window, the Centre has released Rs 1 lakh crore to states and UTs in four months since October 2020, to meet GST compensation shortfall, the finance ministry said today.

The ministry on Friday

released the 17th weekly installment of Rs 5,000 crore to 23 states and 3 Union territories (Delhi, Jammu & Kashmir & Puducherry), taking the total amount released so far under the special borrowing window set up in October last year to Rs 1 lakh crore. The remaining 5 states - Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and Sikkim - do not have a gap in revenue on account of goods and services tax (GST) implementation.

The Centre had set up a special borrowing window at an average interest rate of 4.83 per cent... Out of this, an amount of Rs 91,460.34 crore has been released to states and an amount of Rs 8,539.66 crore has been released to the 3 UTs with legislative assembly," it said.

"An amount of Rs 1,00,000 crore has been borrowed by the Central government through the special borrowing window at an average interest rate of 4.83 per cent... Out of this, an amount of Rs 91,460.34 crore has been released to states and an amount of Rs 8,539.66 crore has been released to the 3 UTs with legislative assembly," it said.

## SBI Payments to launch Yono Merchant app

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 20 FEBRUARY

tion for which it has partnered with global payments technology major Visa to enable tap to phone feature.

The partnerships aims to give the necessary boost to scale up acceptance infrastructure across the country, SBI said.

"It gives me immense pleasure to announce the launch of Yono SBI Merchant app by our digital payments subsidiary SBI Payments. The bank launched Yono platform three years ago. Yono has 35.8 million registered users. Yono Merchant is a brand extension of this platform aiming to improve user experience and bringing convenience to our merchants," Dinesh Kumar Kharra, chairman of SBI, said.

Kharra said in the next 2-3 years, SBI is aiming to digitise millions of merchants by upgrading their mobile phones into a PoS device, accepting all form factors, accessing value added services such as loyalty, GST invoicing, inventory

management, among others and connecting into an interface to avail other banking products at a click of a button.

"We are aiming to grow our merchant touch points multi-fold crossing 5-10 million within 2-3 years. Yono SBI Merchant is a great enabler for retail and enterprise merchants offering holistic product proposition to improve merchant engagement, user experience and convenience," Giri Kumar Nair, MD & CEO, SBI Payments said.

SBI said the launch of Yono Merchant is in line with RBI's recent announcement of creating a Payments Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF) to encourage acquirers to deploy PoS infrastructure in lesser penetrated areas of the country. Merchants will now be able to turn their NFC-enabled Android smartphones into payment acceptance devices through a simple mobile app, it said.

## Covid-19 could give momentum to healthcare industry: HUL CMD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 20 FEBRUARY

The Covid-19 pandemic could provide India an opportunity to scale up the healthcare industry and be a major supplier of pharmaceutical products to the world, Hindustan Unilever chairman & managing director Sanjiv Mehta said today.

Making a case for restarting manufacturing of APIs (active pharmaceutical ingredients), Mehta said this would not only help India become the affordable healthcare capital of the world but would also be a massive growth engine for the country.

"I believe that just like Y2K crisis gave a stimulus to the IT industry in the country, the current pandemic could give momentum to the healthcare industry," said Mehta in his virtual keynote address at All Indian Management Association (AIMA) foundation day. The healthcare industry needs focus not only for the welfare of the country's population but also for improving on the value chain and become a major supplier of pharmaceutical products to the world, he said.

"Terming local manufacturing of API critical", Mehta said there should be no restart it. According to him, by giving up local manufacturing of API, we had done a big disservice to the nation.

"I believe India can really become the affordable healthcare capital of the world. This will not only be good for the citizens of the country, but will also be a massive growth engine for the country," he said.

Mehta also lauded the strict lockdown imposed by the Indian government during the peak of the pandemic and said at that stage while

everyone was cribbing about it, they must realise that the healthcare system in the country was very fragile at that time.

Besides, Mehta, who was also awarded JRD Tata Corporate Leadership Award by AIMA today, highlighted concerns over the environment and said there should be no procrastination on this.

"For pandemic, we will get a vaccine but for climate, there would not be a vaccine and I think that we have to stop procrastinating... If we are not able to control the global warming then large swathe of land, many parts of our own country will submerge in water," he said.

Mehta also lauded the strict lockdown imposed by the Indian government during the peak of the pandemic and said at that stage while

ident Joe Biden has again come back to the Paris accord. It was a completely absolutely wrong step by the previous administration. This is a crisis which is staring at us," he said while referring to the recent glacier burst in the Chamoli district of Uttarakhand, which killed over 62 people. This is just a small impact of the climate crisis, which is facing us. My urge would be that for the world, we would have to stop procrastinating the concrete steps and in business, we have to adopt sustainability as a business core, he added.

According to Mehta, climate crisis and healthcare are the two big lessons that the world and businesses must focus on. If I have to pick up the lessons that the world should not forget one is to accelerate on climate change and the other is healthcare, Mehta said.

## Goyal calls for 'one nation one standard'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 20 FEBRUARY

in all kinds of public procurement and tendering can be an immediate deliverable, Goyal said.

The minister said that strength and character of nation is often exemplified by the standards it sets for the quality of its products and services. "It's time for India to settle for nothing less than the best," the statement said.

Goyal asked the BIS to explore international partnerships and associations to achieve synergy in the field.

The minister said that lab testing in India should be of world standards and added that modern equipment and latest technologies should be used there.

