

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

CHENNAI | TUESDAY 19 | JANUARY 2021

## WEATHER



**Max:** 29°C  
**Min:** 22°C  
**Rainfall:** Nil

## ASTROGUIDE

**Sarvari:** Thai 6  
**Tithi:** Sashti/ Saphthami  
**Star:** Uthirathathi/ Revathi  
**Rahukalam:**  
3 pm to 4.30 pm  
**Yamagandam:**  
9 am to 10.30 am  
**PRAYERS**  
**Fajar:** 5.20 am  
**Zohar:** 12.23 pm  
**Asar:** 3.35 pm  
**Maghrib:** 6.01 pm  
**Isha:** 7.17 pm  
**SUNSET TODAY** 6.04 PM  
**SUNRISE TOMORROW** 6.36 AM  
**MOONRISE TODAY** 11.04 AM  
**MOONSET TOMORROW** 11.26 PM

## CORONA COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+9,783)	(+132)
1,05,82,458	1,52,588

covid19india.org

### STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+551)  
**TN:** 8,31,323 12,272

### WORLD CONFIRMED CASES

9,57,68,122  
**DEATHS**  
20,44,183  
**COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES**  
219  
worldometers.info

## 'Tandav' makers apologise, say no intent to hurt sentiments

**Mumbai:** The makers of Amazon Prime Video series 'Tandav' on Monday apologised unconditionally after complaints that one of its episodes had hurt "Hindu sentiments". An official statement from the cast and crew of Tandav said, "We have been closely monitoring viewer reactions to the web series Tandav and today during a discussion, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting informed us regarding a large number of grievances and petitions received on various facets of the web series with serious concerns and apprehensions regarding its content hurting the sentiments of the people. "Tandav is a work of fiction and any resemblance to acts and persons and events is purely coincidental. The cast and crew did not have any intention to offend the sentiments of any individual, caste, community, race, religion or religious beliefs or insult or outrage any institution, political party or person, living or dead.

## COUNTER POINT



**Forget Bihar... now our priority is Assam and Bengal!**

# Domestic flight offloads woman and 4-month-old daughter at city airport

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
CHENNAI, JAN. 18

A 30-year-old woman and her 4-month old daughter were offloaded from the Delhi bound Vistara flight on Monday since the baby was crying continuously after boarding the aircraft. The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami was travelling to Delhi in the same flight.

The Tamil Nadu CM

Edappadi K Palaniswami boarded the Vistara airlines flight to Delhi which was scheduled to depart from Chennai at 11: 55 am with 94 passengers. Sources said that the 4-month old baby girl started to cry continuously after boarding. Her parents Rahul and Lakshmi Devi tried to control the baby but all their efforts went in vain.

The air hostesses requested the mother to get down from

the flight along with the baby since other passengers are getting disturbed. Lakshmi Devi got down from the flight along with the baby, while his husband stayed back in the aircraft.

The flight left Chennai with 93 passengers after a delay of 25 minutes. Airport sources said mother and the baby were made to stay in the waiting hall and boarded the Vistara airlines flight to Delhi at 5.30 pm.

## STATE | 3

**OPS to Centre: Release ₹19,591.63 cr dues soon**



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

## NATION | 4

**Shivraj demands ban on web series**



## SPORT | 8

**Mum's call did wonders for Siraj**



### 'COPS MUST DECIDE'

# SC keeps off farmers' R-Day tractor rally

**PARMOD KUMAR AND SANJAY KAW | DC**  
NEW DELHI, JAN. 18

The Supreme Court on Monday left it to the Delhi police to decide on the entry of protesting farmers into the national capital on Republic Day, as it heard the government's plea seeking an injunction against the tractor rally planned for January 26.

Sticking to their stand, the union leaders said the protesting farmers had a constitutional right to take out their tractor rally peacefully and said thousands of people will participate in the event. The proposed 50-km "kisan rally" will be led by women-driven tractors on Outer Ring Road and won't disrupt the day's big parade on Rajpath. Farmers have started organising mock rallies in parts of Punjab and Haryana to encourage more people to join the "kisan tractor march" in large numbers.

The tenth round of talks between the government and the farmers' representatives was on Monday pushed back by a day to January 20, with the Centre saying both sides want to resolve the stalemate at the earliest but it was "getting delayed due to the involvement of people of other ideologies".

"The government's ministerial meeting with the farmers unions will be held on January 20 at 2 pm at Vigyan Bhavan, instead of January 19," the agriculture ministry said in a

● **The Supreme Court on Monday told the Centre that the proposed tractor rally by farmers on the Republic Day on January 26 is a matter of "law and order" and Delhi police are the first authority to decide who should be allowed to enter the national capital**



statement late on Monday. A Supreme Court-appointed panel to resolve the crisis is, meanwhile, due to hold its first meeting on Tuesday.

"The government's ministerial meeting with protesting farmers' unions was fixed on January 19. Due to inevitable reasons, it has become important to postpone the meeting. Now the meeting will be held on January 20 at 2 pm at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi. Request you to attend the meeting," agriculture secretary Sanjay Agarwal said in a letter to 40 farmers' unions.

There are indications the tractor rally may also figure in the tenth round of negotiations between the farmers and Central ministers. The two sides have failed to reach any understanding in nine rounds of talks over the repeal of three Central farm laws and the MSP Act.

In the Supreme Court, a three-judge bench led by Chief Justice of India Sharad Arvind Bobde on Monday said the Delhi police was at liberty to

invoke its powers under the law and it has the power to deal with law and order situations. "Who should be allowed and the number of people to enter are all matters of law and order, to be decided by the police. We are not the first authority," Chief Justice Bobde said.

To this, attorney-general K.K. Venugopal said: "It is an extraordinary situation and the court may pass orders", noting that "public order", "police", "land" and "services" in the national capital are under the direct purview of the Centre. Calling the proposed tractor rally "illegal", Mr

Venugopal told the court an order from it would "strengthen" the hands of the government as it was facing an "unprecedented situation". An unmoved CJI Bobde shot back, asking: "Does the Union of India need the Supreme Court to tell it what powers it has under the Police Act?" He said the court hadn't taken up the entire issue of the farmers' agitation and its intervention had been "misunderstood".

### KARNATAKA Vs MAHARASHTRA

# BSY slams Thackeray over border comments

**Bengaluru, Jan 18:** Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa on Monday condemned the statement of Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray that his government is committed to incorporating areas of Karnataka where Marathi-speaking people are in majority.

"The statement of Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's speech on the integration of Marathi language and culture into Maharashtra is obnoxious. This is contrary to the principles of the Indian Union. Mahajan report is final and true," Yediyurappa said.

"It is unfortunate, I condemn the statement. We're not going to give even an inch of land from this side," the Karnataka CM added.

Yediyurappa further said that it is painful that Maharashtra chief minister is trying to sabotage an amicable atmosphere.

"Thus regionalism and talk of linguistics are detrimental to the unity of the country. I condemn this. In



Karnataka, the Marathas are living with Kannadigas. While the Kannadigas in the border districts of Maharashtra are living with the Marathas," he added.

On Sunday, the chief minister of Maharashtra said that his government will incorporate areas of Karnataka where Marathi-speaking people are in majority into the state. "Bringing Karnataka-wide Marathi-speaking and cultural region to Maharashtra will be a tribute to the soldiers who were martyred in this border war. We are united and committed to that. Respects to the martyrs with this promise," the CMO tweeted on Sunday.

# Congress-DMK friction shows as Pondy assembly passes resolution

**G. BABU JAYAKUMAR & D. SEKAR | DC**  
CHENNAI, JAN. 18

The open assertion of the DMK's Puducherry unit on Monday to field candidates in all the 30 constituencies for the Territorial Assembly elections in April or May is seen as harbinger to the splintering of the Congress-DMK alliance not just in the Union Territory but also in Tamil Nadu. Though all is seemingly well with the DMK-Congress alliance in Tamil Nadu with even Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and DMK's Youth Wing secretary Udhayanidhi Stalin sharing the stage at a Jallikattu event at Avaniyapuram in Madurai on Pongal Day, that relationship between the two allies has been going south for quite some time in Puducherry.

On Monday, DMK members boycotted the crucial Assembly session called to pass a resolution against the Centre's farm laws and also to demand Statehood for the Union Territory on the pretext of attending a meeting called by S. Jagathrakshan, DMK's newly appointed in-charge for Puducherry.

Jagathrakshakan, DMK MP representing Arakkonam, vowed to lay down his life in the event of the DMK failing to win all the 30 constituencies in the elections. Though it is not clear whether he aspires to become the next Chief Minister, as it is rumoured in some circles, or not, he had made it clear that the alliance with Congress was over.

In fact, the DMK has not been participating in any of

### DIFFERENCES

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the programmes of the Congress in the past six months. Even Chief Minister V. Narayanasamy organised a protest against Lieutenant Governor Kiran Bedi recently, the DMK did not extend support.

Since the local leaders of the DMK and Jagathrakshakan, who was made in charge of Puducherry a few days back, feel that the party was strong in the Union Territory and would hence romp home in the elections on its own strength, they want to detach the Congress from its bandwagon.

With the PMK apparently coming close to the DMK — after the AIADMK in whose alliance it is now put its foot down turning down the precondition of an assurance on its reservation demand — Jagathrakshakan is hopeful of his party storming Puducherry.

Jagathrakshakan, a multi-billionaire who owns educational institutions and many other businesses, is said to have a wide range of business interests in Puducherry too and hence is keen on reigning over the Union Territory. A

▶ In fact, the DMK has not been participating in any of the programmes of the Congress in the past six months. Even Chief Minister V. Narayanasamy organised a protest against Lieutenant Governor Kiran Bedi recently, the DMK did not extend support.

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▶ TNCC president KS Alagiri has also acknowledged that there were differences between the Congress and DMK in Puducherry.

Vanniyar himself, he is said to be secretly working towards roping in the PMK.

To accommodate the PMK in its alliance, the DMK would also have to let go of the Congress in TNadu, too. In the event of the PMK moving in, the VCK may also leave the alliance. VCK general secretary Thol Thirumavalavan had acknowledged that there was trouble in the coalition by saying that there was an attempt by inimical forces to break the alliance.

Since PMK founder S. Ramadoss, who recently launched an agitation demanding 20 per cent exclusive reservation for Vanniyars, needs a face saving measure like an assurance from the leader of the alliance in which it goes to the polls that at least the sentiments behind the demand for reservation would be respected.

The DMK, during the Vikravandi byelections in October 2019, had actually promised an exclusive reservation of Vanniyars, which was then ridiculed by Ramadoss. But now since Ramadoss' demand that the AIADMK at least agree in

principle for an exclusive reservation has been turned down, he is angry and would like to go with the DMK if it could give them a decent number of seats.

Also if the DMK could give the assurance to look into the reservation demand, there is every possibility of the PMK supporting the Jagathrakshakan plan to form a government in Puducherry and then filling in the void left by the Congress departure from the alliance.

TNCC president KS Alagiri has also acknowledged that there were differences between the Congress and DMK in Puducherry.

Though he hoped that it will be sorted out, the manner in which Congress has planned a series of meetings by Rahul Gandhi in the State, point to its preparedness to go it alone in the elections, Rahul Gandhi is touring the Western region of Tamil Nadu from January 23, meeting entrepreneurs, trade unions and others in Coimbatore and Tirupur for three days. And more such programmes in other parts of the State are also on the anvil.

# TN poll alliance matters figure in CM meeting with Amit Shah

**G. BABU JAYAKUMAR & D. SEKAR | DC**  
CHENNAI, JAN. 18

Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami's scheduled visit to Delhi on Monday, ostensibly to invite Prime Minister Narendra Modi to inaugurate the Jayalalithaa memorial and to discuss development plans for the State, led to tongues wagging in the political circles back home.

The political grapevine had it that Palaniswami has gone to explain to the Prime Ministers and other leaders of the BJP the difficulties in allowing the TTV Dhinakaran-led AMMK merge with the AIADMK at this point of time.

That Dhinakaran was also planning to fly to Delhi by a chartered flight only added fuel to the rumours, though fisheries minister D. Jayakumar, who accompanied the Chief Minister, told the media rather categorically that the visit was to seek funds for the various schemes initiated by the State government and to

● **The BJP, it is said, is keen that the AIADMK's vote bank is intact when the alliance goes to polls, probably in April or May, and does not want the AMMK to split it**

● **The AIADMK leaders, however, are wary of totally renouncing Sasikala as they fear that she could approach the court against her removal from the post of general secretary of AIADMK, which has not been filled so far**



invite the Prime Minister for the inaugural function.

The BJP, it is said, is keen that the AIADMK's vote bank is intact when the alliance goes to polls, probably in April or May, and does not want the AMMK to split it.

The perception is that the arrival of VK Sasikala, aide of former Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa, in the political scene could create a bigger rift in the party with many leaders and functionaries of AIADMK throwing their weight behind her.

In such a scenario, the AMMK could walk away

with more votes that would otherwise go to the AIADMK and thus weaken the entire alliance, in which the BJP is a part, paving the way for an easy victory of the DMK in the elections.

So, the BJP leaders are said to be putting pressure on the AIADMK to accept Sasikala and AMMK into the party fold without any fuss. Voicing the same sentiment was Deputy Chief Minister and AIADMK coordinator O Panneerselvam at a meeting of Jayalalithaa Peravai office-bearers on Monday.



**Mamata to stand in Suvendu's turf in Nandigram**

**RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC**  
KOLKATA, JAN. 18

In a move that is being seen as a masterstroke to avenge Shubhendu Adhikari's desertion of her party and joining the BJP, Trinamul Congress chief Mamata Banerjee on Monday announced that she would contest the forthcoming Assembly elections from Nandigram, adding that she will also try to contest from her home constituency, Bhowanipore, which elected her in 2011 and 2016.

