



On this historic day, expressing heartiest gratitude to all Corona warriors. These 'Made in India' vaccines are proof of the determination of Aatmanirbhar Bharat

AMIT SHAH
UNION HOME MINISTER

Bird flu confirmed in owl found dead in Delhi zoo

PTI

NEW DELHI, 16 JANUARY

A dead owl in the Delhi zoo has been found to have been infected with bird flu, officials said on Saturday.

"The zoo witnessed the death of a brown fish owl in its captivity. Its cloacal, tracheal and ocular swabs were sent to the animal husbandry unit of the Delhi government for serological examination," zoo Director Ramesh Pandey said.

The samples were found positive for H5N8 avian influenza virus under real time RT-PCR test done by ICAR-National Institute of High Security Animal Disease (NIHSAD), Bhopal, on Friday.

day, he said.

As per protocols and guidelines issued by the Centre and the Delhi government, sanitisation and surveillance drills have been intensified in the zoo and all possible preventive measures are being taken, the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change said in a statement.

Pandey said, "Birds in captivity have been isolated and are under consistent monitoring and care for their behaviour and health. Spray of lime, virkon-S and sodium hypochlorite and foot bath of potassium permanganate are being done on regular intervals every day."

Chicken feed to raptors and entry of vehicles inside the zoo have already been stopped. Movement of staff is also being restricted and regulated in view of the bird flu outbreak.

The Delhi zoo has both captive and free-ranging birds, including local migratory waterfowls and waders, in its habitat.

On Monday, samples taken from crows and ducks at parks and lakes in the national capital had tested positive for the avian influenza.

Pandey said that in case of any suspected death of birds in future, authorities will collect samples for test as per protocol.

Today, samples taken from crows and ducks at parks and lakes in the national capital had tested positive for the avian influenza.

Pandey said that in case of any suspected death of birds in future, authorities will collect samples for test as per protocol.

Capital logs 299 fresh virus cases, 6 deaths

SNS & PTI

NEW DELHI, 16 JANUARY

Delhi today recorded 299 fresh coronavirus (Covid-19) cases and 6 more deaths, even as its positivity rate dipped to 0.42 per cent, according to the Delhi government's latest health bulletin. The country-wide Covid vaccination drive kicked off today.

The city's Covid caseload rose to 6,32,183 and its death toll mounted to 10,738, the health bulletin said.

This is the 13th time the daily Covid incidence count stood below the 500-mark in January so far, and seventh

consecutive day since 10 January when the single-day tally stood below the 400-mark.

Today's 299 new coronavirus cases were detected out of 71,957 tests including 40,717 RT-PCR tests and 31,240 rapid antigen tests, the bulletin stated.

The national capital's active cases tally dropped to 2,691 from yesterday's 2,795.

It had yesterday recorded 295 Covid cases - the lowest in more than eight months.

Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal had then tweeted: "Well done Delhi! Delhi records the lowest number

of Covid cases in the last 8 months. The positivity rate stands at an all-time low at 0.44%. With the resilience of the Delhites, we are committed to fight and beat Corona."

Delhi health minister Satyendar Jain had then also tweeted to state that "Lowest number of cases recorded since 9th of May 2020. Positivity rate in Delhi has been dropped to all time low of 0.44%. Wear mask and follow social distancing to keep yourself and your family safe."

The city had yesterday reported 10 Covid-linked fatalities.

Don't believe in anti-jab rumours: Kejri to people

As the Covid vaccination kicked off in Delhi & the country, CM reminds people that experts say the vaccines are safe; inspects the drive at LNJP Hospital, interacts with healthworkers who got the shots

SNS & PTI

NEW DELHI, 16 JANUARY

Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal today urged people not to believe in rumours and listen to experts who say Covid-19 vaccines are safe, as the world's largest immunisation programme against the contagious, deadly disease got underway in the country.

Kejriwal inspected the Covid vaccination campaign at Lok Nayak Jai Prakash Narayan (LNJP) Hospital here, interacted with some health workers who received the shots, and lauded their contribution in fighting the pandemic.

The vaccination drive has started at 81 centres in Delhi. Atmaja Priyadarshini Nayak, nursing officer at LNJP Hospital, was administered the vaccine shot in the presence of the CM.

"I have interacted with those vaccinated. No one has any problem. All are happy that they will get rid of coronavirus," Kejriwal said. "I want to say to all not to pay attention to rumours and misin-



formation. The experts say vaccines are safe and there is no need to worry."

But there is a need to use face masks and maintain social distancing even after receiving the vaccine shots, he stressed.

The Delhi government has made all the preparations and around 8,100 people will

be vaccinated today at 81 sites across Delhi, the CM said, adding that the exercise was running smoothly at LNJP Hospital and those vaccinated were very happy.

Kejriwal said there was no need to launch a separate app to register people for vaccination as the Centre has devised the same system for

the entire country.

The number of vaccination centres will be raised to 175 gradually in the coming days and to 1000 as and when vaccine availability increases, he said.

Delhi health minister Satyendar Jain said health workers will be the first to receive the vaccine followed

by frontline workers such as civil defence volunteers and police officials.

Following this, people above 50 years and then younger people but with co-morbidities will be vaccinated, he said.

In a series of tweets, Jain said: "Reviewed the vaccination drive at LNJP hospital with Hon'ble CM Shri @arvindkejriwal ji. Our front line workers received the first dose of the vaccine. I appreciate their endless efforts and dedication. Kudos to our scientists for their tireless work!"

He also said, "Honour to have witnessed the historical vaccine roll out in capital. I appreciate the arrangements made by the doctors & administration of Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality Hospital, for facilitating vaccination drive."

LNJP Hospital director Dr Suresh Kumar said, "World's largest vaccination drive has started in Delhi from LNJP Hospital. CM Arvind Kejriwal and Health Minister Satyendar Jain inspected the preparations and they spoke to eight people who received the vaccine.

JOBS & CLASSIFIEDS QUEST

LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE COURT OF SH. SUNIL RANA
Addl. District Judge-05
(Central)
Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi
PC No. 31/2020
N.D.O. - 17 -03-2021

Om Prakash Sethi
Versus

The State
CITATION UNDER SECTION
271 OF THE INDIAN
SUCCESSION ACT

Whereas an petition under
Section 276/278 of the Indian
Succession Act, 1925, for grant
of Probate/Letters of Adminis-
tration in respect of the
Estate of deceased Lt. Sh.
Kailash Kumar, w/o Lt. Sh.
Badri Singh, 79/1, Sector-10,
Puri Subzi Mandi, Delhi-110007,
Who died on 01-07-2012 at Delhi, has been made by
Sh. Om Prakash Sethi, S/o Late Sh. Dilli Ram Sethi, r/o
C-38, Ashirwad, Vaishali,
Ghaziabad, U.P.

Whereas the 17-03-2021 has
been fixed for hearing of the
case. Notice is hereby given so
that any person having any
interest in the Probate/Letters
of Administration or any other
of the said deceased if he/she
desires to be heard shall
appear before this court on 17-
03-2021 before the Grant
of Letters of Administration.

Given under my hand and
the Seal of this Court on this
15th day of January, 2021.

Addl. District Judge-05
(Central)

Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi
Seal of the Court

DEBTS RECOVERY
TRIBUNAL-I
4th Floor, Jeevan Tara
Building, Parliament Street,
New Delhi-110001
OA No. 315/2019
ICICI Bank Ltd.

— Applicant
Versus

Vinay Kumar & Ors.
— Respondents

To, 1. Vinay Kumar, s/o Sh.
Ghanshyam Verma, 23 G, Kam
Pura, Ramesh Nagar, West
Delhi-110015.

Also at: Vinay Kumar, s/o Sh.
Ghanshyam Verma, Flat
No. 1701, 17th Floor, Tower-D,
Mascot Manohar, Sector-16,
Noida-201307.

2. Shamma Verma, 23 G,
Karm Pura, Ramesh Nagar,
West Delhi-110015.

3. M/s. Mascot Soho Homes
Pvt. Ltd. Having Its Corpo-
rative Office At: Plot No. GH-03,
Tech Zone-IV, Greater Noida-
201308.

Also at: M/s. Mascot Soho
Homes Pvt. Ltd. Having Its Site
Office At: 4B/1, Sector-16
Greater Noida-201308.

Also at: M/s. Mascot Soho
Homes Pvt. Ltd. Having Its
Office At : H-106, Sector-63,
Noida-201301.

Whereas the abovenamed
applicant has instituted a
case for recovery of Rs.
47,11,987/- (Rupees Forty
Seven Lacs Eleven Thousand
Nine Hundred Eighty Seven
only) against you and where
as it has been shown to the
satisfaction of the Tribunal
that it is not possible to serve
you by process of summons
therefore, this notice is given by
advertisement directing you to
make appearance before
Ld. Registrar on 19-01-2021
at 10-30 a.m. (for further
details kindly visit DRT website
www.tribunal.gov.in
Phone Number : 011-23748473).

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

Given under my hand and
the Seal of the Tribunal on this
29th August of 2020.

Order of this Tribunal

For Registrar

Respondent may contact
undermention Phone Num-
ber for further enquiry.

Amit K. Dar,
Registrar
DRT-I, New Delhi
Phone No.: 011-23748473
Email : drt@delhi-dc.nic.in

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING
ATTENDANCE OF
DEFENDANT
(Order 5 Rule 20 of the Code
of Civil Procedure)
In the Court of
Manjusha Wadhwa
Additional District Judge-02
Shahdara District,
Room No. 52
Karkardooma Courts, Delhi
CS - 2178/2016
M/s. Polycab Wires Pvt. Ltd.
Versus

To,
Amit Sharma, Sole Proprietor/
Authorized Signatory of
M/s. Jai Jagdamba Electricals
A-2/16, Street No. 1,
Harsh Vihar, Delhi-110093.
The Defendant above-named.

Whereas you are intentionally
evading service of summons
it is hereby notified to you
that you still do not appear
on the 15th day of March,
2021, the day fixed for the
final disposal, it will be heard
and determined ex parte.

Given under my hand and
the Seal of the Court on this
6th day of October, 2020.

Additional District
Judge-02
Shahdara District,
Karkardooma Courts, Delhi.

Seal of the Court

DEBTS RECOVERY
TRIBUNAL-I
4th Floor, Jeevan Tara
Building, Parliament Street,
New Delhi-110001
OA No. 315/2019
ICICI Bank Ltd.

— Applicant
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No. 1701, 17th Floor, Tower-D,
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Noida-201307.

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47,11,987/- (Rupees Forty
Seven Lacs Eleven Thousand
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as it has been shown to the
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abovementioned day before
this Tribunal, the case will
be heard and decided in your
absence.

Given under my hand and
the Seal of the Tribunal on this
29th August of 2020.

Order of this Tribunal

For Registrar

Respondent may contact
undermention Phone Num-
ber for further enquiry.

12 YEARS experienced
B.Com., office administration,
accounts, correspondence,
computer Tally, GST,
MS-Office, Internet etc., seeking
part-time Job.

JOB SEEKER, exp-13 yrs.
Acct., Tax, Tally ERP-9.8,
back office, will (change)
need immediately. Cont. No.
6289982255.

MBA (PERSONNEL) LL.B.,
17 years experience in big
industries, seeks job in HR /
IR / Administration, any
where. M: 9331412242.

B.COM., C.S. (Inter), MBA
(HR), more than 25 years of
experience of allround
company Secretarial matters
(Company Law), including
ROC drafting of minutes,
resolutions, seeks immediate
change. Contact: 9836567640, 7595095311.

**BENGALI boy, 27/5'-8",
B.Tech., working at Paypal,
Bangalore; looking for slim,**

DEBTS RECOVERY
TRIBUNAL-I
4th Floor, Jeevan Tara
Building, Parliament Street,
New Delhi-110001
OA No. 315/2019
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— Applicant
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Mascot Manohar, Sector-16,
Noida-201307.

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applicant has instituted a
case for recovery of Rs.
47,11,987/- (Rupees Forty
Seven L



She should stop politicising everything. None of the states has complained only she is complaining.

BJP NATIONAL GENERAL SECRETARY KAILASH VIJAYVARGIYA
ON MAMATA BANERJEE'S ALLEGATIONS OF FEWER VACCINE DOSES BEING SENT TO BENGAL

The Sunday Statesman
NEW DELHI, 17 JANUARY 2021

Shah & Nadda to attend HP golden jubilee event

Himachal Pradesh is set to mark the 50th anniversary of its statehood on 25 January, planning celebrations while ensuring safety & sanitation for the grand occasion

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 16 JANUARY

Union home minister Amit Shah and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) national president J P Nadda will attend the function marking the golden jubilee of Himachal Pradesh's statehood on 25 January.

HP chief secretary Anil Khachi disclosed this while presiding over a meeting held today to review preparations for the state's golden jubilee celebrations function in Shimla.

The chief secretary said that to ensure success of the state's golden jubilee event all departments must work in coordination with each other.

He directed them for making proper seating arrangements for dignitaries, keep-



HP chief secretary Anil Khachi holds a meeting to review preparations for the state's golden jubilee celebrations. In Shimla on Saturday.

ticipating in the exhibition on the occasion should showcase the developmental journey of the state through effective means.

He also directed the officers to make proper arrangements for safety and sanitation during the event in the midst of the Covid pandemic.

HP's additional chief secretaries Manoj Kumar and R D Dhiman, secretary, health, Amitabh Awasthi, director, IT, Ashutosh Garg, director, tourism and civil aviation, Yunus, deputy commissioner, Shimla, Aditya Negi, superintendent of police, Shimla, Mohit Chawla, director, information and public relations, Harbans Singh Brascon, director, language, art and culture, Suneel Sharma, and other senior officers were also present at the meeting.

ing in view the weather forecast.

Khachi directed the officers to ensure full day rehearsal of the golden jubilee function one or two days prior to the event.

Additional LED screens

should be put up at the Ridge so that people could watch the telecast of the programme, he said, even as he directed the officials to make proper arrangements for seating of media persons.

Apart from these, arrange-

ments should be made for live telecast of the function through LEDs in all 68 assembly constituencies and all district headquarters across the state, he said.

The chief secretary also said that all the departments par-

Harish Rawat's aide switches loyalties, asks him to take rest

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
DEHRADUN, 16 JANUARY

A close aide of senior Uttarakhand Congress leader and former chief minister, Harish Rawat, has switched his loyalties ahead of the approaching state assembly election. Ranjeet Rawat, who was industrial advisor to Harish Rawat during the Congress government, has launched attack on the former CM and asked him to take rest.

Harish Rawat had to face huge embarrassment when his personal secretary Md Shahid allegedly featured in a sting operation. He was asking for money in the video to provide



FILE PHOTO

liquor license and a businessman was constantly asking him, "Have you spoken with Ranjeet?"

declare CM's face of party for Uttarakhand polls, Ranjeet Rawat mocked, "In 2014 we painted every wall in the state with slogan 'Everyone's choice Harish Rawat.' Nature has made us in such a way that with time we lose our mental and physical balance. Harish Rawat needs rest. His comments are demoralizing to the party workers."

The attack by Ranjeet Rawat has turned the situation of Harish Rawat uncomfortable. The anti-Harish Rawat camp is enjoying the situation. Harish Rawat is constantly demanding declaring face of Congress for the forthcoming state assembly

polls. The face war has created rift in Uttarakhand Congress.

Harish Rawat is struggling to get support from a major chunk of state Congress leaders. Har Dafas major roadblock to get him emerge as unanimous choice for Congress CM's face.

Harish has intensified his political activities and is touring various parts of the hill state these days.

But, rebel camp is constantly blaming Harish Rawat for the dismal performance of Congress in 2017 state assembly election. The ex-Chief Minister is facing tough situation in Uttarakhand in the present times.

HP CM kicks off vaccination drive from IGMC Shimla

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 16 JANUARY

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur today inaugurated the Covid-19 vaccination campaign in the state from Indira Gandhi Medical College here.

He said that in the first phase of the Covid vaccination in HP, 93,000 doses would be administered to the state's frontline "corona warriors" including health care workers.

He said that today 2,529 health care workers were being administered dose through 27 identified sites in the State. He said that about 74,500 health workers would be vaccinated and each beneficiary would be provided two doses and second dose would be administered after interval of 28 days.

Thakur said that the state government had constituted State Level Steering Committee, State Task Force, District Task Force and Block Task Force to monitor the administration of vaccination of Covid-19.

He said that State Vaccination Store has been set up at Shimla while Regional vaccine store has been established at Mandi and Dharamshala. He said that District Vaccine Stores had been set up in all the 12 districts of the state besides 386 cold chain points in the State.

Thakur said that Auto Disable (AD) syringes in sufficient quantity as per beneficiary has also been received by the State and has been distributed to the districts and additional stock of 0.5 ml AD syringes had been stored at State Vaccine Store, Parimalah, Shimla, Regional Vaccine Store, Mandi and Regional Vaccine Store Dharamshala to meet out any situation.

The chief minister said that Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFI) management training had been given to the session site vaccinators for establishing referral mechanism and report on COWIN app. He said that AEFI Committees at State and District

93,000 doses of Covid-19 vaccine to be administered to frontline 'corona warriors' in 1st phase in Himachal Pradesh

level had also been notified with additional members of Pulmonologist and Medicine Specialists for casualty assessment of AEFI cases.

Thakur said that to ensure the success of the vaccination campaign dry run had also been organised at various identified sites. He also urged the people of the State to ensure that all precautions are maintained despite having administered Covid-19 vaccine.

Meanwhile, Governor Bandaru Dattatraya has expressed contentment over the coronavirus vaccination drive launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, today and termed it as a historical moment. He said that it was world's largest vaccination drive launched in India, which was a ray of hope in fighting against this pandemic.

The Governor said that the COVID-19 pandemic had affected the lives of the people and can never be forgotten. He also expressed happiness that in Himachal Pradesh, Coronavirus Vaccination Program has been started along with the country, for which the State Government has made elaborate arrangements.

He appealed to the people to participate and use the vaccine to protect themselves from the virus.

He said that those who have not been able to be part of vaccination campaign in the initial phase, must follow all instructions and guidelines like wearing mask, physical distancing and cleanliness as followed earlier.

