

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

CHENNAI | WEDNESDAY 20 | JANUARY 2021

WEATHER



Max: 29°C
Min: 23°C
Rainfall: Nil

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Thai 7
Tithi: Saphthami/ Ashtami
Star: Revathi/ Ashwini
Rahukalam:
12 noon to 1.30 pm
Yamagandam:
7.30 am to 9 am
PRAYERS
Fajar: 5.20 am
Zohar: 12.23 pm
Asar: 3.35 pm
Maghrib: 6.01 pm
Isha: 7.17 pm
SUNSET TODAY 6.04 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.36 AM
MOONRISE TODAY 11.40 AM
MOONSET TOMORROW 12.57 AM

CORONA COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+13,566)	(+164)
1,05,96,228	1,52,747

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+543)
TN: 8,31,866 12,281

WORLD CONFIRMED CASES

9,63,00,853
DEATHS
20,57,050
COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES
219
worldometers.info

Minister Kamaraj goes under ECMO

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JAN. 19

Food minister R. Kamaraj was admitted to the super multi-specialty MGM Healthcare facility in Chennai on Tuesday as he needed ECMO support. The 60-year-old Minister was diagnosed with Covid-19 and admitted to the MIOT Hospital in Chennai on January 6. Later he was shifted to the Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital.

40 fishermen detained by Lanka released

Chennai: Forty Tamil fishermen detained and imprisoned by the Sri Lankan navy last month were released and brought to Chennai by a flight. The Sri Lankan Navy arrested Tamil Nadu fishermen with boats and imprisoned them at Sri Lankan jails on December 16 and 19 for fishing on Sri Lankan waters.

COUNTER POINT



STATE | 3
CM to inaugurate Jaya memorial on Jnauary 27



WORLD | 5
Russian Kremlin refuses to free Navalny

SPORT | 8

Washington retained for England Test series



Shardul Thakur holds the Indian flag aloft as Team India takes a lap of honour around the Gabba in Brisbane where India beat Australia by three wickets to win the Test match on Tuesday and the series 2-1.

Brave new India emerge on top Down Under

R. MOHAN | DC
CHENNAI, JAN. 19

Victory for Team India came as if in a fantastic dream sequence out of a Bollywood cricket thriller. This was one of Indian cricket's finest hours as a battered, bruised and emaciated touring squad, which could virtually be classified as India's B Team, downed tough host Australia at the finish with something to spare in the hour of the mandatory

overs at the "Gabba.. The series victory Down Under, only the second since 1947-48, will go down as the best ever in the annals of Indian cricket. No Indian team could have overcome greater odds in an away series as this one led by stand-in skipper Ajinkya Rahane who, to his great credit, allowed the chase of 324 on the last day pitch of a target of 328 to go on. If Shubman Gill had laid the ghosts to rest of a disci-

plined Australian pace attack, which has proved irresistible at the 'Gabba, where Australia had not lost for 32 years, with an attractive and attacking 91, Rishabh Pant was the enforcer who took the situation by the grip of its neck and stayed to the very end to fashion this remarkable win, his occasionally childish indiscretions saved by good fortune that is said to favour the brave.

Among the discomforts

of an Australia that has clamped down on normal life in the face of the pandemic was the absence of housekeeping and room service in a Brisbane luxury hotel and so it was in the face of more than just the Australian attack that India stooped to conquer, its fightback inspired by newbies Washington Sundar and Shardul Thakur when India were still way behind Australia in the first innings and seemingly doomed to face defeat. ■P8

Covid vaccination picks up, adverse effect 'negligible'

VINEETA PANDEY | DC
NEW DELHI, JAN. 19

India's vaccination drive against Covid-19 picked up pace on Tuesday with more than 6.31 lakh healthcare and frontline workers getting the jab amidst concerns over the efficacy and adverse effects of the indigenous Covaxin.

Though no adverse reactions of the two vaccines — Covaxin (Bharat Biotech) and Covishield (Serum Institute of India) — were reported on Tuesday after the cumulative 580 cases of Adverse Effect Following Immunisation (AEFI) in the first three days, healthcare workers in several parts of the country continue to show reluctance to take Covaxin. In most places the demand was for

INDIA TO SUPPLY VACCINE NEIGHBOR

India on Tuesday announced that it will begin supplies of Indian-manufactured Covid vaccines under grant assistance to Bhutan, the Maldives, Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar and Seychelles from Wednesday.