Mr Adhikari is the MLA of Nandigram in East Midnapore. In her first visit to Mr Adhikari's home turf after his induction into the BJP, Ms Banerjee said that Nandigram is "lucky" for her since her movement against forcible land acquisition there ousted the Communist regime a decade ago.

# FBI vetting Guard troops in DC amid fears of insider attack

**Washington, Jan 18:** Participants in a rehearsal for President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration were evacuated from the front of the Capitol on orders of security officials after a fire in a homeless encampment, adding to the fears over security threats to Wednesday's ceremony following the storming of Capitol Hill early this month.

U.S. defense officials say they are worried about an insider attack or other threat from service mem-

bers involved in securing President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration, prompting the FBI to vet all of the 25,000 National Guard troops coming into Washington for the event.

The massive undertaking reflects the extraordinary security concerns that have gripped Washington following the deadly Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol by pro-Trump rioters.

And it underscores fears that some of the very people assigned to



National Guard troops reinforce security around the US Capitol ahead of the inauguration of President-elect Joe Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris, in Washington.

— AP

protect the city over the next several days could

present a threat to the incoming president and

other VIPs in attendance.

Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy told The Associated Press on Sunday that officials are conscious of the potential threat, and he warned commanders to be on the lookout for any problems within their ranks as the inauguration approaches. So far, however, he and other leaders say they have seen no evidence of any threats, and officials said the vetting hadn't flagged any issues that they were aware of. — AP



## SHORT TAKES

## Armed gang robs ₹7.8L after assaulting Tasmac staffer

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, JAN. 18

In a daring act, a four-member armed gang attacked a staff working for the Tamil Nadu State Marketing Corporation (Tasmac) and his friend and relieved them of ₹7.80 lakh on Pavunjur-Selaiyur road here on Sunday night.

Police sources said on Sunday night after 10 pm, Suresh Kumar (46), who was working as supervisor of Tasmac retail shop at Palur and his friend Shakar (30) were heading home after collecting Pongal's sales revenue from the retail outlet.

When the duo was near Pudur road on Pavunjur-Selaiyur road, they were intercepted by four unidentified bike-borne robbers. The gang brandished a machete and threatened them to hand over the cash bag, and when they refused, the assailants attacked Suresh Kumar and Shankar with a machete and snatched the bag containing ₹7.8 lakh.

The duo was noticed by passersby who alerted the 108 ambulance. They were first rushed to Seiyur GH and then to the Government hospital in Chengalpet for treatment.

Based on the complaint from Suresh Kumar, Selaiyur police registered a case regarding the robbery. Further investigations are on.

## Newsprint cost up: Publishers seek waiver in customs duty

**New Delhi:** Newsprint cost has jumped 20 per cent in the last three months due to demand-supply imbalance post pandemic, prompting news publishers to petition the government for waiver of 5 per cent import duty to help cut cost.

The industry has been hit hard due to Covid-19 led disruptions and the most newspapers have stopped sending newspapers to rural areas where there is less than 50 copies to reduce the distribution cost, said the Indian Newspaper Society (INS) president L Adimoolam.

In a representation to the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, INS has suggested to take steps as to reduce the customs duty on import of newsprints, a stimulus package for the industry or at least to help the publications by releasing advertisement with an increased tariff of 50 per cent.

—PTI

# Madras HC issues set of guidelines /directions to be followed by lower courts to dispose of cases Over 1K cases under domestic violence Act pending

J. STALIN | DC  
CHENNAI, JAN. 18

Expressing surprise over the pendency of over 1,000 cases related to the domestic violence (DV) Act before it for over three years, the Madras high court has issued a set of guidelines/directions to be followed by the lower courts while disposing of applications filed under section 12 of the DV Act.

The directions included that an application under section 12 of the DV Act is not a complaint under section 2 (d) of the CrPC. Consequently, the procedure set out in section 190 (1) (a) (for taking cognizance) and 200 to 204 CrPC regarding cases instituted on a complaint has no application to a proceeding under the DV Act. The magistrate, therefore, cannot treat an application under the DV Act as a complaint under the CrPC. The magistrate shall not issue summons to a respondent(s) in a proceeding under the DV

Act. Instead, the magistrate shall issue a notice for appearance. Personal appearance of the respondent(s) shall not be ordinarily insisted upon, if the parties are effectively represented through a counsel. It is not mandatory for the magistrate to issue notices to all parties arrayed as respondents in an application under section 12 of the Act. The magistrate should apply mind in deciding the respondents to whom notices should be issued. In all cases involving relatives and other third parties to the matrimonial relationship, the magistrate must set out reasons for issuing notice to such parties.

Justice N. Anand Venkatesh framed the guidelines while dismissing, as not maintainable, a batch of petitions filed under section 482 of CrPC to quash the proceedings, pending before the lower courts, which are initiated pursuant to the complaints filed under section 12 of the DV Act.

Domestic violence against women is a human rights and social rights issue that has engaged the attention of law and policy makers at global and national levels. The genesis of the D.V. Act can be traced to the General Recommendations XII (1989) passed by the U.N. Committee on the Elimination Discrimination against Women. Taking note of Articles 2, 5, 11, 12 and 16 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, it was unanimously resolved by the Committee that State parties must put in place appropriate legislations to protect women against violence of any kind occurring within the family, at the work place or in any other area of social life. India ratified the CEDAW in 1993. However, a legislation to implement general recommendation XII had to await another 12 years.

The object of the Act was to bridge the gap between the existing procedures in civil and criminal law by providing a civil remedy for a complaint of domestic violence without disrupting the harmony in the family.

Section 2 (a) of the D.V. Act defines an "aggrieved person" to mean a woman who is or has been, in a domestic relationship with the respondent who alleges to have been subjected to any act of domestic violence by the respondent. It is crucial to notice that the grievance of the "aggrieved person" is directed against a "respondent" as defined under section 2 (q) of the Act. Therefore, the relief sought for under Chapter IV of the D.V. Act is not in the nature of a formal accusation like in a criminal case and the person against whom such a relief is sought for, is therefore not an accused before the magistrate.

The judge said the issue relates to the jurisdiction of the high court to quash a complaint under section 12 of the DV Act, 2005 in exercise of its inherent power

applications under section 12 of the DV Act. "This court was surprised to learn that over 1,000 such cases were pending. The DV Act endeavours the



## Rajini fans free to join any party

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, JAN. 18

Members of the Rajini Makkal Mandram were given a free hand to join any political party of their choice after resigning from the mandram, thus putting to rest all speculations that actor Rajinikanth might revive his plans of starting a political party in future.

A statement issued by V. M. Sudhakar, administrator of the Mandram, on Monday said that whichever party they opt to join and work far, they would remain fans of Rajinikanth, adding that Mandram members should bear that in mind.

From time immemorial, many fans of Rajinikanth had been members or supporters of various political parties and casting their votes in elections according to their free will. Only after the actor announced his plans of launching his own party did the fans, particularly those who were members of the Mandram, start waiting for the moment, giving up their past political affiliations.

Now that the official announcement has been made by the mandram, they would be going back to their parent parties and also working during the elections.

## Plea seeks proceedings against Gurumurthy

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, JAN. 18

A 78-year-old advocate, practicing in Madras high court for over 51 years has sought the written consent of the Advocate General of Tamil Nadu to file a criminal contempt against S. Gurumurthy, Editor of Thuglak, a Tamil weekly magazine, for allegedly making scandalous remarks against judges of the high court and Supreme Court at a function held on January 14, 2021.

In his affidavit filed before Advocate General Vijay Narayan, advocate S. Doraisamy submitted that the contemnor S. Gurumurthy in a public meeting viz., Thuglak anniversary on January 14, 2021, made a speech allegedly against judges of the High Court and Supreme Court. Gurumurthy has allegedly said that most of the judges are dishonest and meritless and obtained the post of the high court judge by falling in the legs of politicians. It is a false scandalous dishonest speech of the contemnor, thereby lowering the honesty of the high court judges and interfering with the administration of justice and hence he is liable to be punished for making a contemptuous speech, Doraisamy added.

Meanwhile, another advocate P. Pugalethi of Chennai, has filed a petition in the Madras high court to take action against S. Gurumurthy on its own motion under section 15 (1) of the Contempt of Courts Act and punish him.



## TURTLE TALE

Sea turtles have laid eggs in nests dug along Elliot's beach in Besant Nagar. Due to recent floods, the estuary near the sea was blocked by garbage which had hampered the process of hatching of eggs by sea turtles. Moved by the plight, beach walkers informed the Chennai corporation officials and forest department. Steps were taken to clear the estuary of garbage due to which a turtle has laid 119 eggs this season. Usually, a sea turtle lays about 150 eggs on the sandy beaches. —N. Sampath



## Three drown in stone quarry pond

DC CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI, JAN. 18

Three persons including two minor girls drowned and died in a stone quarry pond in Chengalpet's Kanthalur on Monday evening.

According to the police, the deceased has been identified as Thameem Ansari (25), a resident of Washermanpet. His cousin, Samitha (17) and her friend Angel (17).

Police sources said, on Monday afternoon Thameem

Ansari took the duo and two other relatives, Dijath (38) and Yashini (13) to bathe in the stone quarry pond in Kanthalur near Pulipakkam in Chengalpet district. Thameem recently visited the pond with his friends and on Monday he took his family to the spot.

Police said Diljath and Yasini did not venture into the pond, while Thameem, Samitha and Angel jumped into the pond. While taking a bath, the trio suddenly started to drown.

They shouted for help, on seeing them a few people nearby jumped in to save them, however, their efforts went in vain.

Chengalpet Taluk police were alerted. Fire and services personnel rushed to the spot and launched an extensive search for them. The team on Monday evening managed to pull out their bodies. The bodies of the deceased were sent to the Chengalpet GH for post-mortem. A case has been registered and inquiries are on.

## Abducted MP girl rescued in Tirupur

**Coimbatore, Jan 18:** A teenage girl, reportedly abducted from Madhya Pradesh, was traced in nearby Tirupur and handed over to a police team from that State, police said on Monday.

According to police, the 17-year-old girl from Batkakhapa in Chhindwara district in Madhya Pradesh was brought to Tirupur a few days ago by a man identified as Bijesh on promise of marrying her.

Based on a complaint, Madhya Pradesh police investigated and learnt that the girl was in the hosiery town of Tirupur and a special team reached there and alerted the local police.

Police found that the girl was staying with Bijesh in Kumar Nagar. Both were handed over to Madhya Pradesh police, who registered a kidnapping case against the man, working in a garment unit, they said. —PTI

## Speak Out

### Close unauthorized auto stands

In most of the Chennai streets, particularly those located near shopping hubs, one could find auto-stands — both 'authorised' by the traffic police and unauthorised ones, with the boards depicting the pictures of the political leaders, the auto-rickshaw drivers owe allegiance to ostensibly to draw the extra mileage. In the case of authorized auto-stands, one does not know what basic procedures are

being followed by the traffic police while giving sanction for the same. The following posers deserve answers from the traffic police :

1 How does the department go about with the sanction of the auto stands on streets?

1 Do the auto drivers approach the department for setting up stands in the streets?

1 Based on what needs do the auto drivers approach the department to set up auto-stands?

1 If approval is given for setting up the auto-stand, how many autos are permitted to park at any point in time?

1 Does the department keep a watch on the auto-stands on a regular basis to ensure the safety and security of the neighborhood residents?

1 Does the department allow the setting up of auto-stands at every street?

V. S. Jayaraman,  
Chennai

## A T Nagar lane remains unutilized

We draw the kind attention of the Greater Chennai Corporation to the lane located in between Ranganathan Street and Natesan Street in T Nagar, falling under Zone X, Division 136, and seek answers to the following:

- Is the lane a private space or a public space belonging to the Greater Chennai Corporation?
- If it is a public space, what purpose does it now serve?
- Has any official of the GCC ever visited the space to check the condition of the lane?
- When extreme space crunch is felt, why is it allowed to get used as a public urinal or to dump waste/rubbish of the establishments close-by?

T Nagar Residents Welfare Association  
(Regd),  
Chennai

## Govt name boards in Tamil on K'taka border vandalised by group

**Erode, Jan 18:** Sign and name boards of the Tamil Nadu government in Tamil and English on the state's border with Karnataka were allegedly damaged by a fringe group from the neighbouring state for the second time in 10 days, police said here on Monday.

The group claimed that Thalavadi in Tamil Nadu's Erode district 'belonged' to Karnataka. The incidents come against the backdrop of a row between Maharashtra and Karnataka over some border areas where Marathi speaking people live predominantly.

Following the back to back incidents and a call for protest against it by Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi, armed police personnel have been deployed at (Thalavadi taluk, Erode district) Tamil Nadu's border with Karnataka (Chamarajanagar district), they said.

Such incidents have been brought to the notice of police in Karnataka, they added.

On Sunday, sign and name boards, including one by Erode district panchayat, were damaged by unknown miscreants, Thalavadi police said, adding they inspected the spot and posted adequate number of armed policemen to avert such incidents in future.

Such boards inform people about the beginning of the limits of Tamil Nadu state and under which division or sub-division of the TN highways department the locality falls.

Also, they either 'welcome' or say 'thanks' to people for visiting Erode district of Tamil Nadu, ubiquitous in border regions.

On January 10, about 20 people led by Vattal Nagaraj, leader of Kannada Chaluvali Vatal Paksha, entered Tamil Nadu's Ramapura in Thalavadi police limits and some from among them allegedly dismantled

and threw away name-boards of district panchayat and the highways department, police said.

The men, damaging the signboards in Tamil, raised slogans like 'Don't need Tamil', "We want only Kannada name plates in Karnataka", "Victory to Kannada Chaluvali Vatal Party".

A video clip on their vandalism has been widely shared in social media.