He asked for gap analysis of BIS and government labs to be taken up on priority basis.

## PC market clocks 27% growth in Dec quarter

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 20 FEBRUARY

The growth driver continues to be the demand from e-learning and remote working, leading to a 74.1 per cent and 14.1 per cent annual growth in the consumer and enterprise segments, respectively, IDC said.

E-learning and remote working needs had helped the Indian PC market log its biggest quarter in the July-September 2020 period with shipment rising by 9.2 per cent year-on-year to 3.4 million units.

"2021 will give another opportunity to the vendors to leverage the missed prospects due to supply constraints in 2020. So far, consumer demand does not seem to be abating anytime soon, and enterprises also continue to place fresh orders," IDC India associate research manager (client devices) Jaipal Singh

### TOP THREE PLAYERS

» Dell Technologies replaced HP for the top position in the overall PC market, as its shipments grew by 57.1 per cent year-over-year in the fourth quarter. It had 27.5 per cent market share, ahead of HP Inc that had 26.7 per cent share.

» HP remained the leader for the full year of 2020 with 28.7 per cent share,

said.

Additionally, many government education deals are under discussion which can set a strong foundation for 2021, he added.

"However, if the current

in the expansion of the market in the country," Singh noted.

The year 2020 ended as the biggest year for notebooks with 7.9-million-unit shipments during the year with the shipment growing by 6 per cent in 2020, IDC said.

"However, if we exclude the mega ELCOT deal, notebooks witnessed an impressive 34.3 per cent year-on-year growth this year. Had the industry not been challenged by the component shortages, notebook shipments could have been much higher during the year," it added.

Desktop shipments, on the other hand, saw a decline of 33.2 per cent in 2020 as companies reduced their spending on fixed computing devices and preferred mobile devices to manage their operations remotely, IDC said, adding that

this led to a 6.4 per cent decline for the overall PC market in 2020.

"The massive demand in the consumer segment driven by online learning led to the exceptional performance of notebooks. Likewise, gaming notebook PCs were one of the fastest-growing categories, further proof of the growing importance of gaming in the country," IDC India market analyst (PC devices) Bharath Shenoy said.

Shenoy added that the market saw demand across the price bands and concluded the biggest fourth-quarter shipments for notebooks in India.

However, the severe supply challenges for entry-level CPUs and panels restricted the growth, as supply remains much lower than the current demand in the country, Shenoy said.



supply challenges continue for some more months, it can offset the ongoing demand to some extent. Availability of the devices will not only be critical for the category growth but will play an important role

to society must come from within, and it cannot be mandated from outside. But that's my personal view.

He added that it is important that individual and personal philanthropy is separated from a company's CSR efforts.

"When I travel in the field and meet our teams and our partners' teams who have single-mindedly dedicated their lives to helping the country improve, that is about the biggest satisfaction one can derive," he said during an AIMA event.

All India Management Association (AIMA) presented Premji with the AIMA Life Time Achievement Award for Management at the event.

"I do not think we should have a legal mandate for companies to do CSR. Philanthropy or charity or contribution to society must come from within, and it cannot be mandated from outside. But that's my personal view.

As of now, this is the law and all companies must follow it.

Premji noted that the pandemic has had a very unequal impact with the disadvantaged having suffered "exponentially more" and inequality widening significantly, while advising that one needs to start on the path of philanthropy early.

"Start right away, even if you start small. Try to help build

institutions and support programmes. We must have a strong set of civil society institutions that you can contribute to. Your experience in business has eminently qualified you to build scale, this is an integral part of nation building," he added.

# Elected govts must be allowed to function: Naveen

Says don't view everything from political prism, calls for cooperative federalism

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
BHUBANESWAR, 20 FEBRUARY:

**C**hief Minister Naveen Patnaik today said the biggest threat to pace of development and peace in the country is the fact that everything, every action of an elected government, every crime is viewed from a political angle.

Addressing the NITI Aayog, the CM said "It's high time the country gets out of this election mode and allows elected governments to function".

He was implicitly referring to hurdles being put hindering developmental projects and schemes in states.

Elections are an essential feature of democracy. However, the hallmark of a mature democracy is that once elected, Government are meant to work for people, beyond party line.

Its high time that we as a country have serious introspection on whether we are able to do the same, he stated.

Emphasizing of cooperative federalism, he said a unified response and inclusive approach should be adopted for all major challenges facing the country just as it was done while dealing with the pandemic.

National parties had

promised women's reservation both in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies. History will not forgive us if we renege on this commitment. This calls for a serious deliberation and taking it forward, stated the CM.

He referred to Odisha's demands relating to Railways, Telecom, Banking, reduction in central fund, special focus state status in view of frequent disasters, inclusion of some of our important languages in the 8th schedule etc.

Specific sections that need focus like malnutrition, connectivity, sex ratio imbalances etc.

The CM called for a criti-

cal re-evaluation of the examination pattern of UPSC, NEET, JEE etc.

The present pattern make students heavily dependent on highly paid coaching classes which in itself deprives lakhs of children living in rural areas.

NITI Aayog should look into this very serious issue or else in a few years' there will be serious distortions.

A number of proposals of different States relating to inclusion of tribal communities in the ST list have been

pending from 1978 onwards. It is unjust to keep these pending for years without a decision, noted the CM.