He also urged the people who have been vaccinated to continue maintaining precautions from Covid-19. He also appealed the people to practice yoga or exercise and take nutritious diet to maintain their immunity.

sodexo			
Sodexo SVC India Private Limited			
Regd Office: 503 & 504, 5th Floor, B Wing, Hiranandani Fulcrum, Sahar Road, Andheri East, Mumbai - 400099.			
CIN: U74140MH2008FTC182494, Tel. No.: +91 22 43214321, Fax No.: +91 22 43214372, Email id: client@india.sodexo.com			
Website: www.sodexo.in			
AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 ST MARCH, 2020			
(Rs. in lakh)			
Sr. No	Particulars	Year Ended 31.03.2020 (Audited)	Year Ended 31.03.2019 (Audited)
1	INCOME		
a) Revenue from Operations	11,292	14,509	
b) Other Income	431	442	
Total Income	11,723	14,951	
2	EXPENSES		
a) Operating Cost	4,977	4,581	
b) Employee Benefits Expense	4,518	5,081	
c) Depreciation and Amortisation Expense	367	322	
d) Other Expenses	4,762	5,758	
Total Expenses	14,624	15,742	
4	Profit/ (Loss) Before Tax	-2,901	-791
5	Tax Expenses	130	16
6	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the Period	-3,031	-807
7	Paid up Equity Share Capital (F.V. of Rs. 10/- per share)	3,600	3,600
8	Earning Per Share (Basic/Diluted) (Rs.)	-8.42	-2.24
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AS ON 31 ST MARCH, 2020			
(Rs. in lakh)			
Sr. No	Particulars	Year Ended 31.03.2020 (Audited)	Year Ended 31.03.2019 (Audited)
A	EQUITY AND LIABILITIES		
1	Shareholders Funds		
a) Share Capital	3,600	3,600	
b) Reserves and Surplus	-864	2,167	
Total Shareholders Funds	2,736	5,767	
2	Non Current Liabilities		
a) Other Long Term Liabilities	214	238	
b) Long Term Provisions	842	987	
Total Non-Current Liabilities	1,056	1,225	
3	Current Liabilities		
a) Trade Payables	10,809	11,036	
b) Other Current Liabilities	48,833	42,335	
Sub-Total Current Liabilities	59,642	53,371	
TOTAL EQUITY & LIABILITIES	63,434	60,363	
B	ASSETS		
1	Non Current Assets		
a) Fixed Assets	1,233	975	
b) Deferred Tax Assets (Net)	518	648	
c) Long Term Loans & Advances	9,739	6,833	
Sub-Total Non Current Assets	11,490	8,456	
2	Current Assets		
a) Inventories	134	36	
b) Trade Receivables	6,993	6,429	
c) Cash and Bank Balances	43,772	41,971	
d) Short Term Loans & Advances	776	1,697	
e) Other Current Assets	269	1,774	
Total Current Assets	51,944	51,907	
TOTAL ASSETS	63,434	60,363	
NOTE:			
a) The above results have been taken on record by the Board of Directors at their meeting held on September 29, 2020.			
b) The Auditor have not expressed any qualification or other reservations in respect of audited financial results and Balance Sheet for the year ended March 31, 2020 and hence the Auditor's Report is not published.			
c) The Accounts is adopted by Members in the Annual General Meeting held on 28th December, 2020			
Date: 28.12.2020	For Sodexo SVC India Private Limited	Sd/-	Company Secretary

पंचायती राज चुनाव
के दौरान कोविड अनुलेप्त व्यवहारों का
अनुपालन अवधय करें

फेस मास्क पहनें और सुनिश्चित करें कि मास्क को केवल किनारे से हो छुए

दूसरों से उचित दूरी बनाएं कर रखें
2 फैट 6 फैट

नियमित रूप से अपने हाथों को धोएं और कीटाणुहरित करें

हाथ मिलाने से बचें
2 फैट 6 फैट

बदल कर अपना व्यवहार, करें कोरोना पर वार

सुरक्षा की युक्ति, कोरोना से बचना

राष्ट्रीय स्वास्थ्य मिशन
स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण विभाग, हिमाचल प्रदेश



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 16 JANUARY

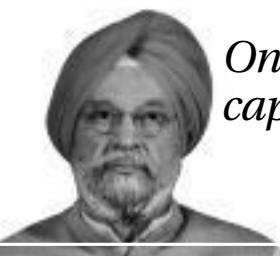
Haryana Chief Minister, Manohar Lal Khattar, on Saturday said the state has received more than 2.4 lakh doses of Covishield vaccine and 20,000 doses of Covaxin for the Covid-19 vaccination programme commencing today at 77 sites in the state.

He said that two vaccines namely Covishield of Serum Institute of India and Covaxin of India Biotech are authorized for emergency use in Haryana. While congratulating the people of Haryana on the roll out of the vaccination programme by Prime Minister, Narendra Modi today, the CM said that this vaccination programme would prove to be an effective step in overcoming this global pandemic.

Khattar said that two vaccine stores (one in each district) have also been setup. Apart from this, arrangement of 22 insulated vaccine vans has been made for the transportation of vaccine to 659 cold chain points across Haryana.

The CM said that Haryana had enough Covid hospitals to treat Corona patients and all the hospitals were equipped with oxygen beds, ICU beds and ventilators.

Khattar said that Haryana is taking all necessary COVID 19 Pre



On a day of hope for every Indian, all those who expressed apprehensions about India's capability to produce vaccines can now vaccinate themselves against self-doubt

UNION MINISTER HARDEEP SINGH PURI

India

BJP names Shahnawaz its MLC candidate from Bihar

NEW DELHI/PATNA,
16 JANUARY

Former Union minister and BJP's national spokesperson Syed Shahnawaz Hussain was named by the party on Saturday its MLC candidate from Bihar.

The announcement marks Hussain's return to electoral politics, albeit to the state level, for the first time since 2014 when he lost the Lok Sabha election from Bhagalpur. He was not given ticket in the 2019 polls. In the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government, he had held the civil aviation portfolio among other charges. The party also named six more candidates for the legislative council polls in Uttar Pradesh. They are Kunwar Manvendra Singh, Govind Narayan Shukla, Salil Bishnoi, Ashwini Tyagi, Dharmveer Prajapati and Surendra Chaudhary. Polling for 12 legislative council seats in Uttar Pradesh and two in Bihar will be held on 28 January. The win of BJP candidates in these seats is all but certain owing to the party's strength in respective state assemblies. Two MLC seats in Bihar have been vacated after the elections of former state minister Vinod Narayan Jha to the assembly from Benipatti seat in Madhubani district and of former deputy chief minister Sushil Kumar Modi to Raja Sabha.

PTI

Shot in the arm: Health workers go from being harassed to vaccinated

Several hundreds of healthcare workers were given shots of Covid-19 vaccine at 81 centres in Delhi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 16 JANUARY

For Biji Tomy, a nurse who received the very first Covid-19 vaccine

hailing the healthcare workers," she said, adding, "It is our moment of reckoning, I guess, which is very humbling."

Several hundreds of healthcare workers, from doctors to sanitation workers at hospitals, were given shots of Covid-19 vaccine at 81 centres, after the world's largest vaccination drive was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi across the country.

"We were only trying to do our job when the virus had just invaded our cities, and our country. We were not criminals that they subjected many of our fellow brothers and sisters to humiliation. But, it feels very relieving today. People have understood we were trying to save lives, putting our own lives at risk," said Tomy, who hails from Kerala.

Many doctors, nurses, sanitation workers and other frontline staff have lost their lives in Delhi since the first cases of the pandemic were reported here on 1 March.

"But, today, we are getting applause and fellow citizens are



The Delhi government-run Lok Nayak Jayaprakash Narayan (LNJP) Hospital, which was soon converted into a dedicated coronavirus facility and where over 10,000 Covid-19 patients have been treated so far, drew praise from both chief minister Arvind Kejriwal and health minister Satyendar Jain.

Nurse Atmaja was administered a dose of Covishield in the presence of Kejriwal who visited the facility in the afternoon and interacted with a few healthcare workers.

At the hospital's vaccination centre, beneficiaries were warmly greeted with a rose after administrating a shot and

her feel vindicated today, she said, "No, not at all."

"Yes, it was wrong behaviour by them, but today being chosen as the first in line to get the vaccine shots, we feel humbled and it emphasises our sense of purpose, and of the spirit of servitude for humanity which our profession teaches," she said.

Husain, who still recalls a large number of patients dying in ICU at the height of the pandemic, hopes the vaccination drive will help create a veil of protection for the rest of the population, by developing a sense of solidarity.

"Pride is quite natural, and tremendous happiness, after all the hardships and deaths we have seen last year, as the city and the country fought the pandemic," she said.

Asked if the unfair treatment meted out to several healthcare workers by their landlords or taunts made by neighbours in the beginning phase of the pandemic made

MP flouts vaccination norms of safety, privacy & social distancing

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHOPAL, 16 JANUARY

The message 'safety and privacy protocols and social distancing measures to be adhered to during vaccination' was floated in Madhya Pradesh, as CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan, health minister Dr Prabharan Chaudhary, medical education minister Vishwas Sarang and other officials remained personally present in the vaccination room during the state's first vaccination in Hamidia Hospital given to ward boy Sanjay Yadav in Bhopal today.

Union Minister Prahpal Patel was also present in the vaccination room at Jabalpur.

The vaccination guidelines of the Union Health Ministry for the 'Vaccination Room' have clear directives that, 'Only one person must enter the vaccination room at a time to ensure privacy.'

The guidelines for 'Vaccination Officers' also say that they must 'Advise beneficiaries to maintain physical distancing', 'Ensure privacy of beneficiary' and 'Allow only one beneficiary at a time in the vaccination room'.

Sanitation worker Hardev Yadav of the JP District Hospital became the first person in Bhopal to get the shot against the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

The health authorities have set up 12 vaccination centres across Bhopal.

CM Chouhan officially launched the vaccination drive in the state at the Singrauli district.

The vaccination in the state was carried out at about 150 centres.

The next dose of the vaccine would be administered after a gap of 28 days.

Chouhan said on the occasion that even though vaccination has begun, yet everyone must still ensure to wear a mask and follow social distancing protocols, as the antibodies against the virus would develop after about 14 days of the first vaccine dose.

Amarinder rolls out Covid-19 vaccination for 1.74 lakh HCWs

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
(MOHALI)/CHANDIGARH,
16 JANUARY

Punjab joined the rest of the country in the historic roll-out of the Covid vaccine on Saturday morning, with five health care workers (HCWs) getting the jab in the presence of chief minister Captain Amarinder Singh, who virtually kicked off the process to inoculate 1.74 lakh HCWs in the first phase.

Speaking to reporters, the CM said it was his desire to get vaccinated first but in accordance with the directives of the Centre government, only HCWs could be covered in the first phase. "I would definitely get myself vaccinated in the next phase," said Amarinder Singh.

He said that the vaccine would be administered to the HCWs first, followed by the army and police personnel, in line with the guidelines of the Government of India. He disclosed that he had written to the Prime Minister for permission for free distribution amongst the people belonging to the lower income groups.

In response to a query on vaccine safety, the CM said the vaccine would not have been approved unless the scientists were sure of its safety.

Earlier, in his address at the Kisan Vikas Chamber, Amarinder appealed to the

people to continue to wear masks and observe all social distancing and other safety norms. Noting that all the restrictions imposed during lockdown, curfew and thereafter had been aimed at delaying the peak of the pandemic so that the vaccine could be available, the CM thanked the people for their patience and cooperation during this difficult phase.

Hoping that the vaccination would pave the way for the complete eradication of the pandemic from Punjab and the rest of India, the CM said it was undoubtedly a memorable day when the long-awaited vaccine had arrived after getting all the mandatory approvals from health experts in the government of India.

The CM lauded the healthcare workers and others responsible for keeping the spread of the pandemic in check in the state, where the number of daily cases had come down from the peak of 3,700 to 242.

'Nepal will never allow interference in domestic politics'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"In democracy, people are the final authority to decide about who will govern. I think dissolution of the Parliament is a reflection of the internal issue. It is not wise to blame anybody," Gyawali said.

"Prime Minister Oli thought that time has come to seek a fresh mandate in line with universally accepted practice of seeking people's views," he said.

Asked about the boundary row between Nepal and India, Gyawali said both the countries have common commitment to resolve the issue.

"The sanctity and security of the border is extremely important for expanding the overall developmental cooperation... We both have realised the urgency (to resolve the border issue)," he said.

Gyawali suggested that both sides are working on the modalities in mapping the areas concerned.

Eatala backs out from first vaccination jab, gives priority to health workers

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD, 16 JANUARY

Telangana health minister Eatala Rajender today backed off from his decision to take the first dose of the Covid-19 vaccine after suggestions from the Prime Minister that health workers should be given priority in the vaccination programme.

Rajender had earlier said that as the "captain" of the health department he would take the jab first to build confidence among the people. But after the health minister's decision to step aside, the first person to be vaccinated in Telangana was a sanitation worker, Krishnamma working at the state run nodal Covid-19 facility Gandhi Hospital. She had recovered from Covid-19 in the past.

However, the Telangana health minister along with Union minister for state of home affairs G Kishen Reddy and chief secretary Somesh Kumar participated in the

launch of the vaccination programme. Later, Telangana industry minister KT Rama Rao said though public representatives were ready to take the vaccine they decided to wait in view of the Prime Minister's suggestion that health workers should be given priority in the vaccination programme.

Vaccines were administered in 139 centres across the state and in many centres ministers launched the vaccination programme.

AIMIM chief and Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi too attended and oversaw the launch of the vaccination drive at Osmania General Hospital at Afzal Gunj area.

Telangana met 84 per cent of its vaccination target on day one. Out of 42,000 beneficiaries 3530 persons till 3 p.m. were vaccinated. They were vaccinated with Covishield manufactured by Serum India Institute. Some of them, around 20 reported mild rashes, swelling and muscular pain after being vaccinated.

Kerala vaccinates 1,300 HCW

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
16 JANUARY

It took up to five minutes to get vaccinated. After vaccination, they were put under compulsory observation. All the centres have doctors to handle the adverse events following immunisation.

State health minister KK

Shailaja, who visited the

vaccine centre in Kannur, said there was no need for concerns regarding vaccine side effects. She urged those who took vaccination to continue Covid precautions.

Dr. Vipin Varkey, took the vaccine at Kozhikode, said that vaccination felt like a Tetanus Toxoid injection.

There were also refusals from healthcare workers and absences even though doctors tried to convince them.

Andhra Pradesh CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy launched

the vaccination programme at government general hospital in Vijayawada with sanitation staff B Pushpa Kumari became the first person to receive the jab.

BJP MLA tells 'paanaa pramukhs' to flaunt identity to cops

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
AHMEDABAD, 16 JANUARY

A BJP MLA from Surat has nearly made it official that the ruling party workers need not be bothered about police trying to enforce rules and regulations during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Limbaitay MLA Ms Sangita Patil has asked the BJP's 'paanaa pramukhs' (page in-charge) to reveal their identity to the police who stop them during the curfew hours starting from 10 p.m. BJP's 'paanaa pramukhs' are local party workers given charge of mobilising people listed in a single page of the voters' list.

Addressing a meeting of BJP's 'paanaa pramukhs' and other workers earlier this week at Shantinagar Society in her constituency, Ms Patil said "if the police stop you, just say you are 'paanaa pramukh' of BJP".

"Show them the identity card issued to you as BJP page in-charge", she added. "If the

cops still don't listen, then call me", the BJP MLA from Limbaitay told the party's 'paanaa pramukhs' in Surat.

She also described the 'paanaa pramukh' identity card as 'Brahmasutra' (ultimate weapon) to strengthen the BJP.

What the BJP MLA has advised the party workers this week had actually been practised in Gujarat for nearly two decades during which cops intercepting traffic violators were made to speak to some 'uncle' or 'cousin' enjoying a designation in any wing of the saffron party. Soon after the BJP has announced the names of 'paanaa pramukhs' of the vot-

ers' list and issued them party identity cards, many of them have proclaimed the newly acquired 'designations' on their vehicles prominently.

For a change, the BJP legislator has not this time blamed the media for 'misreporting' her speech at the party meeting.

She has justified her advice to party workers as they return home from work only around 9.00 p.m.

By the time they finish dinner and set out as 'paanaa pramukh' it would be 10.00 p.m. when the curfew starts, she argued on the need for BJP workers to flaunt their identity to the police on duty.

At 18 million, India has largest diaspora in the world: UN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
UNITED NATIONS, 16 JANUARY

The Indian diaspora, one of the most vibrant and dynamic, is the largest in the world, with 18 million people from the country living outside their homeland in 2020, the UN has said.

The United Arab Emirates, the US and Saudi Arabia host the largest numbers of migrants from India, it said.

India has the largest transnational population in the world. It has the most migrants abroad - 18 million, which is a significant number and another feature which is very interesting about the Indian migrant population is that they're really distributed all over the globe, Population Affairs Officer in the Population Division at UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) Clare Menozzi told.

Menozzi said while some transnational populations are really clustered in one country or region, the Indian diaspora is present in all continents and regions - from the Gulf to Northern America to Australia, UK. It's a very vibrant and dynamic diaspora in the world,

she said.

The report, International Migration 2020 Highlights', by the Population Division of UN DESA, released on Friday said in 2020, 18 million persons from India were living outside their country of birth.

Other countries with a large diaspora included Mexico and Russia (11 million each), China (10 million) and Syria (8 million). The report said India's large diaspora is distributed across a number of major countries of destination, with the UAE (3.5 million), the US (2.7 million) and Saudi Arabia (2.5 million) hosting the largest numbers of migrants from India.

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Menozzi said while some transnational populations are really clustered in one country or region, the Indian diaspora is present in all continents and regions - from the Gulf to Northern America to Australia, UK. It's a very vibrant and dynamic diaspora in the world,

and family reasons, Director of Population Division at UN DESA John Wilmoth told reporters at the launch of the report here, adding that forced displacement is a much smaller category (about 10 per cent) in the total. Menozzi said the growth in the stock of international migrants by around two million by mid-2020, 27 percent less than the growth expected since mid-2019.

The report said growth in the number of international migrants has been robust over the last two decades, reaching 281 million people living outside their country of origin in 2020, up from 173 million in 2000 and 221 million in 2010. Currently, international migrants represent about 3.6 percent of the world's population.

Between 2000 and 2020, the size of the migrant population abroad grew for nearly all countries and areas of the world. India experienced the largest gain during that period at nearly 10 million, followed in order of magnitude by Syria, Venezuela, China and the Philippines. Migration from India is largely motivated by labour

and family reasons, Director of Population Division at UN DESA John Wilmoth told reporters at the launch of the report here, adding that forced displacement is a much smaller category (about 10 per cent) in the total. Menozzi said the growth in the stock of international migrants by around two million by mid-2020, 27 percent less than the growth expected since mid-2019.