Speaking to Karnataka reporters in front of the Tamil boards then, Nagaraj said "Thalavadi is a Kannada land" and recalled that he launched a protest in 1969, seeking to annex Thalavadi with Karnataka. He and many leaders from Chamarajanagar marched from that town and protested at Yallekatte. They were arrested and lodged at the Gopichettipalayam jail in Tamil Nadu and released three days later, Nagaraj said. "Karananidhi was the Tamil Nadu chief minister while Veerendra

Patil was Chief Minister of Karnataka," he said. Protesting against Tamil boards in Thalavadi, Nagaraj said authorities should not put them up and must come up with Kannada boards. "There is not a single word written in Kannada," he said.

Following the incidents, Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi said here that they would stage a protest against the vandalism by the group and their claim to Thalavadi. Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's statement on Sunday that his government is committed towards incorporating into the state, areas of Karnataka where Marathi speaking people are in a majority triggered strong reactions in the Kannada speaking state.

Protests erupted in parts of Karnataka and Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa ruled out parting with "even an inch of land" from Karnataka to Maharashtra. —PTI

SPEAKOUT IS A WEEKLY COLUMN.

Letters to this page should be typed or written on one side of the paper. All letters, including those sent by email, should bear the name, address and phone number of the writer. We will not use complaints without these details. If you have a complaint against a vendor or a corporate, mail the letter with supporting documentary evidence, or bring the same to the DC office. [speakout.chennai@deccanmail.com](mailto:speakout.chennai@deccanmail.com) Letters must reach by Friday.



## SHORT TAKES

## 30 tea units under tea board scanner

B. RAVICHANDRAN | DC OOTY, JAN. 18

The Tea Board of India zonal office at Coonoor near here has issued notices to 30 estate tea factories for non-compliance of quality norms and hygiene standards prescribed by the board.

Executive officer, Tea Board of India, South Zone, Dr M. Balaji, stated that the board has been implementing various schemes for the small and also big tea growers, to promote activities like re-plantation, rejuvenation, pruning, orthodox and green tea manufacturing. The board is taking concerted efforts to ensure higher price realization for the made tea in the market and remunerative price for the green tea leaf being supplied to the bought leaf tea factories by small tea growers.

Monthly advisories are also being issued to small tea growers with regard to standard tea farming practices and plucking standards. Periodical inspections in various tea factories across South India including estate factories are being undertaken to monitor for compliance of quality and hygiene standards set up by the tea board.

A team of officials undertook inspection in a total of 43 estate tea factories in the Nilgiris during the months of November and December 2020. After these inspections, show cause notices were issued to 30 estate tea factories for deviations like lack of quality leaf procurement, poor hygiene standards, non-maintenance of statutory records, holding of tea wastes beyond permissible level, procurement of bought tea leaf beyond the permissible limit, purchase of tea from other factories, and non-adherence to the price sharing formula and other related issues.

These factories have been given statutory time to reply to the notice. Action would be taken after receipt of their reply as per the provisions laid out in the Tea (Marketing) Control Order 2003 and Tea Waste (control) Order 1959, he added.

## Fire breaks out at tyre manufacturing unit

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, JAN. 18

A massive fire broke out at a tyre storage unit in Sipcot industrial complex in Gummidipoondi in Tiruvallur district on Monday morning. According to the fire services personnel, no one was injured in the blaze.

On Monday morning, thick black smoke billowed out from a tyre manufacturing unit and soon engulfed the entire area. Several fire engines were rushed to the site to fight the blaze. According to the Fire and Rescue Services personnel, the smoke was noticed in the godown by the security men where a large number of newly-manufactured tyres were stocked. Immediately, the Tiruvallur fire and rescue services station.

More than four fire engines from various places were brought in to bring the fire under control. The fire-fighting personnel battled and brought the fire under control for more than two hours. Although flames were doused, thick smoke from the Sipcot continued to billow out making it difficult for the residents and motorists.

## OPS to Centre: Release ₹19,591.63 cr dues soon

A. ARUL PALANI | DC CHENNAI, JAN. 18

The Tamil Nadu government has urged the Central government to release long-pending dues of ₹19,591.63 crore, including GST compensation claims, to the state at the earliest.

Addressing a pre-Union Budget 2021-22 virtual meeting with Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and her deputies and officials on Monday, Deputy Chief Minister O. Panneerselvam said: “We have continuously apprised the Centre of the funds, pending release, to Tamil Nadu. At present ₹ 19,591.63 crore, including pending GST compensa-

tion claims, arrears related to 13th and 14th Finance Commission grants to local bodies, and pending grants for programmes including ‘Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan’, ‘Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan’, ‘Right to Education Act’, ‘Flood Management Programme’, and ‘Post-matric Scholarship Scheme’, are due to Tamil Nadu. “I request the Central Government to release the dues at the earliest”, he said.

Apart from Ms Sitharaman, Union Minister of State for Finance Anurag Singh Thakur, the finance ministers of state governments and union territories, senior officers of the union government and state gov-

ernments also attended the virtual meeting.

The Deputy CM said: “We are in the midst of an unprecedented situation. The Covid-19 pandemic caused considerable economic disruption and put the finances of all governments in disarray. Unprecedented times call for unprecedented measures. The Atma Nirbhar Bharat initiatives included many bold measures that supported the economy and ensured a speedy revival”. “The Centre must not just support the states, but ensure a sustained revival of the economy and protect the vulnerable sections of the population,” he said.

Borrowing of upto 5 per-

cent of the GDP should be permitted to all state governments in 2021-22 as well to enable the states to sustain expenditure on capital works and on Covid-19 prevention measures. “The levy of cesses and surcharges by the Central Government deprives the states of their legitimate share of the Centre’s tax revenue. Collections by way of cesses and surcharges have increased substantially as a proportion of the gross tax revenue of the Centre in recent years. All such cesses and surcharges should be merged into the basic rate of tax, so that the states also receive their due share from the additional revenue, he added.

## Pocso Act: Teacher gets 49 year jail term

R. VALAYAPATHY | DC PUDUKKOTTAI, JAN. 18

The district fast track mahila court here on Monday convicted and sentenced an elementary school teacher to undergo 49 years of imprisonment for sexually assaulting a fifth standard school student, at Pudukkottai on March 21, 2018.

Public prosecutor, T. Angavi, said the teacher, Anbarasan, of the panchayat union elementary school, Nariyanpudhupatti village, sexually assaulted the girl on March 21, 2018. Based on the girl’s parents’ complaint, All women police arrested Anbarasan under the Pocso Act, and subsequently arrested school headmaster Ganasekaran who did not take any action against his col-

league Anbarasan, despite several complaints lodged by the affected girl. A case was also filed against them before the Mahila Court, added Angavi.

Judge Dr Sathya, based on the confession statement of a batch of three girl students and another six girl students of the school, convicted the accused to undergo 49 years of imprisonment. The judge also slapped a total fine of Rs 45,000 on the accused, based on various grounds.

The judge also convicted and sentenced headmaster Ganasekaran to undergo one year imprisonment for inaction against the accused, and also a fine of Rs 5,000. On failure to remit the fine, he has to undergo two additional months of imprisonment.

## Chennai tops in leased manufacturing absorption

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, JAN. 18

Chennai topped in total leased manufacturing absorption in 2020 with over 36 percent, leaving behind Pune (20 percent) and Delhi National Capital Region (18percent).

As per JLL’s latest report, “India Manufacturing Reimagined: Now & Beyond”, the demand for leased manufacturing spaces has gained strength in the country last year with gross absorption of 6.6 million sq. ft. in top eight cities.

Chennai and surrounding areas topped with the factors driven by pro-active governance, developed manufacturing ecosystem and proximity to multiple ports while Pune stood second with strong ecosystem, organised supply and a large immediate catchment of urban conurbation of Pune and Mumai. Delhi NCR emerged third with its strong manufacturing demand from sectors including electronics and mobile manufacturing, electrical equipment, white goods, and packaging. Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Mumbai and Hyderabad have also shown strong growth trends driven by sector specific requirements, it says.

## 8000 Euros seized by customs officials

**Chennai, Jan 18:** Customs officials at the Chennai airport seized 8000 Euros equivalent to ₹7.09 lakhs.

According to an official statement from the commissioner of customs, based on intelligence, Syed Abdul Razak (32) of Tiruvallur who was destined for Dubai by Air India Express Flight IX1643 was intercepted in a security hold area after he had cleared immigration on suspicion of carrying foreign currency.

On search of his handbag, 4000 Euros in the denomination of 50 were found concealed inside. Further, on his search, a bundle wrapped with adhesive tape was recovered from the rectum. 4000 Euros in the denomination of 100 were recovered on opening the bundle. Probe is on.

## TN vaccinates 16,400 plus beneficiaries against Covid-19

## 8 persons including 103-yr-old die of corona

**Chennai, Jan 18:** The Covid-19 tally in Tamil Nadu touched 8,31,323 with the addition of 551 new cases on Monday, while eight more deaths, including that of a 103-year-old man, pushed the toll to 12,272, the health department said.

The 103-year-old male from Coimbatore was hospitalised in that city on

January 6, but did not respond to treatment and died on January 16, the bulletin said.

Recoveries outnumbered new infections with 758 people getting discharged as the total number of those cured so far rose to 8,13,326, a bulletin said.

The number of active cases continued its decline and stood at 5,725. —PTI

on the willingness of the proposed recipients. About six lakh people, including healthcare professionals, are on the

priority list for vaccination and vaccines are provided free of cost to them by the government. —PTI

## IIT-M develops ultrasound based temperature tracking technology

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, JAN. 18

The Indian Institute of Technology-Madras (IIT-M) researchers have developed an ultrasound-based temperature tracking for treatment monitoring that helps to obtain diagnostic ultrasound signals from the human body.

The system works at the body parts where heating is applied non-invasively from outside either through a microwave applicator or high-intensity focused ultrasound (HIFU) which is already in use for treating solid tumours (both cancerous and benign).

The researchers, who have currently demonstrated the feasibility of the developed method, are now working to convert these proof-of-concept methods to design an integrated microwave applicator cum ultrasound-based real-time imaging feedback for a pos-

sible clinical application.

Prof. Arun K. Thittai, department of applied mechanics, IIT-M, said this technology would be accessible and affordable as it was an ultrasound-based monitoring instead of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) technology. This technique can be incorporated to software in existing scanners by the manufacturers and thus does not require any special electronics hardware.

Thermal (heat) therapy is used routinely for pain relief and rehabilitation of target tissues. Heating of the tissue inside the body is also exploited as a treatment option for some disease, including ablation of cancerous tumors.

However, one of the major challenges that prevent these approaches from wide-spread use in clinical practice is the lack of reliable and affordable real-time feedback in the form of heat maps from the tar-

geted treatment region.

“Although several ultrasound-based methods have been proposed in literature for temperature tracking, maps of changes in other properties at different temperature ranges have not been exploited. Our technology has the

advantage of having access to a complete signal chain of ultrasound data that allows us to develop methods for tracking multiple different tissue parameter maps’, he said.

The main benefits of this technology include non-invasive treatment and real-time monitoring of the process, safety from ionising radiation, portable and suitable for point-of-care applications. The results from these studies have been presented and published in various international IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers) Society conferences.

## Sterlite firing: Rajinikanth may testify today

DC CORRESPONDENT THOOTHUKUDI, JAN. 18

Rajinikanth is expected to appear today (Jan 19) before the Justice Aruna Jegadeesan commission probing the Sterlite police firing.

The one-man commission constituted to probe the police firing on the anti-sterlite agitation, claiming 13 lives on May 22, 2018 has started its 24th round of enquiry here, on Monday. Summoning 56

witnesses, including the then dean of Thoothukudi medical college hospital, the doctors who performed post-mortem on the bodies of the victims, and the fire service personnel, 11 persons appeared before the commission and presented their witness statements on Monday.

On the second day of the 24th round of the enquiry on January 19, Rajinikanth is expected to appear before the commission in person for dep-

osition, in connection with his statement that the police firing was the result of the violence triggered by the anti-social elements which intruded into the anti-sterlite protestors. It is to be noted that Rajini had earlier sought exemption from appearing before the commission. However, he was represented by his advocate, through whom the commission sent a questionnaire for Rajinikanth to answer.

## Elusive accused in dowry case arrested

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, JAN. 18

The immigration officials at the international airport in Chennai have detained a man, who had been booked in a dowry harassment case by Anna Nagar all women police and had been evading arrest for more than a year.

Anna Nagar all women police registered a case against Vasanthan (33), a native of Villupuram. He was married to Jayasri (29) from Royapettah in the year 2016. The duo left

for USA for Vasanthan’s job. However, after getting there, he deserted his wife and allegedly harassed her over dowry. Unable to bear his torture, Jayasri left the US and returned to Chennai in 2019. She then lodged a dowry harassment complaint against Vasanthan at the Anna Nagar all women police station.

The police summoned him for an investigation, however, Vasanthan and his family members did not appear before the police, they said.

Lookout circular: After he

failed to appear, the police issued a ‘Lookout Circular’ against him and alerted the airports in the country. Meanwhile, Vasanthan returned to the country on Monday after more than a year, and the Immigration officials detained him soon after he landed at the Chennai Airport from the USA, the police said. Immigration officials alerted the AWPS in Anna Nagar. The police team arrived at the airport and secured him.

Further investigations are underway.





## IN BRIEF

**Digvijay donates for Ram temple**

**Bhopal:** Senior Congress leader and Rajya Sabha member Digvijay Singh on Monday donated ₹1,11,111 for the construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya through Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Singh sent a letter to the Prime Minister, with the cheque to Ram Janmabhoomi Teertha Khetra Trust, appealing him to ensure that inflammatory speeches were not made by the volunteers during collection of funds for construction of Ram temple from the people. The former chief minister said he was sending the cheque through the Prime Minister for deposition at the proper place since he was not aware of the right address to send the cheque. He also demanded for public audit of the funds raised earlier by Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) for construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya.

