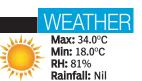
THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA VIJAYAWADA | THURSDAY | 4 FEBRUARY 2021



Forecast: Cloudy. Max/Min temp.

34/18 ºC COVID-19



(+13,092)(+113)1,07,91,123 1,54,742

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+185)(+2)TS: 2,94,924 1,604 (+95)(+1)

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

AP: 8,88,099



worldometers.info/ coronavirus

7,157

#### STROGUIDE

Sarvari; Uttarayana Tithi: Pushya Bahula Saptami Star: Swati till 7.45 pm Varjyam: 1.03 am to 2.34 am (Friday) **Durmuhurtam:** 10.37 am to 11.22 am; 3.08 pm to 3.53 pm Rahukalam: 1.30 pm to 3 pm **HIJRI CALENDAR** 

Jamadi- ul- Akhir 21,1442 AH **PRAYERS** 

> Fajar: 6.10 am **Zohar:** 1.30 pm Asar: 5.00 pm Maghrib: 6.11 pm

> > **Isha:** 8.15 pm

**SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.37 AM** SUNSET TODAY 6.05 PM **MOONRISE** TODAY 00.25 PM **MOONSET TOMORROW 12.11 AM** 



Not public, but our employees are insuring their jobs!

SHORT TAKES

#### **Sebi bars Biyani** from markets

New Delhi: Sebi on Wednesday barred Kishore Biyani and certain other promoters of Future Retail Ltd from the securities market for one year for indulging in insider trading in the shares of the company. Apart from Kishore Bivani, others facing ban are **Future Corporate Resources** Pvt Ltd, Anil Biyani and FCRL Employee Welfare Trust.

#### **Bezos quits**

#### **Amazon CEO post**

New York: Billionaire Jeff Bezos, who founded Amazon as an online bookseller nearly three decades ago, will step down as the CEO of the \$1.7 trillion retail giant in the third quarter of 2021 with Andy Jassy being named his successor. Amazon said Bezos, 57, will transition to the role of executive chair in the third quarter of this year.

### **Bihar: No govt jobs**

for protesters

Patna: The Bihar government has landed into controversy after the police headquarters issued a directive stating that people indulging in road blockages and protests will not be eligible for government jobs or contracts. The Opposition slammed the BJP-JD(U) government for the order which it said was "against the Constitution".

#### NATION 5

**Pak army chief** seeks peace with all



#### WORLD 5

**Lanka halts port** deal with India

#### SPORTS 6

Rahane says Kohli makes it easy for him

Haryana's khap meeting

seeks farm laws repeal



## Nadu-Nedu P-2 gets more funds to fix govt schools

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

**DC CORRESPONDENT** VIJAYAWADA, FEB. 3

The second phase of the Manabadi Nadu-Nedu for renovation of government schools in AP would start soon. Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has directed officials to prepare a comprehensive

schedule for the works.

The CM held a review meeting on Nadu-Nedu Jagananna Gorumudda at the CM camp office in Tadepalli on Wednesday. He asked the officials to start the Nadu-Nedu second phase in a more effective manner by taking special steps to resolve the issues that had cropped up in the first phase. He said a fund of ₹4,446 crore has been reserved. The first phase

cost ₹3,700 crore

**DC CORRESPONDENT** 

The Class 10 exams will be

held across the State from

June 7 to 16, said educa-

tion minister Adimulapu

Examination dates are

common for regular, pri-

vate, OSSC, and vocation-

al candidates and will be

conducted in a single shift

Speaking to the media,

Suresh said that exams

will be held for seven

papers, of which three

would be for languages,

two group subjects and two science papers, where

except science papers will

be held for 100 marks each

examinations

from 9.30 am to 12.45 pm.

Suresh on Wednesday.

VIJAYAWADA, FEB. 3

Jagan Mohan REddy said a fund of ₹4,446 crore has been reserved for the second phase of Manabadi Nadu-Nedu scheme. The first phase of the scheme, to renovate government schools, cost ₹3,700 crore, officials said.

The CM asked officials to start the Nadu-Nedu works from April 15, and take into account the experiences gained and problems faced during the first phase. "Efficiently implement the Nadu-Nedu initiative without compromising on the quality and standards," he said.

Officials said the second phase of Nadu-Nedu will be completed by December

SSC exams from June 7

SSC SCHEDULE

June 8: Second language

June 7: First language

June 10: Mathematics

June 14: Social Studies

Considering the short-

ened academic year, the

syllabus has been reduced

by 35 per cent and the

examinations will be held

according to the updated syllabus, he said adding

that the last classroom day

Similarly, the annual

for class X will be June 5.

June 9: English

June 11: Physics

June 12: Biology

the attendance at schools after the reopening and advised officials to develop an app to record the attendance. He said that in case the children are absent from school, an SMS has to be sent to the parents and a volunteer sent directly to their house on the second day to find out the details on the student's absence. Officials said the app will be

the CM directed officials not to compromise on quality and implement it without errors. He said the toilets in schools must be maintained well. The state government signed an MoU with Sulabh International, wherein 49,000 toilet maintenance

31... The CM enquired about

ready by February 15. As regards Gorumudda,

maintain clean toilets.

examinations for students studying between classes

fist and ninth will be from

May 3-10, with the last

working day on May 15.

Summer vacations start

from May 16 and will stretch up to June 30. The academic year 2021 will

The minister announced

that the Intermediate stu-

dents of the previous academic year both first and

second-year students who

were just awarded pass

marks due to Covid-19 sit-

uation can now appear for

improvisation. Further,

he said that the examina-

tion fee for Intermediate

students shall remain the same as last year, without

begin on July 1.

farmers following the Republic Day violence. Just before Tikait was to begin his speech at the 'mahapanchayat' Kandela village, the stage on which the farmer leaders had gathered collapsed under their weight. Nobody was reported hurt and the BKU leader went on to address the large gathering. Calling for a "wapsi" (withdrawal) of the three new central laws, the BKU leader indirectly warned the Narendra Modi government that it could lose its "gaddi" (power) if the agitation continues. "We have so far talked about "bill wapsi" (repealing the farm laws). The government should listen carefully. What will you do if the youth call for

ion report, waiver on farm

loans and withdrawal of

cases registered against

**SANJAY KAW | DC** 

NEW DELHI, FEB. 3

protesting

five-point



Farmers during Kisan Mahapanchayat against the new farm laws in Jind district on Wednesday.

*'gaddi wapsi''* (removal from power)?" he said.

After the farmers' peaceful protests ran into trouble because of violence at the tractor rally on Republic Day, the agitation has been garnering support from different state panchayats. There have been mahapanchay-ats at Muzaffarnagar, Mathura and Baghpat in the past few days. But the mahapanchayat at Jind in Haryana was the first one to be attended by BKU leader Rakesh Tikait who has now become the face of the farmers' agitation.

The massive turnout in different mahapanchayats has raised concerns for the BJP and given new hope to Opposition parties, especially the Congress, RLD and Samajwadi Party. The importance of the khaps, especially in the politically dominant Jat communities, is such that even Prime Minister Narendra Modi had to seek their blessings for his party during the 2014 elections.

With khap after khap rallying behind Mr Tikait and extending support to the protests against the farm laws, there is an increasing sense of vulnerability within the BJP ahead of the 2022 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elec-

fact that the Muzaffarnagar mahapnchayat saw the return of shared unity of Hindu and a cause of further concern for the saffron party.

The khaps play a crucial role in Haryana politics. About 90-odd khaps spread across Sonepat, Jhajjar, Rohtak, Bhiwani, Dadri, Jind, Hisar and Kaithal and Jat community have already expressed solidarity with the protestors.

At Jind mahapanchayat, several khap leaders said the Prime Minister and Union home minister Amit Shah should hold direct talks with the farmers' unions. But Mr Tikait made it clear that the decision to resume dialogue with the Union government will be taken by the Samvukta Kisan Union. an umbrella organisation of the protesting farmers.

#### Risky moves



Indian Air Force's Sarang acrobatic team, flying the made-in-India Advanced Light Helicopters, performs during the first day of Aero India at the the Yelahanka Air Force Station in Bengaluru on Wednesday. The government formally sealed the ₹48,000 crore deal to procure 83 Tejas Light Combat Aircraft from Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd, a deal described by the government as the biggest Make in India defence contract.

## **SEC** launches eWatch app to track poll irregularities

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, FEB. 3

State Election Commissioner N. Ramesh Kumar launched a software application called 'eWatch' to keep tab on poll-related irregularities, here on Wednesday.

Speaking on the occasion, he said that it was an in-house software application developed at the request of the State Election Commission by Reliance Jio for use in the ensuing gram panchayat elections

Explaining the importance of the app, Kumar stated that it was userfriendly. He urged the people to use the app to complain about poll-related irregularities and assured to attend to such complaints promptly. The

action taken report would be sent to the complainants, he said.

He maintained that the Commission did not mistrust existing apps like 'Nigha and cVigil,' but only wanted to conduct the elections in a more transparent manner with zero-tolerance to violence and poll-related irregularities like booth capturing.

He said that the moment they received a complaint of severe nature like booth capturing, their job was to de-escalate the situation within half-an-hour by attending to it promptly.

He warned that district collectors and SPs would be held responsible if they failed to resolve such grave violations.

> ■ Page 2: Give publicity to new app, SEC orders

#### **HC TO HEAR PLEA AGAINST EWATCH**

**DC CORRESPONDENT** VIJAYAWADA, FEB. 3

A lunch motion was filed in the High Court on Wednesday raising objections over the use of 'eWatch' app, developed by a private firm, instead of the government-run app like cVigil to receive complaints on poll-related irregularities.

Petitioner K. Sudhakar from Prakasam district filed the plea through his counsel Jayarami Reddy against the privately developed app being launched by the State Election Commission, which is a constitutional body.

Trinamul Congress in what was once its home turf, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will kickstart his Assembly election campaign from Haldia in East Midnapore, the Adhikari family bastion, with a BJP rally next week amid the party's rathyatra led by its president J.P. Nadda and home minister Amit Sh-

**MODI TO BEGIN** 

**WB CAMPAIGN** 

**ON SUNDAY** 

KOLKATA, FEB. 3

**RAJIB CHOWDHURI** 

Targeting West Bengal's

ah seeking "parivartan' in the poll-bound state. While Mr Modi's Haldia visit was already due on February 7, when he will inaugurate three big-ticket Central industrial projects, his political rally was not on the one-day tour agenda as he was supposed to start his campaign only after the poll schedule was announced, BJP sources

However, the party's state and central leadership decided at a meeting in New Delhi Tuesday to hold Mr Modi's maiden rally for the polls as part of his Haldia tour. State BJP chief Dilip Ghosh said: "The PM will visit Haldia to attend a government event. We invited him to address a party rally there the same

day."
The sudden inclusion of the rally in the PM's tour reflected local TMC MP Dibyendu Adhikari's calculated preparations that fuelled speculation about his defection to the BJP in Mr Modi's pres-

AP awaits funds for cyclone, flood relief

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, FEB. 3

Andhra Pradesh is eagerly awaiting Central assistance worth nearly ₹1.000 crore as compensation for damage to crops and infrastructure following the continuous rains and floods from August to October, 2020 and again due to Cyclone Nivar storm in November last. Two Central teams visited the affected areas to

inspect the damage. The state government prepared the estimates for the loss of crops and damage to infrastructure to provide interim relief in the form of input subsidy to the affected farmers and also to take up restoration of damaged infrastructure,

₹6,386 crore as per the

Disaster Response Fund. The state government asked for interim relief worth nearly ₹1,000 from the Centre. The Central teams assured to extend nearly 80 per cent of the relief asked by AP.