The report said preliminary estimates suggest that pan-

Sealed item rate tender on the prescribed form, terms and conditions mentioned in form-6&8 are hereby invited for the following works by the Executive Engineer, Electrical Division No.I.HPPWD Shimla-171 003 from the firms/contractors enlisted with PWD(Electrical), so as to reach in the office of the XEN (1)Tender documents consisting of plans classes of work to be done and set of terms and conditions of contract to be complied with by the contractor/firms whose tender may be accepted and other necessary documents can be seen in the office of the XEN between hours of 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM except on Sundays and public holidays. (2) The firm /contractor who are not registered under H.P.General Sale Tax Act,1968 and have not cleared all the dues on account of sale tax shall not be issued the tender documents (3) The contractor who has no registration certificate with Excise and taxation department of HP will not be issued the tender documents (4) Tenders placed in sealed envelope with name of work and due date written on the envelope will be received by the XEN and will be opened by him or his authorized representative in his office in the presence of contractors, present if any. (5)The earnest money in the shape of NSC/Time deposit account /saving account in any of the post offices of HP duly pledged in favour of XEN must accompany with the tender in the separate envelope. The tenders without earnest money will summarily be rejected. (6))



SPEAKING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE ANNUAL FILM EXTRAVAGANZA IN PANAJI

THUMBNAILS



First beneficiary of LNJP hospital Biji Tony shows a card after receiving the dose of Covishield, in the Capital on Saturday. PTI

Andaman tally 4,979: Three more persons tested positive for Covid in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, pushing the tally in the Union Territory to 4,979, a health department official said on Saturday. The three fresh cases were detected during contact tracing. PTI

Goa vaccine dose: A hospital worker became the first person in Goa to receive the Covid vaccine on Saturday, health officials said. Ranganath Bhojje, a worker at the Goa Medical College and Hospital near Panaji, was the first to receive the vaccine dose in the coastal state, an official said. PTI

Thane dist sees new cases: With the addition of 297 fresh positive cases in the last 24 hours, the overall infection count in Thane district of Maharashtra mounted to 2,48,809, an official said on Saturday. The death toll in the district, which is part of the Mumbai Metropolitan region, rose to 6,049. PTI

Meerut healthworkers: The Covishield vaccine was administered to 694 health workers on the first day in Meerut on Saturday. Out of the total 19500 front line warriors, 694 private and government health workers were administered vaccine on the inaugural day. PTI

Modi leading from front in battle against Covid: BJP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 16 JANUARY

Hailing Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the launch of the world's largest vaccination drive against Covid, top BJP leaders and union ministers on Saturday said it is a historic moment for the country and reflects the resolve to make India self-reliant.

Prime Minister Modi on Saturday kicked off the drive while reassuring the country that emergency use authorisation was given to two made in India vaccines only after scientists were convinced of their safety and effectiveness, and urged people to beware of propaganda and rumours.

Describing it as a momentous day in India's history, BJP president JP Nadda said Prime Minister Modi is leading the country from the front in the battle against the Covid by ensuring health services to all when they need it the most.

We salute our doctors, nurses, healthcare workers for making great efforts at this time. They are the real heroes of the largest vaccine drive. Vaccine will save us from the Covid virus but we should support it by use of masks, frequent handwashing and maintaining physical distance, Nadda said. Union Home Minister and senior BJP leader Amit Shah said the vaccination drive shows the immense potential of India's scientists and the power of its leadership, as he again hailed the corona warriors.

The 'new India' led by Modi ji transforms disasters into opportunities and challenges into achievements. This 'Made in India' vaccine represents the determination of this self-reliant India. On this historic day, I bow to all our Corona warriors, Shah said in a series of tweets.

Echoing similar sentiments, defence minister Rajnath Singh said the Modi government has taken a decisive step to win the battle against the pandemic.

Social media buzz over vaccine use

Twitter flooded with over 4.3 lakh congratulatory tweets; lawyer Bhushan warns of vaccine roll out without proper trials

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 16 JANUARY

Hours after Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched India's Covid vaccination programme, netizens on Saturday lauded the PM for the roll-out of the nationwide inoculation drive with the hashtag 'LargestVaccineDrive' trending on Twitter.

Launching India's Covid vaccination drive, Modi reassured the country that emergency use authorisation was given to two made in India vaccines only after scientists were convinced of their safety and effectiveness, and urged people to beware of propaganda and rumours.

Addressing the nation ahead of the launch of what he described as the world's largest vaccination programme, Modi said these vaccines will ensure a "decisive victory" for the country over the coronavirus pandemic, but asked countrymen to continue wearing masks and maintain social distancing even after receiving the jabs.

Soon after the event, Twitter and other social media platforms were abuzz with comments over his speech with several people hailing the prime minister's remarks and the beginning of the vaccination drive. Just hours after the launch, 'LargestVaccineDrive' was trending on Twitter with over 4.3 lakh tweets.

"World was suffering, Yet Indians were optimistic bcoz we knew PM will save us. Economy was suffering, Yet Indians were optimistic bcoz we knew PM will save us. We knew PM would select best vaccine. Thank you Modi ji," a Twitter user said.

Another Twitter user said, "Once again, PM @narendramodi, assured the people of India that 'we will defeat #COVID19'. Thank you Prime Minister for taking care of us as head of the family."

Another netizen hailed scientists for their tireless work and Prime Minister

KNOW MORE ABOUT 2 INDIAN VACCINES

AMID THE VACCINE ROLLOUT IN INDIA, HERE ARE FEW THINGS THAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT COVAXIN AND COVISHIELD



Modi for his "impeccable leadership" at the time of crisis. India unveils the world's #LargestVaccineDrive! It's the unmatched global vaccination leadership India is demonstrating to the world!" the Twitter user said.

However, there were also some voices of caution and criticism on Twitter.

Activist-lawyer Prashant Bhushan cited a media report which stated that a total of 23 people died in Norway within days of receiving their first dose of vaccine, and said that yet, here in India, "we roll out vaccines without proper trials or transparency, even though Covid cases & deaths have declined sharply".

Senior Congress leader Manish Tewari also raised questions over the emergency use approval given to the indigenously developed Covaxin and alleged that it was "sans due process".

"As vaccine roll out begins, it is all a bit puzzling India has no policy framework for authorising emergency use. Yet, two vaccines have been approved for restricted use in emergency situation," Tewari said in a tweet just before Modi launched the drive.

"COVAXIN is another story -- Approvals sans Due Process," the former Union minister said,

Vaccination begins in J&K

SNS
JAMMU, 16 JANUARY

Anti-Covid-19 vaccination drive was on Saturday launched simultaneously in the Union Territories (UTs) of J&K and Ladakh.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, who attended a virtual programme of the vaccine launch by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Government Medical College (GMC) at Jammu termed it as a historic event dedicated to corona warriors and front line workers.

tagging a media report which claimed scientists and doctors are divided on the issue of restricted use approval granted to the Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech's Covaxin.

Responding to Tewari's remarks raising questions over approval to Covaxin, Vardhan, in a tweet, quoted English cleric Charles Caleb Colton who said, "So blinded are we by our passions that we suffer more to be damned than to be saved." Sh@ManishTewari & @INCIndia are only passionate about spreading distrust & rumours. Open

On the occasion, Lt Governor also inaugurated and witnessed the administering of the first dose of the vaccine to a sanitation in-charge of GMC Jammu.

In Ladakh the drive was inaugurated by the Lieutenant Governor, RK Mathur at Heart Foundation Hospital in Leh where a safai karamchari of SNM Hospital, Leh, took the first jab in the presence of the Lt. Governor. Senior officers were present during inauguration of the drive in Jammu and Leh.

your eyes, sharing photos of eminent Doctors & Govt functionaries getting inoculated," Vardhan tweeted and posted pictures from the inoculation drive that began earlier in the day.

Hitting back at Vardhan for his jibe, Tewari said, "Dear Dr @drharshvardhan, Concerns that I have articulated are real & not imagined. It is not fear Mongering. Look what is happening in Norway. It may be a different vaccine but do not hide behind vaccine nationalism. ANS QUES's Expected better of you Sir."

Health workers get first jabs in Maha

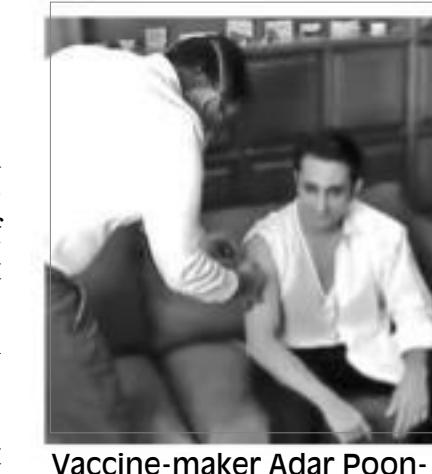
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Mumbai, 16 January

Healthcare workers, doctors and Serum Institute of India CEO Adar Poonawalla were among the first recipients of the Covid jab on the first day of the drive in Maharashtra, which was marked by enthusiasm and anxiety, with many viewing the vaccine as a kind of panacea that will offer them immunity, and more importantly some hope.

As vaccines reached Mumbai's Cooper Hospital in morning, dozens of health workers clapped and cheered the "vaccine carrier" staff. With arti's thalis and sweets, the staff of the hospital waited outside the facility to welcome the first beneficiaries of the vaccination drive. Former Maharashtra health minister Dr Deepak Sawant, Dr Ranjit Mankeshwar, Dean, JJ Hospital and Dr Padmaja Saraf received the vaccine shots among others.

While Sawant was administered the vaccine at Cooper Hospital, Dr Mankeshwar and Dr Saraf received the shots at JJ Hospital in Mumbai and at Juhu district hospital, respectively. The inoculation drive is taking place at 285 centres in Maharashtra where 100 healthcare workers will be administered the shots in a day, and cover 28,500 workers, an official said. Chief minister Uddhav Thackeray launched the inoculation drive at a Covid care centre at Bandra Kurta Complex (BKC) in Mumbai. "It is a revolutionary step we are taking today. I salute to the Corona warriors who selflessly treated the patients when there was no remedy available," he told reporters. In Pune, Dr Nitin Abhyankar (57) was among the first beneficiaries who received the vaccine.

"I feel extremely proud and happy that I could become



Vaccine-maker Adar Poonawalla takes life-saver jab in Mumbai on Saturday. PTI

the part of the inaugural inoculation drive that has started in the country," said Dr Abhyankar, who looked perfectly fine after receiving the jab. In Pune district, more than 21 per cent of the registered healthcare personnel, including doctors and nurses, received the vaccine shots till 1 PM on Saturday. State health Minister Rajesh Tope said the state has received 60 per cent of the vaccine stock or 10 lakh doses so far and the remaining doses will be available in the next 10 days.

Ex-CEO of BARC held in TRP scam hospitalised

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Mumbai, 16 January

Partha Dasgupta, a former CEO of TV ratings agency BARC who was arrested in the Television Rating Points (TRP) rigging case, has been admitted to the ICU of a hospital here after his sugar level shot up, officials said on Saturday.

His daughter took to Twitter to allege that he was tortured in prison, and appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and others to 'save his life'.

Dasgupta, a diabetic, was rushed to the state-run JJ Hospital here from the Taljo Central Prison in Navi Mumbai around mid-night after his blood sugar levels shot up, a prison official said. He was admitted to the ICU and was on oxygen support, the official said.

Dasgupta, former CEO of Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) was arrested in the alleged TRP rigging scam by crime branch of the Mumbai Police on December 24 last year.

A Mumbai court had earlier this month rejected his bail plea, stating that he appeared to have played a vital role in the scam to rig TRP as per the police's case.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This is notified for the information of passengers that Railways have decided to run the Train No. 04727/04728 between Sri Ganga Nagar-Delhi-Sri Ganga Nagar instead of Sri Ganga Nagar-Tilak Bridge-Sri Ganga Nagar with revised timings as per following details:-

Revised Timings of 04727/04728 Sri Ganga Nagar Jn.-Delhi Jn.-Sri Ganga Nagar Special Express (Daily)

Train No. 04727	ARR. DEP.	STATIONS	Train No. 04728	ARR. DEP.
---	20:30	SRI GANGA NAGAR JN.	05:50	---
20:50	20:51	FATEH SINGHWALA	---	---
20:58	21:00	SADULSHAHAR	04:49	04:51
21:10	21:11	BUDHSINGHWALA	---	---
21:17	21:18	BUGLANWALI	---	---
21:29	21:30	HIRNAWALI	---	---
21:37	21:38	JORKIAN	---	---
21:55	22:20	HANUMAN GARH JN.	03:55	04:20
22:28	22:30	HANUMANGARH TOWN	03:20	03:22
22:51	22:53	TIBI	03:00	03:02
23:11	23:13	ELLENABAD	02:39	02:41
23:42	23:44	NOHAR	02:07	02:09
00:08	00:10	GOGAMERI	01:40	01:42
00:22	00:24	TAHSIL BHADRA	01:26	01:28
01:20	01:45	SADULPUR JN.	00:15	00:40
01:57	01:58	HARPALU	23:46	23:47
02:14	02:15	RAMPURA BERI	23:29	23:31
03:12	03:17	LOHARU JN.	23:10	23:15
03:31	03:32	SATNALI	22:21	22:23
03:37	03:38	NANWAN	22:15	22:16
03:45	03:46	NANGAL DEGROTA	22:08	22:09
04:01	04:03	MAHENDER GARH	21:53	21:55
04:11	04:12	BOJAWAS	21:46	21:47
04:17	04:18	GURHA KEMLA	21:40	21:41
04:22	04:24	KANINA KHAS	21:34	21:35
04:33	04:35	DAHINA ZAINABAD	21:21	21:23
05:35	06:12	REWARI JN.	20:45	21:00
06:20	06:21	KUMBHAWAS MUNDHALIA D	20:18	20:19
06:26	06:27	KHALIL PUR	20:11	20:12
06:34	06:35	INCHHAPURI	20:03	20:04
06:41	06:42	PATAUDI ROAD	19:56	19:57
06:48	06:49	JATAULA JAURI SAMPKA	19:49	19:50
06:54	06:55	TAJ NAGAR	19:44	19:45
06:59	07:00	PATLI	19:38	19:39
07:08	07:09	GARHI HARSARU JN.	19:29	19:30
07:15	07:16	BASAI DHANKOT	19:23	19:24
07:21	07:22	GURGAON	19:16	19:17
07:29	07:30	BIJUWASAN	19:07	19:08
07:35	07:36	SHAHABAD MD PUR	19:01	19:02
07:40	07:41	PALAM	18:55	18:56
07:49	07:50	DELHI CANTT	18:48	18:49
08:03	08:04	PATEL NAGAR	18:35	18:36
08:08	08:09	DAYA BASTI	18:28	18:29
08:13	08:14	VIVEKANAND PURI HALT	18:23	18:24
08:18	08:19	DELHI KISHAN GANJ	18:17	18:18
08:45	—	DELHI JN.</td		

Democracy Denuded

President Donald Trump has disgraced himself and the United States of America no less. He has incurred the very dubious distinction of becoming the first US President to be impeached twice, an event that has made Thursday's action historic. On closer reflection, both the charge and the comeuppance are epochal. And so it has been in the House of Representatives. Mr Trump has been charged with "incitement of insurrection" over the storming of Capitol Hill, home to Congress, on 6 January. Remarkably swift has been the response of the House ~ eight days after the ugly truth emanated from the fountain-head of democracy, and barely five days before the next President's inaugural on 20 January. Mr Trump's proclamation of emergency in Washington DC cannot beef up his position. He has no defence against the charge levelled by the House of Representatives, specifically that he "encouraged" violence with his false claims of election fraud. He now faces trial in the Senate, but not before he leaves office next Wednesday. A trial can happen after his term ends, and Senators can vote to bar him from holding public office again. Joe Biden will, therefore, succeed to a depleted inheritance. In the first week of January, Trump had urged his supporters to "fight like hell" against an election that he falsely told them had been stolen. It is a measure of the tension that rages beneath the surface of salubrious Washington that troops are on vigil at Capitol, one week after the riots. Indeed, the FBI has warned of possible armed protests planned for Washington DC and all 50 US state capitals in the days before Mr Biden, a Democrat, is inaugurated as the new US President. Far from his customary strategy, Trump has appealed to his followers to remain peaceful... without alluding to his second impeachment. "Violence and vandalism have no place in our country. No true supporter of mine would ever endorse political violence," he said in a strikingly sombre and conciliatory tone, indeed a far cry from his appeal on 6 January when the Capitol suffered both violence and vandalism.

The articles of impeachment stated that "President Trump gravely endangered the security of the United States and its institutions of government, threatened the integrity of the democratic system, interfered with the peaceful transition of power, and imperilled a coequal branch of government." The words are suitably damning and underline the importance of democratic values. Speaker Nancy Pelosi, a Democrat, said on the House floor: "The President of the United States incited this insurrection, this armed rebellion against our common country. He must go. He is a clear and present danger to the nation that we all love." The fact that a section of the Republicans backed the impeachment move is a reflection not only of the gravity of the moment, but also the President's declining influence in the final days of his administration. Donald Trump has alienated a fairly large section of legislators. Democracy has been denuded and tragically by the Head of State.

Wimps of Oz

Sane Lee did say Steve Smith had seemed to him in Sydney a bomb reminiscent of Sandpapergate waiting to go off ~ though his vocabulary was different - but Australia, ahead of Brisbane, came up with a near-perfect mix of apologies and protestations of innocence to obfuscate their stooping to conquer in the third, inconclusive Test, which had left the series open at 1-1 with the last one to go. They have always known their job, and gone about it the way they hit upon. Which is why, first, captain Tim Paine and then coach Justin Langer played Smith's wicket-raking ploy so far down that it seemed a trifly being made too much of, akin, perhaps, to gabbing about the price of potatoes when an Ivy League research paper was another option. "He's doing it all the time when playing in the conventional format, shadow-batting is part of his daily chores," went the unflustered explanation. But when you seek to erase a rival batsman's guard mark ~ Risabh Pant in the present instance ~ you, unwittingly to be sure, also reveal the extent of your frustration. The Sydney wicket's unresponsiveness came to be spoken of too by several home voices, including that of the coach, but in the welter of words uttered in exchanges with the media, there were only superficial references to the glaring lack of fair-play, even by those who weren't all that appreciative of the thing done. Smith himself denied he had allowed himself any unfair tactics but when Sandpapergate hit the headlines, he had been equally sharp and vehement in repudiating all charges initially. Melodrama came much later. Time, however, was when there were people who did not mind telling the truth. In 1967, Richie Benaud, touring England and reacting to reports that he, as the captain, had six years earlier told Australian batsmen to walk if they knew they were out, wrote a letter to the editor of *The Times*, London, making it clear that he had not. The matter was left to the individuals concerned and conforming to the English custom of leaving it to the umpire was not his chief concern.