**ODISHA CONG CHIEF ATTACKED, BJP BLAMED**

**AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC BHUBANESWAR, JAN. 18**

Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) president Niranjan Patnaik on Monday said he was attacked by some miscreants with BJP affiliations attacked his vehicle on Sunday night at Keonjhar.

"The attack on me, my security personnel late on Sunday night was a handiwork of the BJP. Members of the saffron party's youth wing carried out the attack. This is a clear case of political vendetta and desperation of Odisha BJP," Patnaik alleged.

He said that the miscreants thrashed his driver and personal security officer (PSO) and damaged his car.

"I have lodged a police complaint. I was shocked to know that the miscreants were members of BJP's state youth wing. This is a clear case of political vendetta and desperation of Odisha state BJP. Congress is raising relevant issues in the state and speaking out against the policies of BJP, which is desperately trying to get a foothold in Odisha. Congress is the biggest hurdle for them," he tweeted.

**MEDIA TRIAL HINDERS JUSTICE: HC ON SSR PROBE**

**SHAHAB ANSARI | DC MUMBAI, JAN. 18**

The Bombay High Court on Monday held that a media trial during the investigation of any case violates programme code under the Cable TV Network Regulation Act and does have an impact on the probe.

While passing order on a bunch of petitions filed by former police officers, activists, lawyers and NGOs, seeking restrain order for electronic media in actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death case, also observed that Press Council of India (PCI) guidelines will apply to electronic media along with print media till the time electronic media frame their own guidelines.

The court had asked the Centre on October 29 last year as to why it should not frame guidelines on media coverage of sensitive criminal matters and ongoing investigations, and whether "excessive" reporting by the press amounted to interference in the administration of justice under the Contempt of Courts Act.

## BORDER | ROW

**India says it takes necessary measures to safeguard its sovereignty**

**Report: China has built village in Arunachal**

**New Delhi, Jan. 18:** In a cautious reaction to a report that China has built a village in Arunachal Pradesh, India on Monday said it keeps a constant watch on all developments having a bearing on the country's security, and takes necessary measures to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The ministry of external affairs said India has stepped up the construction of border infrastructure, including roads and bridges for the improvement of livelihood of its citizens.

The response from the ministry came when asked to a report by NDTV channel, saying China has

constructed a new village in the disputed region of Arunachal Pradesh and it consisted of about 101 homes. The news channel said the report is based on satellite images accessed exclusively by it.

"We have seen recent reports on China undertaking construction work along the border areas with India. China has undertaken such infrastructure construction activity in the past several years," the MEA said.

"In response, our government too has stepped up border infrastructure including the construction of roads, bridges etc, which has provided much needed

connectivity to the local population along the border," it added.

The ministry also asserted that the government remains committed to the objective of creating infrastructure along the border areas for the improvement of livelihood of its citizens, including in Arunachal Pradesh. "Government keeps a constant watch on all developments having a bearing on India's security and takes all the necessary measures to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity," it said.

In its report, NDTV showed two images of the area where it said the village has been set up.

According to the channel, the first image dated August 26, 2019 did not show any human habitation but the second one of November 2020 shows a row of structures.

The India-China border dispute covers the 3,488-km-long Line of Actual Control. China claims Arunachal Pradesh as part of southern Tibet, while India contests it. India and China are locked in a bitter border row in eastern Ladakh for over eight months.

The army as well as the Indian Air Force have been maintaining a high state of operational readiness along the entire stretch of the LAC with China including

in the Arunachal sector in view of the eastern Ladakh standoff. India and China have held several rounds of military and diplomatic talks in order to resolve the eastern Ladakh row, but no significant headway has been made for its resolution.

Earlier this month, Chief of Defence Staff Gen Bipin Rawat visited various forward posts near the LAC in Arunachal Pradesh and reviewed India's operational preparedness.

He also visited several key installations including "forward most air maintained" posts in Dibang Valley, Lohit sector and Subansiri valley, according to the Army.

**580 persons report adverse effects after vaccination**

**Two people were reported dead; Govts deny deaths connected to jabs**

**DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs NEW DELHI, JAN. 18**

As India intensified its vaccination drive against Covid-19, 580 persons were found to have Adverse Effect Following Immunisation (AEFI) with seven needing hospitalisation in the last three days. Two people were reported to be dead following the Covid-19 shots — a 52-year-old ward boy working in a Moradabad (UP) hospital, and a 43-year-old man in Bellary (Karnataka). However, both central and state governments denied that the death in Moradabad had any connection to the vaccination while the post-mortem of the second person is yet to be conducted.

Since Saturday, a little over 3.81 lakh health, sanitation and frontline workers have been vaccinated out of which over 1.48 lakh were immunised on Monday.

"Post-mortem by a board of three doctors revealed death due to cardiopulmonary disease (pockets of pus in lungs, enlarged heart) and is not related to vaccination," Union health ministry official said about the death of the 52-year-old ward boy Mahipal Singh. However, the family of Mahipal Singh man alleged that his condition deteriorated after the jab.

Mahipal Singh was given a vaccine shot on Saturday. His family said he had minor pneumonia, cold, cough and fever before the vaccine, but his condition deteriorated after the jab and he was breathless. He died the next day.

However, the Uttar Pradesh government said the man died due to septicemic shock and cardiac arrest and the death was not related to the Covid-19 vaccination.

"An adverse event following immunisation (AEFI) committee probed the death of the man in Moradabad. The cause of death was septicemic



Relatives mourn the death of a family member, Mahipal Singh, at their residence in Moradabad district on Monday.

— PTI

**Assam Cong questions efficiency of Covaxin, tells govt to instil confidence**

**MANOJ ANAND | DC GUWAHATI, JAN. 18**

Amidst the report of a few temporary side effects after the vaccination and poor turn out of recipients, the Assam unit of the Congress party has questioned the efficacy of Covaxin and asked the government to instil confidence among people before inoculating them.

The reaction of the

Opposition came after two medical colleges in the state witnessed a poor 40 per cent turnout on the first day and the officials feel that the use of the "contentious" Covaxin is one of the reasons for many health workers not turning up.

In Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed Medical College and Hospital in lower Assam's Barpeta, only 27 of the 100 listed beneficiaries came for vaccination,

while at Tezpur Medical College and Hospital, only 52 of the 100 listed beneficiaries turned up.

Leader of Opposition in the Assam Assembly, Debabrata Saikia told reporters that the doctors in Delhi and Tamil Nadu are reluctant to take the vaccines as Covaxin has been given the nod for political gains as elections for the five states are due in

spring.

"The vaccine rollout has been done hurriedly without complete trial. The Centre has done it to reap benefit in polls. It is said that the vaccination has become a political game as the inoculation drive kicked off without efficacy data and other considerations. Human life can't be compromised in pursuit of private profit and political gains," said Saikia.

the shots. "They were facing general problems but not like Mahipal," he said.

The second person who died on Monday too was vaccinated on Saturday. The cause of his death, as per Union health min-

istry, was anterior wall infarction with cardiopulmonary failure.

Of the seven people needing hospitalisation, three are from Delhi, two in Karnataka, and one each in Uttarakhand and Chhattisgarh.

**Farmers' stir: NIA to summon more people for probe**

**DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JAN. 18**

Dismissing allegations that it was specifically targeting the farmers' agitation, National Investigation Agency (NIA) sources claim the investigation agency will issue notices and summon to some more people in the coming days from Punjab in connection with an anti-terror case it had registered last month.

The NIA has issued notices to more than 40 persons, mostly from Punjab who are in some way connected to the ongoing farmers' agitation.

These people have been summoned to be examined as witnesses in connection with a case lodged by NIA against a pro-Khalistan outfit, the Sikhs for Justice (SFJ).

The NIA officials argue that the notices have nothing to do with the farmers' protest and presence of these people was required to investigate certain details related to the SFJ case.

These notices have been issued to a cross section of people ranging from farmer and religious leaders to local businessmen and journalists. They have been summoned under Section

160 Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) - Police officer's power to require attendance of witnesses in FIR no 40/2020 under various Sections of the Indian Penal Code and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

Statements of these have been recorded by NIA on Sunday and Monday.

Sources claimed that in the coming days NIA is likely to summon some more people in connection with SFJ case which is related to transfer of funds from abroad to certain outfits within India which are suspected to be linked to the Khalistani movement.

The FIR lodged by NIA names some of the designated terrorists like Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, Paramjeet Singh Pamma, Hardeep Singh Nijjar and others who have been involved in collection of funds in countries like United States, United Kingdom, Canada and Germany.

The SFJ was banned in 2019 by Union Home Affairs and in the last five years, 14 cases have been registered against the SFJ in which more than 40 people have been arrested by different State police and investigating agencies.

**Shahnawaz, Sahani file nominations**

**Patna, Jan. 18:** BJP leader Syed Shahnawaz Hussain and Bihar minister Mukesh Sahani on Monday filed their nomination papers for by-elections to two seats of the state legislative council.

Hussain, the party's national spokesman, and Sahani who heads NDA constituent Vikasheel Insaan Party, were accompanied by a host of leaders of the ruling coalition including Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, Deputy CMs Tarkishor Prasad and Renu Devi and state BJP president Sanjay Jaiswal.

It may be recalled that polling is scheduled on January 28 though with no

other candidate in the fray, the duo is likely to be declared elected unopposed on January 21, which is the last date for withdrawal of nomination papers.

While Hussain has filed nomination from the seat vacated by former Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi, now a Rajya Sabha member, Sahani is seeking election from the berth vacated by former minister Binod Narayan Jha who has been elected to the assembly.

Term of the seat vacated by Sushil Modi is till May 6, 2024 that of Jha will last on July 21, 2022.

— PTI

**Prime Vidio's 'Tandav' makers issue apology**

**New Delhi/Lucknow, Jan. 18:** Faced with an FIR, the fear of arrest and loud calls for a boycott for its alleged depiction of Hindu deities, the cast and crew of Amazon Prime Video's starry political saga *Tandav* on Monday issued an unconditional apology if their fictional show had unintentionally hurt sentiments.

A day after the Information and Broadcasting Ministry sought an explanation from Amazon Prime Video and BJP MP Manoj Kotak wrote to minister Prakash Javadekar, trouble escalated for the Ali Abbas Zafar directed thriller with an FIR against its makers in Lucknow and several politicians and others adding their voice to the 'ban Tandav' chorus.

As security was stepped up outside the offices of its star Saif Ali Khan and Amazon Prime in Mumbai, a four-member team of the Uttar Pradesh police left for the city and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's media advisor Shalabhmani Tripathi said the makers will have to "pay a price for hurting religious sentiments" by depicting Hindu gods in an objectionable manner.

UP Police has left for Mumbai, that too in a car. There are strong sections in the FIR. Remain prepared, (you) will have to pay a price for hurting religious sentiments," Tripathi said in his tweet in which he tagged director Zafar, producer Himanshu Krishna Mehra, writer Gaurav Solanki and actors Saif Ali Khan and Zeeshan Ayyub.

At the end of a tense day that saw debate escalate around the show, which balances intrigue in Delhi's corridors of power and touches on current issues



BJP workers stage a protest against Amazon Prime over its web series *Tandav*, at Bandra in Mumbai on Monday.

— PTI

**Shivraj demands ban on web series**

**RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, JAN. 18**

Amid protests by Hindu bodies against Saif Ali Khan-starrer '*Tandav*' released by OTT giant Amazon Prime, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Monday demanded a ban on the web series for hurting religious sentiments of Hindus.

Chouhan met Union information and broadcasting minister Prakash Javadekar in New Delhi to place his demand, saying that the web series sought to denigrate Hindu deities.

Meanwhile, state medical education minister Viswas Sarang wrote a letter to Javadekar demanding to frame laws for cen-

**MAHA BJP MLA CALLS FOR BOYCOTT**

**Mumbai, Jan. 18:** Maharashtra BJP MLA Ram Kadam on Monday urged people to boycott new web series *Tandav* for allegedly mocking Hindu deities.

"In a tweet, Kadam said, 'Seems like they are proud of or don't regret their demeaning act of mocking or targeting our Hindu Gods.' I urge all Hindus to boycott Amazon's products, be it their shopping site or content platform, he said.

— PTI

sonship of films released on OTT platform to deny misuse of the platform by 'vested interests'.

of destruction', issued a statement in a bid to defuse the situation.

— PTI



## SHORT TAKES

SAMSUNG CHIEF  
JAILED OVER  
FRAUD CHARGES

Seoul, Jan. 18: Billionaire Samsung scion Lee Jae-yong was sent back to prison on Monday after a South Korean court handed him a two and a half-year sentence for his involvement in a 2016 corruption scandal that spurred massive protests and ousted South Korea's then-president.

In a much-anticipated retrial, the Seoul High Court found Lee guilty of bribing then-President Park Geun-hye and her close confidante to win government support for a 2015 merger between two Samsung affiliates. The deal helped strengthen his control over the country's largest business group. Lee's lawyers had portrayed him as a victim of presidential power abuse and described the 2015 deal as part of "normal business activity."

Wearing a mask and black suit and tie, Lee was taken into custody following the ruling. He didn't answer questions by reporters upon his arrival at the court.

FRENCH MUSLIM  
COUNCIL ACCEPTS  
RULES BY MACRON

Paris, Jan. 18: France's Muslim federations agreed on Sunday on a "charter of principles" requested by President Emmanuel Macron in his bid to eradicate sectarianism and extremism.

Macron urged the French Council of the Muslim Faith (CFCM) to devise the charter in November, after the jihadist killing of a schoolteacher who showed cartoons of the Prophet Mohamed to students.

The charter rejects "instrumentalising" Islam for political ends and affirms equality between men and women, while denouncing practices such as female circumcisions, forced marriages or "virginity certificates" for brides.

