



'TAMIL NADU SHOULD SHOW THE WAY TO INDIA IN OUSTING BJP'

P4



SUU KYI FACES COURT FIRST TIME SINCE COUP

P9



SARKOZY CONVICTED OF CORRUPTION

P10



WHY AUSTRALIANS WILL CHOOSE TO STICK WITH FINCH

P12

WEATHER

Mainly clear sky. Mist in the morning. Strong surface winds during the day. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 29 and 12 degrees Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: Nil

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 100% Min: 45%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 29.0°C (+2) Min: 11.8°C (-1)
SUN RISES 06:44 hrs SUN SETS 18:22 hrs
MOON RISES 21:41 hrs MOON SETS 09:28 hrs

THUMBNAILS



Dramatic scenes played out at Tirupati airport on Monday when police blocked TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu from proceeding to carry out his programmes. IANS (P4)

Nomadland, Borat 2 big winners at Globes: *Nomadland*, director Chloe Zhao's moving drama about van dwellers and Sasha Baron Cohen's satire *Borat 2* won top movie honours at a scaled-down virtual ceremony at the Golden Globes, which was held bi-coastally due to the coronavirus pandemic. *Black Panther* star Chadwick Boseman was posthumously honoured for his performance as the strong-willed trumpet player Levee in the musical period drama *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, his swansong. PTI

PM for more avenues for farmers to sell crops: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday emphasised on farmers getting more avenues to sell crops and said a food processing revolution was needed in the country for value addition to farm produce and to realise better prices. Addressing a webinar on effective implementation of Budget provisions regarding the Agriculture Ministry, he underlined the need for increased participation of private players in the farm sector. PTI

The Statesman

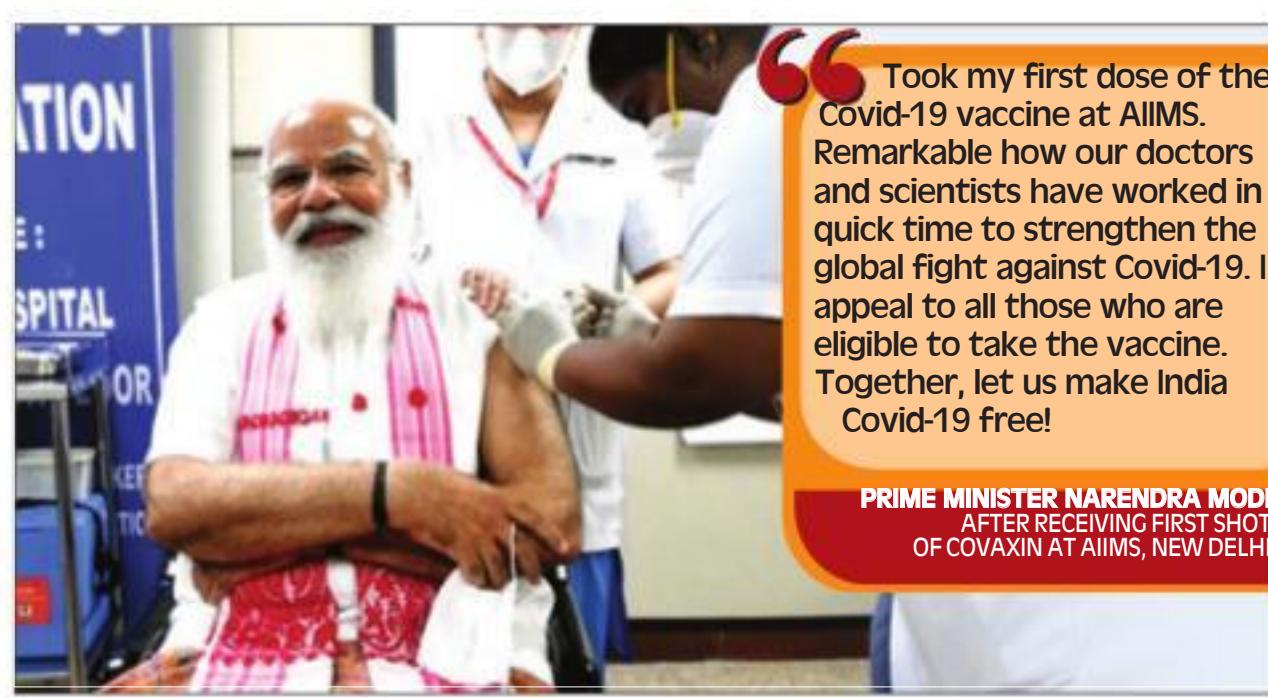
PEOPLE'S PARLIAMENT, ALWAYS IN SESSION

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facebook.com/thestatesman1875

2nd phase of vaccination: PM gets jab

Thousands queue up at government and private medical facilities to get Covid-19 jabs as India expands vaccination coverage

SNS & PTI
NEW DELHI, 1 MARCH



PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI AFTER RECEIVING FIRST SHOT OF COVAXIN AT AIIMS, NEW DELHI

Co-Win app for administrators only, says Govt



NEW DELHI, 1 MARCH

The Union Health Ministry said on Monday that the Co-WIN app on Play Store is meant for use only by administrators, and that registration and booking for appointment for Covid-19 vaccination has to be done through the portal.

This was clarified by the Ministry amidst reported glitches in doing registrations as India opened up vaccination for senior citizens and those aged 45 and above with comorbidities.

"Registration and booking for appointment for Covid-19 vaccination is to be done through #CoWIN Portal: www.cowin.gov.in. There is NO #CoWIN App for beneficiary registration. The App on Play Store is for administrators only," the Ministry tweeted. PTI

FACT FILE

TOTAL CASES
1,11,12,241

ACTIVE CASES
1,68,627

NEW CASES
15,510

NEW RECOVERIES
11,288

TOTAL DEATHS
1,57,157

UNION HEALTH MINISTRY FIGURES AS OF 8:00 A.M.
MONDAY 01 MARCH 2021

6 states show Covid surge; India's total cases touch 1.11 crore

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 1 MARCH

Maharashtra, Kerala, Punjab, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Gujarat have shown a surge in new Covid-19 cases contributing to 87.25 per cent of 15,510 fresh infections reported in a day, pushing India's tally to 1,11,12,241 on Monday, while 106 fatalities mounted the death toll to 1,57,157 the Union Health Ministry said.

India's total number of active Covid-19 cases was recorded at 1,68,627, comprising 1.52 per cent of the total infections, the ministry said highlighting five states that account for 84 per cent of the total active cases in the country.

Maharashtra alone accounts for 46.39 per cent of India's total active cases, followed by Kerala with 29.49 per cent.

The positivity rate too has been rising gradually, pushing it to 1.52 per cent. As per the Ministry's data, there are 1,68,627 active cases at present after 11,288 patients were discharged in a day.

The experts have expressed a number of possibilities which could be due to lax attitude of people towards following Covid protocols to "mutations and new strains" causing the surge, sources in the health ministry said.

This trend is alarming as in mid February the average daily new infections oscillated between 9,000 to 12,000 while the deaths were between 78 to 120. Delhi adds 175 cases, 1 death: Delhi today recorded 175 new coronavirus infections and one fatality, even as the positivity rate rose to 0.44 per cent, according to the Delhi government's latest health bulletin. The city's Covid toll climbed to 10,911, the health bulletin said.

The new cases took its coronavirus infection tally to 6,39,464.

These cases came out of 39,733 tests conducted the previous day.

The active Covid cases in the national capital rose to 1,404 from 1,335 the previous day, according to the bulletin.

(SEE P2)

Huge boost to immunisation drive: Biotech Chairman and Managing Director of Bharat Biotech International Limited Krishna Ella also expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for reposing trust in Covaxin.

"We thank the Honble Prime Minister Narendra Modi for taking the first dose of Covid-19 vaccine himself. This has set a powerful example for all Indians to follow, which will go a long way in reducing vaccine hesitancy and building confidence in immunisation against the pandemic," he said.

The Prime Minister also posted a picture of himself taking the first dose of the vaccine in which he is seen sporting an Assamese gamucha and getting inoculated with a smile on his face.

"I appeal to all those who are eligible to take the vaccine. Together, let us make India Covid-19 free!" he said. He received the indigenously developed Covaxin

Phase 2 of the Covid-19 vaccination drive will cover 10 crore people across the country. So far, some 1.45 crore people have received Covid-19 shots.

The Central government has said that states were explained the three methods of registration, i.e. advance self-registration, onsite registration, and facilitated cohort registration.

SELF-REGISTRATION Registrations were set to open at 9:00 am at www.cowin.gov.in and the Aarogya Setu app and citizens from Monday will be able to register and book an appointment for Covid-19 vaccinations.

Modi took the shot around 6.30 a.m. and was kept under observation for half-an-hour as per protocol and left after that. His second dose is due after 28 days "He is fine after taking the vaccine," Guleria said.

Sister P Niveda, from Puducherry, administered the shot and was informed only in the morning.

She told reporters that the Prime Minister, after being administered the vaccine shot, remarked,

The AIIMS director said

Modi took the shot around 6.30 a.m. and was kept under observation for half-an-hour as per protocol and left after that. His second dose is due after 28 days "He is fine after taking the vaccine," Guleria said.

He said AIIMS was informed about the Prime Minister's visit to the hospital to take the vaccine only late Sunday night. As it was a week day, he chose to come early in the morning so as not to cause any inconvenience to patients at the hospital," Guleria said.

Modi took the shot around 6.30 a.m. and was kept under observation for half-an-hour as per protocol and left after that. His second dose is due after 28 days "He is fine after taking the vaccine," Guleria said.

Sister P Niveda, from Puducherry, administered the shot and was informed only in the morning.

She told reporters that the Prime Minister, after being administered the vaccine shot, remarked,

"Laga bhi diya, pata bhi nahin chala! (Already done? I didn't even feel it.)"

The other nurse, Rosamaria Anil, is from Kerala and said it was the happiest day of her life. Because our Prime Minister Modiji came to our AIIMS hospital for taking vaccine, she said.

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu, Union home minister Amit Shah and External Affairs minister S Jaishankar also received their first shots.

The AIIMS director said

China targeted Indian power grid during Ladakh stand-off: NYT report

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 1 MARCH

In a clear warning to New Delhi last year not to press its claims too hard during the military stand-off in Eastern Ladakh, China had launched a cyber campaign against India's power grid in the midst of the country's war against Covid-19, the *New York Times* has suggested.

The newspaper reported that a new study has lent weight to the idea that the 15 June Galwan Valley clash between Indian and Chinese troops and the outcome in Mumbai four months later might have been connected events as part of a broader Chinese cyber campaign against India's power

grid. The report said the flow of malware was pieced together by Recorded Future, a Somerville, Massachusetts, company that studies the use of the internet by state actors. It found that most of the malware was never activated.

"And because Recorded Future could not get inside India's power systems, it could not examine the details of the code itself, which was placed in strategic power-distribution systems across the country. While it has notified Indian authorities, so far they are not reporting what they have found," the *NYT* said.

Stuart Solomon, Recorded Future's chief operating officer, said that the Chinese state-sponsored group,

which the firm named Red Echo, "has been seen to systematically utilise advanced cyber intrusion techniques to quietly gain a foothold in nearly a dozen critical nodes across the Indian power generation and transmission infrastructure."

The discovery raises the question about whether the outage that struck on 13 October, one of the country's busiest business hubs, was meant as a message from Beijing about what might happen if India pushed its border claims too vigorously, the newspaper said.

It added that news reports at the time quoted Indian officials as saying that the cause was a Chinese-origin cyberattack on a nearby

electricity load-management centre. Authorities began a formal investigation, which is due to report in the coming weeks.

Since then, Indian officials have gone silent about the Chinese code, whether it set off the Mumbai blackout and the evidence provided by Recorded Future that many elements of the nation's electric grid were the target of a sophisticated Chinese hacking effort.

The *NYT* said the investigators who wrote the Recorded Future study, which is set to be published on Monday, said that "the alleged link between the outage and the discovery of the unspecified malware" in the system remains unsubstantiated.

LPG price hiked again by ₹25

SNS & PTI
NEW DELHI, 1 MARCH

LPG PRICE HIKE

Non-Subsidised for Domestic Use (14.2 Kg Cylinder)

■ Old Price (February 25, 2021)

■ New Price (March 1, 2021)

₹ Per Cylinder

Source: Indian Oil Corporation

KBF Infographics

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Delhi Kolkata Mumbai Chennai

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Taking care of your body is one common option to keep diseases at bay

INTIA THAPA, CHAIRMAN, BOA, GORKHALAND TERRITORIAL ADMINISTRATION

WHILE ATTENDING THE HIMALAYAN BODY BUILDING CHAMPIONSHIP IN MIRIK, DARJEELING

2nd phase of Covid vaccination drive begins in Capital

Many people complain of problems faced during online registration for the jabs; 308 vaccination centres set up at 192 hospitals, including 56 govt & 136 pvt hospitals, across Delhi, says health minister Satyendar Jain

SNS & PTI
NEW DELHI, 1 MARCH

The Covid vaccination drive for people above 60 years and those aged 45 and above with comorbidities got underway in Delhi today, with many complaining of problems faced during online registration for the vaccine.

While many people who queued up at the hospitals expressed "confidence", others said they were "nervous" while waiting to receive the first dose of the vaccine.

In the second phase of the nationwide coronavirus vaccination drive, people aged 60 years and above and those in the age group 45-59 years and having comorbidities will receive the Covid shots.

At several places, people had started gathering at the vaccination facilities at 9 am although booking for the first dose slot on the CO-WIN portal was scheduled to start at 12 noon today. Officials had yes-

terday said that from Tuesday onwards, the booking will be open from 9 am to 3 pm.

"I am perfectly confident about the vaccine. After all, the PM also took it today. However, getting registered is a problem. I tried the CO-WIN portal at home but it was not working, and now the staff at the hospital is insisting that we need to be registered," said retired Air India employee Rajesh Kumar Chandok (64) at Poornima Multi Speciality Hospital at Kalkaji.

Dr S Dinakar, medical officer-in-charge of the hospital, said a lot of people reached around 9:30 am but they had not registered online. "We do not have on the spot registration yet. We are trying to make that available too, but at the moment we are prioritising people who have booked slots through online registration, and avoid overcrowding at the hospital."

"We will attend to people with booked slots between 9 am to 3 pm, and then if we have vaccines left, we will open for

everyone. We don't want to say no to anyone," he said.

A sanitation worker from Okhla, Ramveer (50), who had undergone surgeries for appendix and hernia, said he felt nervous but vaccine was necessary to get rid of coronavirus.

"I am a little nervous about getting vaccinated, but what can we do? This needs to be done," said Ramveer who reached the hospital hoping to be guided by the staff as he had no idea of registration required for vaccination.

The Indraprastha Apollo hospital was relatively more crowded with two queues at the billing counters and a full waiting area with people waiting to be administered the vaccine at 2 pm. Sources at the hospital said they are prioritising people with registrations over walk-ins. The hospital saw nearly 50 walk-ins in the morning.

"We will take walk-ins between 3-5 PM," the source said. The hospital has availability of 300 vaccines per day, the source added. In Delhi, vaccine

is being provided at 192 hospitals, including 136 private ones where eligible people can get the shot by paying Rs 250 per dose. At the remaining 56 government hospitals, the vaccine is being administered free of cost. The problems related to online registration was a common complaint from the people. Prasoon Narain Agarwal (70) said he tried registering through the CO-WIN portal, but did not receive any information about the location of the hospital. "That's why I was forced to come here physically because this is the nearest hospital. I have been standing in queue for about an hour but haven't been able to figure out what to do," said the Jasola-based businessman.

Arun Kumar Gupta (66), a retired bank manager, said he waited for almost three hours to get the vaccine.

"A policeman came to us and took our numbers. We kept waiting for our turn. I received the vaccine around 11:45 am. I was never tested for COVID-

19 and I am not scared for the vaccine," Gupta said at Rajeev Gandhi Super Speciality hospital. Retired Delhi government employee Inderpal (68), a resident of Jagatpuri, claimed he was the first senior citizen at Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality Hospital to receive the vaccine on the first day and felt fine after the jab. "My son registered my name online. I came here today morning and showed them the registration paper. There was some technical issue with the portal. I received the vaccine around 11:15 am. I

have not felt any side effects till now," he said. Hospital officials said 93 people had registered for the vaccine.

Dr Chhavi Gupta, media spokesperson of Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality Hospital, said Covishield was being administered to the people.

"For registration, we asked for their Aadhaar card and contact number. We have 100 vaccines which have been divided in 50:50 ratio. The 50 vaccines will be given to the health and frontline workers. The rest 50 will be for the senior citizens,"

she said. The senior citizens were being enquired about any disease that they may have, including blood pressure and diabetes prior to getting vaccinated, she said. The registered persons were being administered the first dose after which they were asked to wait for 30 minutes for observation.

Each vaccinated person is being given a certificate and provided phone number to be contacted for any emergency help after getting the first dose, she said.

Delhi health minister Satyendar Jain, while addressing a press conference, pointed out that 308 centres had been set up at 192 hospitals across the city for this phase of the vaccination drive. The vaccines will be provided free of cost at all the Central and Delhi government hospitals and the cost of vaccination at the private hospitals is capped at Rs 250 per dose.

Explaining the preparations in this regard, Jain said, "A total of 192 hospitals have been selected in Delhi for the third phase and among these are 136 private hospitals and 56 government hospitals. Vaccination will be done free of cost at all 56 government hospitals. Those who want to get vaccinated for free can do so at the government hospitals after the registration on the Co-win app." Jain said there were around two or three centres at a single hospital.

Referring to the number of people to be vaccinated in Delhi in this phase, Jain said, "The number of people in the age group of 60 years are around 12 lakhs to 15 lakhs. The number of those between the age of 45 and 59 years with co-morbid conditions may be around two or three lakhs."

Regarding the on-site vaccination drive, the minister said, "At this moment we should not go for on-site vaccination as there are too many people left for vaccination. So, this will make the process tough. We will do it slowly and steadily so that everyone gets a slot."

Classified

PUBLIC NOTIFICATIONS

IN THE COURT OF
SH. NARESH KUMAR LAKA
Addl. District Judge-03
(South-East)
Room No. 316
Saket Courts, New Delhi.
PC No. 08/2021

Devki —Petitioner

Versus State & Ors. — Respondents

To, 1. State, 2. Jaya Saini, d/o Late Sh. Shobha Ram Saini, s/o B-29, Molar Band, Vill. Badarpur, Jaipur, New Delhi-44.

3. Yash Kumar Saini, s/o Late Sh. Shobha Ram Saini, s/o B-29, Molar Band, Vill. Badarpur, Jaipur, New Delhi-44.

Whereas a petition u/s 278 the Indian Succession Act, 1925, for grant of Probate or Letters of Administration in respect of the immovable/movable properties left by the deceased left by Late Sh. Shobha Ram Saini, s/o Late Sh. Nanak Chand Saini, r/o B-29, Molar Band, Vill. Badarpur, Jaipur, New Delhi-44.

Notice is hereby given to the General Public and other interested parties in the probate/letters of administration of the Estate of the above-named deceased persons and if any person desires, he/she can appear in this court on 10th March, 2021 at 10 a.m. and participate in the proceedings before the Grant of Letters of Administration/Probate.

Given under my hand and the Seal of this Court on the 23rd day of February, 2021.

Addl. District Judge-03 (South-East)

Saket Courts, New Delhi.

Seal of the court

Approximately to be standing in the name of Late Mr. Ravinder Prakash Basin, s/o Lt. Pritivi Raj Basin, deceased. Whereas the at (10) Ten' O'clock in the forenoon has been fixed for 13-04-2021 hearing on the application, notice is hereby given to all concerned.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Court this 27th day of February, 2021.