In the Lord's Test of 1956, Benaud had been caught at the wicket when three but was given not out and went on to make 97, thereby clinching victory. So the ends justified the means even then, in a less toxic world. Additionally, what unofficial Australia, with its racist abuse, showed itself capable of in Sydney might have seeded fears for the future. An anecdotal recalling of MAK Pataudi being asked, from Sydney's Hill, decades ago where his goat was if he was Gandhi. The nawab simply mimed his exasperation, complemented by gestures, to indicate that it was the wag who'd gone missing much to his Pataudi's consternation. Peals of laughter followed. Australia also lavished a lot of love on Frank Worrell's West Indies after a see-saw series which featured history's first tied Test. Altered reality now exposes vulnerabilities galore.

Democracy & radicalism

Exorcising America of Trumpism can only be a spiritual task. It takes a cola to fight a cola. Likewise, secularist fulminations cannot cauterise the malignancy of Christian radicalism. Millions of Americans have been deeply and dangerously radicalised. They have to be de-toxified



6 January 2021 marks the highpoint of irony in the history of American democracy. Puritanism, a stiff, exclusive and zealous version of Christianity, was the foundation of America. It was one of the Pilgrim Fathers who imaged America as a 'city set on a hill'. Secular democracy developed and came to itself in due course in the US on this foundation. But, over the years, Puritanism gave way to fundamentalist evangelicalism. This radical version of Christianity preserved the zeal of Puritanism, but renounced its intellectual rigour and philosophical gravity.

If Puritanism was obsessed with staying true to the essence ~ as the Puritans understood it ~ of Christianity, Christian evangelicalism assumed a triumphalist angst. If the Puritans imaged America as the second Eden, the garden of freedom and goodness, the evangelicals re-imaged it as a Christian Empire, the foremost manifestation of the Kingdom of God on earth. This precipitated the need to turn America into a theocratic state. Hence the head-on collision between Trump-ism and democracy.

What happened on the 6 January 2021 was not a freak event, but a necessary outcome of what has been carefully and conspiratorially crafted over half a century. Religious zeal, masquerading itself as political grievance, powered the domestic terrorists, who rampaged the temple of American democracy.

To see this in perspective, consider the following. In the Congressional debate on impeaching Trump a second time, the Democrats spoke as aggrieved in sponsoring the resolution. But the Republicans ~ read, Trumpians ~ preached the ideals and values they murdered only a weak back. They pleaded for unity, reconciliation and bi-partisan partnership in healing the wounded nation. But none of them said a word about who dealt the moral blow or overran the Capitol.

They conceded that what happened was regrettable but

said not a word about Trump lauding the vandals for the murderous mayhem they perpetrated. The connection between the verbal vehemence of the Trumpians and the bloodthirstiness of the white supremacists was the crux of the matter; but it was glossed over.

Christian evangelicalism, like every other form of religious radicalism, is a regressive and escapist phenomenon. Escapism denotes the inability to relate to reality. Human under-development, the inability to think rationally and factually, is a pre-condition for being radicalised. Given this, creating an esoteric version of reality, and the psychological compulsion to calumny whatever is different from one's own version, becomes a compulsive necessity. The political strength and the democratic peril of this state is that it packs a lot of energy in a small mental space. It has a need to explode.

This need is met in two ways. First, through projecting a strenuous and exciting mission. The riskier it is, the more it stimulates and excites. Trump played to this clientele shrewdly. The medley of irrationalities ~ prescribing detergents as antidotes for Covid-19 being a memorable example of it ~ and pre-modern stances, spiced with verbal vehemence and egocentric grandstanding, were all meant to feed this radicalised evangelical psyche. This makes a political leader also a religious icon. Predictably, it has had a powerful effect. Those who did not understand it, ridiculed Trumpisms. This never bothered Trump; for he knew what he was doing, and why.

The second part of this strategy is the orchestration of grandiose sectarian grievances. Fundamentalist preachers ~ among them several Indians too ~ were let loose to brainwash the religiously credulous Americans to believe

that Trump is part of God's 'special' plan for the US. Such videos are still available on YouTube. The sinister intent of this propaganda was to pit the will of God against the will of the people.

The peril that Trumpism poses to America is that it caricatures democratic processes and institutions as enemies of God. The triumph of the opposite candidate is the defeat of God. But for this canard, millions of Americans would not have swallowed the lie that victory was stolen from Trump. It's no use laughing at it. What could help is recognising the logic of this bigotry and religious ambience in which it becomes a deadly epidemic.

'Claiming' a country for God is the grandest agenda of religious radicalism. The colonial canard of the 'white man's burden' is relevant here. The mission to subjugate other races and peoples becomes a legitimate 'mission'.

In this formulation, religion becomes the fig-leaf for covering the nakedness of colonial greed. The Jews invoked God to legitimise their territorial aggressions and ambitions. The Israelites conquered and exterminated other tribes because God asked them to do so. This eradicates the last trace of scruples in perpetrating unthinkable inhumanities. As Voltaire said, no man is a more cheerful killer than the one who thinks he spills blood for the sake of his God.

Sensible Americans need to take cognizance of this; for violence could mark the days ahead. Trumpism will not go away any time soon. It is a disease; and it needs to be treated. As part of the required therapy, a national debate on the interface between religion and democracy needs to be initiated. The modern state emerged by emancipating itself from its subjection to religion.

Morphing democracy into theocracy is dangerously irrational. When this agenda is afoot, it could seem a heady adventure, in which it is a privilege for one to participate. But it is like cancer. Its malignancy manifests only too late.

The worrisome thing is not merely that the Capitol was seized and vandalised. Not even that certain elements among the law-enforcing agencies were complicit in this perfidy. The point of worry is that the Democrats, in their Trump-fixation, seem to be blind to the big picture. Trump is nothing, but for Trumpism. Trumpism is the politico-religious malignancy metamorphosed right through the country. America needs to be vaccinated against it. Even Covid-19 is a second priority, in the long-run. This will not be done by impeaching Trump, which I believe is a mistake. It is not Trump, but Trumpism that needs to be impeached. That, however, is a task that far exceeds the reach of the Senate.

Exorcising America of Trumpism can only be a spiritual task. It takes a cola to fight a cola. Likewise, secularist fulminations cannot cauterise the malignancy of Christian radicalism. Millions of Americans have been deeply and dangerously radicalised. They have to be de-toxified. The complexity and volatility of the situation calls for non-stereotypical resources. America needs a Gandhi, who bamboozed the British with his unpredictability, which was the insignia of his spiritual freedom and creativity. America looks woefully incapable of producing a Gandhi; no, not even a Martin Luther King Jr.

Embarrassingly, the only message exported from the land of Gandhi to the land of Lincoln is a slogan, 'Agli bar Trump Sarkar!'. It blended well with the maniacal obsession of the Christian fundamentalists in that country. The good thing about slogans is that they are not diamonds. They are not forever. They can be changed like yesterday's attire. While Americans wrestle with Trumpism, let us spin a timelier slogan. Thank God, we are past masters at it.

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

ASIAN VOICES

A promise wasted

Early in the Covid-19 crisis, President Duterte sought to calm people's fears amid the world's longest and harshest lockdown by reassuring them that relief was on the horizon. Before the year was over, he said last year, a vaccine against this deadly variant of the coronavirus would be developed and made available to the people. Even then, the President dangled the possibility of a "made-in-China" vaccine that, he claimed, Chinese authorities had assured him would be made available to ordinary folk. Well, it is now 2021, and indeed the promise of vaccines against the virus has come to fruition. But Filipinos don't seem all that eager to buy into the vaccine promise. Unlike some of its neighbors, the Philippines has yet to have a national vaccination program in place, with officials, medical authorities, and ordinary folk battling over issues like efficacy, effectiveness, cost, manner of transport, equitable access, safety, etc. This comes in the wake of the belated action taken by the government to negotiate with drug manufacturers (with the exception of those from China and Russia), as well as to have the funds for a vaccination program at the ready.

Priorities, previously set as health frontliners first, followed by elderly indigents, remaining seniors, remaining indigents, and those in the uniformed services (police, soldiers) seem to have been turned on their heads. Months before the vaccines were officially allowed in, members of the Presidential Security Group, some top officials, and Chinese workers in online

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
casinos were somehow allowed to jump the line and have themselves inoculated with what were essentially smuggled vaccines. Surveys indicate that majority of Filipinos are, at best, hesitant about being vaccinated, particularly with the Chinese-made vaccines. That hesitancy is somewhat understandable. The Chinese vaccine Sinovac's efficacy has been rated at somewhere between 50 and 70 percent while at the same time being the second most expensive, according to figures first furnished by Sen. Sonny Angara's office that he subsequently clarified came from the Department of Health itself. Vaccine "czar" Carlton Galvez Jr. has defended the administration's seeming preference for Sinovac, saying that the drug has been made available at a cheaper price thanks to the intercession of the Chinese ambassador ("Napakabait po ng atabay mahal na Chinese ambassador, binigay po 'yung best price"). He refused to disclose the amount, though, citing a nondisclosure agreement. He also invoked the examples of other countries ~ Singapore, Turkey, Indonesia, Malaysia, Brazil, Egypt ~ that have availed themselves of Sinovac. At about the same time that Galvez was championing the Chinese vaccine, however, news came that Brazilian trials confirmed Sinovac's efficacy at only 50.4 percent, even lower than was first announced.

Corrigendum

The headline of the special article by Prof. Subrata Mukherjee published in these columns yesterday should have been "Pluralism and politics" and not as published. The error is regretted. ~ Ed. S



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

editor@thestatesman.com

Keeping govt out of healthcare

SIR, Vikram Sen has nicely concluded his article 'Better Healthcare' (January 13 and 14) thus: "The need of the hour is to make available quality, easily accessible and universally affordable healthcare to all our citizens". The article contains elaborate suggestions to obtain that aim through statutory enactment and other measures.

The fulcrum on which the exposition stands is the idea of creating sufficient numbers of private hospitals. The reason for exclusion of existing

government hospitals is not clear. Most of the government hospitals in Kolkata are of British era. As was their wont, these hospitals were built at prime locations with abundant extra space. These hospitals can be expanded if the authorities care to evict the trespassers who have usurped the hospital land.

Many of these hospitals possess excellent equipment too. Funds needed for establishing the private hospitals are proposed to be raised through voluntary contribu-

tion by the beneficiaries of the intended private hospitals. Sen recommends the setting up of two bodies to control the working of the proposed hospitals ~ one comprising of medical professionals and the other comprising of medicos and financial experts.

In this context a few questions are worth asking. Will beneficiaries come forward to contribute their bit? Even after the establishment of the proposed bodies, will they be able to stem the malaise the existing private



WHY MEDIATION?

SIR, Neither the government nor the farmers who are protesting against the three farm laws had approached the Supreme Court for mediation on the disputes between them.

The main issue before the court, raised in some petitions, concerned the constitutional validity of the laws, but these were not filed by the agitating farmers.

But the court sidestepped that issue, which is its main remit, and stepped into a political thicket which is unfamiliar territory for it. The farmers had from the very beginning rejected any court intervention in the matter because it involved policy issues. Only a few days ago, another bench of the court had said in the case concerning the Central Vista project that it was not competent to judge policy matters. It is not clear how the committee's exertions will help to solve the issue.

The farmers have rejected it and declared that they will not talk to it. It will take two months or more for the panel to formulate and submit its recommendations. Will the court be in a position to enforce them if both or any one side rejects them, especially because they will be about the substance of the laws and not about their legality?

While a negotiated resolution of the dispute is good, there is unsolicited mediation here. The court seems to have gone about it the wrong way, upsetting the institutional balance in the system and weakening itself. The government's hope that it may not be embarrassed by a farmers' march to Delhi on Republic Day may also be belied.

Yours, etc., Shovanl Chakraborty, Kolkata, 14 January.

hospitals are afflicted with? Will corporates who will own the proposed hospitals allow their philanthropic zeal to overcome the profit motive?

A remarkable feature of Sen's approach seems to be that he does not get

the government involved in his innovative scheme as he is averse to: "putting too much pressure in the already stressed government resources". The problem may not lie on the constraint of resources. It lies in fixing priorities. Healthcare, education does not seem to attract that priority consideration that fancy projects like Central Vista, Bullet train etc. do.

Yours, etc., Sanjiv Ghatak, Narendrapur, 14 January.

ANDREW SHENG

A week is a long time in politics. On 6 January, armed supporters of President Trump stormed the sanctity of the Capitol, the temple of American democracy. This Wednesday, President Trump became the first president in American history to be impeached twice. Next Wednesday, Joseph Biden will be sworn in as President, guarded by 20,000 National Guard in battle gear against not foreign enemies, but domestic threats. This was supposed to happen only in Hollywood movie scripts.

Consider these bizarre facts: the pandemic is claiming more than 4,000 deaths daily in the US; digital media like Twitter, YouTube and Facebook have banned tweets and comments by their own President; all US stock market indices are still rising, and Bitcoin has surged by 27.9 per cent in 13 days.

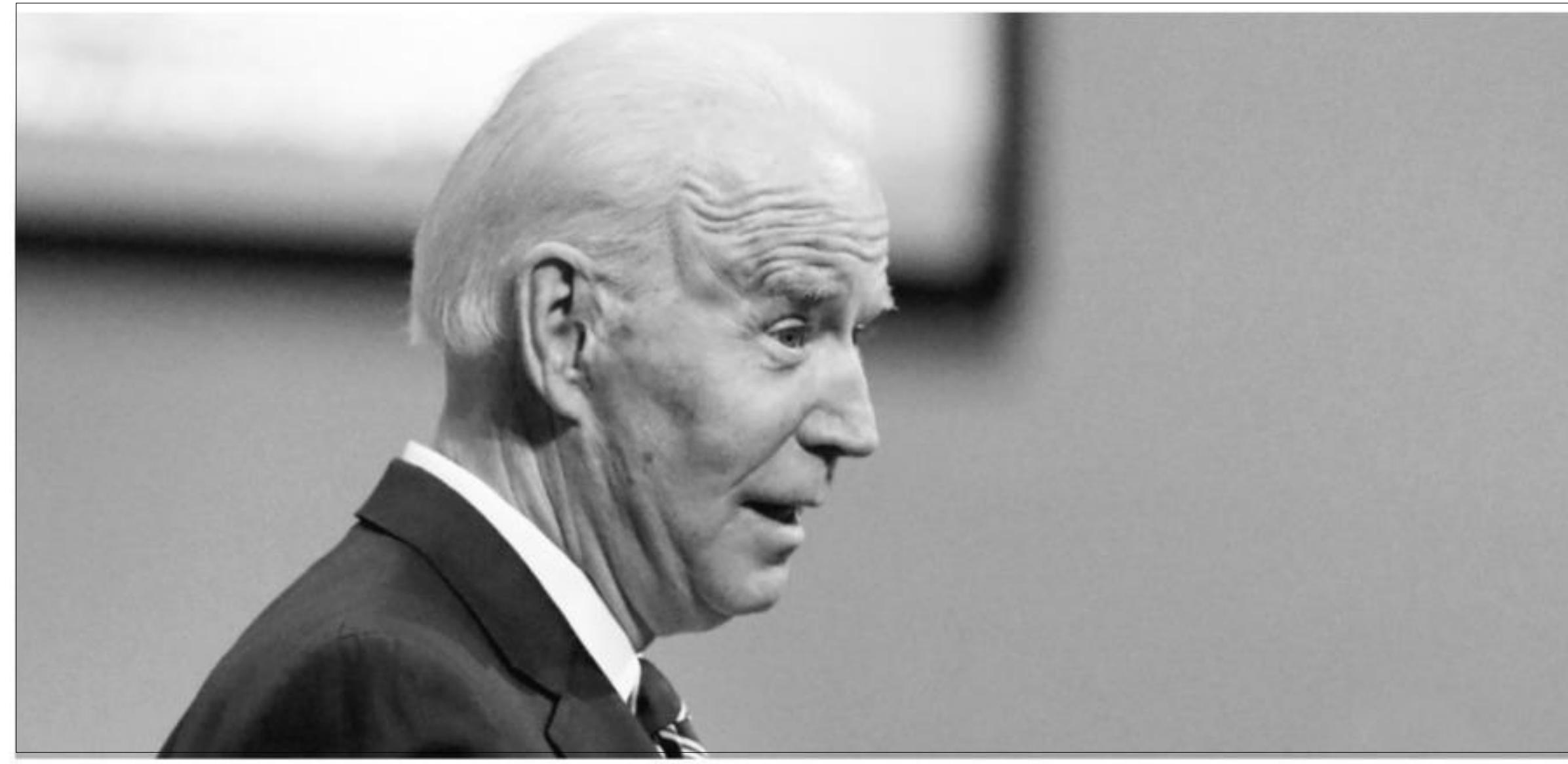
The article of impeachment used more stark terms than any foreign commentator would dare to employ. "President Trump gravely endangered the security of the United States and its institutions of Government. He threatened the integrity of the democratic system, interfered with the peaceful transition of power, and imperiled a coequal branch of Government. He thereby betrayed his trust as President, to the manifest injury of the people of the United States. Wherefore, Donald John Trump, by such conduct, has demonstrated that he will remain a threat to national security, democracy, and the Constitution if allowed to remain in office, and has acted in a manner grossly incompatible with self-governance and the rule of law. Donald John Trump thus warrants impeachment and trial, removal from office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any office of honor, trust, or profit under the United States."

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi summed Trump up, saying "he is a clear and present danger to the nation."

Arguably, Trump has committed the sin of poisoning the well of democracy, not just in America, but for the rest of the world.

Although Western democrats extol its virtues as going back to the Greek Age, modern liberal democracy is very recent. As late as 1978, only one third of the world lived in democracies; by 2015, more than half do. But since then, populism, Brexit and Trumpism have caused many to lament that democracy is receding. Today, the gold standard of liberal democracy in America is

Democracy in danger, can Joe Biden fix it?



being tested, if not questioned.