## Economy of Odisha to contract by 4.92%

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
BHUBANESWAR, 20 FEBRUARY:

The economy of Odisha is expected to contract by 4.92 per cent in 2020-21 as against a growth of 7.1 percent per annum during the period 2012-13 to 2019-20, stated the State Economic Survey presented today.

The contraction is attributed to the pandemic.

The Agriculture sector of the state is estimated to contract by 6.54% in comparison to a positive growth of 3.40% at the national level.

But the industry sector and services sector contracted by 8.83% and 3.18% in Odisha as compared to 9.57% and 8.77% contraction at national level during 2020-21.

The pandemic coupled with the cyclone and floods had hit the agriculture sector.

The per-capita income of Odisha in 2020-21 is estimated at Rs. 1,02,156 in comparison to Rs. 1,04,566/- in 2019-20. The per-capita income of the state is expected to decline by 2.30%.

The Economic Survey states

that in spite of devastating impact of Covid-19, the sectoral composition of the State follows almost the similar pattern like previous year.

The agricultural sector, industry sector and services sectors continue to contribute 21.27%, 36.26% and 42.47% to the Gross State Value Added (GSVA) as against the respective shares of 21.38%, 37.92% and 40.70% during 2019-20.

The annual average growth rate of state economy during 2012-13 to 2020-21 is also estimated at 5.72%.

Mishra said "Yesterday, you announced in the House that during an all-party meeting held in your chamber, it was decided that the Food Supplies Minister will make a statement relating to paddy procurement. I protested immediately and said that I had not agreed to your proposal for directing the Minister to make such a statement in the House," said the CLP in the letter to the Speaker.

Subsequently, another round of the all party meeting decided that the issue will be discussed at length on Monday.

## Rainfall alert in Odisha

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
BHUBANESWAR, 20 FEBRUARY:

Several parts of Odisha are likely to receive rainfall till Sunday under the influence of the cyclonic circulation over Coastal Andhra Pradesh, the latest weather bulletin by the IMD Regional Centre in Bhubaneswar said.

Light to moderate rain or thundershower are very likely to occur at a few places over the districts of Nabarangpur, Malkangiri, Koraput, Nuapada, Kalahandi, Rayagada, Kandhamal, Gajapati and Bolangir and light to moderate rain or thundershower very likely to occur at one or two places over the rest districts of Odisha.

Yellow warning has been issued for the districts of Nabarangpur, Malkangiri, Koraput, Nuapada, Kalahandi, Rayagada, Kandhamal, Gajapati, Bolangir, Ganjam and Sonepur during the period, the bulletin added.

## IIL will usher in the culture of continuing education: Justice Uday Umesh Lalit

Unique Indian Institute of Law (IIL) set up by BCIT with KIIT support

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
BHUBANESWAR, 20 FEBRUARY:

Change is the only constant in life. Continuing education is important in every profession; it is part of life. The IIL is perhaps, the first step towards continuing education in the legal field observed Supreme Court judge Justice Uday Umesh Lalit.

Supreme Court Judges, Justice Lalit, Justice Bhushan Ramkrishna Gavai, Justice V Ramasubramanian unveiled the foundation plaque of the first of its kind Indian Institute of Law (IIL), to be set up by the Bar Council of India Trust with the support of KIIT here in Bhubaneswar today.

Manan Kumar Mishra, Chairman, Bar Council of India (BCI) & Bar Council of India Trust (BCIT); Ashok Parja, Advocate General, Odisha; Mr. Debi Prasad Dhal, Executive Chairman, BCIT; Prof. Achyuta Samanta, Associate Managing Trustee, BCIT and Founder, KIIT & KISS and a host of legal luminaries were present.

IIL will be a model institute of law teachers' academy for promoting continuous legal education and research along with skill development of law



teachers and practicing lawyers. The institute will facilitate young law school teachers of the country and advocates to enhance their expertise, professional skills and acumen.

In his address, Justice Lalit said pursuit of knowledge never stops. Drawing from personal experience he said in 2016 and even later he had attended conclaves had learnt a lot in varied subjects from experts in the field and also as a lawyer as amicus curiae in case which went on to transform the perception of forest laws and focus on conservation.

Change and evolution takes place in every sector, he said and went on to refer to cricket where these days uppercut, reserve sweep is played even by the tail enders something which in the era of Gavaskar

or Viswanath was never even thought of.

If the National Law University, Bangalore was the first step by the CBI in changing law education, the IIL is another big step in continuing education.

Justice Gavai described the establishment of IIL is also a milestone in the history of Bar Council of India.

Justice V. Ramasubramanian said that there are currently more than 1000 law colleges in the country producing about 2.5 lakh law graduates every year. The IIL will address disconnect between academicians and professionals, he added.

He recalled how the SC had expressed concern over the standard of legal education was diminishing and had set

up a committee which had given its report in 2009. In 2005 a National Knowledge Commission was constituted and a working group studied the aspect of legal education but the Commission was disbanded in 2014.

Manan Kumar Mishra said, currently there is no training institute in Law in the country to cater to the skill development needs of law teachers and advocates.

Mr Ashok Parja highlighted how legal education had changed. Earlier it used to be the last choice today it is right at the top preference of students.

"Establishment of an institute of national importance like IIL in Bhubaneswar is a matter of pride for the state of Odisha," said Prof. Achyuta Samanta.

Earlier, providing a brief introduction of the IIL, the legendary legal educationist Prof. N. L. Mitra said, the institute will professionalize the legal education in the country. It will be developed as an institute of national character with the motto, "Unity, Capacity Building and Justice", stated Prof. Mitra, who is former Chancellor of KIIT Deemed to be University.