Sources in the state government say that when AP suffered crop damage due to natural calamities during kharif season in 2018-19, AP got drought relief worth nearly ₹900 crore in December 2019. Similarly, when parts of AP suffered badly due Cyclone Titli in October 2018, the state received relief worth of nearly ₹500 crore from the Centre for crop damages and loss at an early date.

Page 2: AP sent several reminders for Central funds **WELCOME | CHANGE | Kids force their parents to give up factionalism** 

## New gen brings peace to Seema

**NAGABHUSHANAM** HOSKOTE I DC ANANTAPUR, FEB. 3

The centuries-old culture of 'factionalism' with its roots set in the medieval history is grinding to a halt in many villages of the

Rayalaseema region. Mental diversions, professional pursuits, and a resultant change of mindset are evident in the new generation. This includes even those from families with a long history of local rivalries. Youths are now pressing their elders in the family to stay clear of fac-

tion politics. Normally, gram panchayat polls had a history riddled with factionalism, clashes and murders. A majority of the families with a faction-background, however, sent their chil-

dren for higher studies; more so after the turn of this century. These children settled down in big cities as software engineers or in other professions. They are forcing their parents to keep off factionalism.

The last elections witnessed compromise deals between faction leaders at the top levels including former ministers and MLAs in many parts of Anantapur, Kadapa and Kurnool districts. Such trends continued even in the present gram panchayat polls.

Jammalamadugu, a hardcore faction-ridden area in Kadapa district as also Tadipathri and Penukonda in Anantapur district had a change of mind.

Adinarayna Reddy and Ramasubba Reddy worked for the TD, while

faction leaders, who have settled down in big cities as software engineers or in other professions, are forcing their parents to keep off factionalism or asking them to shift to Bengaluru.

• THE CHILDREN of

Bogathi Naryana Reddy, a close aide of the J.C. Diwakar Reddy family, joined hands with his rival K.
Pedda Reddy in the last
assembly polls. Political
borderlines are blurring.
Senior leader J.C.

Diwakar Reddy's family has been with the Telugu Desam for long. He faced cases in the murder of Paritala Ravindra. Bogathi Narayana Reddy had openly declared two years ago that he would keep away

went to settle down in Bengaluru and escaped herself from faction politics. Meanwhile, local leaders of all parties are evidently alert and sending their

from faction rivalry. Slain

warlord Maddelacheruvu

Suri's wife G. Bhanumathi

children away to towns and cities. A former Congress leader from Kambadur mandal, whose family had been into faction rivalry and who lost his brother five years ago. said about four children in his joint family are now working with the software industry in Bengaluru. The new generation has restricted the elders in the family from continuing with faction feuds back

Page 2: Children force parents shift to Bengaluru

#### SHORT **TOP SEERS MEET IN** TN TO DISCUSS

TEMPLE ATTACKS

DC CORRESPONDENT VISAKHAPATNAM, FEB. 3

Top seers and heads of important peethams of the country on Wednesday met at a small village Ponpadi in Tamil Nadu, about 56 km from Tirupati, sources close to the organisers said. This is the day one of the first phase of Sanathana Dharma

Parirakshsna Sadassu. The day-long meeting discussed about the attacks on the Hindu temples in Andhra Pradesh, state government role and the united action plan to be drawn on putting pressure on the pro-active political leaders. The seers also discussed on the systematic attack on the Hindu society, religion and institutions and how to protect them.

The sources added that not many religious heads from across the country could participate as the meeting was convened in a hurry.

Meanwhile, Srinivasananda Swamy said there was no need for some seers to meet in a village in Tamil Nadu when the issue was about attack on the

temples in Andhra Pradesh. All the religious heads should unite on a single platform in Andhra Pradesh and discuss the burning issue and not outside in a secret place," the Swamy told the reporters Visakhapatnam Wednesday.

Those who participated in the Ponpadi meeting include Kanchi Kamakoti Jagadguru Vijayendra Saraswati Mahaswamy, Dakshinamnaya Sringeri seer Bharati teertha auministrator K. Gowri Shankar, Humpi Vidyaranya seer Vidyaranya Bharati Mahaswamy, Pushpagiri seer Vidyasankar Bharati Mahaswamy Mahaswamy and Sringeri Mahaswamy, Tuni Sacchi-tananda Tapovana seer Sacchitananda Saraswati Mahaswamy, Ahobila Matha-deeswarulu seer Ranganatha Yatindra Mahaswami, Sri Bhuvaneswari Mahapeetham seer Kamalananda Bharati Mahaswamy and Mumukujana seer Muttavi Sitaram guru.

#### **EX-TTD CHIEF ALLEGES FAKE CHARGES ON TD**

DC CORRESPONDENT KADAPA, FEB. 3

Former TTD chairman Putta Sudhakar Yadav has said that the YCP government is sending TD leaders to jail on false charges as it feared impending defeat at the panchayat polls. The government is making talse cases to silence the Opposition, he said.

Yadav told a media meet he held at the district TDP office on Wednesday that while some police chiefs wanted to act impartially, the YSRC leaders were pressuring them to register false cases against political rivals.

"The ruling party leaders are trying to intimidate mandal-level leaders of the Telugu Desam Party by arresting top leaders and registering false cases against them," he

He alleged that TD activists on campaign in villages were being threatened and false cases were being registered. A case of SC-ST atrocity was registered by a BC individual in Badripalli panchayat of Chapadu Mandal, he

Desam Kadapa Telugu Parliament in-charge M. Lingareddy demanded the removal of the Mydukuru Rural police inspector who was "terrorizing" Telugu
Desam party workers. The
government was adopting
repressive measures like the
arrest of Achennaidu, the murder attempt on TD national spokesperson Pattabhi, and the registration of SC and ST atrocity cases against Kadapa district leaders, he said.

## SEC's 'eWatch' app not to be trusted, says YSRC

MLA alleges the app is developed in Telugu Desam office

VIJAYAWADA, FEB. 3

Ruling YSR Congress has said the poll app of the State Election Commission, eWatch, is not trustworthy as it is a privately developed app.
YSRC MLA arthe party's official and official

spokesperson, Ambati Rambabu, said the ruling party in the state has no trust in the app by SERAMESH launched Nimmagadda Ramesh Kumar for monitoring the panchayat elections. He alleged that the app was developed in the Telugu Desam office.

Addressing the media here on Wednesday, the MLA said the election monitoring app was designed in the TD office in the same way SEC Ramesh Kumar's letter to the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) was drafted there.

Rambabu said the government is not involved in

the arrest of Atchannaidu. He was caught with evidence of threatening a candidate over filing the nomination for panchayat polls. The police did their duty. He criticised Atchannaidu for threatening to avenge the police act.

"TD leaders are daydreaming and under the illusion of coming to power and forming the next state government, and they hope Lokesh, Atchannaidu and current SEC Ramesh Kumar would hold plum positions in future," he said.

Speaking on the SEC's visit to Gollagunta in East Godavari district, where the husband of a candidate sarpanch died under suspicious cir-Rambabu cumstances, said that the job of SEC is to oversee the elections and not visit families. Police would take care of the investigations. He said the election commissioner visited Gollagunta "as a pilot" for Lokesh and as a representative of the TD.

Rambabu said TD leader Kommareddy Pattabhiram's car had been attacked in the past and the reason could be personal enmity. He critiised Pattabhiram for not filing an official complaint on the attack and accusing the YSRC leaders for no

**DC CORRESPONDENT** 

Telugu Desam chief N.

Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday lauded those who were filing their nom-ination papers for the pan-

chayat elections "without succumbing to the pressure tactics" of the ruling

YSR Congress leaders. He alleged that the ministers

and ruling party MLAs

were resorting to politics of threat and intimidation

because of their fear of

Naidu said that with over

3,335 panchayats going to the polls in the second

phase, aspirants should

file their papers without

Addressing a teleconfer-

ence with party leaders for the second phase of polls,

Naidu urged them to

ensure 100 per cent nomi-

nations without slippage.

He asked the nominations

defeat.

fear.

VIJAYAWADA, FEB. 3



State Election Commissioner N Ramesh Kumar inspects Civil supplies department vehicles at SEC office in Vijayawada on Wednesday.

#### **EC SEEKS TRANSFER OF MANDAL PARISHAD OFFICERS**

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, FEB. 3

In yet another letter to Secretary Adityanath Das, State Election Commissioner N. Ramesh Kumar sought transfer of mandal parishad development officers where unanimous elections were held for posts of Zilla Parishad Territorial Constituencies Mandal Parishad Territo-

rial Constituencies in the last elections in the state. As the State Election Commissioner is very particular to avoid any unanimous elections by force in the ensuing gram panchayat polls, he wrote a letter to the CS seeking the transfer of present MPDOs holding them responsible for such

In Chittoor district alone, the SEC asked for the transfer of 30 MPDOs. It is yet to be known as to how many MPDOs to be transferred in the entire state. However, it has to be seen as to how the Chief Secretary responds to the

Telugu Desam

Chandrababu Naidu

Naidu said that

with over 3,335

second phase,

aspirants should

file their papers

could be rectified later.

should be filed without

delay, and any mistakes

that occur could be recti-

fied later. "It is everyone's

duty to fight and restore

democracy in Andhra Pradesh," Naidu said.

DC CORRESPONDENT

The simmering discontent

between Nandikotkur leg-

islator Arthur and Byreddy Siddarth Reddy came out in the open when Siddarth Reddy assaulted

office-bearer Raghurama-

iah in front of four Cabin-

et ministers during a mee-

ting here on Wednesday. Municipal minister Bot-

sa Satyanarayana, finance

minister Buggana Raje-ndranath Reddy, district uramaiah twice while the ministers remained silent

KURNOOL, FEB. 3

without fear.

panchayats going

to the polls in the

chief N.

File nominations without fear: Naidu

Addressing a teleconference with party lead-

them to ensure 100 per cent nominations without

ers for the second phase of polls, Naidu urged

slippage. He asked the nominations should be

filed without delay, and any mistakes that occur

### demands YSRC DC CORRESPONDENT

Scrap election app,

VIJAYAWADA, FEB. 3

Congress Wednesday lodged a complaint with State Election Commission (SEC) objecting to the release of ewatch application without following proper norms.