The problem is that liberal democracy based on social equality, rule of law and tolerance of diversity, is a work in progress. Given very different cultures, history, religion and institutional set-ups, democracy is practiced differently, requiring huge efforts by all citizens. Democracy that has no performance-accountability happens when what is promised is not delivered. That became evident when the 2008 global financial crisis accentuated rising social inequality and insecurity for large segments of the population.

Democratic politics fragmented and did not seem to be able to deliver on promises.

Austrian economist and political philosopher Joseph Schumpeter became famous for his observation that the driver of capitalism was entrepreneurship, which led to creative destruction. He was equally original and sharp in his realistic analysis of democracy. In his classic Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy, he said four conditions must be satisfied for democracy to work: the quality of politicians in terms of ability and moral character; social

consensus that democracy does not solve everything; a well-trained and effective bureaucracy; and finally, "effective competition for leadership requires a large measure of tolerance for difference of opinion."

Schumpeter understood that democracy has difficulty in making decisions when society is deeply divided. Vote-seeking behaviour means that policies are always for the short-term, so politicians under serve the long-term interests of the nation. For example, democratic and rich countries like Australia cannot even agree on dealing with climate change, because vested interests in the mining industry consistently block change through lobbying. If democracies cannot deliver long-term structural reforms that are painful and unpopular, then in the long run, citizens will seek alternatives, such as autocracies or anarcho-democracy (democracy with autocratic characteristics).

Trump put American democracy in clear and present danger by violating all four Schumpeter conditions. First, nearly half the voting population ignored his moral issues, because they believed him when he

called the mainstream news "fake". Second, he violated many of the unspoken rules, codes and conventions that buttressed democratic checks and balances, aided by lawyers and attorneys-general whom he also threw under the bus. Third, he questioned the loyalty and efficacy of the vaunted American bureaucracy, which then failed to protect the Capitol from violent protests. Lastly, he openly sought division, rather than work in a bipartisan manner to heal social divisions.

Americans have much to learn from Schumpeter, who foresaw that democracy is about majority rule, but works in practice through an elite that deals in votes rather than in money. Since capitalism by definition values money more than labour, money under financial capitalism has a nasty habit of corrupting politics. How to control money politics from corroding diverse rights and public goods is a perennial issue in all systems of governance.

If there is one lesson that should resonate in Asia, it is that violence cannot be an answer to the democratic process. Trump realized

too late that inciting violence in his supporters to protect his version of electoral victory ended up with him denouncing violence in the name of law and order. Retribution occurs to those who incite violence abroad, because violence can bounce back at home.

Next week, the Trump Reality Show will thankfully end, and life will return to some form of normality, so we can address the threats of the pandemic and job losses without being diverted by another tweet. For Trump, impeachment will only withdraw his right to hold further public office. He was made by the media, and he will be haunted by media for the rest of his life. But he will go on to earn millions from book sales and paid appearances.

The clear and present danger to democracy is a distorted system where "heads I win, tails you lose" prevails. We need to change this system, but we don't know how to do this democratically. Perhaps Joe Biden has the answer.

The writer is a former central banker and financial regulator. The views are entirely his own. Special to ANN.

NOW AND AGAIN

Memories of another day

TAPATI CHOWDHURIE

History has always been close to my heart, thanks to my High School history teacher, Mrs. George Verghese of Rosary Matriculation School, Madras now called Chennai. My unbounded curiosity led me to read about the Babri Masjid in Ramkot, Ayodhya built in 1528-29 - an architectural marvel of the Jaunpur Sultanate - and the birth place of Rama, an avatar of Vishnu in mythology. It is alleged that a temple had been destroyed to build the mosque.

It had been a bone of contention between the Hindus and Muslims since the 19th Century. The Hindu Mahasabha in 1949 was said to have stealthily placed the idol of Rama inside the mosque. Fearing violence between the two communities, the Government locked Babri Masjid. My story is about 6 December 1992 - the day when activists of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and other organisations demolished the mosque causing riots all over the Indian sub-continent.

It was a bright Sunday morning. My husband Mr. Shyam Chowdhury and I had accompanied the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Tushar Talukdar and his wife to Baduria in Basirhat District, 48 km from Kolkata. We soaked in the scenic beauty of chosen spots in Baduria; saw water bodies abounding in prawns and fish of many varieties. All the while my mind was consumed by flights of fancy, to imaginary adventures across the two-and-a-half kilometre long porous international border that is in Baduria.

I woke up from my reverie to a sumptuous meal served by our host, little suspecting the great blow in the offing. While we were at lunch, the Commissioner of Police received urgent calls from his office to meet the C.M. immediately. What could have happened? The Commissioner did have a hunch that the historical monument may be brought down, though also there was a lurking hope that the Central Government would manage to avert the calamity. But the inevitable happened that very day.

We saw a live telecast after covering the distance back home. It was preposterous to think that an incident in a place like Ayodhya - almost 900 km. away from Calcutta - would affect the metropolis in parts where no communal riots had taken place before.

The roads were empty. We learnt later that Chief Minister Jyoti Basu was beside himself with anger and vent his wrath on PM P V Narasimha Rao. The Commissioner, I believe, was asked to quell the riots and help the affected. It was a four day horror in Calcutta, now Kolkata. It spread to various areas under the police stations of Tangra, Entally, Garden Reach and Metiabruz in a big way. Mr. Talukdar and IG-CID Mr. Ain Rashid Khan together burnt the midnight oil to stop the surging riots tactfully. The erudite Governor of WB, Professor Nurul Hassan watched matters closely to ensure peace.

On 9 November 2019, the Supreme Court ordered the entire site to be handed over to a trust to build the Hindu temple and to give a five acre plot to the Uttar Pradesh Sunni Central Waqf Board "to replace the Babri Masjid demolished in 1992." On 5 August 2020, during a massive surge of corona virus cases, Prime Minister Narendra Modi placed a symbolic silver brick in the sanctum sanctorum of the Ram Janmabhumi Teertha Kshetra amidst chant of Jay Shri Ram.

100 YEARS AGO

HOUSING PROBLEM IN CALCUTTA

To The Editor Of The Statesman

SIR, - The housing question becomes more acute daily as the cold weather visitors arrive in Calcutta, and high prices have to be paid for shelter if it can be found. A house was advertised in Dum Dum a few days ago and there were 400 replies to the advertisement. A gentleman who read of a room to let in two advertisements called at the address at 9 A.M. and was told at both that some one had been before him and taken the rooms. In fact at one place there were five callers before him. New buildings are now being put up with flat accommodation of four small rooms, for which the landlords are asking Rs 400 to Rs 500 per mensum. Several furnished flats are being offered from Rs 800 to Rs 2,000 per mensum. What are Government doing to relieve this congestion? The Government of Bombay has personally taken vigorous measures to check housing congestion in Bombay.

A.H.L. Calcutta.

JEWISH REFUGEES

To The Editor Of The Statesman

SIR, - Recent reports regarding the arrival in Bombay of two batches of Jewish refugees from Anatolia and Van are quite obscure to me. Their statements as to their undergoing cruel treatment by Bolsheviks and their "Armenian allies" are equally obscure and prove their utter ignorance of facts. It is inconceivable why the name of Armenia has been dragged into these statements when there are in Van neither Jews nor Armenians to treat them cruelly. Neither are Armenians "allies of the Bolsheviks" as stated, since it is evident to your readers that Bolsheviks are composed mostly of Jews, and Armenia has been a prey to them recently. From reliable information I may state that there were about eighty families of Jews at Bashkhal, between Lakes Van and Urumiya. These families were obliged to leave the place in 1915 when the Russians advanced on that town. While sympathising with the plight of these refugees, the Government ought to make further inquiries.

M.P.A. Calcutta.

POLITICAL DIARY | KALYANI SHANKAR

Challenges of mass vaccination

India has taken up the ambitious programme of vaccinating a billion-plus people, the biggest such exercise in the world. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the roll out on Saturday. "India will take a landmark step," he declared at the launch. He has already had several interactions with chief ministers.

India has reported more than 10.54 million confirmed cases and around 150,000 deaths, though its infection rate has come down significantly from the September peak. Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan tweeted that India was ready for a "quick and equitable" distribution of vaccines. India has seen many other challenges including smallpox, TB, polio, and other diseases in the past and handled immunization programmes successfully.

Rolling out vaccines amid a pandemic in a populous country like India is bound to pose challenges but the question is how to overcome these. Even in developed countries like the US, Germany, France and other European countries immunization has posed a challenge.

As far as the Covid vaccine is concerned there are three important challenges for India. Procuring the vaccine, fixing the price and distribution to the whole country. The regulator has approved two vaccines - one developed by AstraZeneca and Oxford University and the other by a local company, Bharat Biotech,



based in Hyderabad.

The most important challenge is to make sure that the billion-plus people get vaccinated without problems. This is easier said than done. Already rumour-mongers are busy spreading doubts about vaccine efficacy. Bloomberg recently reported a survey of Indian citizens conducted after the restricted authorisation to both vaccines found that 69 per cent remained hesitant about getting Covid-19 jabs and wouldn't rush to get them immediately - the same level as before the regulatory nods.

Second is the supply. To get an adequate number of doses is not easy. India makes about 60 per cent of the world's vaccines including in Bharat Biotech and Serum Institute. Still, vaccine supply will be difficult - from the stage of identifying priorities to reaching it to the public.

received emergency use clearance in UK and India, Bharat Biotech's vaccine is yet to start analyzing phase-3 data.

First of all, even choosing the right vaccine from a bouquet of vaccines available is difficult as many of them have come to the market too soon.

Second is the supply. To get an adequate number of doses is not easy. India makes about 60 per cent of the world's vaccines including in Bharat Biotech and Serum Institute. Still, vaccine supply will be difficult - from the stage of identifying priorities to reaching it to the public.

The third is fixing price and whether all the citizens will get the vaccine free of cost. When the government allows sale in the private market, Covishield will come for Rs 1,000 a dose. The Prime Minister and chief ministers are confident of vaccinating all citizens and some states have announced free vaccination for all.

The basic challenge is how to reach out to rural India. Not only procuring millions of vials but also disposing of medical waste is a challenge. Added to that is the cold storage chain. According to government data, presently there are 27,000 cold chain stores in India. Nearly all vaccines have to be stored between 2 deg C to 8 deg C temperatures. The government has to ensure not only auto-disabled syringes but also prevent misuse. There is also the problem of disposing of the huge medical waste.

The second is mobilizing the adequate number of medical personnel and their training to implement the vaccination scheme. At present, there are only four million medical staff but that may not be enough. Training has been given to vaccination teams including training of trainers, state immunization officers, cold chain officers, IEC officials, development partners, etc. According to officials, more than 61,000 programme managers, 2 lakh vaccinators, and 3.7 lakh other vaccination team members have been trained so far.

About 1 crore people — from

doctors to ward staff — work in public and private healthcare facilities. The government needs to go for public-private participation.

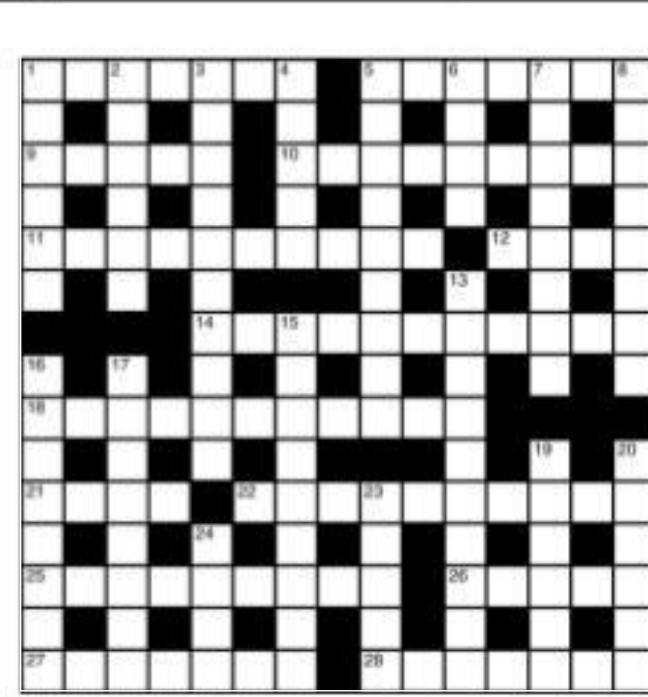
Thirdly, unfortunately, the opposition has made Covid vaccination a political tool. Of course, if there are genuine snags they should be brought to the notice of the government. But former U.P. chief minister Akhilesh Yadav has said, "How can I trust the vaccine, which will be used for vaccination by the BJP? We cannot get vaccinated by the BJP's vaccine." There can be no Samajwadi party vaccine and Congress or BJP vaccine. There is a need to demolish the myths about the vaccination drive.

Fourthly, there is a need for a good communication strategy - as it was done last year - about how to practice social distancing and use masks. Accurate information should be disseminated to the public. It is good that the government has already realized this and has prepared a strategy to address four issues - giving information on Covid-19 vaccines, addressing vaccine hesitancy, building vaccine eagerness along with maintaining and sustaining Covid appropriate behaviour.

Finally, India should learn lessons from other countries and their own experiences. A vaccination drive of this level is bound to have glitches but the ultimate result is important. The public too should cooperate with the efforts of the government in this huge vaccination drive.

NO 28198

CROSSWORD



SOLUTION FOR 10 JANUARY

ACROSS

- Reduce consumption? That's futile? (7)
- Man turned right in Bath, finding trouble? (7)
- French footballer in Post Office misplaced bag (5)
- Lunatic Pope stood against (7,2)
- Giving report about company in recession on the move? (10)
- Hike starts in The Rip and ends in the outback (4)
- Draft right-winger seen prior to joining airborne (10)

DOWN

- Mean drunk getting punched (5-6)
- Before leaving reclusive sort makes widow's contribution (4)
- One suggesting secure area round port (10)
- Belligerent destroying mortars and guns here and there (6-3)
- Four getting stuck into the drink - bubbly? (5)
- Sappers permitted to enter gym that's full (7)
- Get expert to contain buzzing hive (7)
- Member brought to anger by posh Lord's official? (6)
- Becomes hard to follow case of Etonian political theorist (6)
- Free issue includes image from the bottom (10)
- Prisoner's baccy in tin with refill needed (5)
- Client wants some foreign jewellery item (9)
- Elite soldiers bashing in middle window-frame (4)
- Make rare gaffe initially being an outsider (8)
- Girl under water in populous borough (8)
- Norse god to frustrate stupid talk (10)
- How heat might knock one out? (9)
- Storm in Timor Sea that generates spray (8)
- Article by twerp to support subversive literature (8)
- One's seen in valley in this case (6)
- Bond one plugging away? (6)
- Monkey caught in an American city (5)
- Stake - not post (4)

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



India, with its proven software prowess, now needs to aggressively build strong hardware capabilities as well

MEENAKSHI LEKHI

CHAIRPERSON, PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON DATA PROTECTION BILL

THUMBNAILS

TAI plea: Travel agents' body TAI on Saturday urged the government to come out with guidelines for travellers, both domestic and international, who have been vaccinated against Covid-19, and asked to do away with quarantine requirement for such travellers. Many countries have started the process of vaccination and travellers who have already been vaccinated are desirous of travel to India, the Travel Agents Association of India (TAI) said in a release. However, currently, there is no clarity in terms of how their entry into India shall be permitted, it added.

PTI

IntelliSmart-Infosys pact: IntelliSmart has signed an agreement with Infosys to develop a digital platform for value-added services of discoms. IntelliSmart Infrastructure Private Limited (IntelliSmart) - a joint venture of Energy Efficiency Services Ltd (EESL) and National Investment & Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) - have committed to developing a digital platform for value-added services, according to a statement. IntelliSmart signed an MoU with Infosys Ltd to develop a "Sustainable Energy Digital Platform (SEDP)" to accelerate digitalisation and integrate data analytics across the power sector, enabling greater efficiency.

PTI

IRB INVIT revenue: IRB INVIT, India's first listed infrastructure investment trust, on Saturday said its revenue for the December quarter this fiscal remained almost flat at Rs 333 crore. It had clocked a revenue of Rs 330 crore in the corresponding quarter last fiscal, it said in a statement. "India's first listed infrastructure investment trust will distribute Rs 2.50 per unit for Q3 FY21," it added. With this, the cumulative distribution for the nine months in FY21 is now Rs 6 per unit, which includes Rs 4.80 per unit as an interest component and Rs 1.20 as return on capital.

PTI

Bharat Bond ETF: The government is planning to launch the third tranche of the Bharat Bond ETF during the first quarter of the next fiscal and expects to raise over Rs 10,000 crore from retail investors to fund growth plans of Central public sector enterprises, sources said. Bharat Bond ETF is an exchange traded fund that invests in debt of public sector companies. The ETF currently invests only in "AAA" rated bonds of public sector companies.

PTI

Kia Motors: South Korean auto major Kia is looking to further enhance the customer experience across its sales network in India as part of its global brand strategy, a top company official has said. The company, which sells models like Seltos and Sonet in the country, earlier this month unveiled a new corporate logo and global brand slogan signifying its transformation and all-new brand purpose.

PTI

Committed to take measures to support growth: RBI Guv

Policies of Reserve Bank have helped in easing the severity of economic impact of the pandemic

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CHENNAI, 16 JANUARY

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das today said the central bank remains steadfast to take any further measures as may be required to support growth without compromising on financial stability.

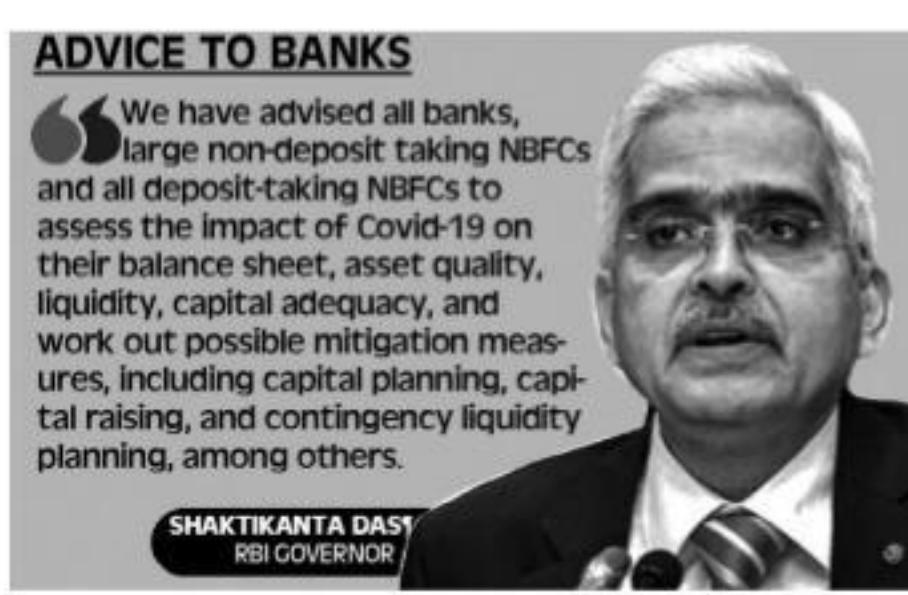
Delivering the 39th Palkhivala Memorial Lecture, the Governor said the principal objective during the pandemic period was to support economic activity; and looking back, it is evident that policies of the RBI have helped in easing the severity of the economic impact of the pandemic.