## Rukus in Odisha Assembly

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
BHUBANESWAR, 20 FEBRUARY:

Opposition BJP and Congress continued to stall assembly proceedings for the third successive day over the paddy procurement mess and the Leader of Opposition, Pradiptha Naik (BJP) was seen tearing a statement made by the Food Supply Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain.

A few BJP members was also seen tearing the statement and throwing it in the House as the entire Opposition rubbished the Minister's

statement on procurement. The Minister had stated that procurement this season had exceeded that of the last by over 21 per cent. He also stated that the procurement will continue till end of March.

Congress leader Narasingha Mishra had objected saying that the all party meeting convened by the Speaker had not agreed upon such a statement and had demanded a discussion.

Amidst the uproarious scenes the Speaker said the Minister will make a progress report after a week.

We were among the first state to declare the situation as a disaster even before a single case was detected. We went for preventive and targeted Lockdown, much before the National Lockdown.

We were the first State to set up large scale dedicated Covid Hospitals across the State. Many of these facilities were provided in a record time period. The migrant returnees were managed in an efficient and sensitive manner, he said.

The hallmark of our Covid management has been that from testing to treatment, it

was free for all, he asserted.

Odisha has been praised as a model even by WHO and other reputed institutions for effectively tackling the pandemic.

He referred to huge investment in the health care sector i.e. proposing to spend Rs 3500 crores on SCB Medical College and Hospital.

The economy recovered from the impact and Odisha has been able to log an increase of revenue by 7.3 per cent over last year. MSME sector has been supported, Odisha has attracted Rs 1.2 lakh crore investment in the last one

year, he said.

Significantly, the CM underscored the heritage conservation and development priority of the government in Puri, Ekamra Kshetra, Maa Samaswari Temple, Harisankar Temple, Nrusinghanath Temple, Konark, Tara Tarini etc. All these developments will help in spreading Odia culture and supporting our economy in future, he said.

He went on to highlight other steps like pipe water supply projects, irrigation, farmer centric schemes like KALIA, BALARAM, Millet Mission etc.

## Three killed as ambulance overturns on highway

CUTTACK, 20 FEBRUARY:

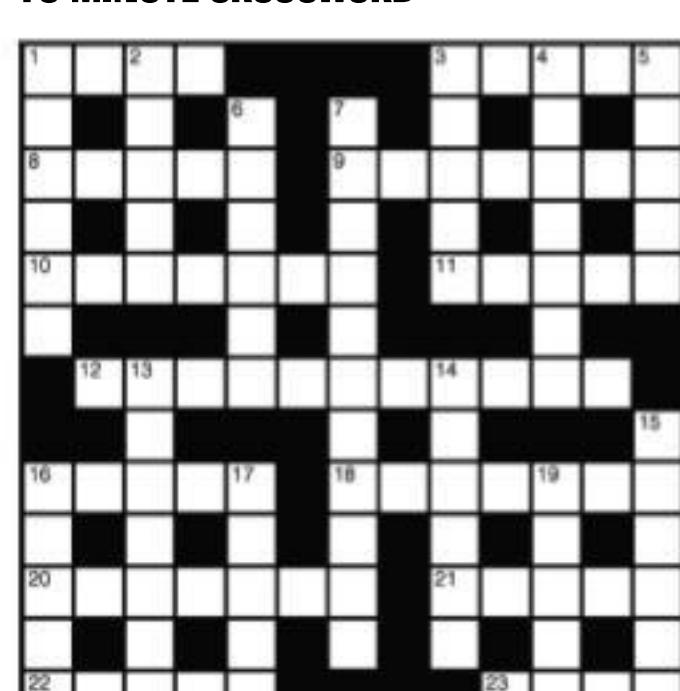
At least three persons were killed and equal numbers of people were injured when a speeding ambulance hit a container truck on the NH near Bandala toll gate under Tangi police limits in Cuttack district during the wee hours on Saturday.

The ambulance, carrying seven persons from Midnapore in West Bengal to SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack, rammed into a stationary container truck on the National Highway.

The driver of the ambulance lost control over the vehicle after which it crashed against the stationary truck to turn turtle along the highway, SNS.

## LEISURE

### 10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



### SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS	1 Central part (4)	13 Nephew, 15 Obstreper-
	2 Period of rule (5)	16 Non sense,
	3 People (5)	12 Doctor, 14 Propane,
	4 Deliberate insult (7)	15 Taboo,
	5 Lowest point (5)	17 Stiff,
	6 Flea (6)	18 Tot up,
	7 Sparkle (11)	19 Palpable,
	8 Seaman (7)	6 Collie,
	9 Bring about (6)	
	10 Decadent (6)	
	11 Imitate (5)	
	12 Robust (5)	
	13 Broadcast (2,3)	

### BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker



### RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson



### DADDY DAZE/John Kovaleski



### NEED TO KNOW

#### HOSPITALS

- AIIMS 26588500, 26588900
- Moolchand Medcity (formerly Hospital) 42000000 & 24-hour Chemist Shop 42000447
- VidyaSagar Institute for Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences 26924300, 26924304
- Batra Hospital & Medical Research Centre 29051280, 29958747
- Deen Dayal Upadhyay 25496320, 25494403
- Guru Tegh Bahadur