It also explicitly rejects racism and anti-Semitism, and warns that mosques "are not created for the spreading of nationalist speech defending foreign regimes".

"This charter reaffirms the compatibility of the Muslim faith with the principles of the Republic, including secularism, and the commitment of French Muslims to their complete citizenship," CFCM president Mohammed Moussaoui said.

ITALY PM TO  
LAUNCH BID TO  
SAVE GOVT

Rome, Jan. 18: Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte was due to address parliament's lower house on Monday at the start of a make-or-break week in a crisis that could bring down his government.

Against the backdrop of Coronavirus pandemic that sparked fresh restrictions at the weekend, Conte will seek a show of support with lawmakers ahead of a crucial vote in the upper Senate the following day.

His coalition government, in power since September 2019, was plunged into turmoil by the withdrawal last week of former premier Matteo Renzi's Italia Viva party.

Conte was to speak at midday to the Chamber of Deputies, where his coalition partners including the Democratic Party (PD) and Five Star Movement (M5S) have a majority of support.

The real test will come on Tuesday, however, when he addresses the Senate and faces what will effectively be a vote of confidence.

JAPAN SLAMS  
KOREA ON  
BROTHEL RULING

Tokyo, Jan. 18: Toshimitsu Motegi, in a diplomatic policy speech in Parliament, said a recent South Korean court ruling ordering Japan to compensate 12 South Korean women who were sexually abused in Japanese military brothels during the war was "an abnormal development absolutely unthinkable under international law and bilateral relations."

"We strongly urge South Korea to correct the violation of international law as soon as possible" and restore healthy relations, Motegi said.

The Seoul Central District Court ruled on Jan. 8 that the Japanese government must give 100 million won (\$91,360) to each of 12 elderly women who filed lawsuits in 2013 over their wartime suffering as "comfort women."

## Chilly slide



Young men slide on a snow covered street in the Balat District of Istanbul on Monday. Extreme cold and snow have hit large parts of Europe, with freezing temperatures causing railroad tracks in Poland to crack and snow blanketing most of the Turkish city of Istanbul. — AFP

## Navalny decries 'mockery of justice' in airport detention

Moscow, Jan. 18: Russian Opposition leader Alexei Navalny said on Monday his treatment was beyond a "mockery of justice" as he was brought before a hastily organised court a day after his dramatic airport arrest.

With calls growing in the West for Navalny's release, he was brought into a courtroom set up at a police station in Khimki on the outskirts of Moscow where he was taken following his detention on Sunday night.

Police seized Navalny, President Vladimir Putin's most prominent opponent, at a border control post at Moscow's Sheremetyevo airport less than an hour after he returned to Russia from Germany for the first time since he was poisoned with a nerve agent in August.

In a video posted by his

team from inside the hearing, an incredulous Navalny said he did not understand how a court session could take place at a police station and why no one had been notified until the last minute. "I've seen a lot of mockery of justice, but the old man in the bunker (Putin) is so afraid that they have blatantly torn up and thrown away" Russia's criminal code, Navalny said.

"This is ultimate lawlessness." In another video, Navalny called for the hearing to be open to all journalists, after only pro-Kremlin media were allowed to attend.

"I demand that this procedure be as open as possible, so that all media have the opportunity to observe the amazing absurdity of what is happening here," he said.

— AFP

EU chief demands  
Navalny's release

Brussels, Jan. 18: EU chief Ursula von der Leyen on Monday joined the international chorus of condemnation against Russia's arrest of opposition figure Alexei Navalny and demanded his release.

"I condemn the detention of Alexei Navalny," she said in a statement.

"The Russian authorities must immediately release him and ensure his safety," von der Leyen, president of the European Commission, also repeated Brussels' call for an independent investigation into an attempt on Navalny's life.

The 44-year-old returned to Russia on Sunday from

Germany, where he received treatment after being poisoned with what experts say was the Novichok nerve agent.

There have been calls for more Western sanctions against Russian President Vladimir Putin's government following the latest arrest.

But von der Leyen did not address what would be a decision for the EU member states, saying simply: "We will monitor the situation closely."

"We also continue to expect a thorough and independent investigation on the attack on Alexei Navalny's life," she said.

— AFP

Another 3 million in lockdown as  
Covid-19 cases increase in China

Beijing, Jan. 18: Nearly three million people were put under lockdown in China Monday after a surge in coronavirus cases linked to a travelling salesman in the country's northeast.

While China has largely brought the virus under control, a sharp rise in cases in the past few weeks has prompted fresh lockdowns, travel restrictions and multiple rounds of mass testing. Monday saw three million residents of a new Covid-19 variant.

The French drive aims

to cover all people over 75 and comes after Brazil and India, which figure among the worst-affected countries, administered their first jabs over the weekend.

— AFP

France, UK boost  
vaccine campaign

Paris, Jan. 18: France and Britain on Monday joined a growing list of nations starting mass vaccinations for all elderly citizens as the UK began demanding all arrivals quarantine to try and halt the spread of a new Covid-19 variant.

The French drive aims to cover all people over 75 and comes after Brazil and India, which figure among the worst-affected countries, administered their first jabs over the weekend.

Health Minister Olivier Veran said more than one million vaccinations are being targeted by January and between 2.4 and 4 million by February.

France had earlier offered vaccinations to residents of retirement homes and health workers on the frontline.

Britain on Monday extended its own vaccination campaign to people over the age of 70, after first attending to over-80s, and frontline health workers and care givers.

— AFP

W.H.O DEMANDS  
FAIR ACCESS TO  
COVID VACCINE

Geneva, Jan. 18: The world is on the brink of a "catastrophic moral failure" if rich countries hog Covid-19 vaccine doses while the poorest suffer, the head of the WHO said on Monday.

World Health Organisation director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus denounced the "me-first" attitude of wealthy nations and also blasted vaccine manufacturers for chasing regulatory approval in rich countries rather than submitting their data to the WHO to green-light vaccine use globally.

— AFP

## Indonesian medics exhausted by quake casualties

Mamuju (Indonesia), Jan. 18: Medics battled exhaustion and the risk of Covid-19 as they raced on Monday to treat scores of people injured by a devastating earthquake on Indonesia's Sulawesi island.

At least 84 were killed and thousands left homeless by the 6.2-magnitude quake that struck early on Friday, reducing buildings to a tangled mass of twisted metal and chunks of concrete in the seaside city of Mamuju.

Doctors in hazard suits treated patients with broken limbs and other injuries at a makeshift medical centre set up outside the only one of the city's hospitals that survived relatively intact — one was flattened by the violent tremor.

A handful of doctors and nurses worked "non-stop" in the first couple of days after the quake until rein-



Rescuers lead a sniffer dog during a search operation at the ruins of a building collapsed in earthquake in Mamuju, in Indonesia on Friday. — AP

forcements arrived, but it was still barely enough amid shortages of medicine and other supplies.

"We were completely overwhelmed at one point," said Indahwati Nursyamsi, director of West Sulawesi General Hospital.

"My nurses were also quake victims and had to

help their families." Medics scrambled to quarantine Covid-19 positive patients in a bid to prevent an outbreak at the crowded open-air triage centre. Some with coronavirus have been put in a prayer room — common in the Muslim majority nation — at the back of the hospital.

— AFP

Trapped Chinese miners  
send SOS after a week

Beijing, Jan. 18: At least 12 gold miners trapped hundreds of metres underground in China for more than a week have sent up a note warning that they are injured, surrounded by water and urgently need medicine.

Twenty-two workers were trapped more than 600 metres from the mine's entrance after a blast eight days ago near Qixia city in eastern Shandong province.

After days without any signs of life, rescuers heard knocking sounds on Sunday afternoon as they drilled through the mine's shaft.

A note was sent up on a line from the depths

Biden all set for  
busy 1st week

Washington buzzes with increased security

Washington, Jan. 18: President-elect Joe Biden's top advisors on Sunday outlined his plans to tackle the nation's multiple crises while balancing the impeachment trial of Donald Trump, as an historic inauguration week opens in the United States.

Washington was under the watch of thousands of National Guard troops and ringed with security barriers ahead of Biden's swearing in on Wednesday, in a nation still rattled by the January 6 attack on the Capitol.

Pro-Trump protests planned at state capitols nationwide got off to a quiet start with only small groups of armed demonstrators gathering in states including Ohio, Texas, Oregon and Michigan.

"The events of the past few weeks have proven just how damaged the soul of America has been and how important is to restore it. That work starts on Wednesday," Biden's incoming chief of staff Ron Klain said.

"We're inheriting a huge mess here, but we have a plan to fix it." As the president-elect prepares to take power in a city where only two weeks earlier Trump supporters launched a violent attempt to overturn the election, Biden faces overlapping crises: not only the pandemic but a struggling economy, climate change and racial tensions.

Biden wants the Congress to act quickly on a massive, \$1.9-trillion stimulus package to revive the economy, and he plans a blitz to accelerate America's stumbling Covid vaccine rollout.

His target of seeing 100 million doses of coronavirus vaccine injected within his first 100 days in office is "absolutely" achievable, top US scientist Anthony Fauci said on Sunday.

"The feasibility of his goal is absolutely clear, there's no doubt about it," said Fauci, who will be Biden's chief advisor on the virus, as he was

FBI screens troops  
ahead of function

FROM PAGE 1

"We're continually going through the process, and taking second, third looks at every one of the individuals assigned to this operation," McCarthy said in an interview after he and other military leaders went through an exhaustive, three-hour security drill in preparation for Wednesday's inauguration. He said Guard members are also getting training on how to identify potential insider threats.

About 25,000 members of the National Guard are streaming into Washington from across the country — at least two and a half times the num-

ber for previous inaugurations. And while the military routinely reviews service members for extremist connections, the FBI screening is in addition to any previous monitoring.

Multiple officials said the process began as the first Guard troops began deploying to D.C. more than a week ago. And they said it is slated to be complete by Wednesday. Several officials discussed military planning on condition of anonymity.

VP-ELECT HARRIS  
TO RESIGN FROM  
HER SENATE SEAT

Wilmington (Delaware), Jan. 18: Vice president-elect Kamala Harris will resign her Senate seat on Monday, two days before she and president-elect Joe Biden are inaugurated. Aides to the California Democrat confirmed the timing and said Gov. Gavin Newsom was aware of her decision, clearing the way for him to appoint fellow Democrat Alex Padilla, now California's secretary of state, to serve the final two years of Harris' term.

Padilla will be the first Latino senator from California, where about 40 per cent of residents are Hispanic. Newsom announced his choice in December, following intense lobbying for the rare Senate vacancy from the nation's most populous state.

— AP

Fearing Biden, Erdogan  
tries to mend ties with EU

Ankara, Jan. 18: Facing a potentially hostile US administration, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is trying to break his isolation by mending EU relations, torn by what the bloc views as his bellicose foreign policy.

Ties between Ankara and Brussels have plunged to a nadir not seen since Turkey formally opened talks to join the bloc in 2005, a process which is now frozen.

And while Erdogan speaks of turning "a new page", the list of European grievances is long.

Most recently, Brussels began drawing up a list of sanctions over Turkey's hunt for natural gas in the eastern

Mediterranean, which triggered a naval standoff with Greece last year.

But older suspicions simmer. Erdogan's direct military interventions in the Syrian and Libyan conflicts raised hackles in Europe, while his vocal backing of Azerbaijan in the six-week Nagorno-Karabakh war upset Armenia's allies across the West.

Erdogan's threats to send millions of Syrian and other refugees Turkey is hosting to Europe if the bloc fails to provide more

funding are a constant menace.

And he has made the animosity personal by attacking French President Emmanuel Macron's treatment of Muslims, which Europe counters by pointing to Turkey's grim record on human rights.

Some believe this standoff is unsustainable for Erdogan.

"Ankara cannot afford an escalation with both the US and Europe, especially with an economy this fragile," a European diplomat said.

— AFP

GREATER CHENNAI CORPORATION PARKS DEPARTMENT	
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Tenders are invited by the Superintending Engineer / Parks for the following work as per details furnished below: Formation of new park and playground at in Dn-77, Zn-6 & Dn-91, Zn-7	
Approx. value of work in Rs. 120.73 Lakhs - E.M.D.: 1% Rs.1,21,000/-	
For more information see <a href="http://www.tntenders.gov.in">www.tntenders.gov.in</a> and <a href="http://www.chennai corporation.gov.in">www.chennai corporation.gov.in</a>	
Due Date and Time for Submission of tender: 04.02.2021 upto 3.00 pm	
Tender opening date and time : 05.02.2021 @ 3.30 pm.	
DIPR/318/Tender/2021	Superintending Engineer (Parks)

राष्ट्रीय परीक्षा एजेंसी National Testing Agency एनटीए	
(एनटीए शिक्षा विभाग, शिक्षा मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार के तहत एक स्वायत्त संयंत्र) (An autonomous organization under the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, GoI)	
NOTIFICATION	
Dated: 18.01.2021	
Recruitment for various posts at National Testing Agency (NTA) on Deputation/ Short Term Contract/ Contract Basis	
Online applications are invited from Indian Nationals possessing relevant academic/ work experience for recruitment to fill up vacancies at the National Testing Agency, New Delhi. Details regarding the online application, educational qualification, experience and other eligibility criteria are provided at official website of NTA at <a href="http://www.nta.ac.in">www.nta.ac.in</a> .	
Eligible and interested candidates are required to apply online upto 18.02.2021 on NTA website: <a href="http://www.nta.ac.in">www.nta.ac.in</a> by paying application fee for application mentioned in the website.	
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DECCAN  
Chronicle

19 JANUARY 2021

# Tejas decision a good one, but much more left to do

In a historic decision, the Cabinet Committee on Security on January 13 approved the country's largest-ever indigenous defence deal when it cleared the procurement of 83 Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas Mk 1-A — ten of which are to be trainers — for the Indian armed forces from Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd at an approximate cost of ₹47,000 crore, closing the circle that began with the commissioning of the LCA project in the 1980s.