"I would like to unambiguously reiterate that the Reserve Bank remains steadfast to take any further measures, as may be necessary, while at the same time remaining fully committed to maintaining financial stability," he said.

In a bid to maintain financial stability, Das emphasised the need for banks to raise resources in advance as a buffer.

Going ahead, he said, financial institutions in India have to walk a tightrope in nurturing the economic recovery within the overarching objective of preserving long-term stability of the financial system.

The current Covid-19 pandemic related shock will place greater pressure on the balance sheets of banks in terms of non-performing assets, leading to erosion of capital, he said, adding building buffers and



ADVICE TO BANKS

“We have advised all banks, large non-deposit taking NBFCs and all deposit-taking NBFCs to assess the impact of Covid-19 on their balance sheet, asset quality, liquidity, capital adequacy, and work out possible mitigation measures, including capital planning, capital raising, and contingency liquidity planning, among others.

SHAKTIKANTA DAS
RBI GOVERNOR

raising capital by banks - both in the public and private sector - will be crucial not only to ensure credit flow but also to build resilience in the financial system.

"We have advised all banks, large non-deposit taking NBFCs and all deposit-taking NBFCs to assess the impact of Covid-19 on their balance sheet, asset quality, liquidity, capital adequacy, and work out possible mitigation measures, including capital planning, capital raising, and contingency liquidity planning, among others," he said.

Noting that good gover-

nance will have to be supported by effective risk management functions and assurance mechanisms, he said banks and non-banking finance institutions need to identify risks early, monitor them closely and manage them effectively.

The Governor said recent experience across countries during the pandemic suggests that banks, non-banks, financial markets and payment systems remain at the core of financial stability issues and there is a need to work much closer at the system in its entirety.

"In this sense, the overall objective of financial stability policies should be closely intertwined with the health of the real economy," he noted.

The financial stability needs to be seen in a broader perspective and must include not just the stability of the financial system and price stability but also "fiscal sustainability and external sector viability", Das said.

The need for banks to raise resources in advance as a buffer.

Going ahead, he said, financial institutions in India have to walk a tightrope in nurturing the economic recovery within the overarching objective of preserving long-term stability of the financial system.

"We have advised all banks, large non-deposit taking NBFCs and all deposit-taking NBFCs to assess the impact of Covid-19 on their balance sheet, asset quality, liquidity, capital adequacy, and work out possible mitigation measures, including capital planning, capital raising, and contingency liquidity planning, among others," he said.

Noting that good gover-

ATF price up by 3%; petrol, diesel remain unchanged

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 16 JANUARY

Jetfuel or ATF price today was hiked by 3 per cent - the fourth increase in two months on firming international oil prices, while petrol and diesel rates remained unchanged after hitting new highs.

Aviation turbine fuel (ATF) price was raised by Rs 1,512.38 per kilolitre, or 2.96 per cent, to Rs 52,491.16 per kl in the national capital, according to a price notification of state-owned fuel retailers.

This is the fourth increase in price since 1 December 2020. Rates had gone up by 7.6 per cent (Rs 3,288.38 per kl) on 1 December, by 6.3 per cent (Rs 2,941.51 per kl) on 16 December and by Rs 1,817.62 (3.69 per cent) on 1 January.

ATF prices are revised on 1st and 16th of every month based on the average price of benchmark international rate and foreign exchange rate in

the preceding fortnight.

In Mumbai, ATF price today went up to Rs 50,596.02 per kl from Rs 49,083.65 per kl. Prices vary from state to state depending on the incidence of local taxes.

The increase in the price of ATF, which makes for close to 40 per cent of the running cost of an airline, will put additional burden on airlines that have been struggling to return to normal business after Covid-19 lockdown had halted their operations. After rising to record levels, petrol and diesel prices were unchanged for the second day today.

Petrol on 14 January touched an all-time high of Rs 84.70 per litre in Delhi. In Mumbai, the price of petrol at Rs 91.32 a litre is just 2 paise lower than the highest ever rate of Rs 91.34 hit on 4 October 2018. Diesel price in Mumbai, however, is at a record high of Rs 81.60 per litre. In Delhi, it comes for Rs 74.88

a litre, lower than its all-time high rate of Rs 75.45 a litre touched on 4 October 2018.

The government had responded to the situation in October 2018, by cutting excise duty on petrol and diesel by Rs 1.50 per litre in a bid to ease inflationary pressure and boost consumer confidence. Alongside, state-owned fuel retailers cut prices by another Re 1 a litre, which they recouped later.

There are demands in some quarters for a reduction in excise duty to ease the burden on consumers.

Excise duty totals Rs 32.98 per litre in petrol and Rs 31.83 in diesel. VAT in Delhi totals to Rs 19.32 a litre on petrol and Rs 10.85 on diesel.

With international oil prices rebounding from the lows of April, retail rates in India too were revised. Since May 2020, petrol price has risen by Rs 15.04 per litre and diesel by Rs 12.59 a litre

Govt nod to vehicle scrappage policy likely soon: Gadkari

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 16 JANUARY

The much-awaited policy to scrap 15-year old vehicles is likely to get government nod soon, Union minister Nitin Gadkari has said.

On 26 July 2019, the government proposed amendments to motor vehicle norms to allow scrapping of vehicles older than 15 years in a bid to spur adoption of electrical vehicles.

"We have submitted the proposal and I am expecting that we will get approval as early as possible for the scrapping policy," the road transport and highways minister said.

The policy is for scrapping of vehicles which are more than 15 years old and includes cars, trucks and buses, the minister said addressing the "Atmanirbhar Bharat Innovation Challenge 2020-21" event.

Gadkari's remarks come

amid reports that the upcoming Budget may unveil the vehicle scrappage policy that aims to boost automobile demand by phasing out old and polluting vehicles.

A final call in this regard, however, will be taken by the Prime Minister's Office. The PMO had earlier sent the proposed policy for a fresh round of consultation with stakeholders.

Gadkari said once the policy is approved, India will become an automobile hub and there will also be reduction in the prices of automobiles.

He said recycled material from old vehicles will help reduce the prices.

"We will take scrap from all over the world and here we will make an industry where we can use all new material and the cost will be less... industry will be more competitive... we will get more export orders," he added.

business

HDFC Bank profit rises 14.36% to ₹8,760 crore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 16 JANUARY

The country's largest private sector lender HDFC Bank today reported a 14.36 per cent jump in consolidated net profit to Rs 8,760 crore for the December quarter, driven by a surge in core income.

At the standalone level, net profit for the three-month period grew by 18.09 per cent to Rs 8,758.29 crore, on the back of a 15.1 per cent growth in the core net interest income at Rs 16,317 crore.

Its deposits grew by 19.1 per cent and the share of float-cost current and savings account deposits was 43 per cent.

HDFC Bank is the first major lender to declare its results for the December quarter. This is also the maiden earnings declaration under new chief executive and managing director Sashidhar Jagdishan, who succeeded Aditya Puri as the head of the bank.

The bank's credit growth came in at 15.6 per cent, while the net interest margin was 4.2 per cent. The non-interest income grew by 11 per cent to Rs 7,443 crore, largely on the back of a gain or

revaluation in an investment at Rs 1,109 crore, which stood at Rs 676 crore in the year-ago period.

The results showed an improvement in the asset quality with the gross non-performing assets (NPA) ratio stood at 0.81 per cent of the total assets as against 1.42 per cent in the year-ago period and 1.08 per cent at the end of the preceding September quarter, the bank said. If one were to exclude the benefit of the Supreme Court order asking banks not to classify stress during the moratorium period in NPA computation, the GNPA ratio would have been at 1.38 per cent, it added.

Its overall provisions and contingencies for the reporting quarter, which saw the economy trying to recover from the reverses of the pandemic, grew to Rs 3,414 crore as against Rs 3,043 crore in the year-ago period. It held contingent provisions of Rs 8,656 crore and floating provisions of Rs 1,451 crore as of 31 December. It said 0.5 per cent of its Rs 10.82 lakh crore in advances have been restructured under the special scheme announced by the RBI.

the loose ends and then come to a stage where it can be announced by the ministry," Sitharaman had said in an interaction with the media after presenting Budget 2020-21.

In May 2016, the government had floated a draft Voluntary Vehicle Fleet Modernisation Programme (V-VMP) that proposed to take 28 million decade-old vehicles off the road.

A committee of secretaries (CoS) recommended to the ministry redesigning of the scheme for greater participation of states with partial support from the Centre.

The CoS had suggested that the scheme may dovetail with a calibrated and phased regulatory approach for capping the life of vehicles together with ministries concerned "fine-tune" it.

"Scrapage policy is in the works... I would wait for the concerned ministries also to fine-tune everything and tie up

CAIT moves SC over WhatsApp's new policy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 16 JANUARY

Traders' body CAIT today filed a petition in the Supreme Court with the prayer to direct WhatsApp to withdraw its new privacy policy, which is encroaching upon various fundamental rights of the citizens granted by Constitution of India," the statement said.

Meanwhile, WhatsApp has announced delaying by three months the implementation of the new privacy policy. The policy change was originally scheduled to come into effect on 8 February, the Facebook-owned company said.

It has clarified that the update does not affect data sharing with Facebook with regard to personal conversations or other profile information and only addresses business chats.

WhatsApp delays policy update to 15 May

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 16 JANUARY

WhatsApp has decided to delay the roll-out of new policy update to 15 May after massive criticism from users globally, including India, over concerns that data were being shared with its parent company Facebook.

The move assumes significance for users in India, given that the country is among the biggest markets for WhatsApp with over 400 million users.

In a blog post, WhatsApp said it is moving back the date on which people will be asked to review and accept the terms.

"No one will have their account suspended or deleted on 8 February. We're also going to do a lot more to clear up the misinformation around how privacy and security works on WhatsApp. We'll then go to people gradually to review the policy at their own pace before new business options are available on 15 May," it said in the blog post.

works on WhatsApp. We'll then go to people gradually to review the policy at their own pace before new business options are available on 15 May," it said in the blog post.

A raging debate ensued after WhatsApp said it will update its terms of service and privacy policy around how it processes user data and partners with Facebook to offer integrations across the social media giant's products. Concerned about the privacy of their data, many users have

thronged to rival messaging platforms such as Signal and Telegram that have seen millions of downloads in the past few days.

"We've heard from so many people how much confusion there is around our recent update. There's been a lot of misinformation causing concern and we want to help everyone understand our principles and the facts," WhatsApp said.

It maintained that messages on the platform are

end-to-end encrypted and that neither WhatsApp nor Facebook can see the private messages on WhatsApp's platform. It added that it doesn't keep logs of which users are messaging or calling, can't see users' shared location and that it doesn't share contacts with Facebook.

Instead, the update includes new options people will have to message a business on WhatsApp today, we think that more people will choose to do so in the future and it's important people are aware of these services. This update does not expand our ability to share data with Facebook," the blog post said.

In the FAQ section, What-

sApp emphasised that "the recent terms and privacy policy update do not affect personal messages".

WhatsApp had informed users about the changes in its terms of service and public policy, through an in-app notification last week. Users had till 8 February to agree to the new terms in order to continue using the platform.

This led to a user backlash and triggered memes on the Internet over WhatsApp's alleged sharing of user information with Facebook.

According to sources earlier, the Indian government is also examining and evaluating the recent privacy policy update announced by WhatsApp and discussions are on within the IT ministry over the implications of the recent move by the messaging platform.

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According to sources earlier, the Indian government is also examining and evaluating the recent privacy policy update announced by WhatsApp and discussions are on within the IT ministry over the implications of the recent move by the messaging platform.

The country's foreign exchange reserves rose by \$758 million to reach a record high of \$586.08 billion in the week ended 8 January, Reserve Bank data showed.

Covid vaccination: 13,745 take first jab in Odisha

Several paramedics, health workers refuse, sport black badges

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

BHUBANESWAR, 16 JANUARY

A 55-year-old Safai Karmachari Biranchi Naik today became the first person in the state to be administered COVID-19 vaccine at the Capital Hospital here as the mega immunization drive got underway across Odisha.

"I am feeling fine after getting the first dose of vaccine", he said as Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik interacted with him.

Unlike a few other of his counterparts who visited hospitals, Patnaik opted to interact with a few of those who were immunized during the day and gathered feedback on their post-inoculation experience through video conference.

"It (the vaccination drive) is good news for us. After a prolonged long wait, the vaccination programme has begun. We again seek cooperation of doctors and health workers, who have worked hard in the past 10 months, for the success of the current vaccination programme," he said.

To make the health workers reassured that getting vaccinated is a safe proposition, the senior medics opted vol-

unteer to receive the vaccine.

The overall state average turnout from the first list was stated to be around 84 percent with some districts like Bhadrak, Koraput, Angul, Balasore recording cent percent and districts like Sonepur, Keonjhar reported around 50 percent turnout of those enlisted for the first shot.

At some of the centres there were reports of concerned authorities calling up people to come as the opened vial (20 doses) cannot be left unused beyond four hours. Since the enlisted numbers had not turned up we had to try and ring up people to come at around 5 pm when we found that a vial has been opened and needs to be

exhausted, confided a nurse.

The Director of AIIMS, Bhubaneswar B. Gitanjali, Layant Panda, state nodal officer on COVID-19 training, the chief of Capital Hospital, eminent prof (Dr) Ashok Mahapatra, VC of SOA, Maj. Gen. P. K. Patnaik, Principal & Director General, School of Medicine KIIMS were administered vaccines in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack.

At Bhubaneswar Covishield was administered while elsewhere in the state Covishield was given.

The immunizations drive that began at 161 sites across 30 districts of the state on Saturday was entirely hassle-free, said State Vaccine Nodal Officer Bijaya Kumar Mishra.

During the course of today's vaccination, 13,745 health workers, doctors from the first list of 16,000 received the vaccine in 161 centres. Each centre will administer 100 vaccines to the enlisted health workers.

There will be no vaccination on Sunday as health authorities have decided to medically observe those vaccinated. No adverse impact of the vaccines has so far been reported, Pradipita Mohapatra, Additional Chief Secretary (Health).

A total of 3.28 lakh health workers would be covered under the vaccination programme by January 25.

The union health ministry has allotted 4.08 lakh doses of

Covishield and 20,000 doses of Covaxin to Odisha.

While the health workers including doctors, nurses and paramedical staff will be administered vaccines in the first phase till 25 January, the front line workers like police, para-military and Disaster Management personnel and Revenue Department officials will be vaccinated in the second phase. The enumeration of people to be covered under the second phase of vaccination drive is currently underway, he added.

SOA's VC and eminent neurosurgeon Prof. (Dr.) Ashok Kumar Mahapatra received the first shot at SUM Hospital along with 100 others while at CM Maj. Gen. P. K. Patnaik, Principal & Director General, School of Medicine received the first vaccine with 100 others.

Meanwhile, the members of the Odisha United Forum of Multipurpose Health Workers and Health Visitors, (both male and female), and other paramedical workers sported black badges while doing duty as a mark of protest. They have also refused to take the vaccine till their long standing demands like restructuring of service grade and changing the designation of different posts are met.



BJD celebrates Naveen No 1 CM survey report.

Doppler radar project in cold storage

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BALASORE, 16 JANUARY:

Several years after the announcement, installation of a doppler weather radar station in the district continues to be a distant dream.

The decision for establishing a radar was taken in 2006. The central government had proposed it in view of the vulnerability of the coastal district where cyclones and floods are an annual phenomenon.

The construction activity commenced here in August 2013 and it was scheduled to be completed by end of 2014.

Reports also added that the project began within esti-

mation of about Rs 4.5 crore and the work was undertaken by the PWD for the four storeyed building at Hindigaon in Chandipur. It is reliably learnt that the work was halted to structural modification and procurement of radar.

However, an official of the meteorological weather department said that Radar will be installed in the establishment after completion of the building.

Meanwhile similar projects have already been installed and commissioned at Paradip and Gopalpur.

As of now the district is served by the radars installed at the defence establishments in Chandipur.

105 Naxals killed in encounters in Odisha over last seven years

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

BHUBANESWAR, 16 JANUARY:

As many as 105 naxals were killed in encounters with security forces in Odisha in the past seven years while 320 left wing extremists returned to the mainstream by surrendering before the police, according to the state government's reply to a RTI query.

From 2014 to September 2020, 105 naxals were neutralized with 320 surrendering before the police during the period. In the first nine months of the current year, 13 LWEs were killed while an equal number surrendered.

In 2016 year, the maximum number of 41 naxals was killed in encounters with security forces. The year-wise breakup of LWEs killed is 6 in 2014, 15 in 2015, 41 in 2016, 8 in 2017, 19 in 2018 and 8 in 2019.

The naxal-affected Chhattisgarh on Odisha's border accounted for 533 deaths of naxals while Andhra Pradesh recorded 18 deaths during the past seven years.

While as many as 3,185 LWEs were neutralized in Chhattisgarh, 617 ultras had shunned the path of violence to surrender in Andhra Pradesh.

The district- Angul, Boudh, Sambalpur, Deogarh and Deogarh- did not witness Maoist violence in the past two years and are categorized as LWE affected SRE districts.

The districts like Koraput, Malkangiri, Nabarangapur, Rayagada, Sundergarh, Kandhamal, Kalabandi, Nuapada, Bargarh and Bolangir are now covered under the Left Wing Extremism affected Security Related Expenditure (SRE) scheme.

Two districts- Koraput and Malkangiri- have borne the maximum brunt of Maoists' violence. Incidentally Malkangiri is widely regarded as a hotbed of LWE. The Swabhimani Anchal comprising 151 villages coming under 9 gram panchayats had always been the epicenter of LWE. The 900-metre-long bridge over river Gurupriya that was inaugurated last year had restored connectivity with the mainland.

With the security forces keeping tabs on anti-Maoist operation, it was widely believed that improved connectivity has brought down red rebels-engineered violence in the region.