Party state general secretary Lella Appireddy said that the Commission has released a mobile application named "ewatch" a technological platform to ensure free and fair elections. He said that it was both sur-prising and shocking that SEC has developed an election surveillance app without following the appropriate govern-ment regulations and it had not been developed by government organisation or by any government empanelled organisation, which is violation of the citizens' right to free and fair elections.

was appalling that the Commission is resorting to clandestine acts. He

PARTY STATE general secretary Lella Appireddy said that the Commission has released a mobile application named 'e-watch' a technological platform to ensure free

and fair elections.

MPTC, ZPTC elections that were scheduled to take place last year, Nigha, a SEC-approved election vigilance application was given an overwhelming thumbs-up by citizens. He recalled that during the 2019 General Elections, the Centreowned C-Vigil application was put to use in the state. He said he did not understand the rationale to have a new app. He demanded an immediate response from the SEC with regard to concerns about safety and security measures of huge volumes of data when it is hosted in private servers. He wanted to know who would take Appireddy said that it responsibility in case of any data breach. He sought immediate scrapping of "e-watch" sought

to destroy democratic sys

tems and institutions in

the state. The government

cannot threaten everybody

with false cases and arrests forever, he said. Naidu alleged that the Chief Minister "did not do

a single useful thing for the

state" and had betrayed all

all sections of the people

with his false promises. The CM could not get any-

thing for AP in the Union

Budget. There were no

funds for Polavaram and

Amaravati, he pointed out.

He alleged that the CM had "failed totally" to get

funds to fill the first year's

revenue deficit, the devel-

opment of seven backward

districts and implement-

He said the government Chandrababu Naidu or Chandrababu is already

since

## Andhra Pradesh. State BJP president Somu Veerraju said here

**AP BJP LAUNCHES** 

**TOLL-FREE NUMBER** 

FOR POLL PLAINTS

DC CORRESPONDENT

State BJP has launched a

toll-free number to lodge

complaints on poll-related

irregularities in the

VIJAYAWADA, FEB. 3

on Wednesday that any-one who found irregularities in the wake of ensuing gram panchayat polls, could complain to the tollfree number 9650713714 to enable them take such issues to the notice of the law enforcing agencies for taking necessary action. He called upon the people to avail toll-free number to complain on attacks and untoward incidents related to the polls.

Reacting on the State Election Commission launching an app called 'eWatch', he asked for action on those who resort to irregularities in the

#### 2,598 PAPERS FILED FOR PHASE-II **SARPANCH POLLS**

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, FEB. 3

As the filing of nominations by the contestants for the positions of sarpanch and ward member in gram panchayat polls under phase-2 began peacefully on February 2 in AP, 2,598 nominations for sarpanch and 6,421 nominations for member, were filed.

The State Election Commission notified 3,327 gram panchyats out of a total number of 3,374 and 34,150 in all 13 districts in the state, to go for polls.

#### **GIVE PUBLICITY TO NEW APP, SEC ORDERS**

From Page 1

He called upon the district collectors to give wide-spread publicity on usage of the newly launched app to enable more number of people to use them. He lauded the district administrations, particularly young officers holding key positions, for making all requisite arrangements

for the conduct of polls. He said, "I appeal to the people living away from their native villages to return on poll day and exercise their franchise."

Earlier, State Election Commission secretary K. Kannababu explained about the functioning of the app by saying that it could be downloaded from Google Play Store and people can register on it. He said that all the com-

plaints would reach the call centre and after getting segregated based on the nature of the complaint, they would reach the district collectors and the SEC for follow-up action. He said that the identity of the complainants would not be disclosed. He also said that the app is tamper-

## BJP failed to initiate CBI probe in chariot burning case: Srinivas

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, FEB. 3

Minister for endowments Vellampalli Srinivas Rao has alleged that the Telugu Desam and the BJP were trying to disrupt communal harmony in Andhra Pradesh by creat-ing social rift in the name of religion, for their polit-Addressing a press meet

here on Wednesday, the minister alleged that BJP Raiva Sabha member Narasimha Rao G.V.L. never tried to speak up for the rights of Andhra Pradesh in Parliament. But, he tried to defame the YSRC government by raising the Antarvedi chariot-burning incident. "The YSRC government has already asked the CBI to conduct an inquiry in-to this incident. The government constructed a new chariot for Antarvedi. On its part, the BJP government at the Centre failed to order a CBI inquiry into the incident, which shows its doublestandard," he said.

The minister said the Antarvedi temple Rathotsavam is scheduled for February 26 and the new chariot would be used then. "The SIT investigation into the attacks on temples would unearth involvement of political leaders. TD leaders were clearly involved in these attacks. They were involved in the plucking and shifting of the Nandi idol in Srikakulam district and the police have arrested some TD leaders in this connection," he said.

Minister Srinivas Rao objected to the statement of BJP Rajya Sabha member Narasimha Rao that no action has been taken against the alleged demolition of the 140 temples in AP. He recalled that the BJP was in the TD Cabi-net and its leader was the endowments minister when 40 temples were demolished by the Chandrababu Naidu government. "But neither Narasimha Rao nor other



Vellampalli Srinivas Rao

ainst it, and never ques-

tioned the demolitions. He said Narasimha Rao was shedding crocodile tears on the temples issue and trying to provoke people via raising baseless allegations along with the TD. He said in the majority of the temple attack cases, TD leaders "are the main accused" and "they are trying to mislead people when the police arrested them" Srinivas Rao said the

TD and the BJP responsible for the demolition of 40 temples never tried to reconstruct those. Chief Minister Jagan was now reconstructing demolished temples, he said, and alleged that Chandrababu Naidu as then CM was responsible for the demolition of those temples CM Jagan is now saviour of the Hindu dharma. The government reconstructed Ram idols of the Ramateertham temple but MP Narasimha Rao is unable to acknowledge the good deeds of the

YSRC government.
On the returning of cheque former minister and TD leader P. Ashok Gajapati Raju offered to Ramateertham temple, Srinivas Rao said Ashok Gajapati Raju put a condition about using his money for the remaking of the Ram idol. The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams meanwhile offered a Ram idol for free and hence his cheque returned

He said that if Ashok Gajapati Raju gives a donation to the temple without any condition then that would be accepted

## TD MPs meet Shah; complain against govt +

DC CORRESPONDENT

A team of Telugu Desam MPs has complained to Union home minister Amit Shah in Delhi on Wednesday about the ong-oing 'attacks and atrocities' from ruling YSRC ministers, MLAs and leaders in AP. "These are done with utter disrespect to all the constitusystems and

institutions," they have complained. The MPs

appealed to Amit Shah for urgent central government intervention restore law and order so as to also ensure a "free and fair" panchayat poll in the state. said They

there were non-stop attacks on a constitutional institution like the AP State Commission and false cases were being filed against the Opposition leaders and the contest

#### **AP SENT SEVERAL REMINDERS** FOR CENTRAL FUNDS

From Page 1

Sources said several letters are being written from the Chief Minister's Office to the Union home ministry seeking the rel-ease of Central assistance to AP to enable it to provide relief to the affected farmers and to restore damaged infrastructure.

Despite no financial assistance being released, the state government has provided input subsidy to all the affected farmers to enable them to take up cultivation of crops for the next season.

ing candidates.

A senior official from AP State Disaster AP State Disaster Management Authority said, "Though it is not unusual for Central assistance to get delayed at times, there is a long delay this time given the enormity of the extent of damage and the assurances given by the Central teams to expedite the release of funds to AP."

Sources say that it has to be seen whether the Centre releases 80 or 50 per cent of the relief

## Children force parents to shift to Bengaluru

From Page 1

"We were strictly directed by our children not to indulge in faction rivalry, but they have no problem if we continue with normal politics." Else, migrate Bengaluru, children tell their parents.

youngsters Previously, forcibly entered into faction rivalry by way of inheritance of a vicious culture from their previous generation, led groups in villages and even

KAPATRALLA, A faction village, had a drastic change after former SP A. Ravikrishna adopted the village four years ago.

crimes and undertake awareness programmes helped control factionalism in a majority of the villages," Anantapur SP Satya Esubabu has observed.

Kapatralla, a faction village, had a drastic change after foreliminated rivals. However, mer SP A. Ravikrishna adopt-police efforts to check such ed the village four years ago.

The TD called on the can-KURNOOL | POLITICS Byreddy Siddarth Reddy assaults YSRC office-bearer Raghuramaiah

papers along with the enclosures to the district panchayat officers, district collectors and the TD Central office. He alleged that the YSRC was trying

didates to send the copies of their nomination

in-charge minister Anil Kumar Yadav and labour

minister Gummanur Jaya-

ram were in the town to

finalise names of candi-

dates for the ensuing gram

panchayat polls.
According to an insider,

the four ministers were no

match to the aggressive

stance taken by Siddarth

Reddy, who hurled chairs

and sharp objects causing injury to Raghuramaiah.

'The attackers hit Ragh-

ing various items under the Reorganisation Act. The TD chief asserted that the YSRC's 28 MPs had mortgaged the state's interests for the sake of ensuring relief to the CM in his illegal assets cases.

## YSRC meeting turns violent in ministers' presence

#### on the party's office-bear-er Raghuramaiah. While spectators. It was only Botsa who tried to pacify the unruly attitude of Siddarth Reddy," an insider said.

Arthur said that when the discussion was taken up as to who should be fielded from Jupadu Bungalow panchayat, a few names popped up and were TD supporters who had joined YSRC. It was objected to by Siddarth Reddy and verbal objections turned violent when Reddy

the matter was pacified when they took time to proceed to other matters, during the interregnum, Siddarth Reddy again ass-aulted Raghuramaih. Botsa Satyanarayana made repeated pleas to Reddy to control himself, but they

fell on deaf ears, he said. Siddarth Reddy has become a liability to the party as his behaviour is feudalistic and against lifted a chair and threw it democratic practices.

The Nandikotkur MLA Congress party of yore," Arthur has objected to the leader said while Arthur has objected to interferences of Reddy's followers in the con-

stituency.

A YSRC leader said, "I bow my head in shame at the turn of events at Kurnool. Four Cabinet ministers could not do anything to control a person who turned violent. Unless checked now, the rebels would start dictat-

sounding caution. Nandikotkur constituen-

cy was reserved for SCs in 2019. Prior to the reservation, it was represented by Byreddy Reddy and Gouru Charita Reddy.

To checkmate the influence of Byreddy Rajasekhar Reddy in the region, then chief minising terms to the party bosses and the YSRC would soon turn into a Scheduled Castes. SHORT

#### **MANSAS SIGNS Mou WITH ACHARYA RANGA VARSITY**

DC CORRESPONDENT VISAKHAPATNAM, FEB. 3

Alak Maharaia Naravan Society of Arts and Science, Vizianagaram, and Acharya Ranga University signed an MoU in Guntur on Tuesday. The memorandum was signed by the chairperson of MANSAS P. Sanchaita Gajapathi Raju and vice-chancellor of the univer-Prof.