Administrative Civil Judge-com-Commercial Civil Judge-cum-Additional Rent Controller (West), Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

Seal of the court

Act, 1925, for grant of Probate of the Will or for Letters of Administration to the estate of Late Sh. Pritpal Singh Sethi, s/o Late Sh. Mehtab Singh, brother of the party bearing No. EXB-14 & 15 Hari Nagar, New Delhi-110064 and Property No. ES-321, Sanjayan Hinda Transport Nagar, Delhi-110042 and Plot No. 12 Sec-B Panchshet Co-operative Society, Zirakpur, Chandigarh, Punjab dated on 02nd January, 2019, has been made by Sh. Manpreet Singh Sethi, s/o Sh. Pritpal Singh Sethi, r/o H. No. 15, Block-B, Street No. 1, Hari Nagar, New Delhi-110064.

Whereas the 11th day of May 2021 has been fixed for hearing of the case. Notice is hereby given that any person having any interest in the Administration of the Estate of the said deceased may if he/she desires to appear in this court on the above said date and see the proceedings of the Grant of Probate (or for Letters of Administration).

Given under my hand and the Seal of this Court on this 25th day of February, 2021.

Administrative Civil Judge-com-Commercial Civil Judge-cum-Additional Rent Controller (West), Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

Seal of the court

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING ATTENDANCE OF DEFENDANT (Order 5 Rule 20 of the Code of Civil Procedure) In the Court of Sh. Ms. Moti Mehta Khurana, Kakarba Senior Civil Judge Cum-Rent Controller Room No. 201, 2nd Floor South-East District Saket Court Complex, New Delhi.

Suit No. CS SCJ/559/2019 HDFC Bank Ltd. A Banking Company Incorporated and Registered under the Companies Act, 1956. Having its Registered Office at Jagatpuri Marg, Lower Parel (West), Mumbai-400013 And Having its Branch Office at:

Branch Office at: Plot No. 31, Nangaraj Industrial Area, Tower A, 1st Floor, Shivaji Marg, Moti Nagar, New Delhi-110015. Through its Authorised Representative Mr. Anand Swami.

— Plaintiff Versus Ranjiv Kumar Singh — Defendant Ranjiv Kumar Singh, Country Club India Limited, r/o E12, 2nd Floor, Kalkaji, Delhi-110065

Seal of the court

COURT NOTICE (UO/5 Rule 20 CPC) IN THE COURT OF SH. RAMESH CHANDER DIMRI District and Sessions Judge Bhawani Hari Om Versus Ved Parkash — Plaintiff No. HN/2021-001-007156-2016 Next Date: 15-04-2021 Publication Issued to: Ved Parkash Son-: Kanhiya Lal, r/o Village Bishanpara, PO Chitosha, Tehsil Buhana, Distt. Jhunjhunu (Rajasthan). (Driver and Owner of Dumper bearing Registration No. RJ-18GA-6141) — Plaintiff Versus Ranjiv Kumar Singh — Defendant Ranjiv Kumar Singh, Club India Limited, r/o E12, 2nd Floor, Kalkaji, Delhi-110065

Also at: House No. 50, Villa Karchana Allahabad-212301.

Whereas you are intentionally evading service of summons it is hereby notified that if you shall not defend the case on the 03rd day of March 2021 the day fixed for final disposal, it will be heard and determined ex parte.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Court this 19-02-2021.

Senior Civil Judge Cum-Rent Controller South-East District Saket Court Complex, New Delhi

Seal of the court

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING ATTENDANCE OF DEFENDANT (Order 5 Rule 20 of the Code of Civil Procedure) In the Court of Sh. Yashwant Kumar Principal District & Sessions Judge Room No. 47 District Shahdara, Karkardooma Courts, Delhi-32 CS No. 203/2020 Canara Bank — Petitioner Versus Smita Jha — Respondent Smt. Smita Jha, w/o Sh. Naveen Kumar Jha, Proprietor of M/s. Vinayak Sales, A-343, F/F, Street No. 6, Gamti Extension Bhajan Pura, Delhi-110053

Whereas you are intentionally evading service of summons it is hereby notified that if you shall not

I, MANOJIT Biswas, S/o. Mahaprasad Biswas, R/o. Vill. Gorupatta Matha Para, P.O.: Mamjan, P.S.: Taherpur, Distt. Nadia. Hencforth known as Monojit Biswas before the affidavit sworn before the Lt. Magistrate (1st Class) at Ranaghat, Nadia on 17-02-2021. Monojit Biswas and Manojit Biswas is the same and one identical person.

I, AFZAL Hoque (Army No. 14806029W) declaring from affidavit Domkal SDEM Court dated 04 Jan, 2021 that spelling of my wife Asma Parvin read as Mrs. Asma Parvin in all her documents, same and one identical person.

I, RAHIMA Bibi, wife of Burjahan Saikh, resident of Vill. + P.O.: Sankarpur, P.S.: Kharmpur-721152, West Murgiabad would like to declare that my name Rahima Katun (as per document) would henceforth be known as Rahima Bibi after marriage everywhere as per affidavit made before the Court of S.D.E.M., Berhampore on 01.02.2021.

I, ROSNEYARA Bibi, w/o. Bessarai Khan, R/o. Vill. Bahagram, Purba Medinipur-721152, West Bengal, do hereby declare that Rosneyara Bibi is same and identical person vide affidavit before Notary Public, dated 01.03.2021.

I, VINAY Jaiswal, S/o. Banshraj Jaiswal, R/o. 5/1, S.N. Banerjee Road, Kolkata-700014 declare that I 'Vinay Jaiswal' and 'Vinay Kumar Gupta' is same and identical person and also declare that my father 'Banshraj Gupta' and 'Banshraj Jaiswal' is same and identical person, vide Affidavit No. 32 dated 01 March, 2021 sworn before 1st Class Metropolitan Magistrate, Calcutta.

I, BANANI Dutta, D/o. Pabitra Kumar Dutta, Flat No. 1026, Kali Puri, Rajarhat Main Road, Gopalganj, North 24 Parganas-700136, do hereby declare that I 'Banani Dutta' and Banani Roy is same and identical person vide affidavit sworn before Notary Public, Kolkata dated 01.03.2021.

Labour rights activist Nodeep Kaur (C) addresses a press conference on custodial violence and 'Majdoor-Kisan Ekta', in the Capital on Monday.

SNS & PTI
NEW DELHI, 1 MARCH

Delhi today recorded 175 new coronavirus infections and one fatality, even as the positivity rate rose to 0.44 per cent, according to the Delhi government's latest health bulletin.

The city's Covid toll climbed to 10,911, the health bulletin said. The new cases took the infection tally to 6,39,464. These cases came out of 39,733 tests conducted the previous day.

The active Covid cases in the national capital rose to 1,404 from 1,335 the previous day, according to the bulletin.

The number of people under home isolation rose to 739 from yesterday's 691, it said, adding over 6.27 lakh Covid patients have recovered in the city so far.

The recovery rate was 98.07 per cent.

During 1-23 February, the count of daily Covid cases had been recorded below 200 in the city. The national capital had recorded 94 Covid cases on 16 February, the lowest in over nine months.

Mercury dips in city

PTI
NEW DELHI, 1 MARCH

Mercury dropped by a few notches in the national capital on Monday as the minimum temperature settled at 11.8 degrees Celsius, according to the India Meteorological Department.

The city had registered a low of 15.6 degrees Celsius on Sunday while the maximum temperature had stood at 32.3 degrees Celsius.

The minimum temperature recorded at Safdarjung Observatory here, considered the official reading of the city, was 11.8 degrees Celsius early morning, one notch below the normal, an IMD official said.

The weatherman has forecast mainly clear sky during the day time.

The Palam Observation station recorded a low of 14.4 degrees Celsius, three notches above normal, according to IMD.

The Statesman

KOLKATA Statesman House, 4, Chowringhee Square, Kolkata-700 001 Tel: (033) 22127070-76, (033) 41071700 Fax: (033) 2212-6181 / 7107-1780 Email: thestatesman@vsnl.com thestatesmansdisplay@gmail.com thestatesmansclassified@gmail.com

DELHI Statesman House, 148, Barakhamba Road, New Delhi-110 001 Tel: (011) 23115911 Ishan House (2nd floor) A-90, Sector II, Noida, UP 201 301 Tel: (010) 4171421 Email: delhi@thestatesman@gmail.com

THE COURT OF SHRI ANURAG DASS Administrative Civil Judge, com-Commercial Civil Judge-cum-Additional Rent Controller (West), Court Room No. 112, 1st Floor Tel: Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi Petition No. : SC-25/2



ADDING THAT HIS BELIEF ABOUT CPI-M AND CONGRESS HAS CHANGED AFTER BRIGADE RALLY

Suspended HP Cong MLAs hold protest against govt

Five Congress MLAs, including LOP, sit on dharna outside Assembly against Thakur govt's alleged undemocratic conduct, vendetta and conspiracy

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 1 MARCH

Even as the Himachal Pradesh Assembly resumed its proceedings today, the five suspended Congress MLAs, including Leader of Opposition (LOP) Mukesh Agnihotri, sat on 'dharna' outside the main gate of the Assembly in protest against the Jai Ram Thakur-led BJP government's alleged undemocratic conduct, vendetta and conspiracy.

On the first day of the budget session of the state Assembly on 26 February, the Governor, Bandaru Dattatraya, was gheraoed by the Congress MLAs outside the Speaker's gate after the House was adjourned.

In an unprecedented turn of events in the Assembly then, five Congress legislators, including LOP Agnihotri, were suspended for the entire session till 20 March for allegedly blocking the passage of the Governor, misbehaving with him and jostling his security staff.

"We will fight it out politically now," declared Agnihotri today, as he termed the 26 Feb-



rary incident of gheraoing and jostling the Governor in the Assembly premises a "pre-planned conspiracy" by Chief Minister Thakur. Agnihotri told media persons that the CM

was its alleged "mastermind".

Agnihotri, who sat on a mat

outside the Assembly gate with four other suspended MLAs, including Harshvarshan Chauhan, Satpal Singh Raizada, Sunder Thakur and Vinay Kumar, in protest, said the winter session of the Assembly was not held. "This time when the all-party meeting was held, the Congress Legislatu-

(CLP) was not informed that the Governor will not read out the full address," he said.

The LOP said the Congress members were surprised when they saw the Governor completing his address on the first day of the budget session so early. He said the Congress members were

not invited to the tea with the Governor in the Assembly after his address.

"More so, when the Congress members wanted to meet the Governor after adjournment of the House after his short address, they were not allowed. We sat outside the Speaker's gate and were talking about our issues of price rise, unemployment, irregularities in recruitments and farmers agitation. But the government did not have the courtesy to call us inside. They themselves created ruckus there," he said.

Agnihotri said the Congress members were not informed on time when the House was recalled.

"The government does not have the guts to face the Assembly so the Opposition party members are being suspended," he charged.

The LOP also said the Thakur government has registered FIR against Congress members for the incident. "In reality the ministers, who jostled Congress MLAs outside Speaker's gate, should face the FIR," he said. He charged that the state government was giving protection to "gundagardi".

Pb Assembly pays tribute to farmers who lost their lives during protests

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 1 MARCH

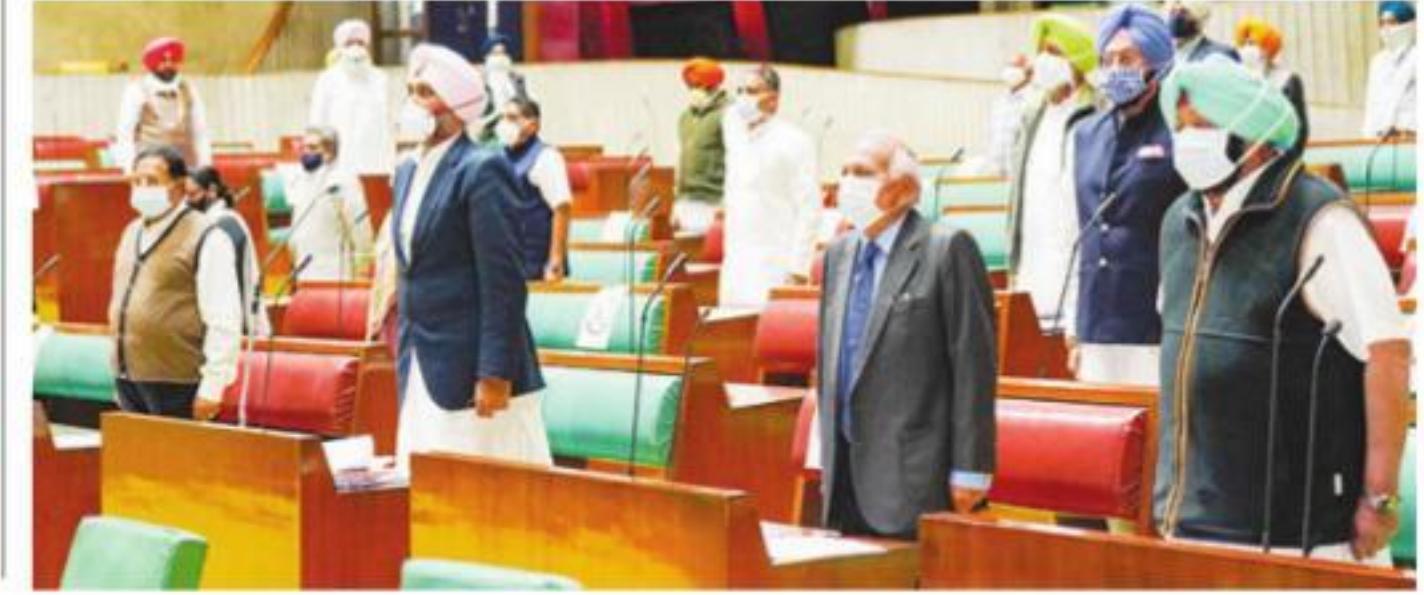
Gosain and Satwant Kaur Sandhu, former deputy minister Chandrawati and former legislator Brij Lal Goyal.

The House paid rich tributes to the farmers and farm labourers, who lost their lives during the ongoing farmers' agitation against the central farm laws.

The House also paid homage to legendary Punjabi Singer Sardul Sikander, devotional singer Narinder Chanchal and journalist Satbir Singh Dardi. The House also remembered martyr Naib Subedar Parwinder Singh, freedom fighters Ajit Singh, Jathedar Gopal Singh Tur, Balwant Singh and Harbans Singh. On the occasion, the House also paid homage to Covid victims who have fallen prey to the pandemic.

On the request of MLA from Mansa, Nazar Singh Manshahia, eminent theatre artiste Mohan Midha and noted writer Darshan Darvesh were also added to the obituary list. A two-minute silence was observed in the memory of departed souls as a mark of respect during the obituary references.

Speaker Rana Kanwar Pal Singh proposed that homage be paid to all those members who had passed away since the previous session. After the obituary references to the departed souls, he passed a resolution for conveying the condolences of the House to their respective families. The resolution was passed by voice vote.



HP Assembly adjourned after obituary references

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 1 MARCH

The Himachal Pradesh Assembly was adjourned on Monday after obituary references to seven former MLAs and one sitting MLA, Sujan Singh Pathania (Congress), who died recently.

Speaker of the Assembly, Vinod Singh Parmar, said it is a tradition that the

House is adjourned as a mark of respect on the demise of a sitting member.

Earlier, Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur moved a resolution for obituary references to former MLAs, Mela Ram Sabar, Ranjit Singh Bakshi, Shyama Sharma, Chandersen Thakur, Raghu Raj, Tulsi Ram and Onkar Chand, and sitting MLA, Sujan Singh Pathania, all of

Congress members, Asha Kumari, Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu, Ram Lal Thakur, and BJP members, Rajiv Bindal, Rajeev Saizal and Govind Singh Thakur, and lone CPM MLA, Rakesh Singh also participated in the resolution to express grief.

Asha Kumari and Singh also paid obituary to the farmers who died during the ongoing agitation.

Himachal govt committed to traders welfare: Jai Ram

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 1 MARCH

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur said the state government is committed towards traders' welfare and would sympathetically consider their demand to set up a 'Trader Welfare Fund' to provide them relief in times of distress or exigency.

Addressing the meeting of Himachal Pradesh Traders Welfare Board, Thakur said the traders were making a major contribution towards development of the state by making sizeable contributions to the state exchequer through taxes.

"The state government is committed to simplify the procedure of GST to facilitate the traders and steps will be taken to make it trader friendly. Steps will also be

taken to do away with the old and outdated rules so as to ensure good governance amongst the traders and for this, a joint committee will be constituted to look into the whole matter," he added.

Thakur said regular camps would be organised by the Food and Civil Supplies department to facilitate the traders to attest and verify weighing machines, electronic weighing machines etc.

This would save the time of the traders and also avoid unnecessary delay in getting it certified, he said.

He further stated that the traders had also played a major role during Covid-19 pandemic and they had not only ensured uninterrupted supply of essential commodities but also helped in checking price rise.

The Chief Minister

Haryana Assembly panel members call on HP Governor

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 1 MARCH

assured the traders that all their genuine demands and suggestions would be considered sympathetically.

Himachal Pradesh Veepar Mandal president Sumesh Kumar urged the Chief Minister to charge market fee only at the market yard and not at the entry point or other parts of the state.

He added in Himachal Pradesh, the whole state had been declared as a Market Yard and Sub-Market Yard.

He urged that traders should also be provided Corona vaccine on priority basis.

State Agriculture Minister

Virender Kanwar, MP and President State BJP Suresh Kashyap, Chief Secretary Anil Khachi, Additional Chief Secretaries Nisha Singh and JC Sharma were also present on the occasion among others.

Covid-appropriate behaviour must to contain the virus spread: Khattar

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 1 MARCH

spread". The CM gave these directions while presiding over a review meeting regarding Covid-19 held with administrative secretaries here today.

During the meeting, Khattar directed officers to ramp up Covid-19 management preparations coupled with aggressive surveillance, stringent containment, swift contact tracing, focused clinical management along with proactive Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities.

While again appealing to the people of the state to wear masks whenever they venture out, Khattar said,

"Though vaccination for Covid-19 has been rolled out but still we should religiously follow all the guidelines like wearing masks and maintaining social distancing to stay safe and to ensure containment of virus

"Though vaccination for Covid-19 has been rolled out but still we should religiously follow all the guidelines like wearing masks and maintaining social distancing to stay safe and to ensure containment of virus spread"

sanitisation system should be also strengthened at these places along with the distribution of masks," directed the CM.

During the meeting, additional chief secretary, health and family welfare, Rajeev Arora said on an average 15,000 to 18,000 daily Covid tests are being conducted in Haryana. The test positivity rate on a weekly basis is less than one percent. At present, there

are 1205 active Covid cases in Haryana.

Meanwhile, Haryana Police on Monday launched a two-week special campaign to educate the public about wearing of face masks by citizens across the state, and also to enforce it strictly.

Disclosing this today, additional Director General of Police (law and order), Navdeep Singh Virk said that in view of the recent spurt in Covid-19 infections, and the casual attitude seen amongst people these days, the state police are starting another two week campaign to make people aware of the risk of infection. The campaign started from 1 March and will continue upto 16 March.

He said that special focus would be on high risk public places with large footfalls like markets, bus stands, taxi stands, and parks etc where the norms are being seen to be flouted.

Modi govt's agriculture laws better than Punjab's contractual farming law: Goyal

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 1 MARCH

Union Minister for Railways and Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal on Monday defended the Centre's controversial farm laws and said Prime Minister Narendra Modi had enacted better laws for the welfare of farmers while citing the example of Punjab's contractual farming law under which a farmer could be jailed, he claimed, for violating contract norms.

Addressing media in Shimla, Goyal said opposition parties were misleading farmers on new laws for their political gains and the laws were aimed at giving new options for marketing their produce while the old systems will continue.

The new farm laws will give the farmers choice to decide on their crops and as to where they want to market their produce as there were several lacunae in previous laws.