■ **REPORT ON PAGE 4**

Covishield. However, the Central government on Tuesday said both the vaccines are safe and healthcare workers should drop their hesitancy and take the shots. Union health ministry officials added that both Covishield and Covaxin have been dispatched to states and Union Territories and it is the

local authorities that are deciding which vaccines are to be used where.

Senior officials of the government said both vaccines are safe and AEFI is just 0.18% out of which only 0.002% needed hospitalisation following immunisation which officials termed as "fairly low and the lowest so far in the world in the first three days." The major concern has been with regard to Covaxin, developed by Bharat Biotech in collaboration with ICMR, which has been given approval for restricted use in emergency situations, in clinical trial mode.

Till Monday, 580 persons reported AEFI. Two deaths that followed vaccinations have been delinked with immunisation after post-mortem. ■P4

SC panel downplays prior opinions

SANJAY KAW | DC
NEW DELHI, JAN. 19

Under sharp attack from the protesting farmers' unions for their "pro-government" public stand on the three contentious agricultural reform laws, members of a panel set up by the Supreme Court to resolve the crisis said Tuesday they will "keep

aside their own ideology and views" while consulting various stakeholders, even as they indicated a complete repeal will not augur well for the much-needed agriculture reforms.

After their first meeting at Delhi's Pusa Agriculture University on Tuesday, a key panel member and president of

the Maharashtra-based Shetkari Sanghatana, Anil Ghanwat, said the farm sector reforms were much needed and no political party in the next 50 years would ever attempt them again if these laws were repealed.

He said the panel would listen to all farmers, including those supporting and those opposing the

laws, and then prepare a report for the Supreme Court.

Even the Supreme Court seemed to defend the selection of the panel members. "Opinions can change," Chief Justice of India Sharad A. Bobde said in an unrelated case, in a possible reference to criticism of the panel members. ■P4

ED chargesheets ex-min Ramana

New Delhi, Jan. 19: The Enforcement Directorate has filed a chargesheet against former Tamil Nadu minister B. V. Ramana, some government officials and a few others in connection with its money laundering probe into an alleged guthka scam in the state. The central probe agency said in a statement here the prosecution complaint was filed before the court of principal sessions judge in Chennai under various sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) with a "prayer for reward/punishment to the accused and confiscation of attached properties totalling to ₹246.10 crore".

It said those named in the chargesheet include former minister of commercial tax B.V. Ramana (December 2012-November 2013), S. Vignesh, the proprietor of Annamalai Industries, his associates who ran the alleged illegal

guthka business in Chennai, their family members and relatives. Also, seven public servants including two Tamil Nadu police officers, as many officials of the food safety department, two of the commercial tax department and one official from the central excise department.

The money laundering case filed by the ED is based on a CBI FIR after the Madras High Court in April 2018 had directed the latter agency to conduct investigations into all aspects of the offence of illegal manufacture, import, supply, distribution and sale of guthka and other chewable tobacco which was banned in Tamil Nadu and the Union Territory of Puducherry from May, 2013.

The three promoters of a company, Jayam Industries, which manufactured MDM brand guthka.

RED FORT SHUT AS CROW TESTS +VE FOR BIRD FLU

New Delhi, Jan. 19: A sample of a dead crow from Red Fort has tested positive for bird flu and orders have been issued to restrict the entry of public into the monument, officials said on Tuesday.

Around 15 crows were found dead in the premises of Red Fort a few days ago. A sample from a dead bird was sent to a Jalandhar-based laboratory for testing, Rakesh Singh, the director of the Delhi government's animal husbandry department said. Entry of public into monument has been restricted till January 26 as a precautionary measure, he said.

On Saturday, samples from a dead owl in the Delhi zoo had tested positive for avian influenza.

Last week, the Delhi government had banned the sale of processed and packaged chicken brought from outside the city and ordered the closure of the Ghazipur poultry market in east Delhi.

EPS closes door on Sasikala in AIADMK

■ **Party to spare 70 seats for BJP and allies**

G. BABU JAYAKUMAR, D. SEKAR | DC
CHENNAI, JAN. 19

Putting an end to all speculations of V.K. Sasikala walking out of jail and turning the political scene upside down in the state, Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami categorically ruled out any possibility of taking her back in the party fold.

Taking questions from the media after meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi at New Delhi on Tuesday, Mr Palaniswami without any ambiguity stated that Ms Sasikala, aide of former chief minister J. Jayalalithaa, was not part of the AIADMK and there was absolutely no chance of her joining the party.

Vehemently denying the rumours that the BJP was putting pressure on the AIADMK to let Ms Sasikala and the AMMK, led by her nephew T.T.V. Dhinakaran, into the party, he said the AIADMK was now func-



tioning properly without any hitch and there was no need to accommodate anybody.