The State which is contending with Maoists violence amidst economic and development disparities in the perennially backward villages and large scale laundering of government exchequer by three-way nexus of politicians, officers and contractors, believe the analysts.

Seed production increases in Odisha

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 16 JANUARY

Despite the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown, shutdown restriction, Odisha State Seeds Corporation Ltd. achieved record production and sale of paddy and non-paddy seeds during 2020, said official sources.

The Corporation produced 3,95,032 quintals of paddy and 25,034 quintals of non-paddy seeds during the year 2020 through its

own production programme 'Mo Bihani Yojana', long term MoU with private seed produces and other National and International Agencies inside the state to incentivize seed growers.

The production and sale included introduction of 25 newly released varieties of early, medium late varieties of paddy, four varieties of Ragi, 14 varieties of Pulses and 16 varieties of oil seed in the seed chain during

2020.

OSSC sold 4,07,444 quintals of paddy and 57,243 quintals of Non-paddy seeds during 2020 i.e. the highest quantity of seeds sold by OSSC after implementation of DBT during 2016.

The corporation has also supplied 630 quintals of potato and 12 quintals of onion seeds to the Directorate, Horticulture and other Government Agencies.

The OSSC has installed eight seed processing plants,

'Total' LPG launched in Bhubaneswar

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

BHUBANESWAR, 16 JANUARY

French Oil and Gas major Total has made its entry into the Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) distribution sector in the capital city by appointing an authorised distributor for Khurda district.

The offerings include various sizes for LPG cylinders including 12 Kgs, 17 Kgs, 33 Kgs for both commercial and domestic segments.

"Total, being one of the largest Oil Gas companies in the world with operations in 130 countries would bring

in the expertise and best practices to our markets", said the co-owners of Absolute Total Distributors.

Presenting attractive value propositions to customers, it has attractively priced new connections with multiple cylinder options to choose from by the customers.

Besides, Absolute Total Distributors is ready to serve industrial customers wishing to switch from conventional fuels to LPG and for those with such requirements, Liquid Off Take (LOT) facility can be provided for industrial customers.

Three officers suspended for corrupt practices

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NABARANGPUR, 16 JANUARY

Odisha government on Saturday placed under suspension two block development officers and a junior engineer on charges of corruption in funds meant for Individual Household Latrine scheme under the Swachh Bharat Mission programme.

The Panchayati Raj department suspended the Jhargona BDO, D B Singh Dharua and Junior Engineer Sunil Samal as well as the

BDO of Chitrakonda block in Malkangiri Lariman Karsel. Several allegations were leveled in Nabarangpur and locals charged that over five crore had been misappropriated. Following the criticism, challenge director, DRDA, Nabarangpur had visited the block to enquire into the allegations.

Recently, the beneficiaries led by the Congress leader and former MP Pradip Majhi had lodged a complaint at Jhargona police station.

LEISURE

10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS 1. Member of a panel (5) 2. Male bovine (4) 3. In addition (4) 4. Go away! (5,3) 5. Contemptible (10) 6. Lively party (informal) (4-2) 7. Help (6) 8. Lovely (10) 9. Calling (8) 10. Couple (4) 11. Leave out (4) 12. Planet (5) DOWN 1. Month (4) 2. Remainder (7) 3. Contests of speed (5) 4. Name of Myanmar (5) 5. Inanimate (8) 6. Part of the eye (6) 7. Parasitic creature (8) 8. Regional dialect (6) 9. Inactive spy (7) 10. Precise (5) 11. Head (Slang) (5) 12. Aquatic vertebrate (4)

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

BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker



RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson



DADDY DAZE/John Kovaleski



NEED TO KNOW

HOSPITALS

• AIIMS 26588500, 26588900
• Moolchand Medcity (formerly Hospital) 4200000 & 24-hour Chemist Shop 42000447
• Vidyasagar Institute for Mental and Neuro Sciences 26924300, 26924304
• Batra Hospital & Medical Research Centre 29051280, 29958747
• Deen Dayal Upadhyay 25496320, 25494403
• Guru Tegh Bahadur 2371723, 23325320

RAILWAY INQUIRY

General Inquiry 139
Toll Free Nos. 180012511
SMS Inquiry Nos. 57886, 54959, 5676747

ROADWAYS INQUIRY

• ISBT (General Inquiry): 23868836, 23865181

• Haryana Roadways 23861262, 23713740

• Himachal Roadways 23713743, 23325320

• Punjab Roadways 23867842, 23860626

• Rajasthan Roadways 23864470

• U.P. Roadways 23868709

• West Bengal Roadways 23868709

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

• JET AIRWAYS Flight Inquiry and Reservation 3984111

• EMIRATES Flight Inquiry and Reservation 33773377

• AIR INDIA Flight Inquiry and Reservation 18001801407

• INDIGO AIRLINES New Delhi City Office 43513183, Call Center 091901803838, 18001803838, Reservation 43513186, Indigo Airlines Air

port 011-25621522

• Air Canada Flight Inquiry and Reservation 41528181

• Air France Flight Inquiry and Reservation 23466262 (City)

• Kuwait Airways Flight Inquiry and Reservation 23554373

Instructions Make a 2 to 7 letter word from the letters in each row. Add the letters in each row to get a 7-letter word. The 7-letter word gets 50 points. Blanks" points as any letter that is not in the word. Add the points to get the total score.

Scrabble® is a registered trademark. All rights in the game

*...the decision on whether to convict the outgoing president over the Capitol riot will be a vote of conscience*

TO REPUBLICAN SENATORS AS PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP'S IMPEACHMENT TRIAL IS ABOUT TO START

WEATHER

CITY	MAX(°C)	MIN(°C)
SINGAPORE	31	24 H
HONG KONG	20	14 H
TOKYO	7	3 H
LONDON	7	2 H
DUBAI	23	16 CL
SAN FRANCISCO	17	11 H
NEW YORK	8	3 H
MOSCOW	-14	-18 H

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

THUMBNAILS



An elderly woman receives a dose of Covid-19 vaccine at central Evangelismos hospital in Athens on Saturday. AP

China builds hospital in 5 days: China on Saturday finished building a 1,500-room hospital for Covid-19 patients to fight a surge in infections the government said are harder to contain and that it blamed on infected people or goods from abroad. The hospital is one of six with a total of 6,500 rooms being built in Nangong, south of Beijing in Hebei province. AP

Pak Cabinet removes Imran's aide: The Pakistan Cabinet has removed Naeem Bukhari, a close associate of Prime Minister Imran Khan, as chairman of Pakistan Television, after the Islamabad High Court barred him from working as the head of the state-run channel. PTI

Haysom to head UN mission: Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has appointed veteran South African diplomat Nicholas Haysom to head the UN peacekeeping mission in South Sudan. Haysom is currently the secretary-general's special adviser for Southern Africa. AP

Mexico clears general, publishes US evidence against him

MEXICO CITY, 16 JANUARY

Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador has accused the US Drug Enforcement Administration of fabricating drug trafficking charges against the country's former defense secretary even as his government published hundreds of pages of US files that purported to show detailed evidence of the man's close links with a drug gang.

The decision to denounce US prosecutors on Friday while clearing a top official of charges adds to a crisis in security cooperation for the incoming administration of President-elect Joe Biden.

It follows the Mexican government's decision to restrict US agents and remove their immunity, seemingly a slap in the face after US efforts to appease Mexico by releasing retired Gen. Salvador Cienfuegos to be tried in Mexico.

The US Department of Justice said it was deeply disappointed by the closure of the case against Cienfuegos. It also said publication of the evidence violates a legal assistance treaty and calls into question whether the US can continue to share information.

It also said the published material demonstrated the strength of the evidence against Cienfuegos.

López Obrador has leaned heavily on the military for a wide range of projects well beyond security. In this case, he said that while many Mexicans see US courts as the good judges, flawless... in this case, with all respect, those that did this investigation did not act with professionalism." AP

Biden unveils 100 days vaccination plan

The US is the worst-affected country in the world with more than 23,523,000 Covid-19 infections and 391,955 deaths

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON, 16 JANUARY

US President-elect Joe Biden has announced an ambitious goal of inoculating 100 million Americans with Covid-19 vaccines in the first 100 days of his administration, noting that the vaccine rollout in the country, the worst hit by the pandemic, has been a "dismal failure."

Ahead of his inauguration on January 20, Biden on Friday held a briefing with his team on addressing the major health crisis that has engulfed the nation for nearly a year now.

The US is the worst-affected country in the world with more than 23,523,000 Covid-19 infections and 391,955 deaths, according to the Johns Hopkins Coronavirus tracker.

During his election campaign, Biden, a Democrat, made tackling Covid-19 and the economic hardships it had put on Americans a core pitch to voters.

The vaccine rollout in the

United States has been a dismal failure thus far and in today's briefing we discussed five things, five things we will do in an attempt to turn things around, five things to turn frustration into motivation, five things to help us meet our goal of 100 million shots by the end of our first 100 days in office. Some wonder if we are reaching too far for that goal. Is it achievable? It's a legitimate question to ask, Biden told reporters in Wilmington, Delaware.

Let me be clear; I am convinced we can get it done, and this is the time to set big goals to pursue them with courage and conviction because the health of the nation is literally at stake. First, we will immediately work with states to open up vaccinations to more priority groups, he said.

Biden said that the process of establishing priority groups is driven by science, but the problem is the implementation has been too rigid and confusing.

If you were to ask most people today, they couldn't tell you

who exactly is getting vaccinated. What they do know is there are tens of millions of doses of vaccine sitting unused in freezers around the country while people who want and need the vaccine can't get it, he said.

Exuding confidence, Biden said that his administration will fix the problem by encouraging states to allow more people to get vaccinated beyond healthcare workers and move through those groups as quickly as they think they can. That includes anyone 65 years or older, a population that has accounted for over 80 per cent of the deaths to date.

We also have to continue vaccinating frontline essential workers like educators, first responders, grocery store workers, et cetera. It won't mean that everyone in this group will get vaccinated immediately as the supply is not where it needs to be, but it will mean that vaccines become available--as they become available, it will reach more people who need them, will reach out and get the

vaccine used, he asserted. Secondly, more vaccination sites would be added.

That is where we are going to harness the full resources of the federal government to establish thousands of community vaccination centres. On my first day in office, I will instruct the Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA, to begin setting up the first of these centres. By the end of our first month in office we will have 100 federally supported centres across the nation that will ultimately vaccinate millions of people, he said.

Within the first month, the administration is going to deploy mobile clinics moving from community to community that will partner with community health centres and local primary-care doctors to offer vaccines to hard-hit and hard-to-reach communities in cities, small towns and in rural communities. And to staff up these centres, the US will mobilise thousands of clinical and non-clinical professionals.

"The third change we are going to make is we are going to expand beyond access in neighbourhoods across the country so that people can make an appointment and get shot, conveniently show up at a particular time and get it done quickly, he said.

This programme will expand beyond access in neighbourhoods across the country so that people can make an appointment and get shot, conveniently show up at a particular time and get it done quickly.

Biden said his administration is going to use the full strength of the federal government to ramp up supply of the vaccines.

Biden said he will use the Defense Production Act to work with private industry to accelerate the making of materials needed to supply and administer the vaccine from

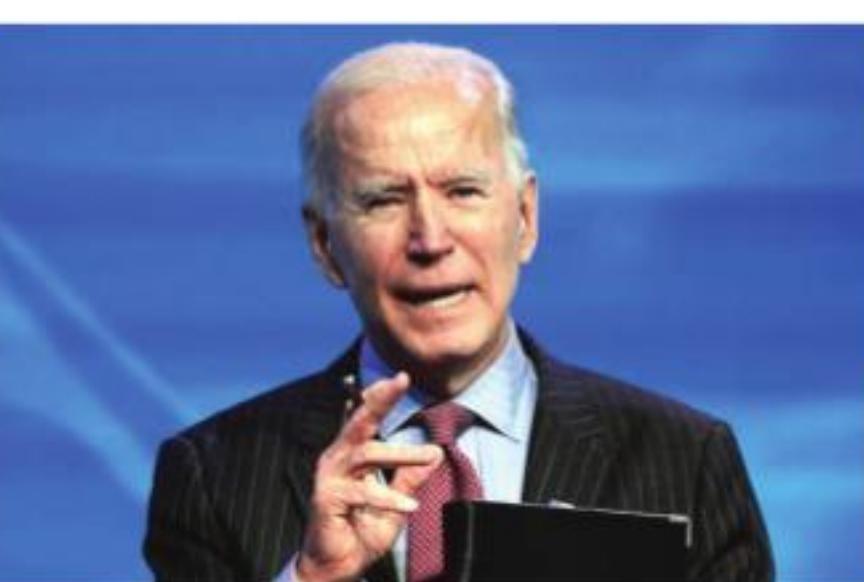
the tubes and syringes--and syringes to protective equipment.

He alleged that the outgoing Trump administration's policy of holding back close to half the supply of the vaccines available did not make sense.

Our administration will release the vast majority of the vaccines when they're available so more people can get vaccinated weekly while still retaining a small reserve for any unseen shortage or delays,

He said his administration will always be "honest and transparent about where we stand, both the good news as well as the bad. We're going to make sure state and local officials know how much supply they'll be getting and when they can expect to get it so they can plan."

"Right now, we're hearing that they can't plan because they don't know how much supply of vaccines they can expect at what time frame. That stops when we're in office," Biden said.



vaccine used, he asserted.

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UK closes travel corridors to block out new virus strains

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LONDON, 16 JANUARY

All travel corridors in place between the UK and some regions will be temporarily closed from Monday as part of efforts to curb the spread of new coronavirus variants from countries such as Brazil and South America.

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced on Friday evening that passengers coming to the UK from anywhere must now have proof of a mandatory pre-departure Covid-19 test taken at least 72 hours earlier and self-isolate for at least 10 days on arrival.

All passengers will continue to be required to fill in locator forms, with the fines in place for a breach in any of the lockdown conditions starting at 20 pounds.

To protect us against the risk of as yet unidentified new strains, we will also temporarily close all travel corridors from 0400 hrs on Monday. Following conversations with the devolved administrations, we will act together so that this applies across the

whole of UK, said Johnson.

This means that if you come to this country, you must have proof of a negative Covid test that you have taken in the 72 hours before leaving and you must have filled in your Passenger Locator Form, and your airline will ask for proof of both before you take off. You may also be checked when you land and face substantial fines for refusing to comply, he said.

And, upon arrival, you must then quarantine for 10 days not leaving your home for any reason at all, or take another test on day 5 and wait for proof of another negative result. And we will bestep-

ping up our enforcement both at the border and in-country, he added.

International travel corridors have been in place since July 2020 for countries and territories, which included India for some time, where analysis suggested the risk of Covid-19 can be mitigated.

India had suspended its corridor with the UK at the end of last year when a new highly transmissible variant was detected in London and has since resumed some limited number of flights.

The UK's Department for Transport said that the level of risk associated with the emergence of new variants globally has now increased, requiring more stringent measures to block all potential avenues through which new strains of the virus could enter the UK while we consider how best to respond. The latest measures will be in place for at least a month until being reviewed on February 15.

We are operating in a completely new environment in our fight against Covid-19, with

several worrying new strains of the virus emerging across the globe, said UK Transport Secretary Grant Shapps.

Now more than ever, as we make strides vaccinating people up and down the country, we need to take advantage of all measures available to us and these robust emergency precautions will help us protect the nation to ensure we continue to make progress, he said.

The move comes as latest figures released by the government reveal that more than 3.2 million people have now been vaccinated. This represents almost 45 per cent of over-80s and nearly 40 per cent of care home residents.

The UK PM praised the National Health Service (NHS) across several regions of the UK which have achieved vaccination targets for millions in the most vulnerable categories, as he urged people to continue to follow the strict lockdown rules because more than 37,000 Covid patients remain in hospital across the UK and another 1,280 deaths have taken the country's toll from the deadly virus to 87,295.

Indian-American named dy director of US's National Economic Council

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON, 16 JANUARY

US President-elect Joe Biden has appointed Indian-American community and economic development expert Sameera Fazili to a key White House position.

Fazili has been named as Deputy Director, National Economic Council at the White House, the Biden-Harris Transition announced on Friday.

The National Economic Council coordinates the economic policy making process and provide economic policy advice to the US president.

Fazili is currently the Economic Agency lead on the Biden-Harris Transition. She was earlier posted at the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta where she served as the Director of Engagement for Community and Economic Development.

Prior to that, she was a clinical lecturer of law at Yale Law School. Originally from Buffalo, she now lives in Georgia with her husband and three children. Fazili is a grad-

uate of Yale Law School and Harvard College.

Before her time in government, Fazili was a clinical lecturer at Yale Law School's community and economic development clinic, where she helped start a CDFI bank and a local anti-foreclosure initiative, and expanded the clinic's work to international microfinance.

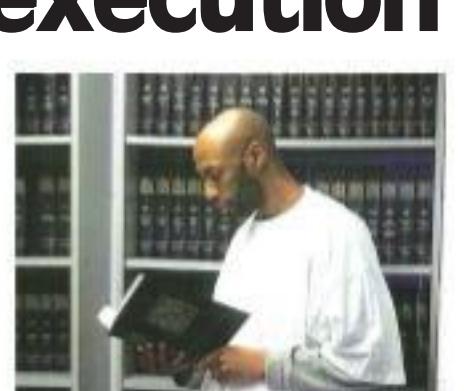
Biden names Vidur Sharma as policy adviser: Joe Biden has named Indian-American health policy expert Vidur Sharma as testing advisor in his Covid-19 Response Team.

In the Obama-Biden administration, Fazili served as a senior policy advisor on the White House's National Economic Council and as a senior advisor at the US Treasury Department in both Domestic Finance and International Affairs.

The announcement of

Sharma's appointment as Policy Advisor for Testing was made by Biden on Friday along with additional members of the White House Covid-19 Response Team.

Trump govt carries out 13th and final execution

ASSOCIATED PRESS
TERRE HAUTE (IN), 16 JANUARY

Dustin Higgs, convicted in the killings of three women in a Maryland wildlife refuge in 1996, was the third to receive a lethal injection this week at the federal prison in Terre Haute, Indiana.

Johnson, who was executed Thursday. Some members of the execution teams have also previously tested positive for the virus.

Not since the waning days of Grover Cleveland's presidency in the late 1800s has the US government executed federal inmates during a presidential transition, according to the Death Penalty Information Center. Cleveland's was also the last presidency during which the number of civilians executed federally was in the double digits in one year, 1896, during Cleveland's second term.