The contract farming law of Punjab is an example of flaws

in previous rules as under existing law, a farmer can be jailed for violating the contract while new law doesn't have any such provisions," he added.

He said the new law did not have any bindings on farmers if he wants to come out of a set contract and he can choose to quit the contract at any point of time. A farmer can sell his crop if he was getting better prices in the market than the set contract or he can demand a bonus from the traders.

In the new law, only traders can be punished if he violates the terms and conditions of contract, he said.

Responding to a query on loss to Railways due to farmers protest, Goyal said the Central government didn't consider losses from farmers' protests as the government considers them their own.

The Central government was working for the welfare of the farmers and was making efforts to increase their income, he claimed.

He further stated that the Railway ministry was mulling



Union minister Piyush Goyal and HP CM Jai Ram Thakur addressing mediapersons in Shimla on Monday.

to transport apples through Kisan Rail and directions had been given to officials to trans-

port the crop from Ambala Railway station to different parts of the country and ports

to market it at international level. Goyal lauded the Himachal Pradesh govern-

Ram Thakur's initiatives, the state had moved from 16th rank to 7th place in a short period of time.

But the state government will now have to make more efforts to sustain its place on Ease of Doing Business index and the government need to make sincere efforts to make upward progress on the index among the other states of the country, he added.

Goyal also said that the Centre will tie up with the HP government to showcase one product from each district of the state at all the Missions across the world.

Goyal lauded the efforts of Jai Ram Thakur government for promotion of exports and said the government had set up export promotion committees in all districts which will give impetus to trade in the state.

"A fresh survey of Jagadhari-Paonta Sahib new railway line will be conducted with a focus on freight expected from Paonta Sahib industrial area.

A study will be conducted

by Research Design and Standards Organisation (RDSO) to examine if the Kalka-Shimla track could be strengthened to improve the speed of the trains plying on this track," he said.

Goyal said a budget allocation of Rs 770 crore had been made for infrastructure projects and safety works in the state in the Budget for the year 2021-22, which was 613 per cent more than the average allocation during the period 2009-2014.

Besides, coaches of Kalka-Shimla Railway should be designed and manufactured to enhance the tourism experience, he said.

He added that Railway officials had been directed to prepare vista dome type coaches so that the tourists could get a panoramic view of the beautiful valleys along the route.

Union Minister said Rs 405 crore had been allocated for Bhanupali-Beri railway line and Rs 200 crore for Chandigarh-Baddi Railway line in the Budget for 2021-22.



It is not a dissident meeting. We (some of the 'G-23' leaders) are not part of it.

SENIOR CONGRESS LEADER M VEERAPPA MOILY

BACKING RAHUL GANDHI'S RETURN AS PRESIDENT OF THE OUTFIT

Secret plans of LDF being halted by Opposition: Chennithala



THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
1 MARCH

Opposition leader in the Kerala Assembly Ramesh Chennithala on Monday said the LDF government in Kerala would have gone ahead with the agreement between the Kerala government-undertaking Kerala Shipping and Inland Navigation Corporation (KSINC) and the US firm EMC, had the Opposition not found and revealed the details of the deal to the media.

Speaking to media persons here, Chennithala said the government has decided to cheat the fishing community and sell the sea, but the Opposition prevented the move by finding and revealing the details of the deal.

The sentiments of the children of the sea would be reflected in the Assembly polls, Chennithala added.

He said fisheries minister Mercykutty Amma had seen the file related to the deal twice, first on 21 October 2019 and then on November 2019. But she is lying of not seeing any such files.

He challenged the chief minister to release the file which was sent to the fisheries minister. The senior Congress leader also revealed the source from where he got the details of the deal.

He said Kerala Independent Fishermen union leader Jackson Pullayil has disclosed to him the details regarding the deal during a public interaction programme held in Alappuzha during his 'Aiswara Kerala Yatra'. SNS

Quota clamour puts BSY on a sticky wicket

Seers threaten hunger strike from 4 March if demands not met

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, 1 MARCH

The growing demand by the Panchamasali Lingayat seers and their supporters for an improved reservation status, has put chief minister B S Yediyurappa and his government on the backfoot.

More so, as the move is seen as a determined attempt to isolate BSY, politically, considering that he is recognised as the undisputed leader of the Lingayat community.

This is evident from the threat issued by the Panchamasali seers and their supporters to go on a hunger strike



from 4 March, if their demands are not met, to quote supporters of the chief minister. Making matters worse for Yediyurappa is the fact that his critic and BJP MLA, Basavagouda Patil Yatnal, is one of the prime movers of the movement, giving the much-needed support to the seers concerned. He is also seen as a rising force in his community now.

The Panchamasali want the government to fix a timeline for granting them benefits under the "More Backward" classification of category 2 A reservation. In other words, this would provide 15 per cent reservation in educational institutions and, of course, government jobs, against the 3B classification of "Backward" that they come under now.

The Panchamasalis, who also held a rally in Bengaluru in February to press their demand, form a sizeable proportion of the over 1.2 crore Lingayat community in general, with several sects, in Karnataka.

Pressure is mounting on Yediyurappa as eight other politically powerful communities, waited for over two decades.

including the Vokkaligas, Kurubas and the Idigas, are seeking an increase in reservation quota. Several OBCs have come out against the demand by Panchamasali Lingayats and the Kurubas, for example.

They are arguing that any attempt to accommodate the interests of these influential sections, at the cost of the poor and backward castes, would not be tolerated.

The immediate concern facing the government, though, is to pacify the adamant seers and their supporters from the Panchamasali Lingayat sect. All attempts to approach them with promises so far, have failed. The aggrieved party's argument is simple.

It wants the government to pay back, arguing that Yediyurappa had used the Panchamasalis as a vote bank without, however, doing anything for the community. For years! If anything, only a few members of the community have been rewarded with ministership in his cabinet, in the common refrain.

The allegation by some of the Panchamasali Lingayat ministers like Murugesh Nirani and C C Patil, has only queered the pitch for the BJP government with the angry seers and their supporters, predictably, taking offence.

The time has come now for Yediyurappa to accept the community's demand. There is no going back on our fight to achieve the 2A status, he added.

The government, of course, is trying desperately to win over the determined seers and leaders of this community. While, till the time of writing, all its attempts to influence the protesters have failed, plans are afoot to form a panel to douse the quota fire. It is now considering the possibility of forming a committee under a retired HC judge to study the demands of the various communities for a higher percentage of reservation, official sources said.

This, however, has not stopped a few ministers of the Yediyurappa government from asserting that the agitation has been promoted by the Congress.

The allegation by some of the Panchamasali Lingayat ministers like Murugesh Nirani and C C Patil, has only queered the pitch for the BJP government with the angry seers and their supporters, predictably, taking offence.

TN should show the way to India in keeping out BJP, oust CM: Rahul



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi pays homage to late Kanyakumari MP H Vasanthakumar at Vasanth Kumar Memorial during his election campaign for Tamil Nadu Assembly polls, in Kanyakumari district, on Monday.

AGENCY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KANYAKUMARI (TN), 1 MARCH

he shook a leg with the students he interacted with, as accompanying Congress leaders Dinesh Gundu Rao and K S Alagiri joined him.

At a public address in Nagercoil in the district, Gandhi said history has shown nobody can rule Tamil Nadu other than the Tamil people.

"This election will show the

same thing that only a person

who truly represents the Tamil

people can be a CM of Tamil

Nadu," he said.

"Tamil Nadu chief minister (K Palaniswami) who bows to Prime Minister Narendra Modi will never be able to do this. The chief minister should bow to the people of the state," he said.

If he were to interview Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Gandhi said he would ask "why are you convinced that all answers should come from you. Why don't you listen to what the people of the country feel or want to say".

He said the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET), strongly opposed to Tamil Nadu political parties, was a "big issue" and "not beneficial" for students.

The Wayanad MP displayed his fitness when he effortlessly did multiple pushups, including one-handed, while

history just as it is my duty to protect all languages and religions in India," he said.

He accused the BJP-led government at the Centre and the Palaniswami government of not respecting Tamil language, culture or tradition.

Ridiculing Stalin for speaking on corruption issues, Shah had at a rally in Villupuram on Sunday asked him to "look within," asking "who did the 2G (spectrum allocation) scam" in which party MPs Kanimozhi and A Raja are accused. The DMK was part of the Congress-led government when the lead party did "Rs 12-lakh crore" worth scams, he said.

During his interaction with

students of St. Joseph's Matric Higher Secondary School, Mulagumoodu in the district, he said NEET is a 'big' issue

in the state. "It is stopping many

youngsters from pursuing

their dreams. It is not benefi-

cial," he claimed.

Asked why youngsters don't want to make politics a career, Gandhi said: "There are good political leaders who work for the people, try to understand people and empower them. Draw inspiration from such leaders who help people".

Later, at a roadshow, he lashed out at the Centre over demonetisation and GST, saying they "destroyed" many small and medium businesses. "The new farm laws are going to destroy the lives of our farmers," he said.

Stalin accuses BJP of siding with 'corrupt' AIADMK



CHENNAI, 1 MARCH

DMK leader M K Stalin on Monday sought to make light of Union home minister Amit Shah's allegation of corruption against his party, saying it was the BJP that "stands by corruption" by aligning with the ruling AIADMK in TN.

Ridiculing Stalin for speak-

ing on corruption issues, Shah had at a rally in Villupuram on Sunday asked him to "look within," asking "who did the 2G (spectrum allocation) scam" in which party MPs Kanimozhi and A Raja are accused. The DMK was part of the Congress-led government when the lead party did "Rs 12-lakh crore" worth scams, he said.

On Monday, Stalin told reporters that earlier Prime Minister Narendra Modi had earlier spoken on similar lines, "now Amit Shah has spoken and tomorrow all BJP leaders coming from the Centre will say the same thing."

"They held the hands of deputy chief minister O Panneerselvam and CM K Palaniswami, who are steeped in corruption, commission and collection. That shows who stands by corruption," he said in a reference to Modi

holding the hands of the two leaders at a government event last month.

Stalin said seat-sharing

talks in the DMK-led alliance have commenced from Sunday while party manifesto was getting ready.

PTI

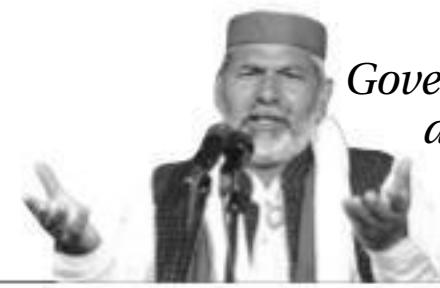
TENDER

HP JAL SHAKTI VIBHAG TENDER SHORT TERMS NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

Sealed item rate tenders for the following works are hereby invited on form PW 6 and 8 by the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Division Nahan on behalf of Governor of H.P. from the approved contractors registered in the Jal Shakti Vibhag in the appropriate class. The application for purchase of tender documents shall be entertained up to 3:00 PM on dated 09/03/2021 on payment non-refundable in cash or by money order as per cost shown below. The tender forms shall be issued in the office of the Executive Engineer up to 4:00 PM on dated 09/03/2021. The earnest money as shown below shall be accompanied with tender in the shape of FDR / Deposit at Call from any nationalized bank duly pledged in the name of Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Division, Nahan. The contractors who do not deposit the earnest money in the prescribed manner at the time of tender Submission, their offer shall be summarily rejected and the tender offers received will be processed on the basis of eligibility criteria prescribed for the work that has been tendered for. The draft Notice Inviting Tender can also be downloaded from the departmental website: www.hp.ipb.org. The conditional offer shall be out rightly rejected. The offer shall be kept open for 120 hours. The Executive Engineer reserves the right to reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason. The tenders shall be received up to 11:00 AM on 10/03/2021 & opened on same day at 11:30 AM in the presence of intending contractors or their authorized representatives, who may wish to be present. If the date of opening happens to be a holiday the tender will be open on next working day at the same time.

Sl. No	Description	E/Cost	E/Money	Time	Cost of Form
1	R/M of LWSS Johnson of DIC Tubewell at Johnson in Tehsil Nahan Distt. Sirmour HP (SH:- Lowering pipe in Tubewell and providing and fixing Kit Kat)	2,12,740/-	4,255/-	3 Months	250/-
2	R/M of LWSS Konthron in Tehsil Nahan Distt. Sirmour HP (SH:- P/F of sluice valve, NRV etc and fixing of boost pump and making of common header etc.)	1,80,142/-	3,650/-	3 Months	250/-
3	Providing FHTC of LWSS Satiwala under Jal Jeevan Mission in GP Satiwala Tehsil Nahan Distt. Sirmour HP (SH:- Laying and jointing GMS pipes for house hold connection of 23 Nos. and Improvement of Distribution system) under JMM	2,28,047/-	4,561/-	3 Months	250/-
4	Providing WSS to Nahan town from Gir river at Dadahu in Tehsil Nahan Distt. Sirmour HP (SH:- Laying and jointing GMS pipes 80mm dia to inhabitants of GA Colony and housing board).	2,42,906/-	5,000/-	3 Months	250/-
5	R/M of LWSS Ambwala Sainwala in Tehsil Nahan Distt. Sirmour HP (SH:- Replacement of old R/main of various RDs from Pump house to Gaushala Tank).	1,76,912/-	3,550/-	2 Months	250/-
6	Improvement of source LWSS Dhakwala Kherwala in Tehsil Nahan Distt. Sirmour HP (SH:- C/O RCC Percolation well 4.5 M dia and 5 mtrs Deep, Laying and jointing GMS pipes 50 mm dia in R/main and Relaying and placing of filter media).	3,96,976/-	7,940/-	3 Months	250/-
7	Providing LWSS to Pajeri Madnesh and adjoining habitations GP wasni Tehsil Pachhad Distt. Sirmour HP (SH:- Providing and fixing at site of Auto control panel) (100 HP 2nd stage).	3,53,000/-	7,100/-	3 Months	250/-
8	Providing LWSS to Pajeri Madnesh and adjoining habitations GP wasni Tehsil Pachhad Distt. Sirmour HP (SH:- Providing and fixing at site of Auto control panel) (100 HP 3rd stage).	3,62,213/-	7,300/-	3 Months	250/-
9	Providing WSS to NC/PC habitation Bag Pashog by lifting water from Gir river under Jal Jeevan Mission by augmentation LWSS to NC/PC bag. Bag Pashog in GP Bag Pashog in Tehsil Pachhad Distt. Sirmour HP (SH:- C/O RCC Anchor block for rising main 200mm dia 2nd stage = 40 Nos) under JMM	3,55,368/-	7,200/-	1 Month	250/-
10	Providing WSS to NC/PC habitation Bag Pashog by lifting water from Gir river under Jal Jeevan Mission by augmentation LWSS to NC/PC bag. Bag Pashog in GP Bag Pashog in Tehsil Pachhad Distt. Sirmour HP (SH:- C/O RCC Anchor Block for Gravity main 125mm dia from Chobata to Bhureshwar Temple = 34 Nos) under JMM	3,03,903/-	6,100/-	1 Month	250/-
11	Providing WSS to NC/PC habitation Bag Pashog by lifting water from Gir river under Jal Jeevan Mission by augmentation LWSS to NC/PC bag. Bag Pashog in GP Bag Pashog in Tehsil Pachhad Distt. Sirmour HP (SH:- C/O RCC Anchor Block for Rising main 150 mm dia 1st stage = 42 Nos) under JMM	3,87,641/-	7,800/-	1 Month	250/-
12	Providing FHTC of by Improvement of D/system of LWSS to Mehlog Lal Tikker under Jal Jeevan Mission in GP Mehlog Lal Tikker in Tehsil Pachhad Distt. Sirmour HP (SH:- Laying, jointing and testing of GMS pipes various dia in distribution system and household connection) under JMM	1,34,393/-	2,700/-	3 Months	250/-
13	Providing FHTC of by Improvement of D/system of LWSS to Sadhanaghat under Jal Jeevan Mission in GP Sadhanaghat in Tehsil Pachhad Distt. Sirmour HP (SH:- Laying, jointing and testing of GMS pipes for household connection) under JMM	1,72,640/-	3,500/-	3 Months	250/-
14	Providing FHTC by Improvement of GWSS to Nom-chat under Jal Jeevan Mission in GP Drabli in Tehsil Pachhad Distt. Sirmour HP (SH:- Laying, jointing and testing of GMS pipes various dia in distribution system and household connection) under JMM	1,37,199/-	2,800/-	3 Months	250/-
15	Providing command Area Development (CAD) of LIS Jangla Bhood in GP Burmapapri in Tehsil Nahan Distt. Sirmour HP (SH:- Providing and fixing various valves with pumps at pump house of LIS Jangla Bhood).	1,90,815/-	3,850/-	3 Months	250/-
16	Providing FHTC by Imp. of LWSS to Saron-Mania under Jal Jeevan Mission in GP Suria Janot in Tehsil Pachhad Distt. Sirmour HP (SH:- Laying, jointing and testing of GMS pipes various dia in distribution system and household connection) under JMM	1,43,263/-	2,900/-	3 Months	250/-
17	Providing FHTC by Imp. of D/system LWSS to Mangarh under Jal Jeevan Mission in GP Mangarh in Tehsil Pachhad Distt. Sirmour HP (SH:- Laying, jointing and testing of GMS pipes various dia in distribution system and household connection) under JMM	4,09,172/-	8,200/-	3 Months	250/-
18	Providing FHTC by Imp. of LWSS to Lohardi Pathroli under Jal Jeevan Mission in GP Bag Pashog in Tehsil Pachhad Distt. Sirmour HP (SH:- Laying, jointing and testing of GMS pipes various dia in distribution system and household connection) under JMM	3,63,840/-	7,300/-	3 Months	250/-

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:-



Government's silence indicates it is planning steps against farmers' stir...

STRESSING ON NEED OF GOVT TO COME UP WITH PROPOSAL OF TALKS WITH FARMERS

THUMBNAILS



Schools in Jammu and Kashmir reopen on Monday after 10 months with strict compliance of restrictions. The schools have applied an odd-even formula which entails having only 50 per cent of students on campus on any given day.

JeM associate held: Security forces on Monday arrested a terrorist associate of proscribed outfit Jaish-e-Mohammad from Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said. Incriminating material was recovered from the possession of the arrested person. A hand grenade that Bhat had concealed in the compound of his house was also recovered, a policeman said.

Tiger poaching: Madhya Pradesh, popularly known as the 'tiger state' of India, has lost 93 of the big cats due to poaching and other causes in the past three years, state forest minister Vijay Shah told the Assembly on Monday. He said the 93 deaths occurred from 2018 to 2021, with 25 of them taking place due to poaching, for which 77 people had been held, and the rest due to natural causes, diseases, mutual conflict, old age etc.

Prashant Kishor joins Punjab CM as principal advisor

CHANDIGARH, 1 MARCH

Punjab chief minister Amarinder Singh on Monday said poll strategist Prashant Kishor has joined him as his principal advisor.

Happy to share that @PrashantKishor has joined me as my Principal Advisor. Look forward to working together for the betterment of the people of Punjab!, said Amarinder Singh in a tweet.

The development assumes significance as the Punjab Assembly elections are due early next year.

Currently, Kishor's company, Indian Political Action Committee (I-PAC), is assisting Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress (TMC) in the West Bengal elections.

Kishor had handled the Congress poll campaign in the 2017 Punjab Assembly elections.

The Congress in 2017 had stormed to power by bagging 77 seats in the 117-member Assembly.

Last year, the Punjab CM had said Kishor told him that he would be "quite happy" in handling the election campaign of the Congress in Punjab for the 2022 Assembly polls.

Kishor had also managed Narendra Modi's campaign for prime ministership in the 2014 General Election.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 1 MARCH

Prime Minister Narendra Modi asked the nurses administering the Covid-19 vaccine to him on Monday whether they were planning to use some special thick needle as politicians are known to be 'very thick-skinned'.