Vishnuvardhan Reddy. In a release, Sanchaita said the objectives of the MoU were to promote and enhance academic research and training in diversified fields, including biological sciences, agricultural sciences and engineering, humanities and social sci-

The other features of the MoU were to promote faculty development and active collaboration among the faculty leading to joint research proposals beneficial engagement with the stakeholders, to foster an eco-system for experiential and collaborative learning to the students leading to honing their skills and making them compatible to contemporary advancements and employability requirements.

#### **MADANAPALLI CASE: ACCUSED** SENT TO VIZAG HOSP

DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUPATI, FEB. 3

The well-educated couple from Chittoor's Madanapalle, Dr Valleru Purushotham Naidu and Valleru Padmaja, who have been remanded at the local sub-jail for allegedly killing their two daughters, were shifted to the govern-ment mental care facility in Vizag on Wednesday, for a complete psychiatric evaluation and treatment, if necessary.

The couple is accused of murdering their daughters Alekhya (27) and Sai Divya (22) in their house at Madanapalle on January 24. They were produced before the Judicial magistrate on January 26 and placed under remand at the Madanapalli sub-jail.



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## TTD readies for another sacred flower garden

Garden in 5 acres area near Bata Gangamma temple

**DC CORRESPONDENT** TIRUPATI, JAN. 3

With an aim to enhance the beauty of the precincts of Tirumala hills and also for the sake of daily word.
Venkateswara, the
Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) has developed yet another flower garden atop the hill town.

The sacred garden is coming up in a five acres area near Bata Gangamma temple at Tirumala. The TTD's garden wing took up the project under the directions of its executive officer Dr K.S. Jawahar Reddy and under the supervision of additional executive officer A.V. Dharma Reddy and with the help of sponsorships by donors.

The TTD is growing traditional flowers like Marigold, Vrukshi Roja, Lily, Madurai Jasmine, Kanakambaram, Manu Sampangi, Tulasi, panner leaves and other aromatic leaves that are used in daily puja of Lord Balaji. The yield of these flowers and aromatic leaves will be available for pujas at the

TTD resumes VIP break darshan

DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUPATI, FEB. 3

The TTD has resumed issuance of VIP break darshan tickets to devotees Udayasthamana and Varsha Darshini sevas.

Those devotees, hencecan avail the break darshan facility through the donor management system portal online, which came into force from Wednesday.

It may be noted that the TTD has been providing the VIP break darshan facility to these tickets' holders from September 11 after all Arjitha sevas were cancelled from March 13 last year in

May. In the meanwhile,

the TTD is also develop-

ing another Sri Venkate-

swara sacred flower gar-

den at a cost of ₹1.5 crore

from donations as depict-

view of Covid-19. On appeal Údayasthamana ticket holders, the TTD is providing VIP break tickets darshan to them along with the Srivani

trust donors.

However. Wednesday these devotees need not have to go to Arjitham office at Tirumala to get their darshan tickets. Instead, the devotees

can directly go for darshan with online tickets in VIP break. The TTD requested the devotees to contact Arjitham office through

landline: 0877-2263589 or arjithamoffice@gmail.c

acre land near Sila months of April and Thoranam, located on hills. In this garden, 25 varieties of aromatic plants like seven leaves plantation. banana

**SVBC NODS TO** OPEN KANNADA, **HINDI CHANNELS** BY UGADI FEST

DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUPATI, FEB. 3

The board of TTD's Sri Venkateswara Bhakthi Channel (SVBC) on Wednesday approved the lau-nch of SVBC's Kannada and Hindi version channels on the auspicious occasion of Ugadi on April 13. At the board meeting held in Tirupati on Wednesday, the SVBC board also endorsed the

HR policy of the channel. Speaking on the occasion, TTD executive officer Dr K.S. Jawahar Reddy directed the officials to procure all equipment needed to convert the transmission into a HD channel and provide quality devotees. telecast

most auspicious will also be grown apart from Darbha, Tulasi, Sampangi, mango,

DC CORRESPONDENT

Department of Space has entered into a Non Discl-

osure Agreement (NDA)

with M/s Skyroot Aeros-

pace Pvt. Ltd., a private

company in Hyderabad

#### SRISAILAM TEMPLE LAUNCHES FREE FOOD SERVICE TO PILGRIMS

will open up free food service to pilgrims (Annadana programme) aftet a gap of 9

**TRIBAL SCHOOL** 

**KIDS PROTEST** 

DC CORRESPONDENT

VISAKHAPATNAM, FEB. 3

Darakonda Primary School in GK Veedhi

Visakhapatnam agency,

their parents and vil-

lagers staged a dharna

for few hours on the

school campus demand-

ing appointment of new teachers. The villagers

announced that they

would boycott the ongo-

ing gram panchayat elec-

tions if no new teachers

were appointed immedi-

Rajababu of Girijan

Samakhya at Darakonda

told this newspaper that

the school has 180 stu-

dents and had 9 teachers

until recently. Of them,

six teachers got trans-

ferred using the political

connections, one is on

long leave and another

Prasad is paying the

multi-role of teacher as

well as headmaster. His

is also ill but attending

the school regularly

keeping in mind the stu-dents' interest,"

building small satellite

The NDA will enable the

company for accessing the

facilities and technical

expertise available in Isro

Centres to proceed with

their launch vehicle devel-

opment programme.

Rajababu said.

launch vehicles.

**DOS INKS PACT WITH HYD-BASED FIRM** 

lone teacher

**FOR NEW** 

**TEACHERS** 

mandal

ately.

"The

due to Covid, said executive officer Rama Rao. With declining of Covid- to devotees from Feb. 4.

Kurnool: Srisailam temple months as it was shut down 19 cases, the authorities of to resume free food services

#### Govt. of India (Ministry of Education) **Department of Higher Education** Hinditar Bhashi Hindi Lekhak Puraskar Year-2020

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Davp 21252/11/0008/2021

## 6-year-old gets new lease of life through Aarogyasri

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, FEB. 3

The doctors had successfully treated a six-yearold child suffering from primary refractory Lymphoma Aarogyasri scheme in Manipal Hospital at Vijayawada. The assessment of PET CT results showed that there was a complete metabolic response post giving her second-line salvage chemotherapy with GDP.

Addressing the media at a press meet here on Wednesday, Dr Madhav Danthala, Consultant Oncology, and she is now being

DC CORRESPONDENT

The Export Promotion

Council for Handicrafts

(EPCH) has asked world-

famous Kondapalli toy-

makers to participate in

the national toys fair to

be held from February 27

to March 2, organised by

skill development pro-

gramme was concluded

Kondapalli

Wednesday and the toy-

makers received certifi-

cates. EPCH India south-

ern states director K.

Nagatulasi Rao said the

upgrading of skills

would give more oppor-

tunities to Kondapalli

toys in universal mar-

kets and asserted on the

of

one-month

exporting

on

the Union government.

VIJAYAWADA, FEB. 3

national toys fair

Manipal Hospital, said the child, Neelapati Siri Spandana, visited the hospital with multiple lesions in her body and was in a very critical condition.

Dr G. Krishna Reddy, Consultant Medical Oncology, said once the patient became responsive, BEAM conditioning and Autologous Stem Transplant was given to the patient. He said the patient was dis-charged in 3 weeks after having achieved com-plete blood count recoverv. He said the doctors are constantly monitoring the patient's health

Kondapalli toys in all

possible aspects. He asked the toymakers to

national toys fair with-

out fail with Kondapalli

toys to get global atten-

tion and market oppor-

tunities. He said that 30

male and female toy-

makers successfully completed the skill

gramme and these skills

would be useful to the

Kondapalli toymakers

community to spread

their business in all

platforms. Nagatulasi

Rao presented certifi-

cates to the toymakers

EPCH assistant man-

ager, Sateesh, its execu-

tive Divakar and design-

ers participated in the

on the occasion.

programme.

participate

development

treated on an out-patient The parents of Siri

Spandana expressed their gratitude to the doctors for successfully completing the treatment. They also expressed their gratitude to the Government of Andhra Pradesh for making such treatments affordable Aarogyasri.

Dr Sudhakar Kant-ipudi, hospital director, Dr Manoj Kumar, chief of clinical services. Dr B. Sravan Kumar, associate consultant. Medical Oncology, and others present in the press

95 COVID

# Kondapalli toys at AP RECORDS

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, FEB. 3

**CASES, 1 DEATH** 

Andhra Pradesh registered 95 fresh cases of Covid-19 and one death on Wednesday.

Out of 25,445 samples tested, 95 persons were found infected with Coronavirus. Out of a number 1,32,14,548 samples tested so far, 8,88,099 persons were found infected with the virus and of them, 8,79,780 recovered while 1,162 are still active with the virus.

Among daily cases. Krishna reported 17 followed by 16 each in Guntur and Visakhap atnam, nine in Chittoor, seven each in East Godavari and Nellore.

#### ceive the degrees on the dais and others will receive their degrees through registered post. Further details can be seen in the website www.jntua.ac.ir under Examinations section. Note: The candidates who have applied in response to our earlier Notifica

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25.02.2021. Only Ph.D/M.Phil./M.S. Awardees and Gold Medalists will re-

XI CONVOCATION NOTIFICATION

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2nd auction date: 19.02.2021, 11:00AM, Auction Centre: Muthoot Finance Ltd, H.No:1-17-171/2 Church Road Opp: Hp Gas Suryapet, Suryapet District, Pin - 508 213 (Suryapet District)

Spurious/ Low Quality Accounts Details:- KODADA (AP)(2142)- BTB- 2,

2nd auction date: 18.02.2021, 04:00PM, Auction Centre: Muthoot Finance Ltd, D.No.56-11-4,1st Floor, Upstairs Of Andhra Bank, Bundar Road, Vijayawada-Patamata, Krishna -520010 (Krishna District)

Spurious/ Low Quality Accounts Details:- GUDIWADA(0711)- MSL- 11443, HANUMAN JUNCTION (AP)(1514)- MAL- 4243, MSL- 17766, MACHILIPAT-NAM(1347)- MSL- 18030, VIJAYAWADA - KRISHNA LANKA(3667)- BTB- 39, MAL- 8697, MSL- 18751, 19752, 19901, 19913, 19970, 20078, 20144, ZIL-50, VIJAYAWADA- CHITTINAGAR(1910)- MSL- 23852, VIJAYAWADA-BHAVANI PURAM(0751)- MSL- 42674, VIJAYAWADA-KAMAIAH THOPPU(2118)-MHP- 21, VIJAYAWADA-MARUTHI NAGAR(2215)- MSL- 29832, VIJAYAWADA-PATAMATA(1044)- MAL- 5429,

2nd auction date: 18.02.2021, 10:00AM, Auction Centre: Muthoot Finance Ltd, D.No: 22-4-23, Lalapet, Old Bus Stand, Beside Nakshatra Fashions, Guntur, -522003 (Guntur District)

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## **Chronicle**

4 FEBRUARY 2021

## Farmers aren't hooligans; don't act like a police state

re India's farmers — who have mounted a full-scale agitation to secure the rollback of three agricultural reform laws passed without consultation with them — hooligans? The narrative built up by the Centre and its supporters, including in the media, has been built assiduously around exactly this idea. It's in the chaotic events of Republic Day in New Delhi that the justification is sought to be excavated to denigrate the community of food-growers thus.