#### ROADWAYS INQUIRY

- ISBT (General Inquiry): 23868836, 23865181
- SMS Inquiry Nos. 57886, 54959, 5676747

#### RAILWAY INQUIRY

- General Inquiry 139
- Toll Free Nos. 1800125121

#### AIRPORT INQUIRY

- AIR INDIA Flight Inquiry and Reservation 0001801407

#### FLIGHT INQUIRY

- INDIGO AIRLINES New Delhi City Office 43513185, Call Centre 09910383838,

#### SHIP INQUIRY

- AIR FRANCE Flight Inquiry and Reservation 23466262 (City) 2565294 (Airport)

#### KUWAIT AIRWAYS Flight Inquiry and Reservation 23354373

#### SHIPPING INQUIRIES

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



America is back, I know the past few years have strained and tested the transatlantic relationship

SPEAKING TO THE ANNUAL MUNICH SECURITY CONFERENCE VIRTUALLY,

US PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN

## WEATHER

CITY	MAX	MIN
SINGAPORE	29°C	25°C H
HONG KONG	26°C	20°C H
TOKYO	18°C	12°C CL
LONDON	16°C	9°C S
DUBAI	30°C	25°C S
SAN FRANCISCO	11°C	04°C C H
NEW YORK	01°C	-04°C C H
MOSCOW	-09°C	-05°C H

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

## THUMBNAILS



Visitors wear face masks while walking the pier in Santa Monica, USA. AP

**Argentine health min quits:** President Alberto Fernández removed Argentina's health minister Friday after a well-known local journalist said he had been given a coronavirus vaccination preferentially after requesting one from the minister. Argentina has had 2 million people infected by the virus and 50,857 deaths from Covid. AP

**Spain rapper protest:** Street protests over the imprisonment of a rapper turned violent for a fourth straight night in Spain on Saturday, as political responses to the disturbances strained relations inside the country's coalition government. Police in Catalonia, said some protesters pelted officers with bottles, stones. AP

**Princess Eugenie & husband pick a name for their baby son**

LONDON, 20 FEBRUARY

Britain's Princess Eugenie and her husband Jack Brooksbank have named their baby boy August Philip Hawke Brooksbank, Buckingham Palace said Saturday. The baby - a ninth great-grandchild for Queen Elizabeth II - was born 9 February at London's Portland Hospital.

Eugenie, 30, is the younger daughter of Prince Andrew and Sarah and a granddaughter of the queen. The baby is her first child and is 11th in line to the British throne. Eugenie said on Instagram that the baby is named after his great-great-great-great-grandfather Prince Albert, husband of Queen Victoria, who had Augustus as a middle name. One of his middle names pays tribute to Prince Philip. The baby is not expected to get a royal title and will be known as Master August Brooksbank. AP

The Lyon-based group

**The 100-member Senate is evenly split between the Republicans and the Democrats. The vote of Vice-President Kamala Harris will tilt the balance in favour of the Democrats.**

to support her nomination, it is unlikely that Tanden, 50, will be confirmed for the job.

Manchin, a moderate Democrat from West Virginia, said: "I believe her overtly partisan statements will have a toxic and detrimental impact on the important working relationship between members of Congress and the next director of the Office of Management and Budget."

"For this reason, I cannot support her nomination. As I have said before, we must take meaningful steps to end the political division and dysfunction that pervades our politics," he said.

He went on to say that, at

a time of grave crisis, it is more important than ever that we chart a new bipartisan course that helps address the many serious challenges facing our nation. It's the first real test that Biden has faced on a nomination, with most of his picks for Cabinet positions sailing through the chamber with bipartisan support. Tanden had also disparaged some Democrats on social media, most notably Sen. Bernie Sanders, the independent from Vermont. The White House said Friday it was sticking by Tanden.

The 100-member Senate is evenly split between the Republicans and the Democrats. The vote of Vice-President Kamala Harris will tilt the balance in favour of the Democrats. As such the vote of Manchin gains significance, given that a majority of the Republicans are likely to oppose the nomination of Tanden.

In the past, Tanden has referred to Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell as

"Voldemort," and has battled Senator Bernie Sanders and his supporters online.

President Biden on Friday said that he has enough votes to get her confirmation. I think we are going to find the votes and get her confirmed, Biden told reporters at Joint Base Andrews following a trip to the Pfizer vaccine manufacturing plant in Michigan. Despite Manchin's opposition, Biden said he will not pull the nomination. No he told reporters.

Neera Tanden is an accomplished policy expert who would be an excellent Budget Director and we look forward to the committee votes next week and to continuing to work toward her confirmation through engagement with both parties, White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki said.

Tanden apologised to senators during her confirmation hearings this month.

I deeply regret and apologise for my language, and some of my past language, she

said. Tanden reportedly deleted more than 1,000 tweets before her confirmation process started.

According to The New York Times, the announcement by Manchin underscored the fragility of the ambitions of the new Democratic majority in the Senate and the outside power that any one senator holds over the success of Biden's administration and agenda.

The fate of the nomination is now in the hands of a party that Ms Tanden has frequently criticized in the past, particularly moderate Republicans she has previously scorned. Ms Tanden would need the support of at least one Republican senator in order to be confirmed, with the vote of Vice President Kamala Harris needed to break a tie, the daily said.

If she fails to garner enough support, Tanden would be the first Biden administration pick not to win Senate confirmation. No Republicans have said they would vote for her yet.