APPOINTMENT

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY
University of Delhi, Delhi-110007
E-mail: anthro@du.ac.in
Website: www.anthro.du.ac.in

Appointment of Field Investigator
Posts of Field Investigator (Two) for conducting fieldwork in Bihar in a research project of Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi. Details are available at University websites (www.anthro.du.ac.in and www.du.ac.in).

'Farmers should get more avenues to sell crops'

Prime Minister says a food processing revolution was needed in the country for value addition to farm produce and to realise better prices

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 1 MARCH

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday emphasised on farmers getting more avenues to sell crops and said a food processing revolution was needed in the country for value addition to farm produce and to realise better prices.

Addressing a webinar on effective implementation of Budget provisions regarding the Agriculture Ministry, he underlined the need for increased participation of private players in the farm sector, including in research and development (R&D) work.

Without making any direct reference to the three new farm reform laws or to the three-month-old agitation by farmers, Modi said there is a need for expanding options for the country's farming community to sell agri produce.

While the Modi government says the three laws give farmers alternate options to sell their produce, thousands of farmers from Punjab and other states have been protesting at Delhi borders against the laws which they see will end the government procurement at Minimum Support Price (MSP).

Highlighting various provisions for agriculture in the Union Budget, the prime minister said agriculture credit target has been hiked to Rs 16.5 lakh crore with priority to animal husbandry, dairy and

Goyal says Centre formed better farm laws, cites Punjab's contractual farming law

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 1 MARCH

Union Minister for Railways and Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal on Monday defended the farm laws and said Prime Minister Narendra Modi had enacted better laws for the welfare of farmers while citing the example of Punjab's contractual farming law under which a farmer can be jailed for violating contract norms.

Addressing media in Shimla, Goyal said opposition parties were misleading farmers on new laws for their political gains and the laws were aimed at giving new options for marketing their produce while the old systems will continue.

"The new farm laws will

fisheries sector.

The prime minister laid emphasis on the effective and timely implementation of these budget provisions so that benefits reach to maximum people.

The prime minister strongly emphasised on developing processing facilities in every agriculture related sectors such as foodgrains, vegetables, fruits, fisheries etc.

He highlighted various initiatives by the government keeping small farmers at the



give the farmers choice to decide on their crops and as to where they want to market their produce as there were several lacunae in previous laws. The contract farming law of Punjab is an example of flaws in previous rules under existing law, a farmer can be jailed for violating the contract while new law doesn't have any such provisions," he added.

He said the new law did not have any bindings on farmers if he wants to come

core and said empowerment of these small farmers will greatly help in ridding India's agriculture from many problems.

Modi called for the improvement of the system of taking the produce from the fields to processing units and emphasised that hand holding of these units be done by the Farmer Producer Organisations.

The prime minister said organic clusters and export clusters will also play a major

out of a set contract and he can choose to quit the contract at any point of time. A farmer can sell his crop if he is getting better prices in the market than the set contract or he can demand a bonus from the traders.

In the new law, only traders can be punished if he violates the terms and conditions of contract, he said.

Responding to a query on loss to Railways due to farmers protest, Goyal said the Central government didn't consider losses from farmers' protests as the government considers them their own.

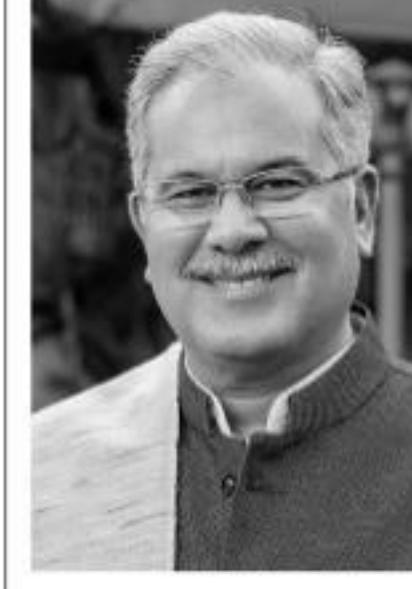
The Central government was working for the welfare of the farmers and was making efforts to increase their income.

role in this.

The prime minister lamented that even though India is one of the world's major fish producers and exporters, the country's presence in processed fish in the international market was very limited.

Under the 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' campaign, the prime minister said that emphasis is being laid on creating clusters for fruits and vegetables processing in the districts across the country.

Chh'garh budget continues to rely on farm-freebies despite widening fiscal deficit & debt



RAIPUR, 1 MARCH

Chhattisgarh chief minister Bhupesh Baghel presented his second budget today, with his trademark stress on rural areas particularly farmers.

Although he claimed that the state achieved a positive growth rate despite pandemic blues, he hardly explained the reasons and measures to curb the ever-widening fiscal deficit and debt. Baghel who holds the finance portfolio said that the state is expected to achieve 5.12 per cent growth in 2020-2021 as against 5.32 per cent projected initially.

Chief minister said that a provision of Rs. 175 crore has been made under Godhan Nyay Yojana implemented to convert Gobar (cow dung) into Godhan (cow-wealth). He also announced Rural Industrial Parks in rural areas to convert specific creative arts into employment opportunities. Besides, the government will ensure the setting up of C-Mart stores in and outside the state to provide all Chhattisgarhi products under one roof. Local agricultural products of Chhattisgarh like crushed rice of Dheki, cold-pressed edible oil, and fiber-rich grains from millets such as Kodo, little millet or Kukki, corn and maize to all kinds of pulses along with a variety of forest produces, Baghel announced.

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The apex court said that its blanket order extending all interim stays and bail granted prior to and during the Covid-19 lockdown would not remain in effect after 31 October, 2020.

Advocate Gaurav Agrawal, who is assisting the top court as an amicus curiae in a separate matter related to inhuman conditions in prisons, told the bench that he would submit a report on the issue of overcrowding in jails within 15 days.

The apex court said that 356 prisoners, who were earlier granted interim bail by the Delhi High Court in view of the pandemic, would also surrender in jail within 15 days from today.

A bench comprising Justices L Nageswara Rao and S Ravindra Bhat passed the directions while hearing the pleas, including an appeal filed by National Forum on Prison Reforms' (NFPR) against the 20 October last year direction of the Delhi High Court which had said

that its blanket order extending all interim stays and bail granted prior to and during the Covid-19 lockdown would not remain in effect after 31 October, 2020.

The apex court had on 29 October, 2020 stayed the high court direction asking all undertrial prisoners, whose bail period was extended due to the pandemic, to surrender in a phased manner between 2 November and 13 last year.

The bench has listed the matter for further hearing in April.

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The Covid Package

President Joe Biden's \$1.9 trillion pandemic aid package has passed muster at the House of Representatives, thus effecting a major milestone towards enacting the first legislative priority of the new administration. The devastating fallout from the spread of Covid-19 has left Americans in dire need of further relief. The promptitude of the present is in refreshing contrast to the inertia of the previous. There was no question of bipartisan support as no Republican voted for the measure. Notably, two Democrats broke ranks and voted against the bill - Kurt Schrader of Oregon and Jared Golden of Maine. It is cause for surprise that assistance for quite the worst public health catastrophe has been impeded by the legislative (aka political) dichotomy. Making the effort more complicated, the Senate is expected to use a provision in the legislation increasing the federal minimum wage after the Senate parliamentarians ruled against including it under the procedure known as reconciliation, which Democrats are using to pass the bill with a simple majority vote. The bill would then have to go back to the House for a separate vote before it could be sent to Mr Biden to be signed into law. The President has praised the House for passing the bill and called on the Senate to take "quick action" on the measure. "If we act now, decisively, quickly and boldly," he said, "we can finally get ahead of this virus. We can finally get our economy moving again, and the people of this country have suffered far too much for too long. We need to relieve that suffering."

The package advanced by the House Democrats also includes direct aid to small businesses, \$1,400 cheques to Americans earning less than \$75,000 annually, an increase in the child tax credit, direct funding to state and local governments, funding for schools and more money for vaccine distribution. This is actually a fairly comprehensive public welfare package. House Republicans have urged their members to vote against the package and worked to limit defections. Republicans have argued that the legislation overreaches and serves as a liberal wish-list of agenda items and have complained that they were locked out of the process for crafting the measure. Democrats counter that they are willing to work with Republicans, but will not water down the plan; they say they have a mandate to take sweeping action to address the pandemic now that they control Congress and the White House. Nancy Pelosi, the Democrat Speaker of the House of Representatives, stopped short of skirting Senate procedures - "We will seek a solution consistent with Senate rules, and we will do so soon." That is in the true tradition of democracy. The enormity of the Covid tragedy ought to take precedence over everything. A positive matrix has guided Joe Biden, so very unlike the negativism of his predecessor, Donald Trump, or the President of Brazil, Jair Bolsonaro, who had initially sought to dumb down coronavirus as "just a flu". It's more than that, to say the least.

Shades of Grey

Pakistan may not have been rapped on the knuckles by the Financial Action Task Force at its plenary meeting in Paris on Thursday, but the upshot can scarcely be flattering for the Imran Khan dispensation. The FATF will retain Pakistan on its "grey list" and the country's status will be reviewed at an "extraordinary" meeting in June. It shall not be easy for the government to disclaim its game of footsie with terrorists, still less for the omnipotent military to defend its sentences against militants. "Pakistan remains under increased monitoring," said the FATF president, Dr Marcus Pleyer. He acknowledged that while Islamabad had made "significant progress", there remained some "serious deficiencies" in mechanisms to plug the financing of terrorism. He was emphatic that "three out of 27 [points] need to be fully addressed," while alluding to the action plan agreed to by Pakistan. Though the country has made progress, "we strongly urge completion of the plan". From distant Paris, Dr Pleyer did convey a message to Islamabad - "Pakistan must improve their investigations and prosecutions of all groups and entities financing terrorists and their associates and show [that] penalties by courts are effective. As soon as Pakistan shows it has completed these items, FATF will verify and members of FATF will vote." The FATF chief has drawn a fine distinction between money-laundering and the broad framework to tackle terror. Markedly, he evaded a question on prosecution of terrorists. "The FATF," he said, "is not an investigative organisation. What we assess is the entire system of anti-money laundering [and] the framework. This does not change with incidents per se." Truth to tell, for every terrorist killed, two are born. The military court's death sentences against terrorists have done but little to contain the scourge.

The FATF president noted that Pakistan was working towards its commitment made at a high level to implement the illicit financing watchdog's recommendations, saying "that is not the time to put a country on the blacklist". As soon as Pakistan completes the action, the watchdog "will verify the sustainability of the reforms and discuss the same in the next plenary in June". As regards the alleged funding of terrorism by India, the FATF president declined to comment on specific incidents, reiterating that the watchdog was not an investigative agency. "India is subject to the same rules as any other country and FATF will assess India as any other country when the time comes," he added. Dr Pleyer has been remarkably diplomatic. North Korea and Iran remain the only two countries on the blacklist. The designation means international financial transactions with those countries are closely scrutinised. International creditors can also place restrictions on lending to blacklisted countries. For now, Pakistan remains daubed in shades of grey. This is neither here nor there.

Tagore and Death

Tagore was deeply influenced by the Hindu philosophical belief that we are all bound in the cycle of life consisting of births and deaths. We go from one life to another. So, death is just one incident in life. And, in this cycle of life, soul is transcendental and indestructible

Tagore experienced the death of his family members time and again and often in quick succession. Tragedy first struck Tagore at the young age of 14 when his mother, Sharada Devi, passed away in 1875. Then, in April 1884, Kadambani Devi, Tagore's favourite sister-in-law, confidante and muse, committed suicide. Kadambani Devi's demise was Tagore's first mature understanding of the grim reality of death, which left him shattered. The death of Kadambani Devi forever changed his way of thinking. In My Reminiscences Tagore wrote:

"My acquaintance with death in my twenty-fourth year was a permanent one. Merging its pain with grief of every successive bereavement since then, it has continued to weave a long garland of tears..."

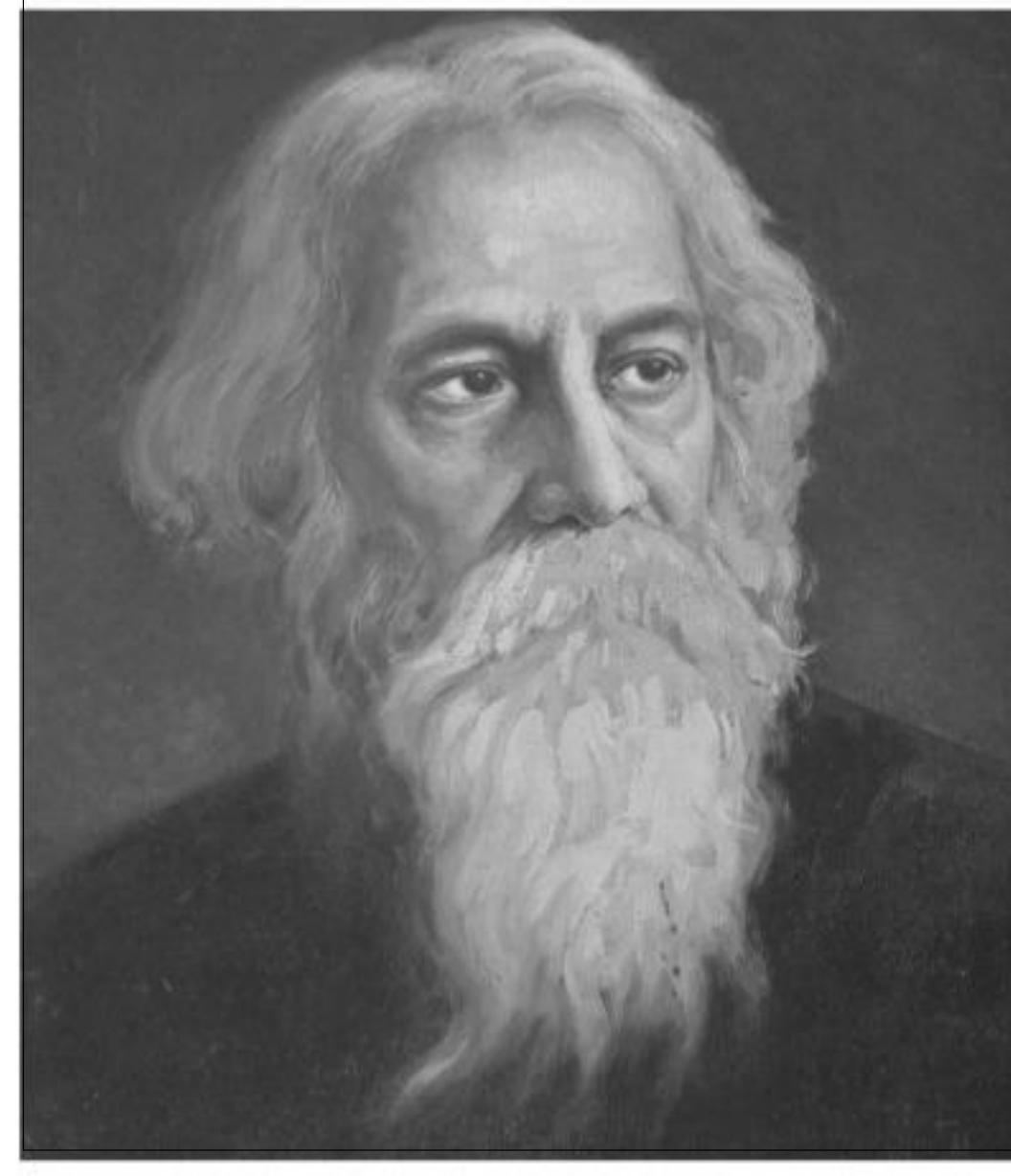
I was unaware then of the slightest lack anywhere in my life; there seemed no loophole in its tightly woven fabric of laughter and tears. Nothing was visible beyond it, hence I had accepted it as the ultimate truth. And then death suddenly arrived from somewhere. In a single instant, it tore away one end of this very visible fabric of life. How bewildered I felt now!"

In November 1902, tragedy befall Tagore once again when Mrinalini Devi, who was married to Tagore for 19 years, passed away at the young age of 30. Within a few months of Mrinalini Devi's death, Tagore's second daughter, Renuka, died in September 1903 when she was only 13. Tagore had to grapple with death yet once again when his father, Debendranath Tagore, died in 1905. If the tragic deaths of his wife, daughter and father were not enough, Tagore suffered another devastating blow when his youngest son, Samindranath, suddenly died of cholera in 1907 at the age of 13. According to Tagore's eldest son, Rathindranath, Samindranath's death left Tagore brokenhearted.

Despite Tagore's immense grief at the deaths of his family members, he still found great sense of fulfilment and joy. In fact, Tagore made death his friend as C.F Andrews has noted in Letters to a Friend: "Death itself became a "loved companion - no longer the king of terrors, but altogether transformed into cherished friend." Tagore had the following to say about death to C.F Andrews:

"You know, this death was a great blessing to me. I had through it all, day after day, a sense of fulfillment, of completion, as if nothing was lost. I felt that if even an atom in the universe seemed lost, it could never actually perish. It was not mere resignation that came to me, but the sense of a fuller life. I knew then, at last, what Death was. It was perfection." (Quoted in C.F Andrews' *Letters to a Friend*).

Tagore has written extensively on the inevitability of death. In the song "Achhe Dukkho Achhe Mrityu", ("Pain Exists, Death Exists"), Tagore reminds us that death and sorrow are an essential part of life. Even when clouds of sor-



(No. 90, *Gitanjali*).

In several of Tagore's poems, life and death take on the role of either a bride, bridegroom or lover. For example, in the following poem in *Gitanjali*, life is represented as a bride who is waiting for death, the bridegroom, to take her to the abode of the supreme being:

"There exists pain, exists death
The pain of separation burns one

And yet reigns peace, prevails
happiness in eternity

Flows the ceaseless life-stream,
beams the sun, moon, the stars

Spring arrives in
the forest in varied hues

Waves ebb, they
rise again

Flowers wilt as
they bloom again
There's no destruction,
no trace of misery

My soul desires to
take refuge at the
feet of that completeness"

(Translation by Ratna Dey).

Since death is inevitable and can't be avoided, Tagore treats death as a guest, letting him into his home with folded hands:

"Death, thy servant, is at my door... The night is dark and my heart is fearful - yet I will take up the lamp, open my gates and bow to him my welcome... I will worship him with folded hands, and with tears. I will worship him placing at his feet the treasure of my heart." (No. 86, *Gitanjali*).

In another poem, also in *Gitanjali*, we find Tagore welcoming death in his house and offering the vessel of life that contains both the sweetness and bitterness of life:

"On the day when death will knock at thy door what wilt thou offer to him?

Oh, I will set before my guest, the full vessel of my life..."

All the sweet vintage of all my autumn days and summer nights, all the earnings and gleanings of my busy life will I place before him at the close of my days when death will knock at my door."

(Translation by Sumanta K. Bhowmick).

There's a deep-rooted longing to meet death yet once again in "Purno Milan" (Complete Union):

"Love, my heart yearns day and night to meet with you - for the encounter that is like all-devouring death... Is that devastation, in the utter nakedness of spirit, let us become united in endless beauty."

(Quoted in Krishna Kripalani's *Rabindranath Tagore: A Biography*).

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HARSHA KAKAR

The India-China disengagement in Ladakh is progressing smoothly. After successful disengagement in Pangong Tso, talks are underway to enforce the same arrangement in other sectors. De-escalation and de-induction would follow disengagement. Confidence exists within the Indian security establishment that it will be implemented across all friction points in Ladakh. Increased diplomatic engagements indicate that India-China ties are moving towards normalcy.

The Chinese decision to move towards disengagement was due to multiple actions. Initially, India stopped the Chinese in their tracks, preventing further transgressions. Then came Galwan, where Indian forces displayed an offensive spirit and put to rest the ghosts of 1962. Following Galwan, there were economic and diplomatic actions, including banning Chinese investments as also refusing to participate in Shanghai Cooperation exercises thereby linking trade and diplomatic ties with peace and tranquility along the LAC. Finally, there was occupation of dominating features on the Kailash Ridge, which gave India a tactical advantage over Chinese permanent camps. There are still hills to climb before complete peace is restored, but the ride now appears smoother.