Insisting that he discussed nothing but issues relating to the development of the state with both the Prime Minister and Home Minister Amit Shah, whom he called on Monday, the Chief Minister gave a long list of the projects to be inaugurated and to be launched. He invited Mr Modi for the events related to those projects, he said.

That the Prime Minister had not agreed to inaugurate the Jayalalithaa

memorial inside the MGR Samadhi became evident when the government announced that the memorial would be declared open by the Chief Minister with Deputy Chief Minister O. Panneerselvam presiding over the ceremony on January 27.

Earlier, it was said that Mr Palaniswami was going to Delhi to invite the Prime Minister to inaugurate the memorial, besides seeking funds for the various projects. On Tuesday, he claimed that he 40 fishermen had been released from Sri Lankan jails after he took up the issue with Mr Modi and assured that more fishermen would be released in the coming days.

Despite the open posturing of Mr Palaniswami that no politics, meaning alliance issues, were discussed, BJP sources in the state said that they were happy with the outcome of the talks the Chief Minister had with their national leaders in Delhi. ■P4

Drop policy, India tells WhatsApp

New Delhi, Jan. 19: The government of India has asked WhatsApp to withdraw the recent changes in the privacy policy of the messaging app, saying unilateral changes are unfair and unacceptable.

In a strongly worded letter to WhatsApp CEO Will Cathcart, the ministry of electronics and information technology said India is home to the largest user base of WhatsApp globally and is one the biggest markets for its services.

The proposed changes to the WhatsApp Terms of Service and Privacy Policy, without giving users an option to opt-out, "raise grave concerns regarding the implications for the choice and autonomy of Indian citizens," it wrote. The ministry asked WhatsApp to withdraw the proposed changes and reconsider its approach to information privacy, freedom of choice and data security.

WhatsApp had on January 16 delayed the



introduction of the new privacy policy after user backlash over sharing of user data and information with the parent company, Facebook Inc.

Stating that Indians should be properly respected, the ministry said, "any unilateral changes to the WhatsApp Terms of Service and Privacy would not be fair and acceptable." With over 400 million users in India, the changes will have a disproportionate impact on the country's citizens, it said.

It asked WhatsApp to provide details of the services provided by it in India, categories of data collected and permissions and consents sought.

Also, WhatsApp has been asked to explain if it conducts profiling of Indian users on the basis of their usage, as well as explain difference between the privacy policy in India and other countries.

Biden-Harris to honour Covid-19 victims

Washington, Jan. 19: Hours before they are set to take the helm of a country in crisis, U.S. President-elect Joe Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris plan to honor the nearly 400,000 Americans who have died from Covid-19 at a lighting ceremony in Washington on Tuesday.

The ceremony will be the first federal event memorialising the country's Covid-19 victims and will occur on the last day of Donald Trump's presidency, after the Trump administration's pandemic

response has been blamed for the United States having the highest Covid-19 death toll of any country in the world.

The United States was on track to reach two grim Covid-19 milestones on Tuesday - 24 million infections and 400,000 lives lost during the pandemic, according to a Reuters tally. The country has recorded more than 200,000 new cases and 3,220 deaths on average over the last seven days.

The memorial planned by the incoming White House

leadership was scheduled to take place at 5:15 p.m. ET (22.15 GMT) at the Reflecting Pool at the Lincoln Memorial, followed by a moment of silence and 400 bell tolls in Georgetown to symbolically honor the Covid-19 dead.

"The memorial will feature the lighting around the reflecting pool at the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool, and hundreds of towns, cities, tribes, landmarks, and communities all across the country have committed to joining the tribute in a national moment of unity,"

Mr Biden's inaugural committee said in a statement.

The inaugural committee said it was encouraging Americans to light candles in their windows in a show of unity, and that national landmarks including the Empire State building in New York City and the Space Needle in Seattle would be lit simultaneously.

Mr Biden plans to make coronavirus relief a top priority when he takes office on Wednesday under unprecedented security measures in the nation's capital.



National Guard troops reinforce the security zone on Capitol Hill in Washington, Tuesday. — AP

SHORT TAKES

CoP gives away digital gadgets to cops' kids

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JAN. 19

Chennai police commissioner Mahesh Kumar Aggarwal along with V Balakrishnan, joint commissioner of police (north Chennai), distributed 201 digital educational devices to children of police personnel who were at the frontlines during lockdown to help them in their online classes.