## US Air Force to review racial disparities

WASHINGTON, 20 FEBRUARY

The Air Force inspector general will do a second investigation into racial and ethnic disparities across the force, service leaders said on Friday, expanding the review to include gender and additional racial categories such as Asian and American Indian.

The latest review comes just two months after the IG released a report concluding that Black service members in the Air Force are far more likely to be investigated, arrested, face disciplinary actions and be discharged for misconduct. AP

Even though our country is built on injustice and we all face it, we also see that millions of people want righteousness, Navalny told the court. They want the righteousness and sooner or later they will have it. Asked about the impact of Navalny's prison sentence on Russia's politics, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters that the country's rich and multifaceted political scene will develop regardless of the verdict.

The government's task is to scare you and then persuade you that you are alone, he said. Our Voldemort in his palace also wants me to feel cut off,



## Russia court rejects Navalny's appeal

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
MOSCOW, 20 FEBRUARY

A Moscow court on Saturday rejected Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny's appeal against his prison sentence, even as the country faced a top European rights court's order to free the Kremlin's most prominent foe.

Speaking before the verdict, Navalny urged Russians to stand up to the Kremlin in a fiery speech mixing references to the Bible and Harry Potter.

A lower court sentenced Navalny earlier this month to two years and eight months in prison for violating terms of his probation while recuperating in Germany from a nerve agent poisoning that he blames on the Kremlin. Russian authorities have rejected the accusation.

Navalny, 44, an anti-corruption crusader and President Vladimir Putin's most vocal critic, appealed the prison sentence and asked to be released. The Moscow City Court's judge on Saturday only slightly reduced his sentence to just over 2 1/2 years in prison, ruling that a month-and-a-half Navalny spent under house arrest in early 2015 will be deducted from his sentence.

His arrest and imprisonment have fueled a huge wave of protests across Russia. Authorities responded with a sweeping crackdown, detaining about 11,000 people, many of whom were fined or given jail terms ranging from seven to 15 days.

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'World's biggest emitters like China, India, Russia, need to lower emissions'

UNITED NATIONS,  
20 FEBRUARY

The world's big emitting countries, including China, India, Russia and Japan need to really step up and begin to lower greenhouse gas emissions, US Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry has said as he called on all nations to raise their ambition to fight against climate change.

Kerry on Friday joined UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres for a special virtual event to mark the United States rejoining the Paris Agreement.

We need the United States and every country to determine what they will get on a path toward net-zero emissions by 2050. That is not something we will do by countries just stepping up and saying, Hey! We commit, here we are. Yeah, we'll do it by 2050'. That doesn't cut it. That is not the way that we get to go to Glasgow, Kerry said.

The United Kingdom will host the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow in November this year.

The COP26 summit will bring parties together to accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Kerry said as nations go to Glasgow, they have to be real about exactly what we need to do starting now. What steps will we take in the next 10 years? And the truth is that everybody has to do that. China, which is the largest emitter in the world, needs to be part of the 2020 to 2030 effort. India needs to be part of it. Russia needs to be part of it. Japan, all the big emitting countries of the world, the major emitters, 17 nations need to really step up and begin to lower those emissions, Kerry said.

## UK ministry confirms second HQ outside London, in a historic move

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
LONDON, 20 FEBRUARY

In what has been dubbed a historic move, the UK government on Saturday confirmed that it will create a second headquarters outside London for its housing ministry in the city of Wolverhampton in central England. The new HQ will have at least 500 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Group roles spread across the region by 2025 with further increases planned by 2030.

The new hub will include the presence of ministers making it the first such ministerial office outside of the UK capital with a regular ministerial presence. Senior civil servants will also be based in Wolverhampton, ensuring this becomes a centre for policy development and decision making, MHCLG said.

As Communities Secretary, I am determined to spread opportunity and pros-

**The new hub will include the presence of ministers making it the first such ministerial office outside of the UK capital with a regular ministerial presence.**

perity to every part of our nation. That is why I am delighted to be taking the historic step of moving significant numbers of senior roles out of Whitehall and creating the first ever ministerial office outside of Westminster in Wolverhampton increasing the jobs in the Midlands to over 500, said Robert Jenrick, the minister in charge at MHCLG.

With a dual headquarters in Wolverhampton my department will not only change where we work but how we work, signalling the end of the Whitehall knows best approach. All of us at the department are looking forward to having the opportu-

nity to work there, he said. The minister said the aim was to have more local voices at the heart of policy development and delivery, supporting communities more effectively, and to develop greater career options in government outside of London.

In choosing the city of Wolverhampton we are also backing our great smaller cities, some of which have been neglected for too long. We want to raise their stature, encourage civic pride and commercial success, added Jenrick.

This move, part of UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson's manifesto commitment to "level up" different parts of the country, signals a culture change in civil service.

It marks a significant increase on the 300 roles currently in the region and is part of plans to have at least 800 roles outside of London by 2030 including 50 per cent of the most senior positions. Recruitment is already underway.

"We are dealing with an extreme challenge with get-

ting more water through our distribution system," said Lumumba. The city was providing water for flushing toilets and drinking, but residents had to pick it up, leaving the elderly and those living on icy roads vulnerable.

Lisa Thomas said her drive-way on a hill in Jackson was a sheet of ice. Her husband, who is on a defibrillator, has only enough heart medication to get him through Sunday because she hasn't been able to go to the pharmacy.