While India and China talked disengagement and moved towards peace came an offer for talks from General Bajwa, the Pakistan army chief. While addressing an army graduation ceremony, on 2 February, General Bajwa stated: "It is time to extend a hand of peace in all directions." He added, "Pakistan and India must also resolve the longstanding issue of Jammu and Kashmir in a dignified and peaceful manner as per the aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and bring this human tragedy to its logical conclusion." This was reiterated by Imran Khan in a speech in POK a few days later.

Last week, a joint statement issued by the Directors-General Military Operations (DGMOS) of India and Pakistan, after their weekly talks, announced a ceasefire between the two forces. The statement read, "Both sides agreed for strict observance of all agreements, understandings and cease fire along the Line of Control and all other sectors." The offer for peace and subsequent ceasefire would have involved considerable back-channel diplomacy and discussions at multiple levels. It is possible that the statement from Bajwa and Imran would have been part of confidence-building measures, as India does not trust Pakistani politicians, as they possess no authority.

As per inputs, there were covert discussions between National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and his Pakistani counterpart, Moeed Yusuf, though Yusuf denied this. While both sides insisted there was no change in their

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stance on core issues, there was a reduction in rhetoric between the two countries. The Indian spokesperson stated, "We are committed to addressing issues, if any, in a peaceful manner."

Yusuf stated, "Doing so (implementing the ceasefire) will save lives, so no one should question the intent. Nor should wrong inferences be drawn."

However, what came to the fore was the immense trust deficit. The Indian foreign office spokesperson stated, "Our position is well known. India desires normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan in an environment free of terror, hostility and violence." He added, "the onus is on Pakistan for creating such an environment." The Pakistan foreign office spokesperson stated, "The onus is on India to create enabling environment for meaningful engagement."

Imran Khan tweeted, "the onus of creating an enabling environment for further progress rests with India." Still doubting Pakistani intentions, the Northern Army Commander, Gen Joshi stated, "I want to assure that this

ceasefire will have no bearing on the counter-terrorist operations, and we will maintain our alertness."

Some believe the Pakistani offer for ceasefire flowed from FATF-impacted economic conditions, deteriorating scenario in Afghanistan, strong Indian responses to firing incidents, its failed Kashmir policy and growing internal insecurity. It has already moved additional forces into Baluchistan to protect CPEC projects.

Some suggested it could be the result of the Biden government's current policy towards the region. However, it is unlikely for Pakistan to offer talks and accept a ceasefire without the concurrence of China, their major ally and benefactor.

A few aspects lead to doubting the Pakistani offer. How would Pakistan handle its trained terrorists, awaiting induction? If it attempts to push them in, how would India respond? Would Pakistan's terrorist group leaders, considered as prime assets of the army, accept the ceasefire? In case of a terrorist strike crossing Indian redlines, would India con-

tinue with the ceasefire? Answers to these are difficult and hence trust deficit is high.

The Pakistani offer comes as India and China are seeking to restore peace and tranquility along the LAC. China is aware that it would have to withdraw from areas it has transgressed, while Indian construction of infrastructure in Ladakh would continue. The vulnerability of the CPEC through Gilgit Baltistan would remain. Thus, in case Pakistan attempts to cross Indian redlines, there is a possibility of India striking CPEC targets close to the LOC. China would not have much option as the targets are not on Chinese territory, though built with Chinese investment.

On both borders, talks and ultimate resolution of issues is a long way away. Differences in perceptions between India and China as also between India and Pakistan cannot be resolved in a short time. As long as talks continue and ceasefire remains in place, the assets of the CPEC remain secure, thus benefiting China

and Pakistan. It would remove the one threat for which China intruded into Ladakh.

There is no doubt that peace is a major requirement for nations of the region. Ceasefires may not lead to immediate resolution of pending disagreements; however, they could usher in an era of peace and development and reinvigorate the economy. The major stumbling block between India and China as also between India and Pakistan is trust deficiency. India has been stabbed in the back by both nations and hence remains wary. Overcoming this deficit is a greater challenge than seeking a long-term solution. The next few weeks would be crucial for building trust from both ends.

However, the Indian government must continue enhancing military capabilities despite a push towards peace. Military power is the most powerful vaccine for securing borders and ensuring peace.

The writer is a retired Major-General of the Indian Army.

generally sets all medicine at defance".

Looking at this longer history of cancer reminds us of the emotional and physical costs of any delays. After all, even if these waits have only minimal effects on patients' survival or long-term health, we must also think about the psychological trauma of living in limbo. Particularly when that limbo is associated with cancer, a disease that has long carried with it a sense of profound anxiety, so much so that in the 19th century it was often termed "the dread disease". It is often understood as an alien invader, now very much outstaying its welcome.

As the Covid-19 crisis slowly abates, we must not just look back with regret at the number of people killed by the virus or celebrate the success of vaccines. We must instead assess the pandemic's impact in the round and consider the physical as well as emotional costs of a disease that turned our world upside down. When the next pandemic comes, we must be prepared to not only treat the victims of epidemic disease but to continue to provide the fundamental healthcare services we need to stay both healthy and happy.

The writer is Research Fellow, History of Medicine and Healthcare, University of Bristol. This article was published on www.theconversation.com

From the report of the discussion which took place at Monday's meeting of the Bihar Legislative Council, it will be seen that Lord Sinha's Government has stuck to its guns. In answer to a question relating to the embargo on Babu Rajendra Prasad's visit to Arrah, it set forth the facts clearly, and defended the action of the District Magistrate uncompromisingly, and its defence will appeal irresistibly to everyone who values law and order. The gentle art of employing questions as vehicles for arguments has been reduced to a fine point in this country, the Government being called upon to admit that "its interference with the liberty of Babu Rajendra Prasad had caused universal resentment among the people of the Province." The retort that "matters of opinion could not be dealt with by question and answer" was neat and effective, and should tend to discourage future irregularities. In the subsequent debate on the now famous circular Messrs. LeMesurier and Rainy made it clear that district officers had not been given a free hand to deal with non-cooperation in any way they chose. It ought not to have been necessary to convey any such assurances, but at a time when legislators at Delhi can make serious attempts to hold Government responsible for the recent tragedy in the Punjab it is impossible to state the policy of the Government too clearly, or reiterate it too frequently.

SIX SINN FEINERS EXECUTED

Six Sinn Feiners are being executed at Cork barracks this morning, five for preparing an ambush and the sixth for being in possession of a revolver and a book entitled "Night Fighting." Prayers have been offered up in Catholic churches for "grace and happy death" for the condemned men. The Cork Corporation has urged a reprieve, while in the case of the sixth prisoner the jurisdiction of the military courts to impose the death sentence has been challenged in the King's Bench at Dublin. A latter message states that six Sinn Feiners were executed in Dublin which was a scene of great military activity. The National University was occupied by the military and the students were searched. Many offices in Sackville Street were also searched.

IMPERIAL DISTRIBUTION OF MAN POWER

In an article in Lloyds Sunday News Sir L. Amery, while admitting that emigration would not immediately remedy unemployment expresses the conviction that in the long run a satisfactory solution of the problems not only of employment but of defence depends upon the adoption, in cooperation with the Dominions, of a comprehensive Imperial policy for the better distribution of the man power of the Empire by State aided Empire settlement. We aim, says Col. Amery, at a definite continuous policy of cooperation between all governments of the Empire with a view to the best distribution of its man power and the progressive building up of the economic and defensive strength of the Empire as a whole.

REDUCTION OF WAGES CONTROVERSY

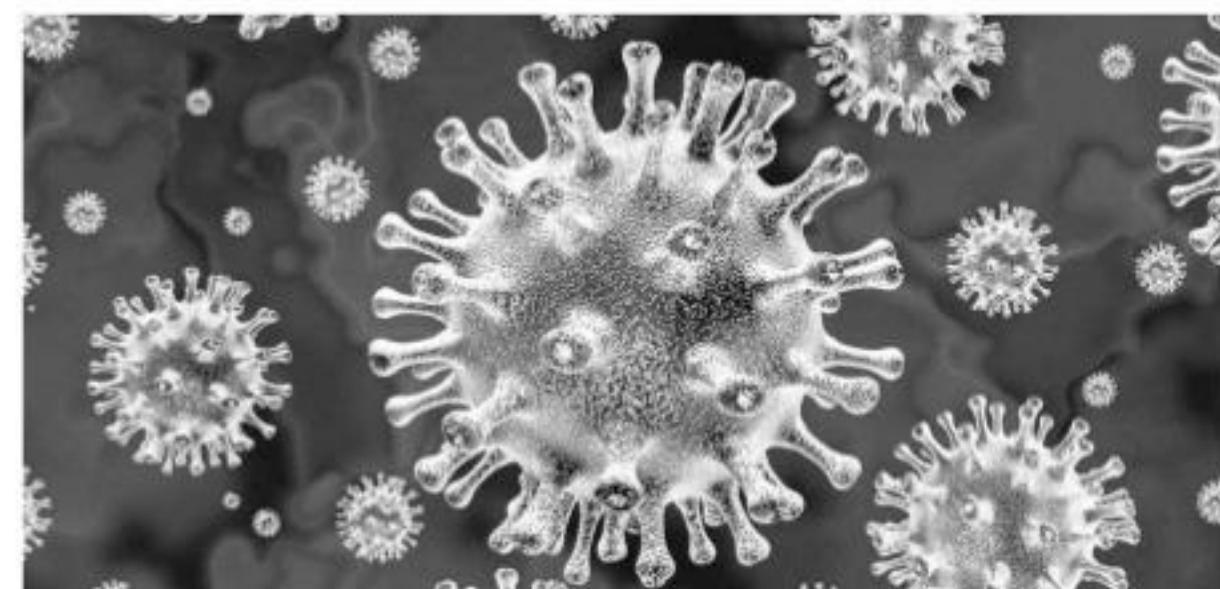
Signs are not wanting of a coming struggle between Labour and Capital on the issue of a general reduction of wages. Employers on the one hand, supported by an influential section of the Press, have rapidly developed a "production campaign," and have sometimes actually advanced figures, while recent speeches by leaders of the big unions on the other hand have strenuously exhorted resistance to any reduction. Mr. Hodges, Secretary of the Miners' Federation enjoins the miners to prepare to prove their solidarity, and suggests a heavy Government subsidy enabling present profits and wages to be maintained, and reducing coal to twenty shillings per ton, thereby reducing manufacturing costs and improving trade in general.

ATTEMPT TO SCALE MOUNT EVEREST

A forthcoming attempt to scale Mount Everest, the approaches of which are still unknown to Europeans, was announced at a meeting of the Royal Geographical Society by the President, Sir Francis Younghusband, who stated that political obstacles had been removed, and that the Indian Government had been given permission to send an exploring expedition, which the Society and the Alpine Club would organise. The expedition would be a great adventure. Apart from risks and hardships there was the unknown factor of human capacity to stand great exertion at that height. He declared that the summit of Mount Everest would never be reached unless all approaches were first explored most carefully. A reconnaissance party would go to India in 1921, and the climbing party would go to Tibet in 1922.

Focus shifted from other diseases

AGNES ARNOLD-FOSTER



use to deal with stress, and 25 per cent saying they'd seriously considered suicide.

Crucially, these issues won't abate as soon as the pandemic is over. Even when the crisis recedes, Dr Shekar Saxena of the Harvard School of Public Health suggests that 10 per cent of these young people will have to live with the long-lasting effects of the mental illnesses they are currently enduring.

The damage done by the pandemic to mental health has already attracted well-deserved attention. It has highlighted the importance of

looking beyond coronavirus deaths to assess the success of global pandemic responses. Cancer tells a similar, and equally distressing, story.

Throughout 2020, hospitals across the UK, US and Europe cancelled or postponed urgent cancer operations because they could not cope with the rising number of desperately ill coronavirus patients.

Determining cancer prognosis is complex, but early evidence suggests that even a four-week delay in treatment can raise the risk of death by up to 10 per cent.

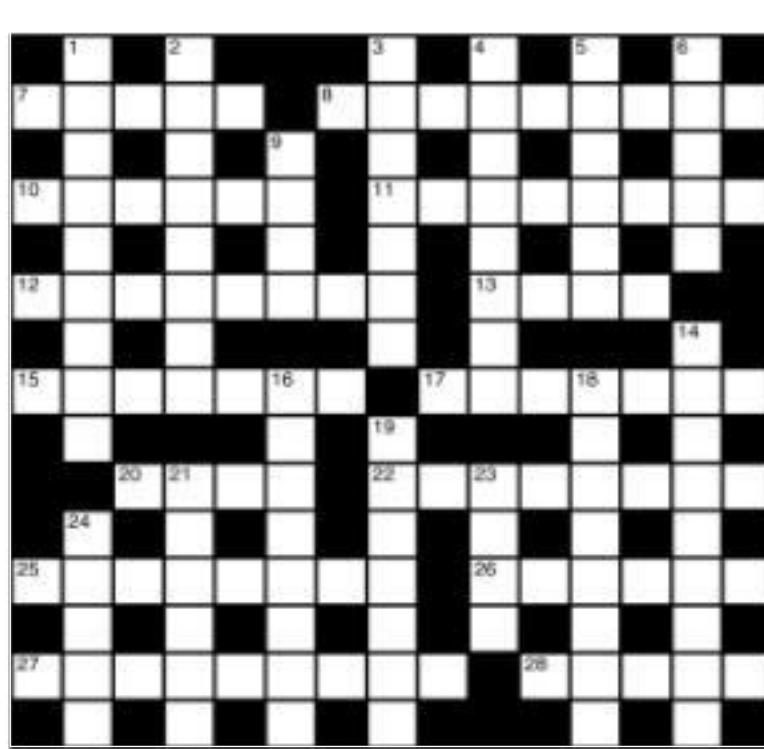
The danger is not just physical,

but psychological too. Despite these distressing figures of cancellations and waiting times, we don't yet know much about the emotional toll these delays will have on people living with cancer today. Stories are, however, starting to emerge. One man, diagnosed with stage-4 bowel cancer in June 2020, had his December surgery postponed, and then "cancelled indefinitely".

Even in the 19th century, doctors and patients alike were acutely aware of the importance of timely treatment. As I argue in my book, *The Cancer Problem*, the "do not delay" principle in cancer treatment has its origins in the early 1800s. Surgeons implored cancer sufferers to seek their advice as soon as they had identified any unexpected lumps or bumps. And in their writings, patients expressed extreme distress at waiting for a diagnosis or cure.

Doctors lamented the patients who, "because of their praiseworthy modesty", consulted too late for effective treatment. Medical textbooks designed to be read by patients told their readers that "were proper means used in due time, a cancer might often be prevented; but after the disorder has arrived at a certain height it

CROSSWORD



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

ACROSS

- 7 Kind of green bananas (5)
- 8 Clean-cut doctor's description of former patient? (9)
- 10 Mineral component of fossil I catalogued (6)
- 11 Publicity drive Queen's informally expecting (8)
- 12 Afflicted by rickets, misshapen bones, essentially (8)
- 13 In short, former Queen's Counsel finally taken on by company boss (4)
- 14 Man's town, such as 9? (7)
- 15 Believe singer's after a drink for instructor? (7)
- 20 Novel introduction to extreme combat sport (4)
- 22 Doing endless exercises, fast and slow (8)
- 25 Starvation diet? (4,4)
- 26 Good-looking lead characters in Carry On movies – everybody loves you! (6)
- 27 Guy pursuing French national, both of them short and sweet (5,4)
- 28 Centrepiece of running buffet sure is tender (5)
- 29 Moderation in drugs (not cocaine) (9)
- 30 On a voyage, ship's company is heard to chant (8)
- 31 Being theatrical under canvas (7)
- 32 Clever 23, one deep in the midst of

DOWN

- 5 Starts to get lively during month of dance music (6)
- 6 Lenny, perhaps his last part after Chicken Run? (5)
- 9 Sailor's small white bowl (4)
- 14 Poor writer on 13's river boat (9)
- 16 Working in Canada, drunk reveals a reptile (8)
- 18 He famously explored a state capital (8)
- 19 Coils half of rope up, making a knot (7)
- 21 EU leader has time for country's first senior 28 (6)
- 23 Detective, one on crook's case (4)
- 24 Climate change – has it wiped out this beast? (5)

NO 28841

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



Charges for testing quality of products should be reduced for MSMEs, startups and women entrepreneurs

PIYUSH GOYAL

FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS MINISTER

THUMBNAILS

Technical glitch: Leading stock exchanges NSE and BSE on Monday said all their operations are functioning in a normal manner after HDFC Securities flagged that confirmations were not received for orders placed in the NSE cash segment due to a "technical glitch". After mentioning about the technical glitch, a tweet at 10.01 am, HDFC Securities, at around 11.53 am, issued a statement saying the issue "got resolved at 9.50 am" and that investigation is going on to find out the root cause. PTI

Bids for SC: The government has received multiple bids for privatisation of Shipping Corporation of India, department of investment and public asset management secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey said on Monday. Dipam in December had invited expressions of interest for strategic disinvestment of its entire stake of 63.75 per cent in Shipping Corp of India. The last date for submitting bids was 13 February, which was later extended to 1 March. PTI

Hero Electric expansion: Electric two-wheeler maker Hero Electric plans to expand its manufacturing facility in Ludhiana to ramp up production from the existing 70,000 units per annum to 2.5 lakh units per annum to further drive adoption of the green mobility solution, the company said in a Press statement. It has a lot of firsts in the industry ranging from developing and launching the first lithium ion based electric scooter in India to launching the unique concept of charging stations for anywhere, everywhere charging, the statement said. SNS

NeoGrowth: NeoGrowth Credit Pvt Ltd, a pioneer in SME lending in India, recently launched diGibiz, an end-to-end platform to help small businesses become digital-ready. The company aims to help over 2 lakh SMEs double their turnover in 3 years by offering access to best-in-class digital solutions through business solution providers, according to a Press release. SNS

CWBTA award: The CWBTA Excellence Award 2021, organised by Confederation of West Bengal Trade Associations, felicitated achievers in 14 different categories related to trade and commerce. "The objective of the CWBTA Excellence Award 2021 is to encourage the trading fraternity and also highlight the importance of trade in the economic activity of the country," said Sushil Poddar, president, CWBTA. SNS

FedEx Express: Express transportation company FedEx Express has been recognised with the award for "Best Gender Equality Workplace" by the World HRD Congress at the Diversity and Inclusion Leadership Awards 2021, said a Press release from the company. SNS

Venkata Rao becomes MD & CEO of Central Bank

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 1 MARCH

State-run Central Bank of India today said Matam Venkata Rao has taken charge as its new managing director and chief executive officer. Rao till now held the position of executive director at Canara Bank.

His appointment is for a period of three years with effect from the date of assumption of office on or after 1 March 2021, or until further orders, whichever is earlier, Central Bank of India said in a regulatory filing.