The first rollout is expected in 2023-24, and then on 16 aircraft are to be manufactured every year on present reckoning. To start with, the indigenous content is to be 50 per cent, to be stepped up to 60 per cent within a short time-frame. HAL would be outsourcing the job to more than 550 domestic vendors.

This gives us an idea of the technological and economic spinoffs of the LCA programme for the Indian economy as a whole, going beyond the military aspect of acquiring a fighter jet at home which is billed as the workhorse of the future for the Indian Air Force, filling the gap left by the hoary MiG-21s of Soviet manufacture, which have been phased out.

If high-level efficiency is ensured in the production of the Tejas Mk 1-A by HAL, the country will make valuable savings of foreign exchange spent on importing costly fighter jets from Western sources. What's more, in time, the Tejas will be ready for export too. Some countries are said to have evinced an interest. The realisation of sale will, of course, depend on a host of political, strategic and economic considerations, and the prospect of readying the fighter for export will potentially add to India's strategic muscle and offer a certain latitude in dealing with the world.

The Tejas Mk1-A — a fourth-generation fighter — is a single-engine, light-weight, highly agile, all-weather, multi-role fighter aircraft capable of air-to-air refuelling. It has Beyond Visual Range (BVR) missile capability, and updated avionics and flight control software. The good news is that the LCA Mk-2 version with a bigger engine is in its design stage and is expected to be ready for trials next year. As of 2019, the IAF is committed to procuring 324 Tejas MK1-A fighters of different variants. That signifies the workhorse role visualised for this sophisticated fighter.

The domestic manufacture of the Tejas Mk 1-A is a signpost of enormous value, although it has been more than three decades in the making, starting from the conception stage when the Aircraft Development Agency (ADA) was set up in 1984. The ADA designed Tejas in collaboration with Aircraft Research and Design Centre (ARDC) of HAL.

To find true liberation from imports in the strategic sphere of fighter aircraft manufacture, it is now crucial to look at the propulsion aspect for upgrade. India's LCA is fitted with the GEF-404 engine. In the wake of the 1998 nuclear test, the United States had held up the supply of these engines. It is therefore important to return special focus to the development of the indigenous Kaveri engine, which has been in the works for decades. To achieve cent per cent indigenous content, radars and avionics will also need to be manufactured domestically. Only a country that can grow its own food and has the ability to defend itself can ultimately avoid being at anyone's beck and call.

## WhatsApp: A lot to explain

The Mark Zuckerberg-acquired WhatsApp is throwing up as many headaches as its parent Facebook these days because netizens are getting smarter about their data privacy. In an intemperate push to monetise data out of WhatsApp, the popular messaging platform, Facebook got into a tangle that saw millions of individual users and groups sign off and download apps like Signal and Telegram that are less intrusive of personal territory like online data. It may have come as a shock to most Internet users that an app promising end-to-end encryption, and which routinely declines law enforcement enquiries with the excuse that it has no access to user chats, should talk of sharing user data with Facebook.

It is largely true that netizens sign off much of their rights over prized personal information when they sign on to social media platforms and the like. Big Tech has never been averse to building up their businesses and making money out of a large number of users running into millions. The leaks of personal data from breaches by hackers or emanating from sheer carelessness of the machinery that is supposed to ensure security of data have not stopped people from their modern-day existence in an inter-connected world. The advantage is very much with those who keep data as citizens seem to have no rights in the absence of a regulatory framework to govern the Internet.

A parliamentary committee has summoned Facebook and Twitter officials to question them on the misuse of social media and online news platforms, but it is a long-drawn process that might not lead to foolproof measures to safeguard citizens' rights. Big Tech may have done signal service to the world in cutting off the communication of hate propaganda by maverick users like Donald Trump, but it must do a lot more to earn people's trust that it will not recklessly monetise their online presence by compromising their privacy. No algorithm has been invented yet that exposes the cavalier ways of the giants of the new economy. It is up to Internet users to be most discerning in signing on.

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DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:

**Chennai:** SP 3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai 600032. Phones: (044) 22254747, 22254748

**Coinbatore:** 77 Vivekananda Road, Ramnagar, Coinbatore 641009. Phone: (0422) 2231255, 2231256

**Hyderabad:** 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad 500 003. Phone: (040) 27803930-4. Fax: (040) 27805256

**Bengaluru:** 5th Floor, BMTC Commercial Complex, 80 Ft. Road, Koramangala, Bengaluru-560095. Ph: 08043460500. Fax: 080-2290551/52/55

**Visakhapatnam:** Survey No. 1/3A Beach Road, Near Kailasagiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017. Phones: (0891) 2552333/2552334. Fax: (0891) 2755285

**Vijayawada:** No. C 3 & 4, Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.). Phones: (0866) 2555284/2555287. Fax: (0866) 2555234

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

**Anantapur:** Thapovan Colony, Bangalore Bye-Pass Road, Anantapur 515004. Phones: (08554) 276903, Fax: 08554-276904

**Nellore:** Survey No. 527/2, Burranpur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chemudugunta Panchayat, Nellore. Phone: (0861) 2348581/82. Telefax (0861) 2348580

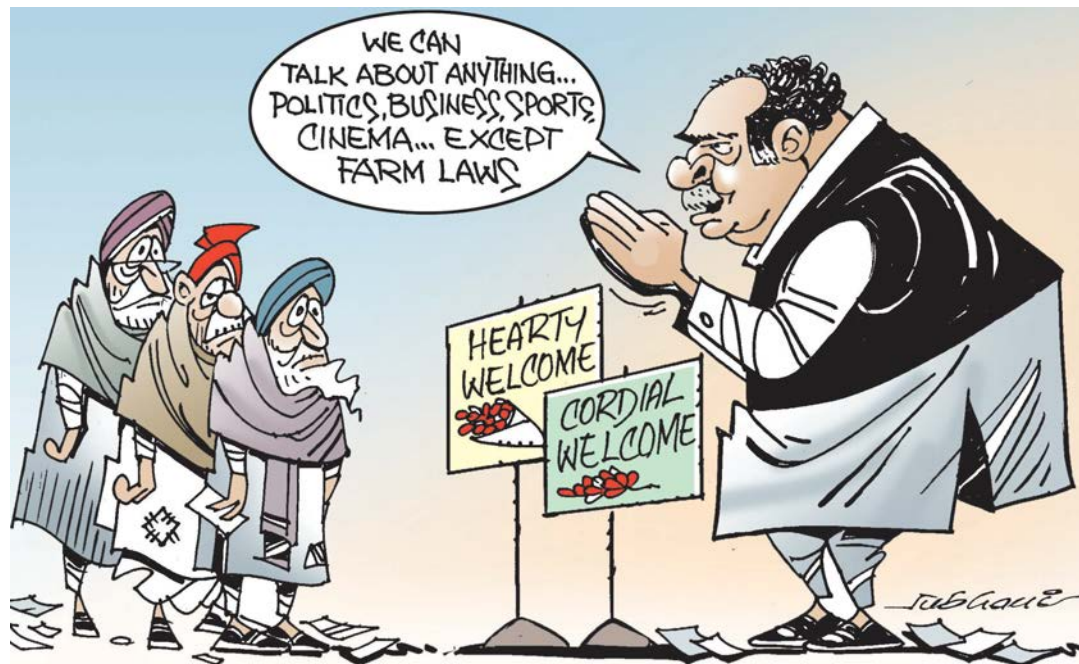
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**Kozhikode:** No 6/1002 E, First Floor City Mall, Opp. YMC Kannur Road, Kozhikode - 673 001 Fax: 0495 4019018

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Subhani



# Thoughts on democracy as Trump exits, finally..



Sunanda K. Datta-Ray

Reflections

Not long before Donald Trump became the first-ever American President to be impeached for a second time — this time with a real possibility of conviction — his daughter Ivanka chose to remind the world of the close ties between her father and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The opening and closure in record time of a study centre in Gwalior that exalted Nathuram Godse, the killer of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, also occurred almost simultaneously.

It is the legal action against Mr Trump by America's senators and congressmen that grips the world's attention. The impeachment proceedings threaten to overwhelm President-elect Joe Biden's \$1.9 trillion plan to end "a crisis of deep human suffering" by speeding up the supply of coronavirus vaccines and financially helping Americans who are still struggling with the economic disaster caused by the grim pandemic. It even distracts notice from the contradictions, if not crisis, of democracy that Mr Trump's rantings and ravings have unwittingly highlighted. For it should never be forgotten that 74 million Americans voted for the man who now seems bent on destroying the edifice on which he stood.

While he is believed to have broken many constitutional norms during his four years in the White House — including trying desperately hard to thwart the peaceful transition of power to his legitimately elected successor — millions of Americans had endorsed his excesses. The January 6 rioters who stormed the US Capitol

building in Washington chanting "Hang Mike Pence" and "Where's Nancy?" clearly saw both the Republican vice-president and the Speaker of the House — the first and second in the line of presidential succession — as national enemies.

There is footage available of the rioters beating a police officer with a flagpole as the crowd chanted "USA" and crushing another officer repeatedly in a door. The violence resulted in five deaths; more might have perished if the police hadn't distracted the mob from breaching the debating chambers long enough to whisk every legislator away to safety. The outrage to civilised governance was infinitely worse. Some Republicans, after encouraging or standing by mute as the President attacked the democratic process for months, have shaken consciences. Ten of them joined all 222 Democrats in the House vote accusing Mr Trump of "incitement of insurrection" that was passed on January 13, a week after the attack.

Even those who concede that Mr Biden obtained more votes can ask if that invalidates the views of 74 million Americans.

A similar question arose in 2000 when George W. Bush defeated Al Gore by winning 271 electoral votes, one more than a majority, despite Mr Gore receiving 543,895 more votes nationally. Many Americans did not regard it as a satisfactory outcome, but they accepted it without protest.

The flaw goes back to 507 BC when the Athenian Cleisthenes introduced demokratia, or "rule by the people", from demos, "the people," and kratos, or "power". Setting aside

the claims of Vaishali, Athens was the first democracy for the Western world. But it was a far cry from the universal adult suffrage which we identify with democracy today, and which can be indistinguishable from mob rule. In the middle of the 4th century, for instance, Athens boasted about 100,000 citizens (sons and daughters of citizens), some 10,000 metoikoi, or "resident foreigners", and 150,000 slaves. Only male citizens above 18 were a part of the demos, meaning only about 40,000 people could participate in the democratic process.

Around 460 BC, under the rule of the general Pericles (generals were among the only public officials who were elected, not appointed), Athenian democracy began to evolve into an autocracy (Herodotus' "the one man, the best") which eventually led to Mao Zedong's concept of "people's democratic dictatorship". The premise was that the party and the State represented the people and acted on their behalf to preserve the "dictatorship of the proletariat", and save the government from collapsing into a "dictatorship of the bourgeoisie", or liberal democracy. Mao famously used the term on June 30, 1949, commemorating the 28th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China.

However, not all democracies are killed by Army coups or declarations of emergency. Many are destroyed from within. The urge to perpetuate a particular group's stranglehold on power or the plea that a mere head count does not adequately reflect the mood and temper of the people explains opportunistic

**However, not all democracies are killed by Army coups or declarations of emergency. Many are destroyed from within.**

devices like Gen. Ayub Khan's "basic democracy" (Pakistan), King Mahendra's "panchayati democracy" (Nepal) or "guided democracy" (Indonesia). Mr Trump's "America First" slogan is strongly echoed in the implicit argument that India's majority feels disenfranchised unless it enjoys special privileges. Hence the Hindu Mahasabha's attempt to propagate the "true nationalism which Godse stood for" through an eponymous library.

Three years ago, the Mahasabha installed a statue of Godse and was about to organise prayer meetings there, but the statue was removed. This second try has to be seen in the context of the constitutional dismemberment and demotion of Jammu and Kashmir, motivated tinkering with academic curriculums, triumphalism over the new Ram temple in Ayodhya. Hindutva trolls, opposition to inter-faith marriages and attacks on Muslims in the name of cow protection. WhatsApp and Twitter are said to be the main instruments for hounding the community.

In view of such similar populist moves, it was not surprising that 39-year-old Ivanka Trump, a senior adviser to her father, should choose this moment to recall her 2017 visit when she led a high-powered delegation to the Global Entrepreneur Summit in Hyderabad. "As the world continues to battle Covid-19, our countries' strong friendship in promoting global security, stability, and economic prosperity is more important than ever," she tweeted, paying particular tribute to Mr Modi by name.

Given the association with a man who is widely accused of desperate attempts to subvert democracy, it's a compliment the Prime Minister of an India that is still proud of being the world's largest democracy could have done without.

*The writer is a senior journalist, columnist and author*

### LETTERS

#### VACCINATION Vs VACCINE

The editorial *Transparency the key to success of vaccine drive* (Jan. 18) clinically dissects the potential dangers looming large in the launching of Covaxin inoculation in a hurry by the Centre taking the people for a guinea pig ride. It is equally shocking to note that the warning by the panel of scientists has fallen on deaf ears. The government's unscientific and illogic launching of the vaccine before getting the nod of the medical experts should be challenged in court as PIL lest many should turn victims in case of side effects. In a significant way the editorial demarcates vaccination vs vaccine.

**E.S.Chandrasekaran, Chennai**

#### UNFAIR COMPARISON

MR MOHAN Guruswamy's comparison of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Emperor Aurangzeb is unfair and unfortunate (*An important lesson from India's history for PM Modi*, Jan. 17). While Modi became prime minister through the constitutional process, Aurangzeb ascended the Moghul throne by blood and sword. More than 100 Hindu temples were destroyed in Aurangzeb's rule, chief among them being most famous temples like Somnath, Kashi Viswanath or Mathura. And he imposed the oppressive religious tax Jizya on Hindus. Sadly in India, bigotry is highlighted only when directed against minorities. Thus, Mohammad Akhlaq's murder over alleged possession of beef was prime-time news for months on end but not that of V. Ramalingam who was murdered by Muslims for protesting against conversions in Tamil Nadu. Indeed, Modi has emerged as the leader who corrects historic wrongs like Kashmir or Ayodhya.