"People are in dire need here," Thomas said. Paul Lee Davis got to the front of the line at a water station set up by city officials only to have the water run out. He was still waiting for it to be replenished three and a half hours after arriving. Texas electrical grid operators said elec-

tricity transmission had returned to normal for the first time since historic snowfall and single-digit temperatures created a surge in demand for electricity to warm up homes - buckling the state's power grid and causing the widespread blackouts.

Smaller outages remained,

but Bill Magness, president of the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, said the grid now

can provide power throughout the entire system. Gov.

Greg Abbott ordered an investigation into the failure for a

state known as the U.S. energy capital. ERCOT officials have defended their preparations

and the decision to begin

forced outages Monday as the grid reached a breaking point.

The storms also left more

than 330,000 from Virginia to Louisiana without power.

About 60,000 in Oregon on Friday were still enduring a weeklong outage following a massive ice and snow storm.

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The US will not undertake a hasty or disorderly withdrawal from Afghanistan that puts our forces or the alliance's reputation at risk

US DEFENCE SECRETARY LLOYD AUSTIN  
AT A PENTAGON NEWS CONFERENCE

The Sunday Statesman  
NEW DELHI, 21 FEBRUARY 2021

11

## THUMBNAILS



A flag marks the place of a clandestine grave site in Puquita, a tropical mangrove island near Alvarado in the Gulf coast state of Veracruz, Mexico on Thursday.

IANS

Pak soldiers killed: At least five Pakistani soldiers were killed and two others injured when suspected terrorists carried out attacks through remote-controlled bombs in two separate areas in the restive Balochistan province. The attacks targeting Frontier Corps soldiers took place on Thursday on the outskirts of Quetta and in a remote area of Kohlu district. ap

Kabul explosions: Three separate explosions in the Afghan capital Kabul on Saturday killed at least five people and wounded two others, a police official said. Kabul police spokesman Ferdaws Faramarz said the first two explosions took place 15 minutes apart and a third targeting a police vehicle took place two hours later. No group claimed responsibility. ap

Pak drought: Pakistan's meteorological department has warned that drought-like conditions currently prevailing in parts of Sindh and Balochistan provinces may exacerbate and cause water stress in cultivated lands, according to a media report. ap

Mexico vaccine: Mexico says it will get its first shipment of the Chinese Coronavac vaccine Saturday and by Monday will receive its first lot of the Russian Sputnik V shot. Both shipments are expected to consist of about 200,000 doses. AP

Lander & rover of China's lunar probe switched to dormant mode

BEIJING, 20 FEBRUARY

The lander and the rover of China's Chang'e-4 lunar probe have been switched to dormant mode for the lunar night due to lack of solar power, a media report said on Saturday.

China's Chang'e-4 lunar rover scripted history on January 3, 2019 when it made the first-ever soft landing on the far side of the moon and sent back close-up images of the previously unexplored region, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

The lander and the rover, Yutu-2 (Jade Rabbit-2), were switched to dormant mode on Friday as scheduled, according to the Lunar Exploration and Space Programme Center of the China National Space Administration.

The Chang'e-4 probe, which was switched to dormant mode during the lunar night due to the lack of solar power, had been on the far side of the moon for 778 Earth days as of Saturday, and the rover has travelled 652.62 meters. A lunar day and night each equal 14 days on Earth, the report said.

The rover is in good condition, and all scientific payloads are working normally, it said.

The Chang'e-4 probe, launched on December 8, 2018, made the first-ever soft landing on the Von Karman Crater in the South Pole-Aitken Basin on the far side of the moon on January 3, 2019.

The rover Yutu-2 has far exceeded its three-month design lifespan, becoming the longest-working lunar rover on the moon, the report said.

## Two protesters killed in Myanmar

Shootings occurred in Mandalay city, where tear gas and rubber bullets were used on protesters earlier in the day

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
MANDALAY, 20 FEBRUARY

**T**wo anti-coup protesters were shot dead by riot police who fired live rounds Saturday in Mandalay, Myanmar's second-largest city, local media reported.

demonstrators and striking dock workers in Mandalay.

At least five people were injured by rubber bullets and had to be carried away in ambulances, according to an Associated Press journalist who witnessed the violence.

Some 500 police and soldiers descended on the area near Yadanabon dock after dock workers joined the national civil disobedience movement, refusing to work until the military junta that seized power in a Feb. 1 coup reinstates the democratically elected government.

Protesters and residents were forced to flee the neighborhood amid the violence, as security forces chased after them. There were reports of sounds that resembled gunfire. A group of journalists was forced to flee after being hit with tear gas and shotgun projectiles.

Earlier in the week in Mandalay, security forces cracked down on state railway workers in a similar fashion after they joined the civil disobedience movement.

Less than an hour after the 8 p.m. curfew started on Wednesday, gunshots were heard as more than two dozen police officers with shields and helmets marched past railway workers' housing. Numerous videos posted on social media showed muzzle flashes as shots were heard, and some police shot slingshots and threw rocks at the buildings. Marching chants of left, right, left, right could be heard along

with shouts of shoot, shoot. Also Saturday, anti-coup protesters in Myanmar's two largest cities paid tribute to a young woman who died a day earlier after being shot by police during a rally against the military takeover.