Hyundai Motor India Foundation (HMIF) sponsored the devices under the 'Shikshak' Project. Stephen Sudhakar J, trustee – HMIF, was present. The foundation also distributed 800 tabs to children of Covid-19 warriors in Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Ahmedabad.

S.S. Kim, MD and CEO, Hyundai Motor India Ltd., said, "Project 'Shikshak' was initiated towards creating a sustainable future for our communities realizing our global vision of 'progress for humanity'. The project aims to offer academic support to the Covid-19 warriors' children by bridging digital divide due to closure of schools, to help them continue their academic sessions seamlessly".

PIL to retrieve Perambur temple lands

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JAN. 19

A Public Interest Litigation has been filed in the Madras high court to direct the authorities to remove the encroachments made on the lands and ponds belonging to two temples at Perambur in the city.

A division bench comprising Justices R.Subbiah and Sathi Kumar Sukurama Kurup before whom the PIL filed by G.Devarajan came up for hearing ordered notice to the state government and Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments department and posted after four weeks further hearing of the case.

According to Devarajan, he was one of the devotees of Arulmigu Anandheeswarar Temple and Arulmigu Palani Andhavar Temple in Perambur. These two temples, which were under the control of HR & CE, own several acres of lands worth about Rs 1,000 crore. However, several persons have encroached the said lands and put up constructions. They also let out the lands for installation of towers to two cell phone companies without permission for about Rs 65 lakhs. The encroachers have also encroached the ponds belonging to the temples. Therefore, he sent representations to various authorities to remove the encroachments and retrieve the lands. But, there was no response from them. Hence, he has filed the present PIL, he added.



Nurses and Cancer Institute staff pay their last respects to Dr Shanta in Chennai on Tuesday. — DC

Condolences pour in for Cancer Institute's Shanta

From P1

Dr Shanta was associated with Dr S. Krishnamurthy, son of Muthulakshmi Reddy, in not just developing the Cancer Institute and providing accessible cancer treatment to the poor and needy but also building the specialty of oncology in India from the scratch.

Some of the benefits that the community gained from the cancer research and advocacy carried out by the institute were duty exemption for cancer drugs, free travel for cancer patients in trains and buses, making cancer a notifiable disease in Tamil Nadu and the first Cobalt machine in India.

Shanta had served as member of several national and international committees on health and medicine, including World Health Organisation's advisory committee on Health.

Winner of the prestigious Magsaysay Award, Shanta had also been honoured with the Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan and Padma Vibhushan awards in her life time.

Announcing police honours for the departed doctor from Chennai for her selfless service, Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami recalled former Chief Minister J. Jayalalitha bestowing the 'Aavay Award' on her.

Leading the nation in paying tributes to the doyennes of cancer treatment, Prime Minister Narendra Modi recalled his visit to the Cancer Institute in 2018 and said that it was in the forefront of serving the poor and downtrodden.

Governor Banwarilal Purohit said he was impressed with her unparalleled commitment and complete dedication to cancer patients and Adyar Cancer Institute. DMK President M K Stalin recalled her work

particularly the awareness on cancer that she had created in society.

Deputy Chief Minister O Pannerselvam, TNCC president K S Alagiri, MDMK founder Vaiko, VCK general secretary Thol Thirumavalavan and BJP State president L Murugan were among the political leaders who paid tributes to Shanta through messages, recalling her service to cancer patients.

Social media was abuzz with tributes from people from various walks of life. Even top doctors recalled her service. Diabetologist V. Mohan said, "for her integrity was the most characteristic of a human being".

Her mortal remains were kept at the institute, to which she dedicated her entire life and even lived within the premises, for public viewing. Health minister C. Vijayabaskar paid his last respects by laying wreath.

Thieves cook food in locked prof's house, scoot with jewels

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JAN. 19

In an unusual incident of theft reported from Tambaram, thieves cooked food and feasted after breaking into the locked house of Anna university professor. They soon fled with jewels and gadgets.

The incident took place in West Tambaram's Sri Sai Nagar area under the jurisdiction of Tambaram police station on Monday night. The police confirmed it on Tuesday morning.

According to the police, the robbery happened at the locked house of Ravi (39), a faculty member of

The thieves stole four sovereigns of gold jewels, two LED TVs and a laptop from his house. Tambaram police registered a case and began inquiries

Anna University. Police sources said Ravi, locked his house and left for Kambam, Theni for a surgery on January 5. He is being administered treatment at a hospital there.

Meanwhile, on Monday night, using sharp weapons, the thieves broke open the grill door of Ravi's locked house and entered, according to the police.