From this springs the presumed validation of the rationale to deny famers both the physical and moral space, and deny them basic human rights by chaling off surpruss of waters curply, their prespects of securing

rights by choking off avenues of water supply, their prospects of securing food by blocking transport channels, and by switching off the Internet that is crucial for them to communicate their voice of protest; in short virtual-

ly stamping out their right to free speech.

These moves appear to be a prelude to the unleashing of fierce punishment on the farmer-protesters. Depending on circumstances, such punishment may take the form of brutal executive action. Or it's possible sections of civil society that ruling party outfits control are let loose on protesters. A trailer of this was seen recently when marauding young men in the hundreds, pretending to be "locals" inconvenienced by the agitation, descended on the camps of farmers and their families as the police watched. In the times we live in, it will be a surprise if the government, if it so desires, fails to secure convenient judicial pronouncements.

Now that the hurdles have been cleared for a debate in Parliament on the farmers' protest, it is crucial that the Opposition parties, the ruling party, and those that are prone to sit on the fence seek to define farmers, farm agitators and hooligans. Before any judicial inquiry is instituted — if that is done — it is incumbent on the political class to tell us if they believe the men who indulged in violence and marred the spirit of Republic Day by unfurling religious flags and symbols at the Red Fort were farmers. In this narrative, these criminal elements are being called "farmers". Are they? Or are they fifth columnists tasked with maligning an entirely peaceful agitation that the government wasn't sure how to handle?

It seems extraordinary that the police and the NIA, routinely unleashed on harmless civil society protesters, has not been directed to trace the whereabouts of a loud-mouthed actor who was a BJP MP's election agent in Punjab, and his accomplices who are listed as bad characters. From this person's remarks, it would appear he is a votary of "Khalistan". While that may not be held against him, his actions on Republic Day merit scrutiny. The government is yet to exhibit due diligence. But it has shown alacrity in hammering thousands of nails in the roads, and erecting layers of barricades, presumably to ensure that the farmers don't go on the rampage on their tractors. But have they ever done so in the past? What we see here is a glimpse of Chinese or Russian police state tactics in action, not those of — what we so proudly claim — the world's largest democracy!

## Putin bares his fangs

he jailing of Alekesi A. Navalny, the Kremlin's harshest critic and Russia's most visible Opposition leader, must be seen as the biggest move President Vladimir Putin has made in the pursuit of his pet pastime over the past two decades of acting brazenly against critics and oligarchs. The fiercest challenge to Mr Putin has been disposed of in the traditional manner of an authoritarian state after the politician survived an attempt to poison him with military-grade nerve agent Novichok applied to his underwear in August 2020.

Mr Navalny has gained stature as the anti-corruption champion who exposed the President and his cronies with investigative reports followed by six million people on YouTube and another two million on Twitter. Surviving the assassination attempt and recuperating in a German hospital, he returned to Russia to carry on his campaign. Mr Putin's government had tried to muzzle him with typical Kremlin tactics through the spy agencies, short jail terms or orders preventing him from running for President. As Mr Navalny's presence then ballooned into a growing threat, with thousands of Russians taking to the streets now to protest against his arrest and sentencing, Mr Putin may have thought it best to send him away to a far-flung prison in Siberia or thereabouts.

In two decades of Mr Putin's rule in post-Soviet Russia, whatever little resistance was there from critics had been ironed out with brutal state repression tactics. Boris Nemtsov, who spoke up against Russia's military action against Ukraine, was found dead and the oligarch Mikhail Khodorkovsky was detained for 10 years. The case of Mr Navalny may be no different, though as a lawyer in the field of politics he has become a rallying figure against the State. The Russian economy may struggle in the face of low oil prices, curbs on imports due to Western sanctions and a depreciating rouble, but Mr Putin's popularity as the strong man who takes on the West has not faded. He could come under pressure if the movement for freeing Mr Navalny picks up steam. Not without reason is it said that Mr Putin fears him the most.

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# No new taxes? Budget's Mahabharata lessons



hile reading out the finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman crowed several times that there were "no new taxes". It reminded me of US vicepresident George H.W. Bush, the 1988 Rep-ublican presidential candidate, who proclaimed at the nominating convention the famous words: "Read my lips, no new taxes!" These words defined his next three years at the White House, and the US economy, which exical loudly for a which cried loudly for a spending boost and hence higher taxation, tanked. His 1992 opponent was Bill Clinton whose campaign manager had the words "It's the Economy, Stupid!" print-ed/pasted on every desk of Mr Clinton's election George Bush Senior, whose tenure saw the collapse of the Cold War and a huge military victory in Iraq, lost the presidency to Bill Clinton after just one term.

Even in a much poorer country and smaller economy like India, in the ultimate analysis it's the state of the economy that determines political longevity. But Prime Minister Narendra Modi's hucksters kept re-peating all day on Monday and Tuesday this week that even a huge contraction of the economy and despite tens of millions of migrant workers being rendered jobless and homeless in a massive drop of the guillotine with the March 21, 2020, lockdown, Mr Modi won the state elections in Bihar later that year. But did he? The NDA polled 34.86 per cent of the popular vote while the Tejashwi Yadav-led UPA got 36.20 per cent of the popular vote. The NDA came to power with a very slim majority in the Assembly and the margins in as many as 11 seats were by just a few hundred votes. So to believe Mr Modi always wears a Teflon suit is quite erroneous. It's always the economy, stu-

But were there indeed "no new taxes"? Not only are there no new taxes for annual incomes below ₹15 lakh, there are reductions. But for those with incomes above ₹2 lakh per month, the new taxes impose a substantially higher burden. For a person with an annual income of ₹26.50 lakh, the tax burden increases from ₹3.40 lakh to ₹5.30 lakh, or almost 60 per cent. This is not small change. There are taxes beyond I-T, which are borne directly by taxpayers, like those on petrol and diesel. Petrol will now cost ₹2.50 more per litre, while diesel will cost ₹4 more per litre. There will necessarily be a cascading effect on the economy. The transport sector consumes 72 per cent of the diesel refined in India so the five per cent hike in retail prices will have a noticeable ripple effect. Every lower middle class household will have at least a twowheeler and higher petrol prices will be felt. Think of the consequences to the home delivery gig economy. Amazon, the biggest ecommerce player, pays a flat ₹10 per package, irrespective of weight, distance and volume. The deliveryman uses his own vehicle and pays for the fuel and other costs. We can now expect ecommerce goods to cost more. Individuals will also have to pay more for mobile phones, cars and imported tipple, among other things. So why claim "no new taxes"? As

things are certain to go up. One is us, the other is The newspapers and

government, for good or

bad, from Kumaraman-galam Birla to Ashok Hinduja, a panoply of CII and Ficci presidents, and waiting economists to comment. All of them hailed it as a pathbreak-ing, visionary and break-out Budget. What else can they afford to say or dare to say? I saw Prannoy Roy hosting the NDTV Budget show ask-ing these worthies after letting them say their hosannas, if they had anything critical to say? Without exception, they hemmed and hawed, and apart from desiring more for their sectors said that all is great. But, not being professional actors, their mortification could not be fully masked. Decades ago, Lala Charat Ram, then Ficci's president, when asked favoured the budget, blithely replied: "We favour all budgets, what-ever the government!"

But let us take a cursory look at the numbers. Total expenditure in FY20-21 was ₹34.50 lakh crore. The proposed expenditure for FY21-22 is ₹34.83 lakh crore (Page 3 of FinMin's 'Budget at a Glance'), so where is the money for a breakout? The vision painted is a long-term vision. For instance, Tamil Nadu going to the polls in a few months gets a declared appropriation of ₹65,000 crore to build 3,600 km of highways over the next five years, when what matters to people and the economy is what will be

**Total expenditure** in FY20-21 was ₹34.50 lakh crore. The proposed expenditure for FY21-22 is ₹34.83 lakh crore (Page 3 of FinMin's 'Budget at a Glance'), so where is the money for a breakout?

larly, Assam and West Bengal, also scheduled for the hustings soon, get TV have trotted a range of people beholden to the

₹23,000 crore and ₹35,000 crore respectively. This is not even sleight of hand, its just political chicanery. The Centre intends to increase capital expenditure by ₹1.14 lakh crore and proposes to spend ₹5.54 lakh crore in FY21-22. This item rose by ₹1.30 lakh crore in FY20-21 over FY19-20, so in effect the rate of climb has fallen. But on the morning after, every major newspaper lauded the increase in capital expenditure. Everybody has his or her own compulsions. Big brother is watching?

Our leading pink newspaper had a banner headline shouting: "82% jump in health outlay'. Another newspaper screams: '137% increase in health and well-being spend". But it adds sotto voce that this increase is mostly due to bringing the drinking water and sanitation (₹60,030 crore) and nutrition ₹27,000 crore) outlays, previously under different departments, under one caption "health and wellbeing". There is a hike in outlay for heath (₹71,269 crore), but it is a more modest nine per cent.

When the Pandavas shouted "Ashvathama is dead", Drona, the commander of the enemy forces, assumed they were referring to his son. Refusing to believe them, he decided to check with Yudhishtra. "Tell me," said Drona to Yudhishtra, "Is my son dead? Yes, Ashvathama is dead. Maybe it is an elephant? Maybe a man? He knew it was an elephant but had been forced by Krishna to lie or tell a half-truth. In the din of the war, all Drona heard Yudhishtra say was: "Yes, Ashva-thama is dead.' Clearly, Nirmala Sitharaman knows her Mahabharata

The writer, a policy analyst studying economic and security issues, held senior positions in government and industry. He also specialises in the Chinese economy.

**TEACH TEACHERS** 

The report about JNTU Kakinada (State cracks whip on JNTUK professors, Feb. 3) t is high time that motivational sessions are arranged for teaching

> K.L. Rao Visakhapatnam

#### **VACCINE SAFETY**

staff periodically.

It is a shame on the Modi government for dealing with farmers with multi-layered barricading, iron nails and barbed wire. (Iron nails, barbed wires turn protest sites into fortresses, Feb. 3). It is very clear that the BJP will lose its reputation as news of the farmers agitation has spread all over the world.

Panchakarla Govardhana Rao.

#### **INTRIGUING NTR**

The two-part interview with the author of 'Maverick Messiah' was riveting and intriguing. N.T. Rama Rao was certainly a regional leader with a national outlook. His bold stand over the historical necessity of regional parties cannot be for-gotten and he always worked for the dignity of Telugus.

Dr C. Ghanshyam

Whether NTR was casteist or not is a disputable debate. He was also "against" dynastic politics but he had encouraged his son-in-law to take over the reigns of the TD. The 'talk' in the corridors of powers those days was that only those belonging to "SC (same caste)" were allowed to be entertained by NTR. To top it all, NTR would enquire as to whether the help seeker had met "Babu garu". refer-ring to N. Chandrababu Naidu.