An impromptu memorial created under an elevated roadway in Yangon attracted around 1,000 protesters. A wreath of bright yellow flowers was hung beneath a photo-

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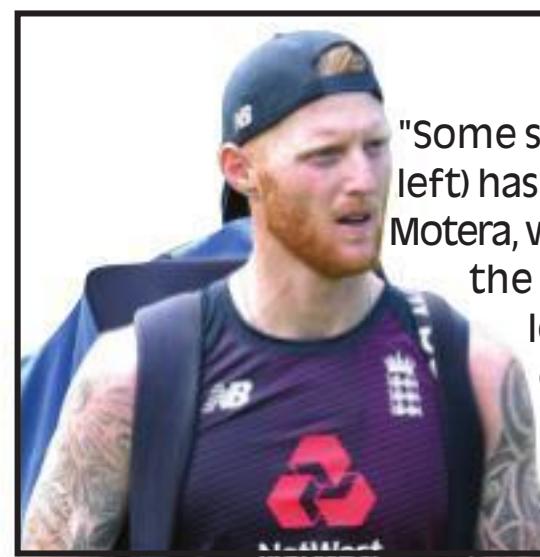
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## MOTERA MUSINGS

"Some stadium this is," Ben Stokes (in photo, left) has said in a tweet about the refurbished Motera, which can now seat 110,000, purportedly the most anywhere, adding: "and a bit of local music to help get through to the end." The public address system played Vande mataram.

For more updates

www.thestatesman.com

## THUMBNAILS

**City reluctant:** Manchester City have distanced themselves from claims they are negotiating with Lionel Messi over a move to the Etihad. He will be out of contract at the end of the season but has been linked to a reunion with his former manager Pep Guardiola.

**Cavani contract:** Ole Gunnar Solskjaer is ready to speak to Edinson Cavani about stretching his stay at Manchester United beyond this season. Cavani's contract expires this summer but United have the option of automatically triggering a one-year extension.

**Moyes generous:** West Ham manager David Moyes has hailed the winning mentality of Tottenham boss Jose Mourinho ahead of Sunday's meeting between the two. The clubs will play with the Hammers in the unfamiliar position of being top dogs in the capital.

**Race row:** Arsenal's Willian has become the latest Premier League player to be racially abused online and the Brazilian shared screenshots of the messages on social media. He was targeted by two different users and he highlighted the messages on Instagram.

**Benzema injured:** Karim Benzema could miss Real Madrid's Champions League game against Atalanta next week after they confirmed he was injured on Thursday. Benzema missed training on Friday morning and the club said he would not travel with the team.

**New role:** Sri Lanka's cricket board has appointed Chinnappa Vaas national fast bowling coach, replacing Australian David Sekar who resigned just before the West Indies tour. Vaas, 47, is the most successful Sri Lankan fast bowler, with 355 wickets in 111 Tests.

**Hussain's tip:** Former England captain Nasser Hussain has advised England to avoid the siege mentality by blaming the pitch and external factors and instead look at their recent overseas record to draw inspiration for the remaining two Tests against India.

**Schwazer cleared:** Former Olympic champion walker Alex Schwazer, suspended for eight years for doping, has been cleared of criminal proceedings by an Italian judge who thought his samples could have been altered. Walter Pelino ruled for a dismissal of the case.

**Pathan wins India's first gold:** Indian women boxers continued their fine run as Alifa Pathan (81+kg) claimed the country's first gold medal even as five others stormed into the finals of the 30th Adriatic Pearl Tournament in Budva, Montenegro.

# Osaka beats Brady to win 2nd Australian Open title

## AGENCIES

MELBOURNE, 20 FEBRUARY

Japanese tennis sensation, Naomi Osaka (in photo) won her second Australian Open title by beating American Jennifer Brady 6-4, 6-3 in the women's singles final here on Saturday for her fourth Grand Slam title. Before this, Osaka had won the 2019 Australian Open and 2018 and 2020 US Open crowns.

"I didn't play my last Grand Slam with fans so just to have this energy it means a lot," Osaka said to the fans during the presentation.

"Thank you so much for coming. I feel like playing a Grand Slam is a super privilege right now and it's something I won't take for granted. Thank you for this opportunity." The 23-year-old from Japan faced challenge from her American challenger in the first set with the two holding serve till the ninth game which Osaka had to fight for and take on advantage. However, Osaka



broke the 25-year-old Brady's serve in the 10th game and

clinched it after being 30-40 down. The second set was a

much easier ride for the Japanese as she raced to a 4-0 lead.

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Brady broke back in the fifth game and held her serve in the sixth game. From thereon, Osaka held her serve to win the second set and the title. Brady praised Osaka at the presentation.

"I'd like to congratulate Naomi on another Grand Slam title," Brady said after the match. "She's such an inspiration to us all and what she is doing for the game is amazing in getting the sport out there, and I hope young girls at home are watching and are inspired by what she is doing."

"Hopefully, I'm on this stage next time with this girl over here," she added, referring to the winner's trophy. Osaka hit six aces against two from Brady. She also had fewer double faults -- two against Brady's four. This was Osaka's 21st consecutive match victory.

## DOES YOUR BUTTER COOKIE CONTAIN BUTTER OR VEGETABLE OIL?

### SOME BUTTER COOKIES

0.3% - 4% Butter<sup>†</sup>  
20% - 22% Vegetable Oil<sup>†</sup>

### Amul BUTTER COOKIES

25% Amul Butter  
0% Vegetable Oil

TO FIND OUT, READ THE INGREDIENTS MENTIONED ON THE PACK.



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