**Kangayam R. Narasimhan, Chennai**

#### NO ROOM FOR RACISM

THIS HAS reference to your editorial *No room for racism* (Jan. 11). There is no space for racism in sports. Cricket is a gentleman's game. The spirit of sports and games is coordination. It is beyond racism. But we cannot expect spectators too to preserve a safe environment. Australian society is facing the real problem of racism. Football has attained a track record against racist elements. Cricket also must do more to achieve the same. India is also having the same problem but it is not getting much attention due to the language barrier.

**Suresh V.V., Vellore**

Aakar Patel



## Nehru a model of modernity.. Why his vision & legacy endures

I was being interviewed for my book and was asked a question unrelated to it — Why does Hindutva hate Jawaharlal Nehru so much? It is an interesting question and has two parts to the answer. To know it, we must first understand what Nehru was and what he wanted.

Before Independence, Nehru wrote a series of works through which he aligned himself to India as a civilisational entity of the sort that the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh also approves of. He traces the modern nation to its origins in the Indus Valley Civilisation (discovered only a few years before he wrote *Glimpses of World History* and only 15 or so years before he wrote *The Discovery of India*) to the periods of the first and second millennia after Jesus Christ.

But having acknowledged that India was ancient, Nehru sought also to align it to the modern world and the era he was a part of and the future that he saw for all mankind. To that end he used the State as an instrument to modernise the country. Nehru based his strategy on two things — heavy industry and heavy

education. India had limited resources but these two would get priority.

You could argue about whether the strategy was good, bad or indifferent, but it would be difficult to say that he did not execute what he sought out to do. Having determined that he was going to modernise this civilisational entity he set about doing it because Nehru was not only a man of vision (you could argue with him about whether your vision was better) but also a man of action.

He began building institutions, including some which are today called "navratnas", but were then nothing and needed to be built. Some such examples are Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (1964), Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (1956), Steel Authority of India (1954), Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (1964), Indian Oil Corporation (1959), Isro (formerly INCOSPAR) 1962, Department of Atomic Energy (1954), Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (1954). And then Nehru set up the Indian Institutes of Technology (1951), the Indian Institutes of Management (1961), the National Institute of Design (1961), and the

Sahitya Akademi (1954).

The list goes on and on. Why were all these set up? They were set up because they were the means through which Nehru determined India would be modernised. He inherited a pre-modern economy, where the vast majority of production lay in agriculture and that agriculture was being largely managed by farmers whose means of farming had changed very little for over a thousand years.

Nehru did not inherit a trillion-dollar economy. He had to figure out how to get India there.

The problem is that nobody in the world of Hindutva has any vision — good, bad or indifferent — when compared to Nehru, and that includes our Prime Minister. He can offer us statements like "\$5 trillion economy" but he does not say, because he does not himself know, what needs to be done to get us there. More important, he does not know what the State needs to do differently to get there. You can only build institutions if you can think of what to do with them. The reason that Narendra Modi has not built institutions while Jawaharlal Nehru was

so prolific is because Mr Modi does not have even Nehru's starting point.

Nehru had said: Heavy industry and higher education! What does Narendra Modi say? If the answer to that is difficult for you to come up with, it is because there is no answer. This is the first reason that the BJP and Hindutva adherents hates Nehru: Jealousy.

The second reason is that Nehru was not a fraud nationalist. He was a real one. He did not only name China, he fought against it. Nehru lost because Nehru fought. And he fought because he could not bear the thought of surrendering any land of his precious India.

External affairs minister S. Jaishankar said at the Ramnath Goenka Lecture on November 14, 2019 that Nehru should have accepted Zhou Enlai's offer on the border dispute during Zhou's 1960 visit to India. What was that offer? That India should accept the Karakoram range as the Sino-Indian boundary. This is where the Line of Actual Control exists today. But this was not acceptable to Nehru. He wanted the border much further into Tibet.

And he was willing to fight for it. He may have lost, yes, but he did not give up India's claim.

This is unlike Mr Modi, who has not only given up the claim, but is also unwilling even to name the opponent for fear of what China might do. This is the second reason that the BJP and Hindutva hate Nehru. He was a nationalist who exposed thoroughly their own fraudulent nationalist credentials.

The name Nehru is used far too loosely in today's times without much understanding of what he really stood for because we have not explained his thinking in simplified terms.

He is not only much superior to whatever came after him, particularly as we see now in a period of economic collapse and national security failures, but he is a model for modernity. He died more than 55 years ago but is still spoken about and his legacy is all around us today. Of how many Prime Ministers, and that includes this current one, will we be able to say that?

*The writer is a senior journalist, columnist and author*



## quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	48,564.27	-0.96
Nifty 50	14,281.30	-1.06
S&P 500*	3,768.25	-0.72
Dollar (₹)	73.28	-0.31
Pound Sterling (₹)	99.18	0.49
Euro (₹)	88.47	0.27
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	48,332.117	0.24
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	54.87	-0.42
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.957	-0.52
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.087	-0.92

\* As of 8:30 PM IST

## Cure.fit acquires US-based digital fitness firm Onyx

Health-tech startup Cure.fit said it has acquired California-based fitness company Onyx. The company, however, did not disclose the value of the deal. Cure.fit's acquisition of Onyx is a step towards improving its computer vision technology for its at-home fitness product and expanding its international business, a statement said. Onyx specialises in body tracking technology and personalisation of workout feedback.

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## ■ Import of appliances, furniture, EV parts to get costlier Budget may raise duties by 5-10% to aid local mfg

**AFTAB AHMED & MANOJ KUMAR**  
NEW DELHI, JAN. 18

The government is considering hiking import duties by 5-10 per cent on more than 50 items, including smartphones, electronic components and appliances in the upcoming budget, three government sources privy to the discussions told Reuters on Monday. The move to increase import duties is part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's self-reliant India campaign that aims to promote and support domestic manufacturing, said the sources, who asked not to be named as the discussions are not public. One of the sources said

### FOCUS ON SELF-RELIANCE

- Customs duty hikes part of revenue raising and Atmanirbhar Bharat plan
- Govt seeking additional revenue of about ₹120,000 crore-₹21,000 crore from duties
- Duty hikes could hurt Swedish furniture maker Ikea and electric vehicle maker Tesla

the government was seeking to target additional revenue of about Rs 20,000 crore-21,000 crore from the moves, as it looks to shore up revenue amidst the pandemic-driven slowdown.

Two of the government sources also said the duty hikes could impact furniture and electric vehicles, potentially hurting the likes of Swedish furniture maker Ikea and Tesla,

which is planning to launch its cars in India this year. Both Ikea and Tesla executives have previously expressed concerns about the steep duty structure their products already face in India.

The list of items likely to attract steeper duties is set to include appliances such as refrigerators and air-conditioners too, three of the sources said.

The sources said the proposals may still be tweaked further before they are finalised.

India has in recent years taken a series of measures that industry executives say discriminate against foreign companies. Government officials say such taxes are essential to promote India as a destination for local manufacturing and to support domestic businesses.

"This is part of revenue raising and Atmanirbhar Bharat plan," said one of the government sources.

Last year, India raised import taxes on a wide range of products such as footwear, furniture, toys, electrical and electronics items by up to 20 per cent.

—Reuters

## Beware of tricky January, budget moves of mkt

**RAVI RANJAN PRASAD**  
MUMBAI, JAN. 18

Sensex and Nifty-50 fell close to 1 per cent for the second session in a row on profit taking amid negative global cues, though foreign portfolio investors were still buying shares.

The Sensex closed 470 points down at 48,564 while the Nifty-50 closed 152.40 points lower at 14,281.30. The broader market fall was even sharper with the BSE Mid-cap Index down 2.01



per cent and BSE Small-cap Index, 1.89 per cent.

"The news of fresh Covid cases in China has spooked the markets across the globe, including India, as participants are worried about global economic recovery," said

Ajit Mishra, VP-research, Religare Broking.

It's time to remain cautious as the January-February period has seen big market falls in the past—the biggest fall after a sharp rise took place on January 21, 2008—and later between 2015 and 2018 the market saw sharp falls post-Union Budget.

With little headroom for the government to present a popular budget, profit taking before budget day cannot be ruled out.

"Unusual strength in the dollar index and sustained run up in the commodities have battered the sentiment of the equity market. It has triggered selling in commodities and the Nifty Metal Index closed 4.57 per cent lower," said Shrikant Chouhan, analyst-equity technical research, Kotak Securities.

Foreign portfolio investors were net buyers of equities worth Rs 650.60 crore while the domestic institutions were net sellers by Rs 42.51 crore.

## Chip shortage forces Ford to advance plant shut down

New Delhi, Jan. 18: The global shortage of semiconductors will impact production of US auto major Ford's plants in India in the coming months, even as the company advances a scheduled week-long shutdown to this week at its Chennai factory, according to a company official.



### AUDI DELAYS OUTPUT, IDLES 10,000 STAFF

**YUEQI YANG**  
JAN. 18

A global semiconductor shortage is forcing Audi to delay the production of some high-end cars and furlough workers, its chief executive officer told the *Financial Times*.

The Volkswagen AG brand has put more than 10,000 workers on furlough as production slowed, but overall output for 2021 shouldn't be affected because the company expects to make up for lost time in the second half, Markus Duesmann said in the interview.

VW, the world's biggest carmaker, had said last month that it's bracing for a major production

disruption in first-quarter manufacturing around the globe because of the bottleneck. Other carmakers, including Daimler AG, Nissan Motor Co, Honda Motor Co, Ford Motor Co and Fiat Chrysler Automobiles NV, have also said they face impact from the chip shortage.

In the *FT* interview, Duesmann said Audi will "do everything we can to keep it below 10,000 [fewer models produced] for the first quarter." The supply challenge came as Audi saw unexpected rise in demand for cars, largely due to a rebound in China, he said.

—Bloomberg

per cent at 6,943 units. The company's domestic sales were at 1,662 units, down 45.06 per cent from the year-ago month, whereas its exports were at 6,992 units, a decline of 53.83 per cent from December 2019.

Last month, due to the shortage of semiconductor supplied by Bosch Ltd, Mahindra & Mahindra had also stated it was expecting reduction in production and sales volumes.

—PTI

## COFFEE-BREAK

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



**Aries:** Relax, you will soon find your strength and tackle life with renewed vigour and vitality. Matters of heart will be great. Some of you may plan to settle down.



**Taurus:** There is a possibility that you will be face to face with a new opportunity today. Address it and you will be more than happy to see positive result.



**Gemini:** There may be some issues at your work place that keep on recurring back. Do nothing, ignore it and walk away. Do not indulge in any kind of brooding now.



**Cancer:** Hard work gets rewarded, as some of you are likely to get a promotion. Your partner will need your constant attention. Spend time with family and friends.



**Leo:** You may particularly feel out of sorts. Your natural patience and expertise may fail you. You may not even feel like addressing an issue that may need to get resolved.



**Virgo:** You may feel the need to relax and enjoy with your beloved. Expenses will not hold you back. You'll gladly spend and have no qualms about it. Financial gains are indicated for some of you.

### You share your b'day with

**Dolly Parton, an American singer, songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, actress, author, businesswoman, and humanitarian, known primarily for her work in country music.**



**Libra:** One of your family members may be in trouble. So try to be there to help. You will be somewhat disturbed today. There will be a number of questions on your mind.



**Scorpio:** You will see subtle changes in your surrounding and life in general. This should be taken well since this will affect your image in a good way.



**Sagittarius:** Do not try to do more than your capacity. Legal intervention in family's property dispute may not be beneficial. There might be sudden expenses to be tackled.



**Capricorn:** Resist any temptation to behave stubborn and to force your opinions on others. Make some genuine promises as it would add to your happiness. Added responsibility at home will be a burden.

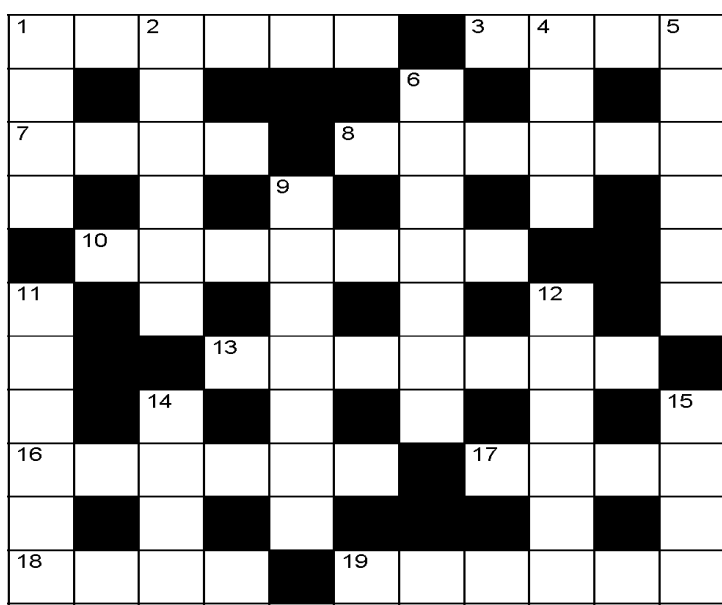


**Aquarius:** Your mate will be as pleased as you will with the results. If you want to relax your body it is high time for you to kick away your depression. Evening with friends will be good for holiday planning.



**Pisces:** You will be drawn to occult and spirituality. Your endeavours will be more refined than most. Matters related to abroad will feature in your thoughts. If you are waiting for some news, you may receive it.