Govardhana Myneedu Vijayawada

## 50 YEARS AGO IN

### Chronicle Co-op. officials

charge-sheeted One Deputy Registrar and a Cooperative Sub-Registrar are among the six persons on whom charge-sheets were filed in connection with the fertiliser scan-

The State Crime Branch which is investigating into the fertiliser scandal involving embezzlement of over Rs. 6.5 lakhs worth of chemical fertilisers in the District Co-operative Marketing Society, Mahbubnagar, has filed the charge-sheets in the First Class Munisiff Magistrate Court at Mahbubnagar on January 28.

#### Sunanda K. Datta-Ray Reflections



Future unclear in Suu Kyi country: Do generals have a post-coup plan?

he pre-dawn coup in Myan-mar on Monday recalls the worldwide outrage that Singapore's patriarch Lee Kuan Yew caused in 1996 by questioning Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's ability "to govern if ever she came to power". He said he had told the Americans, who were pressing for democracy to be restored, that they should be around to pick up the broken pieces if the experiment collapsed.

It is tragically ironic 25 years later that the only way Ms Suu Kyi can prove her mettle may be another prolonged spell of imprisonment by the ruthless military junta. The sufferings of the 1.3 million persecuted Rohingyas will be much greater. But the worst victims of Monday's coup more than 55 million Myanmarese whose long delayed and hard-won democratic rights have

again been brutally suppressed. The 75-year-old Ms Suu Kyi has been accused of doing nothing to stop the rape, murder and possible genocide of Rohingyas. She was suspected of sharing the deep-seated prejudice of her Buddhist Mongolian compatriots against the darker skinned and largely Muslim, Bengali-speaking Rohingyas of Myanmar's Rakhine

province. Even under British rule, the old Burma was periodically ravaged by massacres of the immigrant Indian, mainly Tamil, community. While those immigrants were evicted at independence, the Rohingyas remained and today bear the brunt of Myanmar's racism.

Ms Suu Kyi has reason to be grateful to the Rohingyas who supported her 1988 democracy movement. The Rohingya-led National Democratic Party for Human Rights returned four members to Parliament in the 1990 election when her victorious National League for Democracy should have formed the government. But the military suppressed all opposition, placed Ms Suu Kyi under house arrest, banned the NDPR, and jailed and tortured its leaders. Myanmar does not now have a single Rohingya MP. The Rohingyas have no voting rights. Politically, Ms Suu Kyi was blamed

for acquiescing in the 2008 constitution which entitled the Tatmadaw the military — to choose the vice-president and the home, defence and border affairs ministers, as well as control 25 per cent of parliamentary seats. But she probably knew the limits of her authority. Monday's coup, the military's declaration of another year-long state of emergency, and the appointment of the commander-inchief, Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, as the national leader, confirmed that the military insists on obedience.

As the daughter of liberation hero, Gen. Aung San, who was assassinated on the eve of independence in 1948, she may be an iconic figure, and quite popular with Myanmar's majority. But the military wanted her only to bestow legitimacy on their iron grip by letting the government turn a pretty face to the world.

Like all those who stage coups, the Tatmadaw says it will hold a "free and fair general election" after the emergency ends. When that will be and how free the exercise can be is anybody's guess. But if the future is uncertain, there are no prizes for identifying the cause of the present crisis. The timing of this second suppression of civilian government there were two other coups in 1962 and 1988 — is easily explained.

Myanmar's Parliament was scheduled to meet on Monday to approve of the new government formed as a result of the general election held in November 2020. The Army was determined to prevent this because more than 70 per cent of voters defied Covid-19 and stringent pandemic restrictions to ensure a landslide victory for Ms Suu Kyi's NLD party. They inflicted a resounding defeat on military-supported Solidarity and Development Party,

which has been clamouring ever since for just such action. The military has now obliged the USDP by accusing the country's election commission of failing to address "huge irregularities" in the November election and is trying to justify its action by citing the need to preserve the 'stability" of the state.

But it is difficult to understand the Tatmadaw's long-term plans. If the emergency is for only a year, does it intend to restore truly civilian rule in February 2022? Since President Win Myint, the only person authorised under the constitution to declare a state of emergency, has also been detained, Monday morning's coup becomes an illegal operation.

Moreover, Ms Suu Kyi's prompt and instinctive response was to urge her supporters to "not accept this" event and to "protest against the coup". In a letter written in preparation for her impending detention, she said the military's actions had put

the country back under dictatorship. The armed forces ruled Myanmar until 2011 when democratic reforms spearheaded by Ms Suu Kyi ended military rule. She spent nearly 15 years in detention between 1989 and 2010 and was internationally hailed as a beacon of democracy and awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991. She is now a global heroine, and Monday morning's widely condemned coup was seen as much as an outrage against her as a national betrayal.

Nevertheless, Lee Kuan Yew had feared that only the military could save Myanmar from civil war. Not for him P.V. Narasimha Rao's faith, expressed in Singapore to thunder-ous applause, that the answer to the problems of democracy was more, not less, democracy. He even saw Rao's defeat in 1996 as retribution for such colossal naivete. Despite a low opinion of Myanmar's generals, Lee saw the military as the only institution that could avoid civil war.

Perversely, that may be true even now. The military remains the main protagonist in any Myanmarese power struggle, the only one that can crush all other contenders. The writer is a senior journalist,

columnist and author



#### THAROOR, PANDE, **OTHERS MOVE SC TO QUASH FIRs**

PARMOD KUMAR | DC

Congress member of parliament Shashi Tharoor, senior journalist Rajdeep Sardesai, Mrinal Pande, Zafar Agha, Vinod K Jose Paresh Nath and Anand Nath on Wednesday moved the Supreme Court for the quashing of multiple FIRs registered against them for alleged misreporting of violence relating to farmers agitation in the national capital

on Republic Day. The FIRs have alleged "misreporting" and "spreading disharmony" by their tweets and reports on the ongoing farmers' agitation seeking the repeal of three farm laws which farmers' are contending aims to corporatise agri-

Describing the FIRs as "frivolous", the petitioners have invoked their right to life and personal liberty under Article 21 and their freedom of speech and expression under Article

19(1)(a) of the Constitution. Several FIRs were filed against the petitioner in Delhi, Gurugram, NOIDA, and Madhya Pradesh.

THE FIRS have alleged 'misreporting' and 'spreading disharmony' by their tweets and reports on the ongoing farmers' agitation seeking the repeal of three farm laws which farmers' are contending aims to corporatise agriculture.

## Didi says polls will be announced soon

#### Accuses ex-TMC leader of anomalies in appointments

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, FEB. 3

Triggering speculation of an early Assembly Election in West Bengal, minister and Trinamul Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday indicated that the polls would be announced within a week in the state.

She also accused TMC turncoat Rajib Banerjee of malpractice, during his tenure as the state forest minister, which has come under a probe of her government. Hitting back at her within few hours, Mr Banerjee, however, gave himself a clean chit.

Addressing a TMC rally in Alipurduar of North

KUMARASWAMI | DC

In what is being seen as a possible outreach to India, Pakistan's powerful Army

chief Gen. Qamar Javed

Bajwa has said "it is time"

for his country to "extend

the hand of peace in all

directions", even as he called on India and

Pakistan to resolve the

Kashmir issue in a "peaceful and dignified

manner". Addressing a

graduation ceremony at the Pakistan Air Force

(PAF) Academy earlier on

Tuesday, Gen. Bajwa, how-

ever, referred to the

Kashmir situation as a

"human tragedy" that must be brought to its

MAMATA ACCUSED TMC turncoat Rajib Banerjee of malpractice, during his tenure as the state forest minister,

which has come under a

probe of her government.

Bengal, the CM said, "Remember, only seveneight days are left for the polls to be announced. So time is less in hands."

Without taking the name of Mr Banerjee she alleged, "The boy who was with us but left us did some anomalies in the appointments of Bon Sahayak (Forest

Assistant). Lot of people gave me this complaint. We are investigating it. One should ask him about

peace in all directions: Bajwa

"logical conclusion" as per the "aspirations" of

The apparent softening

of stance of Gen. Bajwa comes in the wake of

rock-bottom relations between the two nuclear-

armed neighbours amid

Pakistan's insistence that

India reverse the abrogation of Article 370, an

Indian Constitutional pro-

vision that had granted special status to the erst-

while State of Jammu and

Kashmir. India had split its erstwhile state of J&K

into the two union territo-

ries of J&K and Ladakh in

2019. Pakistan's civilian

government has repeated-

ly indicated that no talks

are possible with India in

the current situation.

It's time to extend hand of

his role in such malpractice when he makes tall talks. He joined the BJP

after stealing."
Hitting back at the TMC chief, Mr Banerjee said at a BJP rally in Gurap of Hooghly, "She claimed of anomalies in the recruitment of Bon Sahayak and talked of a probe. But with due respect to her, I can with responsibility that I had impartially entrusted a panel for the recruitment with transparency. At around 10 am on October 8, when I sent her a message complaining against a big shot of Birbhum of threatening me to allot all the Bon Sahayak jobs to him, she called me to distribute the

It may be recalled that

India's position vis-a-vis Pakistan has been that

"talks and terror cannot

go together" and has repeatedly called on

Islamabad to end its sup-

port for "cross-border ter-

rorism". New Delhi has

always indicated that if

Pakistan is prepared to do

this, India is ready to resume talks with its

However, Gen. Bajwa's

neighbour.

western

Trinamul workers in all the districts.

He told the Chief Minister, "I remained silent so far. But you forced me to open my mouth. I still have the messages and copies of recommendations from Kalighat and ministers and leaders. You are only opening a can of worms. You are now in Alipurduar where your district party president was among those who made the recommendations. You rather cancel the panel of recruitment to know the truth. If needed, cancel all the government recruitment for contractual jobs. But can you

#### 16-YEAR-OLD, RAPED, KILLED

Korba, Feb. 3: A 16year-old girl was alleged-ly raped and smashed to death with stones in Korba district of of on wednesday.
The accused all

The accused allegedly also killed the girl's father and his four-yearold granddaughter.

The incident occurred near Gadhuproda village on January 29, but came to light on light on following Tuesday, which six accused were arrested in this connection, Korba SP Abhishek Meena said. The accused were identified Santram Majhwar (45), Abdul Jabbar (29), Anil Kumar Sarthi (20), Pardeshi Ram Panika (35), Anand Ram Panika (25) and Uamshankar

### Farmers dig in their heels



Barbed wires put across a road by Delhi Police at Ghazipur border in New Delhi on Wednesday to stop farmers from entering the national capital during their protest against the new farm laws. Blocking of borders is causing inconvenience to residents of Delhi and neighbouring states, besides financial loss to the people and the excheq-

## No govt jobs for protesters blocking roads: Bihar cops

NAYEAR AZAD | DC

The Bihar government has landed into a controversy after the police headquarter issued a directive stating that people indulging in violent protests and road blockages will not be eligible for government jobs.