"Matam Venkata Rao assumed charge of managing director and chief executive officer of Central Bank of India w.e.f. today i.e. 01st

Equity benchmarks jump as investors cheer Q3 GDP data

BSE benchmark the Sensex surges nearly 750 points; the Nifty of NSE rallies over 232 points

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 1 MARCH

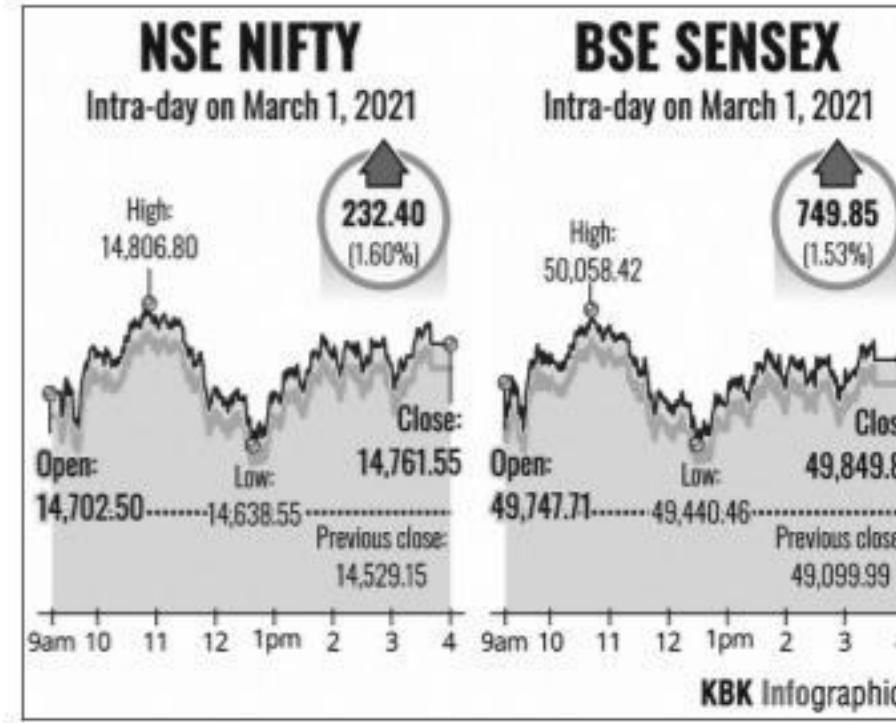
BSE benchmark the Sensex surged nearly 750 points and the Nifty of National Stock Exchange rallied over 232 points today as investors cheered the domestic economy returning to positive territory after two quarters of contraction.

The 30-share BSE index briefly traded above the 50,000-mark in day trade before closing at 49,849.84 points, showing a rise of 749.85 points or 1.53 per cent. Of the Sensex constituents, 29 shares closed with gains.

Likewise, the NSE barometer Nifty settled with a gain of 232.40 points or 1.60 percent at 14,761.55 points.

Top performers were PowerGrid, ONGC, Ultratech Cement, Asian Paints, Kotak Bank and Titan, rising as much as 5.94 per cent.

"Positive global cues and US yields retreating from highs led to a strong opening today with indices sustaining gains throughout the day. The broad-



er markets saw energetic buying momentum across PSU basket and sectors like paints & speciality chemicals," S Ranganathan, head of research at LKP Securities, said.

After two consecutive quarters of contraction, the Indian economy has finally entered an expansionary path.

The gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 0.4 per cent in the October-December 2020 period compared with the same period a year

back, data released by the National Statistics Office on Friday showed.

High-frequency indicators were pointing towards the fact that the domestic economy is slowly entering the recovery path.

Vinod Nair, head of research at Geojit Financial Services, said: "Domestic markets kick-started the month on a strong footing with increased optimism fuelled by GDP reaching positive numbers, improving auto

numbers and steady PMI manufacturing data."

The auto sector was in focus as sales numbers for February were in favour of manufacturers. All of the 19 sectoral indices except telecom ended in the green.

Auto, private banks and metals indices witnessed sharp rally ranging from 1.5 per cent to 2.5 per cent. Notably, volatility index softened by over 8 per cent, which offers comfort, said Binod Modi, head - strategy at Reliance Securities.

Telecom stocks dropped as spectrum auction began with 2,251.25 megahertz (MHz) radiowaves valued at Rs 3.92 lakh crore up for bidding. Bharti Airtel dropped by 4.45 per cent.

Small-cap and large-cap indices outperformed the benchmark - rising 1.61 per cent and 1.56 per cent, respectively.

While mid-cap index underperformed the Sensex, gaining 1.46 per cent.

Elsewhere in Asia, bourses closed significantly higher amid some stability in bond markets after last week's tur-

moil. Further, progress in the US stimulus package also lent some support to investor sentiments globally.

Global markets were on an upward rally owing to the much-anticipated US stimulus package being approved and reports regarding the progress in the vaccines.

Meanwhile, the global oil benchmark Brent crude was trading 0.88 per cent lower at \$65.39 per barrel.

On the forex market front, the rupee dropped 8 paise to end at 73.55 against the US dollar.

Modi said domestic equities witnessed sharp rebound mainly on favourable global cues and positive GDP data.

On Friday, the BSE Sensex had crashed 1,939.32 points or 3.80 per cent, its worst one-day fall since 4 May last year. Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty had plunged 568.20 points or 3.76 per cent, its biggest single-day drop since 23 March last year.

Foreign investors had sold equities worth Rs 8,295.17 crore on a net basis on Friday, as per exchange data.

Strive for seamless digital payments: FM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 1 MARCH

I will bring it here as an example to say even where complete foolproof systems are laid, you find in NSE a couple of days ago when there was a glitch, a kind of technology-driven glitch, which nobody could have anticipated, but that glitch has caused us immensely and lessons are being learnt.

"Maybe that was an issue of interoperability between the two exchanges, but that is the kind of thing where seamless digital payment is the goal that we have to aspire for. That was also an example that tells us about how seamless payment modes or technology-driven platforms can face. So, taking lessons from that, I would think seamless digital payments is something you have to clearly have a roadmap for," Sitharaman said.

The NSE had on Wednesday halted trading on the stock exchange for nearly four hours due to a technical glitch.

The minister suggested that the CGA should move towards being more paperless and user friendly in its functioning and also aim for greater integration with the department of expenditure and states.

SBI reduces home loan rates to 6.70%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 1 MARCH

ing at a good number."

The lender is also giving a 100 per cent waiver on processing fees. Customers can also apply for home loans using Yono app to get an additional interest concession of 5 basis points, the bank said.

It is also offering a special 5 bps concession to woman borrowers on the eve of International Women's Day.

Narayan said the bank does not see much challenge in terms of repayments in the home loan segment.

"We are mindful of whatever stresses there are and we are reaching out to the customers. We are taking several steps within and outside the bank and also giving options to borrowers on how they can repay the loans. We are monitoring closely and, as of now, I don't see much of a challenge," she said.

The new rates are based on loan amount and CIBIL score of the borrower, and are available till 31 March 2021, according to a statement.

The bank said the home loan interest rates will start from 6.70 per cent for loans up to Rs 75 lakh and 6.75 per cent for loans in the range of Rs 75 lakh to Rs 5 crore.

The bank's deputy managing director (retail business) Saloni Narayan said: "We want to take advantage of the festive season, especially Holi. This being the last month of the year, we are look-

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The lender is also giving a 100 per cent waiver on processing fees. Customers can also apply for home loans using Yono app to get an additional interest concession of 5 basis points, the bank said.

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<p



Pakistan always stood for peace and remains ready to move forward to resolve all outstanding issues through dialogue

SAID WHILE WELCOMING THE CEASEFIRE ANNOUNCED BETWEEN INDO-PAK BORDER SECURITY FORCES

PAKISTAN PRIME MINISTER IMRAN KHAN

The Statesman
NEW DELHI, TUESDAY 02 MARCH 2021

09

Suu Kyi faces court first time since coup

Court hearing held online as military abolishes position of 'state counsellor'

ASSOCIATED PRESS

YANGON, 1 MARCH

Myanmar's tallest leader Aung San Suu Kyi, denied a second tenure in power by a military takeover on 1 February, faced court on Monday through a video link, her lawyer Khin Maung Zaw said.

Zaw told this writer he had seen his client for the first time since a military coup exactly one month ago, after which the country has plunged into huge and ceaseless protests.

Suu Kyi's court appearance, in a minor case over alleged possession of foreign-made walky-talkies, came on a day when protesters again hit the streets, despite a bloody Sunday, when at least 19 people died in firing by security forces across Myanmar.

At least 30 were injured and 10 missing during the mayhem unleashed by the forces



Medical students display images of ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi during a street march in Yangon on Sunday. AP

in Yangon, Mandalay, Dawei, Myitkina and several other cities.

The UN Human Rights office confirmed 18 deaths but the Democratic Voice of Burma provided details of 19 people who died in the firings.

Suu Kyi, appeared fit and in good health during Monday's court appearance, her lawyer Khin Maung Zaw, said by telephone during a break in proceedings.

The 75-year-old was detained in Naypyidaw, the nation's capital, before dawn on the day of the coup, and had not been seen in public since. She has reportedly been

kept under house arrest in Naypyidaw.

The military has justified its takeover by making unfounded allegations of widespread fraud in last November's national elections, claiming the presence of 8.6 million fraudulent voters in the electoral rolls.

Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy won the election in a landslide victory, with 396 seats of the total 476 contested. She then sought to form a grand coalition with regional ethnic partners who had won 44 seats.

The generals have hit Suu Kyi with two charges the inter-

national community widely regards as frivolous -- relating to importing walkie talkies and staging a campaign rally during the pandemic.

Monday's court proceedings were preliminary attempts to start trial in the case, that could lead to prison sentences of two to three years, her lawyer Khin Maung Zaw said.

The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, a reliable monitoring group, estimated that about 30 people had been killed by security forces since the coup on February 1.

On Monday, protests erupted again in multiple cities across the country, with demonstrators in Yangon using bamboo poles, sofas and tree branches to erect barricades across streets.

Hundreds of people were also arrested over the weekend with many in Yangon taken to Insein Prison.

Over 1,100 people have been arrested since the coup.

South Korean Moon reiterates willingness to talk with Japan

ASSOCIATED PRESS

SEOUL, 1 MARCH



South Korean President Moon Jae-in said Monday that his government is eager for talks with Japan to improve relations following years of bitter feuding over historical grievances, adding that those unresolved issues should not stand in the way of developing future-oriented ties.

There have been times where issues of the past weren't separated from those of the future and became intermingled with each other. This has impeded forward-looking development, Moon said in a nationally televised speech commemorating the anniversary of a 1919 Korean uprising against Japanese colonial rule.

The Korean government is always ready to sit down and have talks with the Japanese government, he said. South Korea and Japan have been struggling to repair relations that sank to their lowest point in decades in 2019 following South Korean court rulings that ordered Japanese companies to pay reparations to

Koreans who were forced to work in their factories during World War II. Those rulings led to further tensions over trade when Japan put export controls on chemicals vital to South Korea's semiconductor industry.

Another sticking point in relations is the issue of Korean women who were sexually enslaved by Japan's wartime military, with survivors denouncing the Japanese government for refusing to accept legal responsibility for their slavery. Japan has insisted that all wartime compensation issues were settled under a 1965 treaty normalizing relations with South Korea and it has reacted angrily to South Korean court

rulings saying otherwise. There is a risk for further deterioration of the relationship if South Korean courts eventually order the liquidation of local assets of Japanese companies that have refused to compensate forced labourers. While Moon said Seoul will continue to support Korean victims of Japanese wartime atrocities, he stressed that the countries must not let the past hold us back.

Moon said improved relations would also benefit the three-way cooperation between South Korea, Japan and the United States, which Washington sees as crucial to dealing with regional issues such as North Korea's nuclear arsenal and China's increasing economic and military might.

Moon expressed hope that this year's Olympics in Tokyo could provide a stage to renew international efforts to resolve the nuclear standoff with North Korea. Seoul has placed much of the blame for bad relations with Tokyo on Japan's hawkish former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

Suga's PR chief resigns

TOKYO, 1 MARCH

The public relations chief for Japan's prime minister has resigned after she acknowledged she had a 70,000 yen (\$700) dinner paid for by a broadcaster.

Makiko Yamada had been grilled recently by opposition lawmakers in Parliament about the 2019 dinner and had been scheduled to answer more questions Monday.

She had previously said she did not remember or was not fully aware of the circumstances.

Yamada's job included the responsibility of picking reporters to ask questions at Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga's news conferences.

Government spokesman Katsunobu Kato told Parliament on Monday that Yamada resigned. She was hospitalized for two weeks for an illness and can't carry on her duties, and Suga accepted the resignation, Kato said. Details of her sickness were not given.

Yamada had held other bureaucratic jobs, including at the ministry overseeing telecommunications.

AP

Netanyahu accuses Iran of attacking Israeli-owned cargo ship

ASSOCIATED PRESS

JERUSALEM, 1 MARCH

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Monday accused Iran of attacking an Israeli-owned ship in the Gulf of Oman last week.

Netanyahu spoke to Israeli public broadcaster Kan and said that it was indeed an act by Iran, that's clear.

Iran is the greatest enemy of Israel, I am determined to halt it.

We are hitting it in the entire region, Netanyahu said.

The mysterious explosion struck the Israeli-owned MV

Helios Ray, a Bahamian-flagged roll-on, roll-off vehicle cargo ship, as it was sailing out of the Middle East on its way to Singapore on Friday.

The crew was unharmed in the blast, but the vessel sustained two holes on its port side and two on its starboard side just above the waterline, according to American defense officials.

The ship came to Dubai's port for repairs on Sunday, days after the blast that revived security concerns in Mideast waterways amid heightened tensions with Iran.

It remains unclear what caused the blast. The Helios Ray had discharged cars at various ports in the Persian Gulf before the explosion forced it to reverse course.

The crew was unharmed in the blast, but the vessel sustained two holes on its port side and two on its starboard side just above the waterline, according to American defense officials.

Overnight, Syrian state media reported a series of alleged Israeli airstrikes near Damascus, saying air defense systems had intercepted most of the missiles.

Singapore to tighten measures to keep track of gold items in Hindu temples

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

SINGAPORE, 1 MARCH

Singapore's Hindu Endowments Board (HEB) is taking steps to improve the tracking of all movements of gold items within the four Hindu temples that it manages, the culture minister said on Monday, weeks after a former Indian temple chief priest was charged with misappropriating and pawning gold jewellery.

Edwin Tong, Minister for Culture, Community and Youth, told Parliament on Monday that the temples' management committees would tighten oversight of the gold inventories in their temples.

February 16 with allegedly misappropriating 172 pieces of jewellery from the temple over four years from 2016-2020. He later pawned them for over SGD 2 million (USD 1.5 million), wiring SGD 140,000 (USD 105,247) overseas during the period.

Senapathi is facing five charges of criminal breach of trust as an employee and five counts under the Corruption, Drug Trafficking and Other Serious Crimes (Confiscation of Benefits) Act.

Tong said that the HEB conducts routine audits at all four temples.

China appoints ex-PLA General to top parl panel

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

BEIJING, 1 MARCH

China has appointed General Zhao Zongqi, a former top People's Liberation Army officer who oversaw the border with India, as the deputy chairman of the influential Foreign Affairs Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), the country's Parliament.

Gen Zhao, 65, headed the Western Command during the Doklam faceoff in 2017 and Laddak standoff in 2020.

As per regulations of the PLA, the retirement age for the

top generals is 65.

An official announcement by the NPC said Gen Zhao has been appointed as the deputy chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, an influential body of the NPC.

The appointment comes ahead of the annual meeting of the NPC beginning from March 5.

The NPC along with the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), advisory body, will hold their annual get-together for a week. Besides, Gen Wang Ning was appointed as Deputy Chairman at NPC.

Albanian world heritage site struggles without tourists

ASSOCIATED PRESS

GJIROKASTRA, 1 MARCH

Seeing city streets in 2019 flooded by tourists enjoying its beauty was a dream come true for residents of Gjirokastra, a city in southern Albania recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site for its Ottoman-period architecture.

It ended precipitously when the world locked down.

Called the city of stone due to its two-story houses with turrets dating back to the 17th century, Gjirokastra and a second Albanian town, Berat, were inscribed as a UNESCO Heritage Site in 2005 as rare

examples of an architectural character typical of the Ottoman period.

Following renovation of the city's center, Hysen Kodra was among locals who turned their 200-300-year-old houses with wooden facades and stone slabs roofs into a guest lodging. After all, the 700 tourist beds in the city center could hardly accommodate the 120,000 visitors to Gjirokastra the year before the coronavirus pandemic.

The pandemic cut it abruptly, as if with a knife, says Kodra, whose 13-room guesthouse on top of a hill stands empty. Until 2019 we were so

good, with more and more visitors every day, and in 2020 all the booked rooms were cancelled.

The 13th-century fortress on the hilltop of the city and the radial-shaped, 17th-century Old Bazaar where tourists walk the cobblestone streets to taste dishes like pasha qofte (meatball) or oshaf, or shop for handicrafts, curtains, carpets, traditional folk costumes and the like are the main attractions in Gjirokastra.

There's also the ethnographic museum located at the former home of the late communist dictator Enver Hoxha and the newly renovated

in 1990 the family got its property back. With no other industry left in the city, the government concentrated on renovation of its typical homes and streets to gear up tourism.

The turreted homes were turned into small shops, coffee bars, and there was a four-fold increase of visitors between 2015 and 2019. Since the pandemic a year ago, that kind of activity has returned to the realm of wishful thinking.

The pandemic will go away one day soon and tourists will come back and see a different, more beautiful town, she said.

Hundreds of students rally in Bangladesh over writer's death

ASSOCIATED PRESS

DHAKA, 1 MARCH

About 300 student activists rallied in Bangladesh's capital on Monday to denounce the death in prison of a writer and commentator who was arrested last year on charges of violating a sweeping digital security law that critics say chokes freedom of expression.

The protesters marched through the Dhaka University campus and Dhaka's streets toward the country's Home Ministry to also

demand the annulment of the digital security law and the release of seven student activists arrested during recent protests denouncing the death of 53-year-old Mushtaq Ahmed.

They broke a barricade by removing barbed wire fences on the way to the ministry, but were intercepted by a few hundred police officers outside the ministry in downtown Dhaka. Ahmed's death Thursday night sparked protests on streets and on social media, and prompted global human rights groups.

47 dissidents brought to HK court

HONG KONG, 1 MARCH

Hong Kong police on Monday brought 47 pro-democracy activists to court on charges of conspiracy to commit subversion under the national security law imposed on the city by Beijing last year.

Those who were arrested had allegedly violated the national security law for indulging into unofficial election primaries for Hong Kong's legislature the last year.

AP

LEISURE

10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



ACROSS
1 Travel payments (5)
4 Relatives (3)
7 Omit (5,3)
8 Rich soul (4)
9 Cheated (5-7)
10 Hydrophobia (6)
13 Small and delicate (6)
15 On the other hand (12)
19 Cab (4)
20 Period after sunset (8)
21 Playing (3)
22 Taxonomic group (5)

DOWN
1 Insects (5)
2 Pasta (7)
3 Teapot part (5)
4 Tomato sauce (7)
5 Man-made material (5)
6 Warning (6)
11 Waterpoof jacket (6)
12 Dark-complexioned (7)
14 Instruction (7)
16 Contaminate (5)
17 Cake decoration (5)
18 Distinctive spirit (5)

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

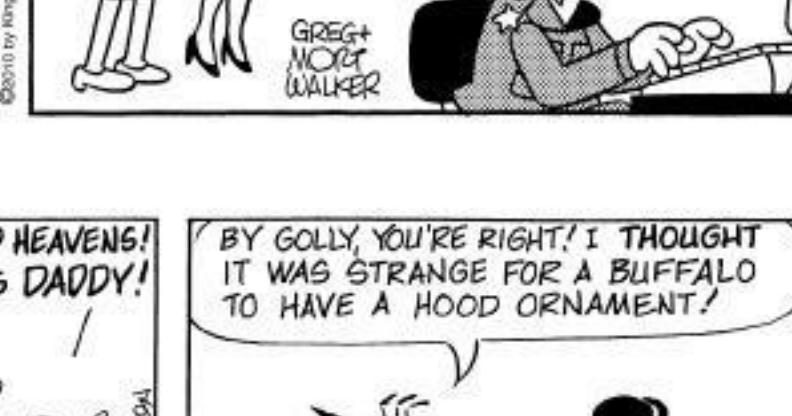
ACROSS
1 12 Golden syrup, 15 Odd, 16 Dismantle, 19 Fraternal, 21 Ado, 22 Eddy, 9 Deed, 11 Fluctuate,
DOWN
1 2 Insects, 3 14 Golf, 4 Allow, 18 Egot, 5 Meet, 6 Patronising, 7 Meet, 8 Foe,

By arrangement with The Independent
Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required

BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker



RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson



DADDY DAZE/John Kovaleski



NEED TO KNOW

HOSPITALS

It was a difficult decision. But I did it fully conscious and I think I did the right thing

EMERITUS POPE BENEDICT XVI

ON THE EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS HISTORIC RESIGNATION



THUMBNAILS



Police officers receive flowers as a symbol of peace during a protest to demand the resignation of Haitian President Jovenel Moise in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

Sarkozy convicted of corruption, sentenced

Nicolas Sarkozy was suspected of trying to obtain information illegally from a magistrate

ASSOCIATED PRESS

PARIS, 1 MARCH

A Paris court on Monday found French former President Nicolas Sarkozy guilty of corruption and influence peddling and sentenced him to one year in prison and a two-year suspended sentence.