In October 2000, a federal jury in Maryland convicted Higgs of first-degree murder and kidnapping in the killings of Tamika Black, 19; Mishann Chinn, 23; and Tanji Jackson, 21. His death sentence was the first imposed in the modern era of the federal system in Maryland, which abolished the death penalty in 2013.

Federal executions began as the coronavirus pandemic raged through prisons nationwide. Among those prisoners who got COVID-19 last month were Higgs and former drug trafficker Corey

LEAVING A MARK



A vehicle streaks across the desert during Stage 10 of the Dakar Rally from Neom to AlUla, in Saudi Arabia.

AGENCIES

'Vaccinationism' is self-defeating: UN chief

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
UNITED NATIONS, 16 JANUARY

As the world crossed a "heart-wrenching milestone" of two million deaths from Covid-19, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres lamented that the deadly impact of the pandemic has worsened due to the absence of a global coordinated effort and said that "vaccinationism" by governments is "self-defeating" that will delay a global recovery.

Since its discovery at the end of December 2019, Covid-19 has now spread to all corners of the world, with cases in 191 countries and regions. Deaths due to the disease reached the grim milestone of one million only in September. In addition, the socio-economic impact of the pandemic has been massive, with countless jobs and livelihoods lost globally, and mil-

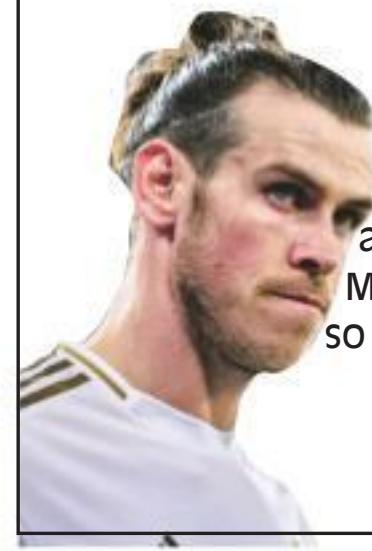
lions pushed into poverty and hunger.

"Our world has reached a heart-wrenching milestone: the Covid-19 pandemic has now claimed two million lives. Behind this staggering number are names and faces: the smile now only a memory, the seat forever empty at the dinner table, the room that echoes with the silence of a loved one," Guterres said on Friday.

According to Johns Hopkins University's coronavirus tracker, the deadly virus has so far claimed 2,008,237 lives and infected 93,816,953 people globally.

Guterres said the deadly impact of the pandemic has been made worse by the absence of a global coordinated effort and called for the world to act with far greater solidarity in the memory of those two million souls".

The UN chief said as safe and effective Covid-19 vaccines are being rolled out, we are seeing a vaccine vacuum and noted that the world's leading economies have a special responsibility.



BALE TALE
Gareth Bale's (*in photo, left*) future is uncertain as Tottenham Hotspur manager Jose Mourinho said "not one second" had been spent talking about extending his season-long loan from Real Madrid. The 31-year-old's second spell at Spurs has so far failed to live up to expectations.

For more updates www.thestatesman.com

THUMBNAILS

Greg's tip: Former Australia skipper Greg Chappell has urged Tim Paine to set satisfactory standards of behaviour against visiting teams after the current Australia skipper was heavily criticised for his on-field chatter with R Ashwin during the Sydney Test this week.

England unfazed: The England and Wales Cricket Board insists it is "not concerned" about two positive coronavirus tests in their team hotel in Galle. The tourists were informed by Sri Lankan authorities of the results collected from staff members at the Lighthouse hotel.

Proteas' tour: The South African cricket team arrived in Karachi on Saturday to play two Tests and three Twenty20 Internationals on their first tour of Pakistan in 14 years. The team were whisked from the airport under state-head level security accorded by the hosts.

Big game: Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp insists he is no Sir Alex Ferguson and has not been playing mind games in the build-up to Sunday's visit of Manchester United. Following a defeat, he flagged up the disproportionate number of penalties United were winning.

Players censured: Footballers breaching coronavirus protocols by hugging each other after goals have been labelled "brainless" by a senior British lawmaker. Julian Knight, chairman of the Commons' digital, culture, media and sport committee voiced the criticism.

New role: Manchester United and England great Wayne Rooney has refused to become manager at English team Derby County. Rooney (35) has been interim manager at the club since November but has now been given a two-and-a-half-year contract.

Speed Kicking Championship: India Taekwondo is looking to move into 2021 by announcing its first ever online Speed Kicking Championship. The tournament will be virtually held looking at the COVID situation taking all the practicalities and logistics online. The virtual tournament will be held from the 14th of February, 2021 to 18th of February, 2021 making it a five-day online tournament. It is met with a lot of support from the World Taekwondo Fraternity as well as the Indian Taekwondo Fraternity.

'FreeFire Mahasangram' Tournament: After garnering huge appreciation amongst the Indian gaming community for arranging the 'PUBG Mahayudh' EWar Games has now come up with yet another one-of-its-kind, squad-based tournament exclusively for FreeFire games. The 15-day long mega tournament titled "EWar presents FreeFire Mahasangram" will be held between 17th January and 31st January 2021, and will offer a whopping prize pool of Rs. 1.5 lakh.

Running shoe: Sportswear multinational adidas unveiled the ULTRABOOST 21, calling it the most holistic running shoe ever, which is the ultimate expression of comfort and responsiveness. The new adidas LEP ('Linear Energy Push') provides a 15% increase in forefoot bending stiffness for a more responsive stride for marathoner and sports persons.

Overall win for Honda Team: Monster Energy Honda Team has done it again at the 2021 Dakar Rally, snatching the overall win with a one-two finish for the team who dominated throughout. Kevin Benavides sees a dream come true as he becomes a Dakar champion. Ricky Brabec, runner-up overall, took the spoils on the final special stage. Kevin Benavides emerging the winner of the 2021 Dakar Rally and team-mate Ricky Brabec taking second place overall. The American Monster Energy Honda Team rider won the final special of the rally in an intense 202-kilometre thriller.

India face crucial test

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BRISBANE, 16 JANUARY

The deciding fourth Test between Australia and India in Brisbane hung in the balance on Saturday after a massive thunderstorm caused play to be abandoned following the tea break on the second day. The Gabba was saturated during the storm, which began during the tea break, and while the ground drained quickly, the umpires decided the outfield was too wet to allow play to continue.

India will resume on Sunday at 62 for two, 307 runs behind Australia's first-innings total of 369, with Cheteshwar Pujara on eight alongside skipper Ajinkya Rahane (*in photo*), who was on two.

Australia had earlier claimed the vital wicket of Rohit Sharma 20 minutes before tea to seize the momentum.

Sharma had been in full flow, striking 44 stylish runs from 74 deliveries with six boundaries. But with the score on 60 for the loss of opener Shubman Gill (7), Sharma threw his wicket away when he charged off-spinner Nathan Lyon, only managing to sky a ball to Mitchell Starc at deep mid-on. Pat Cummins had made the early breakthrough for the hosts when Gill got a thick edge and Steve Smith took a sharp catch at second slip. After resuming at 274 for five on Saturday morning, Australian lost five wickets in the first session including the overnight bats-



men Tim Paine and Cameron Green. Paine and Green had started aggressively on a flat batting wicket and looked to push the score beyond 400.

But shortly after reaching his half-century, Paine chased a wide ball from Shardul Thakur (3-94) and edged to Sharma at third slip to leave Australia 311 for six.

Green survived a sharp chance on 45 off Washington Sundar but two runs later, the off-spinner got his revenge when he bowled the Australian number six for 47. Thakur,

playing only his second Test, took his third wicket when he trapped Cummins leg-before for two to leave the hosts struggling at 315 for seven.

However, Lyon and Starc went on the attack and the score raced to 354 before Sundar bowled Lyon around his legs after his quickfire 24 off 22 deliveries.

When T Natarajan bowled Josh Hazlewood to end the innings, the inexperienced Indian attack had completed an impressive comeback on

SCOREBOARD

Australia first Innings: (Overnight 274/5)
David Warner c R Sharma b M Siraj 1
Marcus Harris c W Sundar b S Thakur 5
M Labuschagne c R Pant b Natarajan 108
Steven Smith c R Sharma b W Sundar 36
M Wade c S Thakur b T Natarajan 45
Cameron Green b W Sundar 47
Tim Paine c R Sharma b S Thakur 50
Pat Cummins lbw b Thakur 2
Mitchell Starc not out 20
Nathan Lyon b W Sundar 24
Josh Hazlewood b T Natarajan 11
Extras: (B-4, LB-5, NB-6, WD-5) 20
Total: (all out in 115.2 overs) 369
Fall of wickets: 1-11, 2-60.
Bowling: Mitchell Starc 3-1-8-0, Josh Hazlewood 8-4-11-0, Pat Cummins 6-1-22-1, Cameron Green 3-0-11-0, Nathan Lyon 6-2-10-1.

India 1st Innings:

Rohit Sharma c M Starc b N Lyon 44
Shubman Gill c Smith b Cummins 7
Cheteshwar Pujara batting 8
Ajinkya Rahane batting 2
Extras: (NB-1) 1

Total: (For 2 wickets in 26 overs) 62

Fall of wickets: 1-11, 2-60.

Bowling: Mitchell Starc 3-1-8-0, Josh Hazlewood 8-4-11-0, Pat Cummins 6-1-22-1, Cameron Green 3-0-11-0, Nathan Lyon 6-2-10-1.

a hot and humid Brisbane morning. Australia will be disappointed with their total considering the benign nature of the wicket.

While many of the Australian batsmen got starts, only Marnus Labuschagne was able to convert his 108 on Friday, the standout score for the home team.

The Indian attack features two players making their debut - Natarajan (3-78) and Sundar (3-89) -- while their most experienced bowler, Mohammed Siraj, is playing just his third Test following a raft of injuries to their first-choice bowlers.

To compound their problems, Navdeep Saini was only able to bowl 7.5 overs on the first day before he broke down with a groin injury. However, they bowled with discipline and were helped by some injudicious shot selection by their opponents.

Amul
MILK AND ELAICHI TOAST

₹30*
200 g

75 g (₹10/-*) pack also available.

*MRP (incl. of all taxes). Conditions apply.

Sri Lanka fight back after Root double ton

AGENCIES
GALLE, 16 JANUARY

Sri Lankan openers Kusal Perera and Lahiru Thirimanne led a fightback from the hosts with a 101-run partnership after England captain Joe Root's (*in photo*) double hundred powered them to a score of 421 on Day 3 of the first Test.

At stumps, Sri Lanka were 156/2 and trailed England by 130 runs.

Root scored his fourth double century in Tests in the first session of the day. Root went on to score 228, which included 18 fours and one six, before falling to Dilruwan Perera. Root was the last man to be out and lunch was called with the end of the England Innings.

Sri Lanka came out fighting with Perera and Thirimanne holding fort and the pair took the hosts through to tea without losing a wicket. Perera finally fell to Sam Curran halfway through the third session and Kusal Mendis, who had got four consecutive ducks before Saturday walked in.



Mendis took six balls to get off the mark and went on to put up 54 runs for the second wicket before falling to Jack Leach in the second last over of the day. Nightwatchman Lasith Embuldeniya was sent out to see off the last over and Sri Lanka ended the day with eight wickets in hand.

Brief scores: Sri Lanka 135 and 156/2 (Lahiru Thirimanne 76 not out, Kusal Perera, Kusal Mendis 15) trail England 421 (Joe Root 228, Dan Lawrence 73; Dilruwan Perera 4/10, Lasith Embuldeniya 3/176).

Hyderabad FC hold Mumbai FC



AGENCIES
GOA, 16 JANUARY

Mumbai City FC and Hyderabad FC played out an evenly fought goalless draw in the Hero Indian Super League at the GMC Stadium, Bambolim, on Saturday. In a match where both teams failed to convert many chances, it was Hyderabad who turned up stronger on the day denying any goal to the relentless Mumbai attack.

Coach Manuel Marquez seemed to have prepared well for the Mumbai test. The Nizams pinned their opponents with their high press-ing approach, thus nullifying Mumbai's danger. Lobera's men were doing everything right, except for the final penalty.

Hyderabad were lucky at the start not to concede a penalty early in the game when Raynier Fernandes was fouled after an attempted clearance from Mohammed Yasir. The referee awarded an indirect free-kick inside the box, which Mumbai failed to capitalise on. It was an end-to-end battle in the first half, as both the keepers were called into action.

First, Laxmikant Kattimani produced a fine save to deny Adam le Fondre. Then, at the other end, Amrinder Singh kept his side alive in the game.

Aridane Santana, Joel Chinanese and Liston Colaco combined together to initiate the move before Colaco tried his luck from the byline, but his near post effort was well saved by Amrinder.

The Mumbai defense has been exceptional this season and Amrinder was at his best once again to deny Chinanese.

This was undeniably the best opportunity for Hyderabad to take the lead. Winning the ball in the midfield, Yasir delivered a lobbed through-ball for Chinanese to send him one-on-one with the keeper. But the Australian's shot was blocked by Amrinder.

It was more of a nervouss start for Mumbai in the second half. They gave the ball away easily and nearly conceded a goal, when Amrinder, in a bid to clear a back pass, played it straight to Colaco. However, the Hyderabadi striker shot wide.

Colaco continued to trouble Mumbai with his pace and shooting range, but it wasn't enough to get the goal they were looking for. Meanwhile, for Mumbai, they were not at their best in the second session. Lobera's men were sloppy going forward and wasted too many chances in the final third. Mumbai had two late opportunities to get the winner.

Australian Open arrivals hit by 3 COVID-19 positive tests

AGENCIES
MELBOURNE, 6 JANUARY

Three coronavirus cases have been detected among charter flights carrying tennis players, coaches and officials to Melbourne ahead of the Australian Open, health authorities and tournament organizers said Saturday.

Total of 47 players from the two affected flights arriving from Los Angeles and Abu Dhabi are now in a strictly enforced 14-day quarantine without the ability to leave their hotel rooms even to practice. The Australian Open is scheduled to start Feb. 8.

Health authorities said two positive COVID-19 cases emerged from a charter flight from Los Angeles, and later Saturday, Tennis Australia said there was a third positive case from a flight from Abu Dhabi.

The cases from Los Angeles involved an aircrew member and a passenger who was not a player. The third positive test also not a player was from a flight from Abu Dhabi in the past 24 hours, Tennis Australia said.

"We are communicating with everyone on this flight, and particularly the playing group whose conditions have now changed, to ensure their needs are being catered to as much as possible, and that they are fully apprised of the situation," Tiley said.

Later Saturday, Tennis Australia said 23 players were among the 64 people on the flight from Abu Dhabi.

"All passengers from the flight are already in quarantine hotels and the positive case, who is not a player and had tested negative before the flight, has been transferred to a health hotel," Tennis Australia said.

"The 23 players on the flight will not be able to leave their hotel room for 14 days and until they are medically cleared," Tiley said.

An aircrew member and Australian Open participant who is not a player has been transferred to a health hotel following positive test results for coronavirus (COVID-19), Victoria state's health department said in a statement about the Los Angeles flight.

All remaining 66 passengers on the flight have been determined to be close contacts.

Running shoe: Sportswear multinational adidas unveiled the ULTRABOOST 21, calling it the most holistic running shoe ever, which is the ultimate expression of comfort and responsiveness. The new adidas LEP ('Linear Energy Push') provides a 15% increase in forefoot bending stiffness for a more responsive stride for marathoner and sports persons.

Overall win for Honda Team: Monster Energy Honda Team has done it again at the 2021 Dakar Rally, snatching the overall win with a one-two finish for the team who dominated throughout. Kevin Benavides sees a dream come true as he becomes a Dakar champion. Ricky Brabec, runner-up overall, took the spoils on the final special stage. Kevin Benavides emerging the winner of the 2021 Dakar Rally and team-mate Ricky Brabec taking second place overall. The American Monster Energy Honda Team rider won the final special of the rally in an intense 202-kilometre thriller.

Assam upset Bengal

AGENCIES
KOLKATA, 16 JANUARY

India's vice-captain Rohit Sharma (*in photo*) is extremely impressed with Thangaraju Natarajan's "solid character" and believes that the Tamil Nadu left-arm seamer is here to stay with his insatiable hunger to succeed at the top level.

Natarajan, who came in as an experienced bowler, joined fellow rookies Mohammed Siraj, Washington Sundar and Shardul Thakur to restrict Australia to 369, which according to Rohit is no mean feat.

"Natarajan bowled pretty well, to be honest. Playing outside the country (internationals) for the first time and bowling to such batsmen, it wasn't going to be easy and he was not under any pressure," Rohit said about the debutant, who was the pick of the bowlers with 3/78 in 24.2 overs.

"From ball one, he was right up there. He showed a lot of composure, is a strong character who doesn't speak much but we all know he has a solid personality. He wants to do well for the team and also for himself. He is here to stay," he said.

For Rohit, considering that cumulative experience of the bowling attack was four Test matches, they need to be lauded for keeping Australia under check on a good batting wicket. "Most of these guys are playing first time in Australia. Siraj has played a couple of games and Saini played in Sydney. Obviously, there's not a lot of experience there."

"They showed a lot of discipline and overall if I had to analyse the performance of

Rohit praises Natarajan, Shardul

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these bowlers, I would say they bowled pretty well. It's a good pitch still. This is a great experience for them bowling against the best batters, and test themselves," he said.

Rohit believes that each and every youngster in this set-up knows that with so much competition for places, there aren't too many chances that will be up for grabs.

"Basically it boils down to where they are coming from. There is a lot of hunger to perform. You don't get a lot of opportunities at this level and we all know that. So when you get an opportunity, you have to make that count."

It's not every team that can restrict Australia to less than 400 hundred in six completed innings and that's a big credit to the bowling unit.

"The A tours must have helped. Shardul, Navdeep and Siraj have played a lot of A team cricket. They know how difficult it can be in Australia. Their understanding of conditions helped them."

"To not let Australia score 400 is an achievement in itself. These tours they have done has helped them stay in control," he said. He also praised his Mumbai teammate Shardul and feels that more he plays, better he will become in terms of consistency.

Football in those days didn't need to be sold. It always had full-house crowds, Goan clubs - long before the ISL was even thought of - compelled attention everywhere in the land.

Salgaocar and Dempo won memorable games against the erstwhile Portuguese colony, is forgotten history now. FC Goa, apparently, are so dominant what preceded them is of no consequence. History lost is just that, and little besides. It