The circular says that the police will issue a verification report about the person's character and

also find out about his past criminal history. "If anyone found indulging in a criminal act by engaging in any law and order situation, protests or road blockages and is charged for this, then it should be mentioned in the person's character verification report by the police. Such people should be prepared for serious consequences

from getting any government jobs or contracts", director general of police S.K. Singhal said in the circular.

This comes almost a

Economic Offences Unit (EOU) in a circular had said that offensive social media posts against the government, ministers and officials will be treated as cybercrime and

invite penal action.

The unit had also informed all government departments about the decision and asked them to report about individuals and organisations involved in such posts on social media.

The RJD which is the main opposition party in the state has termed the

and Hitler by issuing such kind of directives. It means that if a person uses his democratic right to protest against the system then he will be denied a job. This also means that they will not give jobs and will not allow anyone to protest", Leader of the Tejashwi opposition Yadav said in a tweet.

"Why is the Chief Minister with 40 seats so scared?" he added. Hitting out at Nitish government, RJD leader Shivanand Tiwary said that "The Constitution has provided us with the right to The protest. Minister himself had been part of many protests against several regimes. Instead of taking harsh measures against directive "against the constitution". "It seems that Nitish Kumar is trying to the protestors, he should ask the administration to look into their problems". the protestors, he should ask the administration to

SHORT TAKES

#### **SHOOTING IN FLORIDA: 2 FBI AGENTS KILLED**

Miami, Feb. 3: Two FBI agents were shot dead and Tuesday while serving a search warrant on a suspect in a child pornography case in the southern US state of Florida, the FBI said.

The suspect is also dead, the Federal Bureau of Investig-

ation said in a statement.
The FBI and media reports said the shooting took place around 6:00 am in Sunrise, Florida, when agents arrived to execute a search warrant at

the suspect's home. FBI Director Christopher Wray identified the two slain FBI special agents as Daniel Alfin and Laura Schwartzenberger. "The FBI will always honor their ultimate sacrifice and will be forever grateful for their bravery," Wray said in a statement. Two of the wounded agents were taken to hospital and are in stable condition, the FBI said.

#### **NEO-NAZI SONGS: AUSTRIAN** RAPPER NABBED

Vienna, Feb. 3: Austrian authorities said Tuesday they have arrested a rapper accused of broadcasting neo-Nazi songs, one of which was used by the man behind a deadly anti-Semitic attack in Germa-"The suspect has been arrested on orders of the Vienna prosecutors" and transferred to prison after a search of his home, said an interior ministry statement.

Police seized a mixing desk, hard discs, weapons, a military flag from the Third Reich era and other Nazi objects during their search. Austrian intelligence officers had been trying for months to unmask the rapper, who went by the pseudonym Mr Bond and had been posting to neo-Nazi forums since 2016.

The suspect, who comes from the southern region of Carinthia, has been detained for allegedly producing and broad-casting Nazi ideas and incitement to hatred. Promoting Nazi ideology is a criminal offence in Austria, which was the birth place of Adolph Hitler.

## Navalny jailed for three years

Moscow court on Tuesday jailed the Kremlin's most prominent critic Alexei Navalny for nearly three years, triggering fierce condemnation from the West and calls for his immediate release.

The court's decision to turn a 2014 suspended sentence into real jail time will see Navalny, a 44-year-old anti-corruption campaigner who accuses the Kremlin of poisoning him last year, serve a lengthy prison term for the first time.

Britain, France, Germany, the United States and the European Union den-ounced the ruling, as Moscow accused the West of interfering in its affairs. Navalny's supporters called for more demonstrations over the decision. after thousands joined nationwide protests against Navalny's arrest over the

last two weekends. The case is presenting one of the most serious challenges to the Kremlin in years, with some in the West calling for new sanc-

tions against Russia. Judge Natalya Repnikova ordered a suspended three-and-a-half-year sentence Navalny received on fraud charges in 2014 to be changed to time in a

nalist at the courthouse said. He was accused of violating parole condi-tions by refusing to check in with prison officials and was arrested when he flew back to Moscow on January 17 from Germany, where he spent months recovering from the poisoning.

Navalny said it was impossible to make the appointments while in Germany, but the judge said he had skipped meetings even prior to the poi soning. Navalny had spent time under house arrest after the 2014 convicti on — which was denounced by the European Court of Human Rights — and Repnikova said that wou-

ld count as time served. His lawyer Olga Mikha ilova told journalists this meant he would now serve around two years and eight months in prison. His legal team plan to

appeal, she said, and Navalny was expected to stay in detention in Moscow during that appeal.

Corruption Fund immediately called for a protest in central Moscow. Several hundred of his marched supporters through the streets.

## Iran not to set free ship captain

Tehran, Feb. 3: Iran said Tuesday it has allowed all crew except the captain from a South Korean tanker seized last month for alleged pollution to leave the country in a 'humanitarian move''

The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps seized the Hankuk Chemi and arrested its multinational crew of 20 sailors near the strategic Strait of Hormuz on January 4, saying it had polluted the

The development came as Tehran urged Seoul to release billions of dollars

of Iranian assets frozen in South Korea due to US sanctions.

"In a humanitarian move by Iran, the crew of the South Korean tanker accused of polluting the environment of the Persian Gulf were allowed to leave the country," for-eign ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said in a statement.

Permission had been granted upon "the request of the South Korean government and (with) the cooperation of the judici ary in Iran", he added.

ment housing after the

#### words are bound to be viewed with abundant caution by New Delhi which has maintained that terrorists continue their attempts to sneak across the LoC in large numbers from PoK to create havoc in the Indian union territory of J&K.

## Suu Kyi charged, now military gets legal basis to detain her

She can be detained at least till mid-Feb; charge entains three yrs in prison

Yangon, Feb. 3: Police levelled their first formal ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi, members of her party said on Wednesday, giving military authorities who staged a coup a legal reason to detain her at least through the middle of the month.

The charge — that Suu Kyi was in possession of illegally imported walkie talkies — came to light two days after she was placed under house arrest and appeared to be an effort to lend a legal veneer to her detention, though the generals have previously kept her and others locked up for years. The military announced on Monday that it would take power for one year — accusing Suu Kyi's government of not investigating allegations of voter fraud in recent elections. Suu Kyi's party swept that vote, and the military-backed party did poorly.

National League for Democracy spokesman Kyi Toe confirmed the charge against Suu Kyi that carries a maximum sentence of three years in prison. He also said the country's pusted president. Win ousted president, Win Myint, was charged with violating the natural disaster management law. A leaked charge sheet dated February 1 indicates they can be held until February 15. "It was clear that the military were going to look for some legal cases against the leaders of the National League for Democracy and especially Aung San Suu Kyi to actually legitimise what they've tried to do," said Larry Jagan, an independent analyst of Myanmar affairs. "And that is really a power grab.'

Police and court officials in the capital Naypyitaw could not immediately be contacted. At the same time that authorities were working to keep Suu Kvi in detention, hundreds of lawmakers who had been forced to stay at govern-



Burmese living in Japan and supporters chant during a protest in front of the Foreign Ministry in Tokyo Wednesday. Myanmar's new leader said the military government installed after Monday's coup plans an investigation into alleged fraud in last year's elections and will also prioritise the Covid-19 outbreak and the economy.

THE COUP was a dramatic backslide for Myanmar, which had been making progress toward democracy.

coup were told Wednesday to leave the capital city within 24 hours and go home, said a member of Parliament from Suu Kyi's party who is among the group. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he feared drawing the attention of the military.

The coup was a dramatic backslide for Myanmar, which had been making progress toward democracv. and highlighted the extent to which the generals have ultimately maintained control in the

Southeast Asian country. In response to the coup, Suu Kyi's party has called for non-violent resistance, and people in Yangon honked car horns and banged on pots and pans on Tuesday night.

## Washington in touch with India and Japan on coup our like-minded allies and partners in the region. You

Washington, Feb. 3: Terming the detention of Myanmar's top civilian leaders by the military "a coup", a senior State Department official has said that the United States is in constant touch with regional allies like India and Japan on the latest developments in Naypyitaw as the two countries have better contact with the military in the Southeast Asian nation.

Myanmar's military on Monday took control of the country for one year and detained all the top political figures, including de facto leader Aung San

'We have certainly been in frequent contact with

mentioned Japan and India. We're having daily ongoing conversations with them, and we certainly appreciate that some other countries have better contact with the Burmese military than we do, so we're continuing those conversations," a senior State Department official told reporters during a conference call on Tuesday.

The United States categorically said the military action in Burma is a coup. "After a careful review of the facts and circumstances, we have assessed that Aung San Suu Kyi, the leader of Burma's ruling

party, and Win Myint, the

duly elected head of government, were deposed in a military coup on February the State Department official said.

Myanmar was called Burma before 1989 when the ruling junta, backed by the armed forces, changed its name. This was done to maintain the country's global image after a total crackdown on a pro-demo-

cracy movement. We continue to call on Burmese military leadership to release them (the elected leaders) and all other detained civil society and political leaders immediately and unconditionally," the State Department official said.

#### SHORT TAKES

#### **Ajay re-elected** as BFI president

New Delhi: Incumbent Ajay Singh was on Wednesday reelected President of the Boxing Federation of India, comfortably defeating challenger Ashish Shelar in the polls which had an International Boxing Association (AIBA) observer in attendance. Singh, also the chairman of Spicejet airlines, prevailed 37-27 in the elections held at a Gurugram hotel for a fresh fouryear term. He will have a new

Assam's Hemanta Kumar Kalita. Kalita would be succeeding Maharashtra's Jav Kowli, who had decided against contesting for the post after extending his support to Shelar ahead of the elections. "I don't want to comment on the margin, I am happy that the BFI has reposed faith in me. I hope to live up to the expectations and take boxing forward," Singh said. - PTI

secretary general by his side in

#### Serena sizzles; Osaka, Barty toil

Melbourne: Serena Williams continued her impressive Australian Open preparations with a straight-sets thrashing of Tsvetana Pironkova Wednesday, as world number three Naomi Osaka and top-ranked Ashleigh Barty struggled. Williams has been in belligerent form at the Yarra Valley Classic and overpowered the Bulgarian with a 6-1, 6-4 victory in 74 minutes. The American will play world number six Karolina Pliskova or compatriot Danielle Collins in the quarter-finals. Osaka and Barty, however, were pushed to the brink, but both

avoided early exits at Melbourne Park. Japan's Osaka was made to work hard against in-form Katie Boulter, but fought back for a 3-6, 6-3, 6-1 victory to reach the quarterfinals in the Gippsland Trophy. Meanwhile, Barty also had a fright in her match against Marie Bouzkova of the Czech Republic, but recovered from a second-set stutter to win

### **Zverev, Tsitsipas**

6-0, 4-6, 6-3. — AFP

open with wins

Melbourne: Alexander Zverev and Stefanos Tsitsipas opened their seasons with fighting wins in the ATP Cup Wednesday as they warm up for the Australian Open, while Italy and Russia became the first teams into the semifinals.