The 66-year-old politician, who was president from 2007 to 2012, was convicted for having tried to illegally obtain information from a senior magistrate in 2014 about a legal action in which he was involved.

The court said Sarkozy will be entitled to request to be detained at home with an electronic bracelet.

Sarkozy will face another trial later this month along with 13 other people on charges of illegal financing of his 2012 presidential campaign. The verdict is expected on Monday in a landmark corruption and influence-peddling trial that has put French former President Nicolas Sarkozy at risk of a prison sentence if he is convicted.

Sarkozy, who was president from 2007 to 2012, firmly denied all the allegations against him during the 10-day trial that took place at the end of last year.

The politician is suspected of having tried to illegally obtain information from a senior magistrate in 2014 about a legal action in which he was involved.

This is the first time in France's modern history that



a former president has gone on trial for corruption. Sarkozy's predecessor, Jacques Chirac, was found guilty in 2011 of misuse of public money and given a two-year suspended prison sentence for actions during his time as Paris mayor. Sarkozy's co-defendants his lawyer and longtime friend Thierry Herzog, 65, and now-retired magistrate Gilbert Azibert, 74 also deny wrongdoing.

Prosecutors have requested two years of prison and a two-year suspended sentence for all three defendants over what they said was a corruption pact. No pact has ever existed, Sarkozy told the court. Neither in my head, nor in reality. I want to be cleared of that infamy, he added.

The trial focused on phone conversations that took place in February 2014.

At the time, investigative judges had launched an inquiry into the financing of

the 2007 presidential campaign. During the investigation they incidentally discovered that Sarkozy and Herzog were communicating via secret mobile phones registered to the alias Paul Bismuth.

Conversations wiretapped on these phones led prosecutors to suspect Sarkozy and Herzog of promising Azibert a job in Monaco in exchange for leaking information about another legal case, known by the name of France's richest woman, L'Oreal heiress Liliane Bettencourt.

In one of these phone calls with Herzog, Sarkozy said of Azibert: I'll make him move up there... I'll help him. In another, Herzog reminded Sarkozy to say a word for Azibert during a trip to Monaco.

Legal proceedings against Sarkozy have been dropped in the Bettencourt case. Azibert never got the Monaco job.

Prosecutors have concluded, however, that the clearly stated promise constitutes in itself a corruption offense under French law, even if the promise wasn't fulfilled.

Sarkozy vigorously denies any malicious intention.

He told the court that his political life was all about giving (people) a little help. That all it is, a little help. I was 100 billion miles away from thinking we were doing something we did not have the right to do, he said.

Sarkozy said he did not get confidential information from Azibert.

Prosecutors believe Sarkozy

was at some point informed that the secret phones were being wiretapped and that it is the reason why he did not ultimately help Azibert get the job.

The confidentiality of communications between a lawyer and his client has been a major point of contention in the trial.

You have in front of you a man of whom more than 3,700 private conversations have been wiretapped... What did I do to deserve that? Sarkozy said.

Sarkozy's defense lawyer, Jacqueline Laffont, argued the whole case was based on small talk between a lawyer and his client.

You don't have the beginning of a piece of evidence, not the slightest witness account, the slightest declaration, she told the court.

Sarkozy withdrew from active politics after failing to be chosen as his conservative party's presidential candidate for France's 2017 election, won by Emmanuel Macron. He remains very popular among right-wing voters, however, and plays a major role behind the scenes, including through maintaining a relationship with Macron, whom he is said to advise on certain topics. His memoirs published this summer, *The Time of Storms*, was a best-seller for weeks.

Sarkozy will face another trial later this month along with 13 other people on charges of illegal financing of his 2012 presidential campaign.

ROCK SOLID



Pedestrians walk along the snow-covered bank of the Neris river in Vilnius on Sunday. AP

Biden to meet Mexican Prez over migration, Covid

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WILMINGTON (US), 1 MARCH

President Joe Biden is planning a virtual meeting Monday with Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador a chance for the pair to talk more fully about migration, confronting the coronavirus and cooperating on economic and national security issues.

Mexico's president has said he intends during the meeting to propose to Biden a new Bracero-style immigrant labor program that could bring 600,000 to 8,00,000 Mexican and Central American immigrants a year to work legally in the United States.

A senior Biden administration official declined to say whether the US president would back or oppose the

proposal, saying only that both countries agree on the need to expand legal pathways for migration. The official insisted on anonymity to discuss private conversations.

The original Bracero programme allowed Mexicans to work temporarily in the United States to fill labor shortages during World War II and for a couple of decades after the war. Lopez Obrador will warm to Biden's efforts to address climate change and move to cleaner energy sources. The Mexican president supports a measure to make that country's national grids prioritise power from government plants, many of which burn coal or fuel oil.

The Trump era was defined by the threat of tariffs, crackdowns on migration and his desire to construct a wall on the US southern border.

Nepal lower house session: Nepal's President Bidya Devi Bhandari on Monday summoned the session of the House of Representatives on 7 March, days after the apex court reinstated the lower house in a landmark verdict. Bhandari called for the commencement of House on recommendation of Government of Nepal. PTI

Detentions in Syria: Thousands of civilians in Syria were arbitrarily detained in enforced disappearances during the country's 10-year conflict, a UN commission said. Thousands have been subjected to torture and sexual violence. AP

Prince Philip: Prince Philip has been transferred from King Edward VII's Hospital to St Bartholomew's Hospital to continue treatment for an infection. He will also undergo testing and observation for a heart condition. AP

Trump: We've gone from America first to America last in one month

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON, 1 MARCH

In his first public speech since leaving office, former US president Donald Trump has called for Republican Party unity while indicating that he might launch a third presidential bid in 2024 even as he slammed the Biden administration, claiming that the country has gone from America First to America Last" in just one month.

Speaking at the Conservative Political Action Committee in Orlando, Florida on Sunday, the 74-year-old leader, who left the White House on January 20, stopped short of announcing to run for the president in 2024, although he gave enough indications that he is moving in that direction.

"We will take back the House. We will win the Senate and then a Republican president would triumph the White House. I wonder, who that will be," he said amidst cheers from his supporters at the annual session of the committee.

Trump, however, ruled out forming a new party, arguing that such a move will split votes

of conservatives, and called on his supporters to unite for defeating the ruling democrats in the 2022 mid-term polls. Several Republican leaders, including his top critic Senator Mitt Romney, have said that they will support Trump in his presidential bid, if he wins the 2024 Republican party primary.

Romney has said that Trump will win the party's primary, if he decides to run for president again.

Opinion polls have shown that Trump, who is the first US president to have been impeached twice, is highly popular among Republican party members and supporters, and way ahead of others.

In a bid to galvanise his base, Trump, during his 90-minute speech, repeatedly attacked the Democrats and President Joe Biden.

"We will persist and we will prevail. We are tougher than they (Democrats) are. We are stronger than they are. Together in the coming years, we will carry forward the torch of American liberty," he said, alleging that Biden's policies were taking the country on the path of socialism.

Ethiopia rebuffs US call to pull forces out from Tigray

KAMPALA, 1 MARCH

Ethiopia's government is rebuffing calls by the United States to withdraw troops from the embattled Tigray region.

In response to US Secretary of State Antony Blinken's call for Ethiopia to immediately withdraw troops from Tigray, Ethiopia's foreign ministry said that it is a matter to be decided by the Addis Ababa government, not a foreign power. It should be clear that such matters are the sole responsibility of the Ethiopian government, Ethiopia's foreign ministry said.

The Ethiopian government, like any government of a sovereign nation, has in place various organisational principles in its federal and regional structures which are solely accountable only to the Ethiopian people.

No foreign country should try to dictate a sovereign nation's internal affairs, said the Ethiopian statement. AP

Cuomo sorry for remarks 'misinterpreted' as harassment

ASSOCIATED PRESS
ALBANY, (NY), 1 MARCH

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo acknowledged for the first time on Sunday that some of his behavior with women "may have been insensitive or too personal," and said he would cooperate with a sexual harassment investigation led by the state's attorney general.

In a statement released amid mounting criticism from within his own party, the Democrat maintained he had never inappropriately touched or propositioned anyone. But he said he had teased people about their personal lives in an attempt to be "playful."

"I now understand that my interactions may have been insensitive or too personal and that some of my comments, given my position, made others feel in ways I never intended. I acknowledge some of the things I have said have been misinterpreted as an unwanted flirtation. To the extent anyone felt that way, I am truly sorry about that," he said.

Cuomo, one of America's most prominent governors, is facing the most serious challenge of his decade in office following claims he sexually harassed at least two women who worked for him. Democrats in New York and

around the nation aren't rallying to his side, leaving him increasingly isolated from traditional allies.

His partial admission of wrongdoing came after a day of wrangling over who should investigate his workplace behavior. By day's end, Cuomo acquiesced to demands that Attorney General Letitia James control the inquiry.

James said she expected to receive a formal referral that would give her office subpoena power and allow her to depose an outside law firm for "a rigorous and independent investigation."

"This is not a responsibility we take lightly," said James, a Democrat who has been, at times, allied with Cuomo but is independently elected and had emerged as a consensus choice to lead a probe.

Calls for an investigation mounted after a second former employee of Cuomo's administration went public on Saturday with harassment claims.

Charlotte Bennett, a low-level aide in the governor's office, said she expected to receive a formal referral that would give her office subpoena power and allow her to depose an outside law firm for "a rigorous and independent investigation."

Under his first plan, a retired federal judge picked by Cuomo, Barbara Jones, would have reviewed his workplace behavior. In the second proposal, announced Sunday morning in an attempt to appease legislative leaders,

James rejected both plans, demanding a formal referral giving her office authority to subpoena documents and witness testimony. Many of the biggest names in New York politics lined up behind James.

Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, both Democrats, said they wanted the attorney general to handle the investigation. Republican leaders had, for days, called on James to launch a probe. On Sunday, Republican state Senate Minority Leader Robert Ortt called on Cuomo to resign.

New York's two US senators, Charles Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand, both said an independent investigation was essential.

Cuomo's statement that women had misinterpreted comments that were intended to be jokes was met with outrage from some people, who said he appeared to be blaming the women.

"Is it 'playful' to touch one's employees' legs & kiss them on the lips against their will? Be better men than A Cuomo have been fired for that," tweeted former Fox News and NBC journalist Megyn Kelly, whose sexual harassment allegations against late Fox News Chairman Roger Ailes helped lead to his ouster.

James rejected both plans, demanding a formal referral giving her office authority to subpoena documents and witness testimony. Many of the biggest names in New York politics lined up behind James.

Vishnu Sridhar, a 27-year-old Indian-American lead system engineer with NASA's Perseverance rover, has said that the most exciting work on the awe-inspiring Mars mission will happen in the coming weeks.

Sridhar, who is from Queens, New York, is a lead system engineer at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in Pasadena, California, for SuperCam on the Mars 2020 Perseverance rover, which is on a mission to search for signs of past life on the Red Planet. He said some of the rover's most exciting work will be done in the coming weeks.

"We're going to be taking more images of Mars, we're going to be shooting lasers with the SuperCam instrument, we're going to be recording audio with our microphone, and eventually, soon in near future, we are going to deploy our helicopter, and do the first powered flight on Mars," Sridhar told ABC7 channel.

SuperCam is a remote-sensing instrument that will use laser spectroscopy to analyse the chemical com-

'Perseverance rover's exciting work to happen in coming weeks'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
HOUSTON, 1 MARCH

position of rocks on the Martian surface. It analyses terrain that the rover cannot reach. It is an instrument designed to scan rocks and minerals from up to 20 feet away to determine their chemical makeup.

The Perseverance rover was launched on July 30 last year and successfully landed on Mars on 18 February this year. The rover's SuperCam, and its other devices together will help scientists search for clues of past life on Mars.

Its predecessor Curiosity is still functioning eight years after landing on Mars. The two-year Perseverance mission is NASA's latest and most advanced mission to find evidence of past life on Mars.

Sridhar said it was important that the mission was happening despite the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

"NASA missions are clearly trying to explore and answer the basic question. Perseverance is also trying to seek that, and eventually answer the question that was there life on Mars, was there life outside Earth, and it was definitely a tough period for us during COVID-19 and for everyone else around the globe," he said.

'Nomadland', 'Borat 2' win top awards at 2021 Golden Globes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

LOS ANGELES, 1 MARCH

"Nomadland", director Chloe Zhao's moving drama about van dwellers and Sacha Baron Cohen's satire "Borat 2" won top movie honours at a scaled-down virtual ceremony at the Golden Globes, which was held bi-coastally due to the coronavirus pandemic.

He would thank God. He would thank his parents. He would thank his ancestors for their guidance and their sacrifices," an emotional Ledward said.

Andra Day emerged as the surprise best actress motion picture drama winner for her role of singer Billie Holiday in "The United States vs Billie Holiday".

The Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA), the body that conducts the Golden Globes which is facing fire over its lack of Black representation among its ranks, tried to douse the flames as it awarded people of colour in top acting categories.

During their opening monologue co-hosts Tina Fey and Amy Poehler, who hosted the ceremony from New

York and Los Angeles, made fun of HFPA.

"The HFPA is made up of around 90 international -- no Black -- journalists who attend movie junkets each year in search of a better life," Fey said.

They also mentioned that "a number of Black-led projects were overlooked" as awards-season frontrunners "Judas and the Black Messiah", "Da 5 Bloods", "One Night in Miami" and "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom" were not nominated for best picture.

Cohen said in his speech, "Thank you to the all-white Hollywood Foreign Press," Cohen said in his speech.

Daniel Kaluuya won best supporting role Globe, his first, for playing the Black Panther Party chairman Fred Hampton in "Judas and the Black Messiah".

Jodie Foster won the best supporting actress award, her

fourth trophy, for her role in "The Mauritanian", a story about illegal detention in the US.

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Focusing on holistic development

SNEHA PRIYA

In this new age of technology, we are practically surrounded by computers day and night and they have become an integral part of our lives. Our consumption habits have also become dependent on technology, from online gaming to online streaming platforms.

This process of technological advancement was catapulted with the pandemic, many existing jobs were diminished and on the other hand, multiple technologically driven jobs were also created.

This challenge demanded a complete and dynamic curriculum, which was not present in the previous education system. Thus, the National Education Policy was introduced to inculcate coding and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education facets at a young

age to amplify technological exposure and create a new world of innovation.

STEM subjects are important for a strong fundamental foundation of children in the new world of technology. It incorporates multiple disciplines like coding, robotics, mechanical engineering, nuclear engineering, chemical engineering etc.

In today's world, where artificial intelligence-enabled smart speakers are at our disposal to answer our queries, the approach towards education has taken a shift from previously just being able to know the answers to a more holistic approach of knowing what all questions to ask and critically analysing a problem situation, when it arrives. With technological development comes the need for youth to be equipped with skills for critical thinking, technologically adaptive and evaluation skills to be able to ingest, interpret, evaluate and

familiarise oneself with the information in this new digital age.

Since all this is made easier with STEM education, its inclusivity in today's world is imperative. It helps youngsters to develop skills related to access, understand, and determine the merits and utilise the information that they are acquiring. They are taught how to solve problems by utilising their critical thinking skills in real-life situations. This encourages them to ask questions about not only their immediate surroundings but also the world at large and seek unique answers to these.

Learning with STEM is not just an old school learning process; it focuses on a holistic development of the students and opens the door to a vast array of opportunities for them. This is only possible because of its practical inclusivity, interactivity and the fun factor that it brings along with

learning through innovative projects, teamwork/group work and gamification of the learning process.

Techies and teachers believe that coding can be the game-changer and the new digital generation will be one of rational thinkers who will use analytical skills to anticipate and solve a problem. Coding is expected to help with the problem-solving skills in all facets of life, be it maths, science or humanities. Not just that, coding is also expected to make the new generation future-proof and ready for future jobs.

India is the third-largest start-up ecosystem after the US and China. It is also home to a myriad of start-ups in multiple sectors, and coding is one of the major driving forces for this growth. Coding holds the power to embrace development and boost economic growth as the industry has seen an evident rise at an exponential rate.

There has been an exceptional improvement in coding startups and a gradual increase in its educational inclusivity. Moreover, the reliability on computer coding is also increasing rapidly in companies other than the technology sector and 10 out of the top 25 highest paid jobs are tech positions. Coders get a variety of options for their career choices as they can work in tech giants and can also easily get recruited at a hospital or manufacturing firm.

Coding is the game changer and it has catapulted the growth of our economy. From young game developers to young entrepreneurs, coding and STEM education is helping youngsters adapt to the new age of technology and achieve greater feats in their life.

The writer is co-founder and chief executive officer, SP Robotic Works

VIVEK BINDRA

It takes a lot to convert a potentially viable business idea into a successfully running business operation and only a handful of entrepreneurs succeed in this endeavour. It is estimated that 90 per cent of startups fail within the first five years of launching. Lack of innovation, inadequate financial management, below par marketing strategies and overambitious expansion plans are some factors that ruin businesses startups.

Launching a business and setting it into operation requires multiple skills. Entrepreneurs overseeing this phase of business must therefore be capable of wearing multiple hats and undertaking a series of technical as well as specialised tasks on their own. Even if one is outsourcing or delegating tasks, it is imperative to know every operation to ensure that businesses are running on the right track. Clearly, entrepreneur must do his/her homework before taking the plunge into the difficult startup world.

While a number of essential business skills are usually learnt on the job, it is advisable for entrepreneurs to prepare themselves by learning a series of critical business skills. Undertaking training or internships, working for different businesses and taking up a series of short-term digital business learning programmes can help individuals acquire the skills needed to put their business on the runway.

New-age marketing skills:

Effective marketing is a critical stepping stone for a successful sales strategy. Marketing has today grown into a multi-dimensional exercise involving not just traditional outreach activities but a wide array of digital and social media outreach as well. It is advisable, therefore, that entrepreneurs understand the basic elements of marketing strategies before launching a business. Online learning can keep one a step ahead at this. A series of online business skilling courses can help one learn the basics of traditional and digital marketing including content marketing, Search Engine Optimisation, Facebook and Instagram marketing. Intelligent use of these platforms will help augment the reach of business manifolds.

Consultative selling:

This might seem a very obvious suggestion, but understanding sales strategies is one of the most critical business skills for an entrepreneur. If one is an entrepreneur, one also needs to be an intelligent salesman. However, in a highly competitive market one's sales strategies need to be up with the time. Consultative selling rather than product-based selling is the approach that finds greater resonance among new-age businesses. While every salesperson sells his/her product, one has to learn to make the entire sales process look like a problem-solving process for the buyer and that is essentially what consultative selling is about.

When one adopts a consultative selling approach, one is not acting as a salesperson, rather as a consultant for the buyer. The process involves thorough research and gathering information on the customer's needs before approaching them with a solution rather than just a product. Learning the art of consultative selling will set one apart as a salesperson and make one's sales process more seamless and customer-friendly.