### QUICK CROSSWORD



Across

1. Effervescent (6)
3. Stupor (4)
7. Springtime construction (4)
8. Coarse canvas (6)
10. Tramp wearily (7)
13. Bookbinding leather (7)
16. Itinerant travelling seller (6)
17. Layer (4)
18. Alone (4)
19. Grimly persistent (6)

down

1. Crooked (4)
2. Small restaurant (6)
4. Wheel shaft (4)
5. Make larger (6)
6. Noughts (anag) (7)
9. Crucially important (7)
11. University grounds, buildings (6)
12. Pretending (6)
14. Pop hero (4)
15. Reproduced (4)

### YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

Across: 1. Hindrance, 6. Coins, 7. Snips, 9. Tots, 10. Impala, 12. Reflex, 14. Idle, 17. Debut, 18. Elite, 19. Celebrity.

Down: 2. Idiot, 3. Dusk, 4. Assume, 5. China, 6. Catered, 8. Siamese, 11. Beetle, 13. Fable, 15. Drift, 16. Tear.

### Word Mine

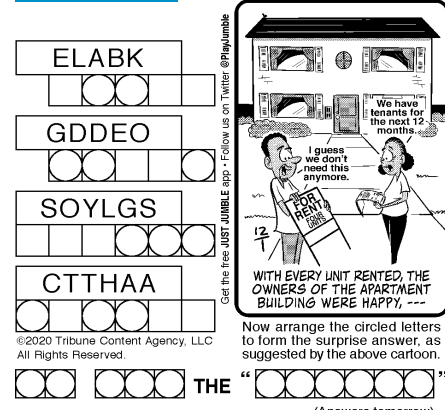
T  
L  
O  
U  
N  
N  
G  
I  
I

TODAY'S RATINGS: 16 AVERAGE; 18 GOOD; 20 OUTSTANDING

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown in today's puzzle? In making a word, each letter may be used only once. Each word must contain the letter at the top of the pyramid. There should be at least one nine letter word. Plurals, foreign words and proper names are not allowed.

Dealer: North Vulnerable: North-South  
1st Pass 2nd Pass 3rd Pass 4th Pass  
5th Pass 6th Pass 7th Pass 8th Pass  
9th Pass 10th Pass 11th Pass 12th Pass  
Opening lead: ♠ 9

### jumble

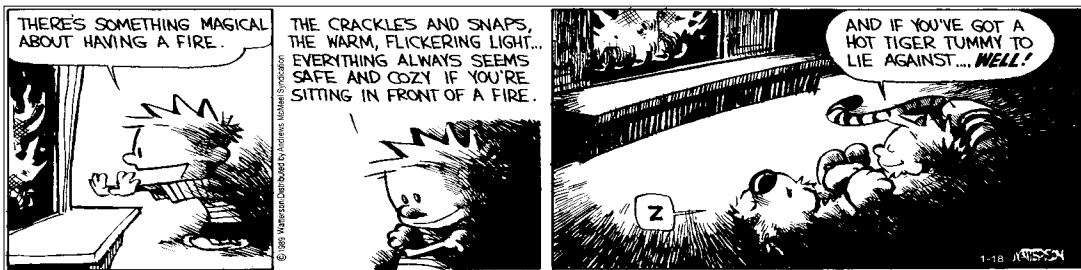


Yesterday's Jumbles: TRULY BLESS SPRAWL BORDER  
Answer: The process of an infant becoming a toddler involves — BABY STEPS

When South doubled, North should have passed, trusting her partner. But, looking at the vulnerability, she moved on to five spades. Both sides played carefully, and declarer went down one, losing two hearts and one club. In five diamonds doubled, East would have lost two spades, two diamonds and two clubs for down four, minus 800.

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### CALVIN AND HOBBS | Bill Watterson



### THE WIZARD OF ID | Parker and Hartsd



### ARCHIE | Bill Henry Scarpelli & Craig Boldman



### BLONDIE | Dean Young and John Marshall



### ANDY CAPP | Reg Smythe



### TARZAN | Edgar Rice Burroughs





## SHORT TAKES

## Chandrasekhar suffers stroke

**Bengaluru:** Former India cricketer B.S. Chandrasekhar has been hospitalised after suffering a stroke but is recovering well and is set to be discharged in the next couple of days, his family said on Monday. The 75-year old legendary former leg-spinner complained of "tiredness and fatigue" on Friday evening and his speech became a "little bit cluttered", his wife Sandhya Chandrasekhar Bhagwath said, describing the health scare as a "very, very minutest stroke". "Chandra is recovering very well, and he will be back home on Wednesday or Thursday," she said. On advice of doctors, the Mysuru-born Chandrasekhar was admitted to the Aster RV Hospital, where he was kept in the emergency care unit for observation. — PTI

## Eng win opening Test in Lanka

**Galle, Sri Lanka:** Jonny Bairstow and Dan Lawrence held their nerve in a 62-run unbroken stand to guide England to a seven-wicket win over Sri Lanka on Monday on the fifth and final morning of the series-opening Test. England ensured they didn't have any more hiccups in erasing the remaining 36 required on the last day after Sri Lanka had set up a tricky 74-run target on a turning wicket. England had slumped to 14/3 late on the fourth evening, included a crucial run-out of their captain Joe Root for just 1, before Bairstow and Lawrence combined to usher the tourists to 76/3. Bairstow remained unbeaten on 35 and Lawrence finished 21 not out. — AP  
**Brief scores: Sri Lanka 135 & 359 vs England 421 & 76/3** (Bairstow 35 not out)

## 72 players in Oz Open quarantine

**Melbourne:** The number of players in hard quarantine swelled to 72 ahead of the Australian Open after a fifth positive coronavirus test was returned from the charter flights bringing players, coaches, officials and media to Melbourne for the season-opening tennis major.

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## NEWBIES STING

Siraj's five-for and Shardul's 4/61 keep India in contention

**Brisbane, Jan. 18:** Indian pacers Mohammed Siraj and Shardul Thakur produced another inspirational effort in adverse circumstances but India were set a a challenging target of 328 by Australia as the Border-Gavaskar Trophy headed towards an exhilarating finale in the fourth Test here. The target is a tricky one and the Indian batsmen would get a fair idea whether to go for it by lunch on the final day, which is Tuesday. This was after Siraj and Thakur combined to share nine wickets while dismissing Australia for 294 in their second innings.

Siraj (19.5-5-73-5) punched way above his weight with his maiden five-wicket haul but couldn't prevent hosts from posting an imposing target for his team in only 75.5 overs of the second innings batting. At stumps, India were 4 for no loss with Rohit Sharma and Shubman Gill at the crease. The highest target chased at Brisbane is 236 and that was seven decades ago which is an indicator why this Australian ground can be equated with Fort Knox. The home team hasn't lost a game here since 1988.

Thakur's dream Test match also got better with figures of 4/61 and a match haul of seven wickets. The most poignant moment was his apparent joy when he took the catch to help Siraj pip him to the coveted five-for landmark. As Siraj showed that scuffed red kookaburra acknowledging the 957 people in the stands on the first working day of the week, the most generous applause came from his partner in crime, who walked a foot behind him clapping with gusto. The possibility of rain adds to the excitement and the changing weather did affect the contours of Australia skipper Tim Paine's facial expressions which exhibited relief and despair in equal measures. Among the two captains, Paine is supposed to be the enforcer but this Indian team hasn't stopped surprising their detractors with a spirit, which has made this series one of the finest played in recent times. — PTI



Paceman Mohammed Siraj (right) points to the sky to pay tribute to his father who passed away in India while the bowler was on national duty in Australia, as he celebrates his fifth wicket with teammate Mayank Agarwal on the fourth day of the fourth Test against Australia at the Gabba in Brisbane on Monday. — AFP

## Mum's call did wonders for Siraj

**Brisbane, Jan. 18:** Mohammed Siraj revealed how a phone call with his mother and the memory of his late father spurred him on to a five-wicket haul in the final Test against Australia on Monday. Siraj, playing only his third Test, ably deputised for the injured Jasprit Bumrah in Brisbane, where India need a draw to retain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy with the series locked at 1-1.

It has been an emotional series for the 26-year-old, who lost his father in November and welled up with tears during the national anthems in Sydney. "I am very thankful that I got five wickets. It was a very tough situation for me because I lost my dad recently," said Siraj.

"I called up home and I felt strong after talking to them and to my mother. She motivated me to feel strong. So I was mentally strong and my focus was to make sure my dad's dream comes true."

## SIRAJ'S MAIDEN 5-WICKET HAUL IN TESTS

- Mohammed Siraj recorded the best bowling in Tests by taking 5/73 against Australian in the fourth Test.
- The right-arm medium pacer from Hyderabad also became the 18th Indian to take five wickets in an innings in Australia.
- Kapil Dev holds the Indian record of taking the highest number of five-wicket hauls in Australia. He claimed five five-wicket hauls in 21 innings of 11 Test Down under.
- Siraj's previous best bowling was 3/37 on debut in the second Test of the series at Melbourne.
- Shardul Thakur also recorded his best bowling after taking 4/61 on Monday. His previous best was 3/94 in the first innings of the fourth Test.

— S. PERVEZ KAISER

Siraj's father, an auto rickshaw driver from Hyderabad, died on November 20 as India prepared for the start of their tour.

## 'CRACKS ON GABBA CAN BE CONFUSING'

An emotional Siraj struggled to describe his maiden five-wicket haul in words but sounded a word of caution about the cracks on the Gabba surface creating confusion in the Indian batsmen's minds on the final day.

He believed that there are a few spots on the surface, from where the ball might rear up awkwardly when his team sets out to chase a record target of 328 on Tuesday to win the series against Australia.

"When they bowl, obviously there will be some confusion, it will play in the mind of the batsmen that there are cracks on the pitch but our batsmen are prepared for this. We will come to know only tomorrow," Siraj said. — Agencies

## SCORECARD

**Australia 1st Innings: 369**  
**India 1st Innings: 326**  
**Australia 2nd Innings (overnight 21/0):** Marcus Harris c Pant b Thakur 38, David Warner lbw Washington Sundar 48, Marnus Labuschagne c Rohit b Siraj 25, Steven Smith c Rahane b Siraj 55, Matthew Wade c Pant b Siraj 0, Cameron Green c Rohit b Thakur 37, Tim Paine c Pant b Thakur 27, Pat Cummins not out 28, Mitchell Starc c Navdeep Saini b Siraj 1, Nathan Lyon c Mayank Agarwal b Thakur 13, Josh Hazlewood c Thakur b Siraj 9. Extras (b-5, lb-2, w-2, nb-4) 13. **Total (all out, in 75.5 overs) 294.**  
**FoW:** 1-89, 2-91, 3-123, 4-123, 196-5, 227-6, 242-7, 247-8, 274-9, 294-10.  
**Bowling:** Mohammed Siraj 19.5-5-73-5, T Natarajan 14-4-0, Washington Sundar 18-1-80-1, Shardul Thakur 19-2-61-4, Navdeep Saini 5-1-32-0.  
**India 2nd Innings:** Rohit Sharma batting 4, Shubman Gill batting 0. **Total (For no loss in 1.5 overs) 4.**  
**Bowling:** Mitchell Starc 1-0-4-0, Josh Hazlewood 0.5-0-0-0.

## SYED MUSHTAQ | ALI TROPHY

## Jagadeesan fires TN to fifth victory

**Kolkata, Jan. 18:** Opener Narayan Jagadeesan shone with an unbeaten 45-ball 71 in the presence of his captain Dinesh Karthik as Tamil Nadu beat Bengal by eight wickets for their fifth straight win in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy T20 tournament here on Monday.

In the day's last Elite Group B match, Bengal made 163 for eight and in reply, Tamil Nadu chased down the target with two overs to spare. Karthik remained unbeaten on 47 off 31 balls while sharing an unbroken third-wicket

stand of 110 runs. For Bengal, Kaif Ahmed top-scored with 63 off 47 balls and hit five four and two sixes, while skipper Anustup Majumdar contributed 34 of 22 balls with the help of four boundaries.

Baba Aparajith was the most successful bowler for Tamil Nadu with figures of 2/20 in four overs.

## BRIEF SCORES

■ Bengal 163/8 in 20 overs (Kaif Ahamed 63\*, B. Aparajith 2/20) lost to Tamil Nadu 167/2 in 18 overs (N. Jagadeesan 71\*, Dinesh Karthik 47\*).

## ISL | SEASON 7

## 10-man East Bengal hold Chennaiyin FC

**Goa, Jan. 18:** A spirited effort by the SC East Bengal defense led by goalkeeper Debjit Majumdar helped the Kolkata side nullify a one-man advantage to Chennaiyin ending up with a vital point in the Indian Super League at the GMC Stadium, Bambolim, on Monday.

Robbie Fowler's side was forced to play with a man down for almost over an hour after Ajay Chhetri received his marching orders at the half-hour mark. However, SCEB held their ground throughout

the game to frustrate Chennaiyin.

SCEB now extend their unbeaten run to seven games.

SCEB made three changes as Anthony Pilkington was back in the side in place of Matti Steinmann. New signing Ajay Chhetri was also handed his first start while Surchandra Singh was the other change. Chennaiyin made just one change as Edwin Vanspaul had his second start of the season, coming in place of Fatkhulo Fatkhulloev.

## HOCKEY PLAYER VJ THOMAS NO MORE

**Chennai, Jan. 18:** Former India hockey player V.J. Thomas passed away due to age related ailments on Monday. He was 71 and is survived by his wife and a daughter. Thomas is the younger brother of Olympic medallist V.J. Phillips. Thomas was part of Indian team that toured New Zealand in 1975. He represented the Indian Railways at the senior national championships in 1976 and 1978.



VJ Thomas



SRM IST women volleyball team, winners of the state level volleyball tournament at Tiruchengode. They beat PKR Arts and Science College in the final.

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