Seventh-ranked Zverev had to dig deep to overcome Canadian dangerman Denis Shapovalov 6-7 (5/7), 6-3, 7-6 (7/4) and seal the tie for Germany. But he gained valuable court time ahead of another crack at a first Grand Slam trophy at the Australian Open starting next week. Germany's Jan-Lennard Struff upset Milos Raonic 7-6 (7/4), 7-6 (7/2) in the opening match and Canada are now out after a second narrow loss for Shapovalov, who pushed Novak Djokovic hard in their Group 'A' clash on Tuesday. Greece's world number six Tsitsipas was also forced to work hard by Australian Alex de Minaur, who won the season-opening Antalya Open last month, eventually triumphing 6-3, 7-5.

— AFP

#### **Irving punches** big to pip Clippers

Los Angeles: Kyrie Irving rattled in 39 points and James Harden bagged the 50th regular season triple double of his career as the Brooklyn Nets outgunned the Los Angeles Clippers 124-120 on Tuesday. The potential NBA finals sneak preview at the Barclays Center saw the Nets' big three of Irving, Harden and Kevin Durant combine for a total of 90 points to halt the Clippers' three-game unbeaten streak. Kawhi Leonard led the Clippers scoring with 33 points while

Paul George added 26 and French international Nicolas Batum chipping in with 21. The Nets were given a scare late in the game when a 118-108 advantage shrank to a single point with five seconds

remaining. Elsewhere on Tuesday, Fred VanVleet exploded for a franchise record 54 points as the Toronto Raptors demolished the Orlando Magic 123-108. - AFP



Pakistan vs South Africa: Second Test, Day 1 from 10.30 am on Sony Ten 2, HD

Big Bash League: Challenger from 1.45 pm on Sony Six, HD

**FOOTBALL** Indian Super League: North East United vs Goa from 7.20 pm on



Members of the Indian cricket team jog during a training session at M. A. Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai on Tuesday.

# WISE CAPTAIN

## My job is easy when Virat is around: Rahane

C. SANTHOSH KUMAR | DC CHENNAI, FEB. 3

After punching above weight against Australia, India are bracing for another mouthwatering heavyweight clash. But vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane made it clear that the team will not lower their guard when they take on England in a four-match Test series starting here on Friday. Not one to rest on his

laurels, Rahane said there was no room for complacency against England, who were the last team to win a Test series in India. 'We know what happened in Australia was special. We did enjoy and celebrate the victory. But it's in the past now. We have a lot of respect for our opponents, England. We will not take them lightly. They are a balanced side. We have to play good cricket and back our strengths. It's all about staying in the moment," said Rahane.



Virat Kohli (right) catches a ball during a training session at MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai on Tuesday.

Kohli. Now that Kohli is back from paternity leave, Rahane is happy to hand over captaincy to him.
"Virat is back and that's

a big positive. With him around, my job is really Rahane had led India easy as I can take a back-admirably in the absence of regular skipper Virat distributions and only need to help him. The captain has too

many things on his mind. As his deputy, my job is to visualise situations and give inputs to him whenever he needs them. It helps us a lot. We always think about playing as a unit," he added.

The curator for the opening test has said the suit spinners. We have to

Chepauk wicket would sport an "English look' with lush green outfield and a decent amount of grass on the wicket. Rahane, however, feels it's too early to say how the wicket will behave. behave. "Indian wickets always

wait and see," he added. In Ravindra Jadeja's absence, Axar Patel is tipped to make his Test debut. Asked about the bowling combination for the opening Test, Rahane chose to keep his cards close to his chest. "The team management will decide the combination only on the match eve, after the final training session," he said.
As New Zealand have

already qualified for the World Test championship, the India-England series will decide the other finalist. Rahane said India are not thinking that far ahead. "Right now, we are focussed on only the Chennai Test. The championship is still three-four months away. We deserve to be there though," he added.

Being in a bio-bubble with a lot of restrictions can be overbearing for athletes. But Rahane said Indian cricketers are mentally tough and know how to cope with it. not mentally tired at all. We are a family. We are enjoying time in the team room," he said

## Man Utd wreak havoc on Saints

Manchester equalled the biggest win in Premier League history as they crushed nine-man Southampton 9-0, while Arsenal had two players sent off in their 1-2 defeat

at Wolves on Tuesday.
Rampant United scored four times in the first half Southampton's Alexandre Jankewitz was dismissed in the second minute at Old Trafford.

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's side hit five more after the break, tying them with Leicester's 9-0 win at Southampton in 2019 and United's own 9-0 victory against Ipswich in 1995.

Aaron Wan-Bissaka's goal opened the floodgates Marcus Rashford bagged United's second. Jan Bednarek's own goal

made it three for the hosts before Edinson Cavani added the fourth. The goals kept coming as Anthony Martial and Scott

McTominay netted before Bruno Fernandes' penalty after Bednarek was sent Martial and Daniel James scored in stoppage-

time to complete an incredible display by United.
United's first victory in

three league games means

THE RESULTS

**Manchester United** (Wan-Bissaka 18, Rashford 25, Bednarek 34-og, Cavani 39, Martial 69, 90, McTominay 71, Fernandes 87-pen, James

Sourthampton

Wolverhampton (Neves 45-pen, Moutinho 49) Arsenal (Pepe 32)

they are behind leaders Manchester City only on

goal difference.

Meanwhile in another match, Arsenal had defender David Luiz and goalkeeper Bernd Leno sent off either side of a stunning 30-metre strike by Joo Moutinho that sealed a 2-1 emphatic wi Wolverhampton. win

Leading 1-0 thanks to Nicolas Pepe's 32nd-minute goal, Arsenal started its implosion when Luiz was given a straight red card for pulling back Willian Jos as the Wolves triker burst into the striker burst into the penalty area. Ruben Neves converted into the top corner from the spot in the fifth minute of first-half stoppage time.



Victor Lindelof (front left) of Manchester United and teammate Mason Greenwood jump for the ball during the English Premier League match Southampton at the Old Trafford stadium in Manchester on Tuesday.

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### **ROOT WANTS TO BE PART OF T20 WC SQUAD**

New Delhi, Feb. 3: England's Test captain Joe Root wants to be in the squad for the upcoming T20 World Cup though he understands it is not going to be a cakewalk for one of the country's finest batsmen in the game's traditional format.

Root will be appearing in his 100 Test when he leads England in the series opening match against India from Friday. The focus, for now, is the

four-match Test series but the technically sound Root has not given up on his T20 ambitions.

"For me, the most important thing is that

England go into that World Cup with the strongest squad and give ourselves the best chance of winning there, and hopefully, I can be a part of that squad," Root said. "And if no then I will be backing those guys because it would be a huge achievement on the back of what we have achieved in 50 over world cup," the England Test captain added. -PTI

# Important to post big 1st innings total: Trott

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, FEB. 3

Having played a crucial role in England's historic Test triumph in 2012, Jonathan Trott knows a thing or two about what it takes to achieve success in India. It was Trott's gutsy hundred and his century stand with Ian Bell in the second innings that earned England a hard-fought draw in Nagpur and then a 2-1 series win.

Back in India, this time as England's batting consultant, the former middle-order batsman is helping Joe Root & Co. by sharing his expertise. "My message varies from player to player, but the fundamentals of playing in India are the same. It's really important to post a big first innings total. Otherwise, it's difficult to catch up. So, whether it's with the bat or ball, you have to start well. Playing spinners and executing your strategy against them are the most important things," said Trott



**Jonathan Trott** 

who played 52 Tests. Trott said India's bowling attack is not just spinners England are leaving no stone unturned in preparation for the much-awaited series. "We certainly saw that India's pace attack did really well in Australia. It's important to prepare for everything; confronting the new ball attack, the reverse swing and spin in the middle. To be able to play well in Chennai's humid conditions is not easy. You have to be fit and switched on all the time," added Trott,

England skipper Root has been leading from the front by scoring a truckload of runs. Trott said captaining in subcontinental conditions is a skill in itself. "Handling the conditions and rotating the bowlers accordingly is a big challenge for a skipper. But, captaincy comes naturally to Root. He is a good decision-maker and has a great presence around the guys as well. I have full confidence in his ability," he

#### **POPE ADDED TO**

Surrey batsman Ollie Pope has been added to the England Test squad. Pope has fully recovered from a left shoulder sustained in "The injury August England medical team are satisfied with his progress and he is available for selection. He has trained with the full squad over the past two said an ECB release

## CA pull out, a dark time: Pietersen

New Delhi, Feb. 3: Michael Vaughan and Kevin Pietersen on Wednesday questioned Australia's decision to postpone their tour of South Africa and expressed doubts if they would have done the same with a powerful cricket

nation like India. Cricket Australia announced their decision to postpone the trip to Africa, citing

safety risk" in that country because of a fresh Covid-19 outbreak. Vaughan said it was not

a good precedent set by and Australia. "The Aussies pulling out

of the tour of SA is a huge worry for the game Would they have pulled out of a tour to India is the question ?? !!," Vaughan tweeted. He said the three big

"unacceptable health and cricket nations — India, England and Australia – should instead help the cricket boards, who are feeling the heat of the pandemic.

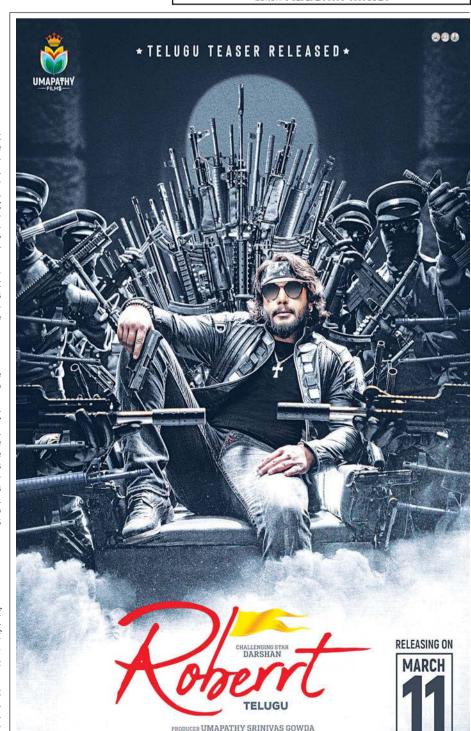
winner of the ICC Player

Kevin Pietersen too slammed Australia's decision to withdraw from the

way @CricketAus would have not played India in a Test tour. It's a really dark time in the world of cricket with CA

cancelling their tour of @OfficialCSA. @england-cricket also pulled out of SA due to Covid issues, but players test positive in SL and tour goes on?!, Pietersen tweeted.

On Tuesday, Cricket South Africa (CSA) had slammed its Australian counterpart for postponing the Test tour, saying it is "extremely" disappointing and will lead to "serious financial loss". — PTI



DIRECTOR THARUN KISHORE SUDHIR