Market research

The ability to conduct effective market research is one of the most underrated business skills. However, conducting a thorough market research to study the state of the market and identify the voids and gaps is a critical element in business success. Effective market research prepares the ground for one's business by providing the right information and knowledge of where one's competitors stand; who one's target consumers are and where one's industry is headed. Make no mistake. Market research is not just essential before launching a business, but it is an inseparable part of running a business. Effective market research is elementary to enable businesses that are re-starting in the market. So, if one is planning to start a business, understanding data must be on one's agenda.

Data analytics

Data analytics or the art of making business sense of numerous data is a widely emerging skill that entrepreneurs will need going forward. A growing mass of data being generated online is a treasure trove of information that businesses must make use of to launch targeted selling strategies. With digital sales gaining increasing prominence, knowing data analytical skills can help entrepreneurs make data-driven decisions resulting in improved product offerings and better business strategy. This lends a huge competitive advantage to small businesses that are re-starting in the market. So, if one is planning to start a business, understanding data must be on one's agenda.

DONNING MULTIPLE HATS

Even if one is associated with outsourcing or delegating tasks, it is imperative for entrepreneurs to know every aspect of their operation

wisely, making the right investment versus Return On Investment assessments, taking the right spending decisions for different core areas of the business, and minimising operational costs. Investing a certain amount of one's profits wisely is another key skill that can create strong collaterals and boost the strength of the business. Often, entrepreneurs make miscalculations about investing in business expansion and fail to optimise their resources.

A calibrated and cautious financial strategy is advisable particularly for businesses in their initial phases. Also, it is important to remember that one must never mix up their personal and business finances. Learning the basics of effective financial management is therefore

crucial for entrepreneurs. This can be done through digital business skilling courses.

Brand management

Once a startup gains a foothold in the market, establishing a brand identity becomes an important element of one's overall marketing strategy. Effective brand management strategies help project a certain image of one's organisation, enabling consumers to associate one's brand with a set of principles and values and ignite greater brand awareness. This not only helps raise the value of one's products and services, but also helps build a loyal set of customers.

The writer is founder and chief executive officer, Bada Business

PLUS POINTS

Enriching skills



To intensively engage children in instilling the 21st-century skills of communication, collaboration and critical thinking, a global debate competition was held at SAI International School with more than 40 schools participating globally. The mega online debate competition had student's participation from over 11 countries and 44 schools across the globe such as Australia, Kenya, Namibia, New Zealand, Pakistan, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, Turkey and India.

The online debate session was graced by keynote speaker Debanjan Chakrabarti, director, East and Northeast India, British Council, Nick Low, British deputy high commissioner, Kolkata and Bijaya Kumar Sahoo, founder and mentor, SAI International Education Group. The winners were announced after three rigorous rounds of deliberations. They were judged on content, accuracy, clarity, body language, evidence, and much more.

Signing ceremony



Michelin India Technology Centre in Pune and IIT Bombay-Monash Research Academy signed a memorandum of understanding recently, designed to be an umbrella agreement for next-generation sustainable mobility research.

The partnership would be for a tenure of five years with several projects envisaged development in the mobility space in India. It will bring Michelin's global Research and Development DNA and involve doctoral students from IIT Bombay-Monash Research Academy encompassing a wide range of topics such as advanced computational engineering, materials, simulation and manufacture, infrastructure engineering, clean energy water, nanotechnology, biotechnology and stem cell research.

Effortless hiring



A recruitment platform named Vasitum aims towards replacing conventional hiring portals with a unique artificial intelligence-powered solution that brings in-built sourcing, pre-assessments, screening tools, and automation to the recruitment process. The founder and chief executive officer of the platform is Vikram Wadhawan.

Since its launch, the start-up has strived to disrupt traditional recruitment processes. It automates every hiring activity and task, including sourcing, screening, assessment, interview scheduling, background check, and documentation. The centrepiece of Vasitum is their AI chatbot-Vasi, which is almost at par with people when it comes to engaging users. The chatbot has been stocked with NLP to have full-fledged conversations with both recruiters and candidates. By using machine learning, it suggests highly relevant candidates and jobs to the user by asking certain questions to understand their requirements.

Virtual conclave

Institute of Management Studies Noida organised a virtual human resources conclave under the joint auspices of ICT Academy. The conclave was organised under the aegis of the HR Club of IMS Noida on the theme "Future skill". The speaker was HR Vinay Agarwal from Tech Mahindra Global Head Business, Vijayan KA, head academic operation from ICT Academy, Pankaj Kakkar, principal technical analyst from West Management, Dr Kulneet Suri, senior director and Dr Manju Gupta from IMS Noida.

Dr Manju Gupta elaborated her points on the relationship between technology and HR. She also added we can complete our work anytime and anywhere through technology.

During the programme, Vijayan KA, head academic operation, ICT Academy stated that students who want to become HR in future need to pay attention to their social networking skills.



PRISON TERM

Bangladesh all-rounder Mehedi Hasan Miraz (photo, left) has said he had felt bad staying in his hotel room all by himself on the team's first three days in New Zealand but being allowed half an hour out each day subsequently made things a little better. It felt like he was in a jail initially, reports *The Daily Star*, Dhaka.

For more updates

www.thestatesman.com

THUMBNAILS

Motera wicket: While there is still speculation about the kind of wicket that will be laid out for the fourth and final Test between India and England at Narendra Modi Stadium, the visitors are preparing for the worst, expecting the ball to turn right from the beginning.

Moody appointed: Sri Lanka's cricket board on Sunday announced it had appointed former coach Tom Moody a consultant tasked with reviving the game and rebuilding the sliding national team. The Australian former Test player will have a three-year contract.



'Stop moaning': Viv Richards was on Sunday reported to have endorsed the spin-friendly conditions that had been created during the second and third Tests between India and England in Chennai and Ahmedabad, respectively. He said people should stop moaning.

Trials postponed: The National Rifle Association of India has postponed its shotgun trials which were scheduled to start on 3 March at the Bhopal Shooting Academy because of a regional surge in Covid-19 infections. Fresh dates and the venue will soon be announced.

Gone phut: Chinese Super League champions Jiangsu FC have "ceased operations," the club said on Sunday, underlining the financial problems coursing through football in the country. Jiangsu won the domestic title for the first time just three months ago.

Pep all praises: Famed Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola on Monday described sister club Mumbai City FC's feat of topping the Indian Super League points table and booking a spot in the AFC Champions League (ACL) as "an incredible achievement".

Gunners win: Arsenal reduced Leicester's hopes of winning the Premier League with a 3-1 win on Sunday. They fell behind to Youri Tielemans' early goal at the King Power Stadium. They had lost nine of 11 league games when they conceded the opening goal this term.

Leverkusen stunned: Freiburg scored twice after the break to snatch all the points on the road against Bayer Leverkusen in the closer of the 23rd round matches in Bundesliga. Freiburg's Ermedin Demirovic and Lucas Holer scored against the run of the play.

Inter victorious: Inter Milan took a four-point lead at the top of the Serie A table with a 3-0 win over Genoa at the San Siro, with striker Romelu Lukaku taking the center-stage. Inter entered Sunday's game with four consecutive Serie A wins, with Achraf Hakimi sitting out.

India training: Big guns Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma and Ajinkya Rahane went full throttle at the nets as the Indian cricket team on Monday trained in earnest for the upcoming fourth and final Test against England. The fourth Test starts on Thursday.

Vijender match: Indian professional boxer Vijender Singh's next bout, his first since November 2019, against a yet-to-be-announced opponent will take place in Goa on the rooftop deck of a docked ship on 19 March.

Bale turns back time at Spurs as ManU and Chelsea draw

AGENCIES
LONDON, 1 MARCH

Gareth Bale turned back time for Tottenham, while Chelsea and Manchester United seemed happy just to play out time.

Bale looked like the star player who left Tottenham for Real Madrid in 2013 as he scored twice in the club's 4-0 win over Burnley, prompting Spurs manager Jose Mourinho to pronounce him "better than ever" though still not suitable to start week-in, week-out.

While Bale found his form, Harvey Barnes had his good run cut short by a knee injury in Leicester's 3-1 loss to Arsenal. He is likely to need an operation and miss six weeks.

Chelsea kept its unbeaten record under manager Thomas Tuchel in a 0-0 draw with Man United as both teams appeared reluctant to risk losing one point in the hope of getting three.

Liverpool put a stop to the run of four straight league defeats which effectively finished off its title chances, but a 2-0 win over last-place Sheffield United was still short of Liverpool's best.

BALE'S COMEBACK

Bale opened the scoring after 68 seconds and the Welsh forward added another early in the second half, both off



assists from Son Heung-min. Back on loan from Spain, it was his first two-goal game since 2019.

"Now he is better than ever," Mourinho said. "It's not just about the two goals he scored, it's fundamentally about his physical performance."

However, Mourinho warned that Bale would still have to rest for some upcoming games to manage his form and fitness.

Harry Kane and Lucas Moura also scored for the hosts, and it could have been

more if not for some good saves from Nick Pope when Burnley was already four goals down.

STAMFORD BRIDGE STALEMATE

Chelsea's new identity under Tuchel is taking shape. There's intense, German-style pressing, but also a newfound compactness and solidity in the defense at Stamford Bridge, compared to former manager Frank Lampard's open but defensively vulnerable style.

Against United's counterattacking specialists, both teams seemed risk-averse, even in the final minutes.

The upshot was a ninth game unbeaten in all competitions for Tuchel at Chelsea, seven of them without conceding a goal, but it also meant that Chelsea missed an opportunity to overtake West Ham for fourth in the table.

The draw also highlighted United's inability to mount an unlikely challenge to cross-city rival Manchester City for the title. City leads by 12 points from second-place United.

United was left grumbling about the refereeing at Chelsea after not being awarded a penalty in the first half for what looked like handball by Calum Hudson-Odoi.

LIVERPOOL FINALLY WINS

The first goal against Sheffield United was made in Liverpool's academy as Trent Alexander-Arnold hit a deflected cross for fellow academy graduate Curtis Jones to send past the otherwise impressive Sheffield goalkeeper Aaron Ramsdale.

In the 64th, Roberto Firmino thought he'd ended his run of six games without a goal in all competitions when his deflected shot went in but the Premier League ruled it was an own-goal for Sheffield's Kean Bryan.

"(The result) is very important because plenty of people have written us off," Liverpool manager Jorgen Klopp told Sky Sports. "That's completely fine because it's about us to show if we're still there."

FULHAM FALLS SHORT

Fulham missed a chance for a win in a 0-0 draw with a Crystal Palace team which rarely presented any sort of attacking threat. The draw left Scott Parker's team unbeaten in five league games, with only one goal conceded during that time, but still 18th and three points adrift of safety.

an empty net from close range.

Things took a turn for the worse for Gokulam in the 30th minute after Vincy Barreto was shown a direct red for his challenge on Vanlal Duata. The Red Machines, aided by the sending off, continued to show their force of strength.

Churchill came close to double the lead in the 34th, but Bryce Miranda's cross kissed the top of the crossbar before going out of play. The winger created another opening via a shot from outside the area, but his powerful effort was saved by Ubaid.

Vincenz Annese's side regrouped and came close to equalising on the 42nd minute after Shilton Paul misjudged Emil Benny's cross, completely missing it and leaving the goal uncheck. The ball fell to Philip Adjah, whose shot was blocked by Duata.

The Kerala side was gifted a penalty after Vilas pulled Dennis Antwi down in the area on the 45th minute. However, Shilton Paul saved Philip Adjah's spot-kick with his legs, keeping the scoreline at 1-0 in favour of the Red Machines at the end of an eventful first half.

Gokulam returned after the break and played attacking football. But just like the first half, they failed to capitalise on their momentum as Churchill Brothers doubled their lead in the 53rd minute after Kingslee Fernandes' shot took a deflection of Deepak Devarami, and beat Ubaid at his near post.

Two minutes later, Zuniga forced Gokulam Kerala's keeper Ubaid into making a sharp save after he met Bryce Miranda's cross at the far post.

After the opening exchanges, Churchill started to knock the Gokulam Kerala defence on multiple occasions and finally broke the Malabar defence with a well-built move in the 26th minute.

Bryce Miranda knocked down Vinil Poojary's cross, sending it across the goal, where Luka Majcen was waiting to bundle the cross into

Churchill Brothers survive late Gokulam Kerala scare to extend lead atop table

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KOLKATA, 1 MARCH

Churchill Brothers survived a last-minute scare to beat 10-man Gokulam Kerala FC 3-2 and extend their lead atop the I-League table here on Monday.

Luka Majcen's brace (26th and 87th) and Kingslee Fernandes' goal (53rd) helped Santiago Valer's side stretch their lead at the top of the standings to five points.

Gokulam Kerala made a dominant start to the game, and created a couple of chances in the opening three minutes, but Vincy Barreto and Philip Adjah were unable to get their shots away from inside the area.

Churchill custodian Shilton Paul had to be alert when Ubaid released Philip Adjah with a long kick forward, and the Ghanaian tried to sneak his volley at the near post in the seventh minute.

Two minutes later, Zuniga forced Gokulam Kerala's keeper Ubaid into making a sharp save after he met Bryce Miranda's cross at the far post.

After the opening exchanges, Churchill started to knock the Gokulam Kerala defence on multiple occasions and finally broke the Malabar defence with a well-built move in the 26th minute.

Bryce Miranda knocked down Vinil Poojary's cross, sending it across the goal, where Luka Majcen was waiting to bundle the cross into

the world championship gold in 2019, her last title before the COVID-19 pandemic disruption.

The 25-year-old from Hyderabad, seeded second, will look to go the distance again as she opens her campaign against Turkey's Nesrin Yigit.

Sindhu didn't have a good outing in the three events in Thailand recently but the road to the quarterfinal here looks smooth for the Indian where she is likely to confront fifth seed Thai Busanan Ongbamrungphan, an opponent she had beaten at the Toyota Thailand Open in January.

Two-time former winner Saina, too, is in the same half but the senior pro will have to overcome players like Korea's sixth seed Sung Ji Hyun and fourth seeded Danish Mia Blichfeldt - whom she is likely to meet -- to set up a semifinal face-off with Sindhu. Former world number

one Saina, who turns 31 this month, is at the fag end of an illustrious career, having slipped to 19 in the BWF rankings but she still has the hunger to make it to another Olympics.

The London bronze medalist will hope to make a positive start when she opens against Thailand's Phittayaorn Chaivaworn, a former world junior championships bronze medallist.

All eyes will also be on world number 10 men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty after their semifinal finish at Toyota Thailand Open.

The Indian pair, seeded second, would look to stretch its good run, especially after a month-long training session under new doubles coach Mathias Boe of Denmark.

The Indian duo will face Scotland's Christopher Grimley and Matthew Grimley in the opening round.

'Finch will be Australia's T20 World Cup captain'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MELBOURNE, 1 MARCH

selectors alongside Trevor Hohns and national coach Justin Langer.

"It's just complete white noise for me," he added of the criticism.

Doubts around Finch have been raging, led by former selector Mark Waugh. "His job is to score runs... no batsman is immune from being dropped when you're not scoring runs, doesn't matter if you're captain or not," said Waugh, now a pundit.

Australian media have also weighed in with the *Sydney Morning Herald* saying Finch was "running out of chances to book his ticket to this year's T20 World Cup".

Bailey told the *Melbourne Herald* Sun there was no doubt in his mind the 34-year-old opener would be leading the side in India in October.

"He's got a terrific average, he's the captain of this side and he'll be the captain of this side at the World Cup," said Bailey, one of three

Mumbai trounce Himachal

JAIPUR, 1 MARCH

Domestic giants Mumbai trounced Himachal Pradesh by 200 runs in their final Elite Group D game here on Monday to remain unbeaten in the league stage of the Vijay Hazare Trophy.

Mumbai had won their first four matches against Delhi, Maharashtra, Puducherry and Rajasthan.

Opting to bat at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium, Mumbai posted an imposing 321/9, courtesy Shardul Thakur's 92, Suryakumar Yadav's 91 and Aditya Tare's 83 after a top-order fall.

Himachal were then bundled out for a meagre 121, with leg-spinner Prashant Solanki (4/31) shining with the ball. Mumbai were teetering at 8/3 after losing openers Yashasvi Jaiswal (2), Prithvi Shaw (2) and Shreyas Iyer (2) cheaply.

While Jaiswal was caught by Praveen Thakur off Rishi Dhawan (4/84), Shaw holed out to Mayank Dagar off Vaibhav Arora.

Himachal had trapped Iyer in front of wicket as Mumbai got off to a horrendous start.

It soon became 49/4, after Sarfaraz Khan (11) failed to convert his start. Then began the rescue act with the prolific Suryakumar, who toyed with the Himachal attack, striking 15 boundaries on his way to a 75-ball 91.

He found an able ally in the experienced Tare (83 off 98 balls; 6x4; 1x6) who played the perfect second fiddle as the duo forged a 99-run fifth wicket stand to rally the innings.

Shardul, one of the heroes of the Brisbane Test against Australia, hammered six boundaries and as many sixes, as he cantered to 92 in just 57 balls.

Thanks to Shardul's hitting, Mumbai crossed the 300-run mark, but Tare's patient knock was equally important as he anchored the innings. PI

Swiss Open: Sindhu, Saina may face off in semis; all eyes on Chirag-Satwik

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BASEL (SWITZERLAND),
1 MARCH

Reigning world champion P V Sindhu will be eager to return to the podium as former winner Saina Nehwal looks to regain her touch in the season-opening Swiss Open tournament beginning here on Tuesday.

Indian men's singles players, too, have tasted success in this tournament with Sameer Verma, HS Prannoy and Kidambi Srikanth emerging victorious in 2018, 2016 and 2015 respectively and B Sai Praneeth finishing runners-up in the last edition.

All four will be looking to relive the moments and extend India's good run at the USD 140,000 event which will also resume the extended Olympic qualifying period.

It was here at St. Jakobshalle venue that Olympic silver medallist Sindhu had claimed

that last point also applies to Zverev, who has defeated Nadal twice but lost their only meeting at a major and who has beaten Djokovic twice but lost both of his major clashes with the world No 1. One of Tsitsipas' two victories over Federer admittedly came at a major, and the exact same can be said when it comes to the Greek's history with Nadal, whom Tsitsipas defeated in a stunning five-set comeback win. But the world No 6's two victories over Djokovic go alongside a defeat in their sole Slam clash.

Zverev is 2-2 with Djokovic at majors, a stage on which he has never beaten Federer. He has beaten Nadal six times in his career, and four of those wins remarkably came on the Spaniard's beloved clay surface, but only one of them was achieved at a Grand Slam. Nadal, meanwhile, has beaten Zverev five times at Slams, including in two French Open finals.

And that is one of the most notable elements of all: None of these players have beaten any of the "big three" in a Grand Slam final. Zverev twice had the chance against Nadal in Paris and twice came up short. Medvedev fell to Nadal at the final hurdle in New York and to Djokovic in Melbourne this month. Zverev's only major final appearance saw him blow a two-set lead to lose to Thiem, while 22-year-old Tsitsipas has not yet reached a Slam final but has plenty of time to do so.

Tsitsipas showed signs of the forcefulness required to unseat one of the "big three" from their thrones when he stole victory from Nadal - who had just showed his own determination in fighting through a back issue - in the quarterfinals. It was the same forcefulness that Stanislas Wawrinka found in three Slam finals and that Andy Murray found once upon a time in New York and then again in London. But there has been nowhere near enough of that conviction from the next generation against the game's icons when it has really mattered.

In recent years there has been talk of the "lost generation" that included the likes of Grigor Dimitrov and Raonic, who were seemingly Slam winners in waiting upon their arrivals in the top 10 but who have never captured trophies of the utmost prestige in their careers.

The "next generation" is now, but that does not mean what it should mean. They are in fact at risk of losing themselves like the generation before them.

THE INDEPENDENT

Medvedev's performance shows tennis' next generation still isn't ready