On seeing the doors broke open on Tuesday

morning, Ravi's neighbours informed him about the incident. Police said he rushed to the city and subsequently filed a police complaint stating that the thieves cooked food and feasted in the house before fleeing with valuables.

The thieves stole four sovereigns of gold jewels, two LED TVs and a laptop from his house. Tambaram police registered a case and began inquiries. Forensic experts collected fingerprint samples from the house. Police also recovered CCTV footage from the area to take the case forward. Investigations are underway.

Stray cattle continue to rule Chennai roads

T. SUDHEESH I DC
CHENNAI, JAN. 19

Though it has been a year since the Chennai corporation launched a campaign against the owners of the cattle that stray onto roads, by imposing hefty fines, the stray cattle continue to rule the city, making streets dirty, posing threat to the life of commuters and hampering smooth flow of traffic.

Recently K. Venkatesan, a T Nagar resident, got his left hand fractured after rogue cattle attacked him. However, the residents alleged that authorities remain oblivious to the nuisance of farm owners who let loose the cattle on the streets.

Venkatesan, a pharmacy owner, said the incident occurred on the street near his house a month ago when he was heading to his shop on the bike. "One stray cattle made a surprise attack on my

Recently K. Venkatesan, a T Nagar resident, got his left hand fractured after rogue cattle attacked him. However, the residents alleged that authorities remain oblivious to the nuisance of farm owners who let loose the cattle on the streets

bike. I fell down from the bike. My hand is in plasters even today. Though I have complained to the local officials, there was no response. I thought it would be a waste of time to press the complaint," he says.

R. Sivaramakrishnan, a resident of Gandhi Street in T. Nagar, who has been fighting against this public nuisance for a decade, blamed the owners for the menace by deliberately allowing the animals to roam free in the streets to earn leftover food from wayside shops and resi-

dents. "The authorities keep claiming that they were impounding stray cattle and imposing penalty on farm owners. But, the herds of cows are seen daily moving around freely occupying major parts of the roads. This situation has posed a threat to the life of two-wheeler riders and motorists. The recent attack on Venkatesan proves that the steps the civic body pursues are not at all a solution to the menace", he says.

V.S. Jayaraman, secretary, Motilal Street Residents Welfare Association, T. Nagar, said the issue could not be sorted out as long as these cows were allowed to live inside the city limits. "The farm owners abandon unproductive cattle on the streets and these animals roam around the streets for food by putting dung all the way. The cor-

poration should relocate them by setting up shelters to maintain their natural life," he said.

It may be recalled in December 2019, the civic body had set a target of impounding more than 20,000 animals a year. It had asked officials in each of the 15 zones to impound at least four heads of cattle every day from bus routes. The corporation also increased the fine to Rs 10,000 to prevent the menace.

Dr J. Kamal Hussain, city veterinary officer, Chennai Corporation, said they had set up special units with cattle-catching vehicles in each zone to impound stray cattle. If there is any specific complaint about this menace, we will be able to mobilise the team in the respective areas. We are also imposing hefty fines on the owners who do not comply with the rule, he said.

Couple killed in road accident

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JAN. 19

A couple died in a road accident on Tiruchy-Chennai national highway after the vehicle they were travelling in was hit by an unidentified vehicle from behind on Tuesday morning.

The deceased have been identified by the police as M. Srinivasan (35) and Adilakshmi (32), residents of Arundhati Palayam near Maraimalai Nagar in Chengalpattu district. Srinivasan worked as a construction worker, while Adilakshmi was a contract worker at a private company in the district.

According to police, on Monday the couple had gone to their relative's home in Maduranthakam. At around 8 am on Tuesday, the duo was returning home on a motorbike. While they were on Tiruchy-Chennai NH, near Mamandur, an unidentified over speeding vehicle knocked the bike from behind.

Srinivasan and Adilakshmi were thrown off the vehicle and died on the spot. Padalam police were alerted. A police team rushed to the spot and sent the bodies to the Chengalpattu Government hospital for post-mortem. A case has been registered by the Padalam police and investigations are on. Police have recovered CCTV footage from the nearby shops to identify the vehicle that knocked down the couple.

Halt Kattupalli port expansion: Youth, kids

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JAN. 19

Youth and children have appealed to the government to halt port expansion project at Kattupalli near Chennai. The activists from Chennai Solidarity Group (CSG) and Chennai Climate Action Group (CCAG), a city-based youth collective, have criticised the state government for handing over more than 3,200 acres of land for Kattupalli port.

The port is being developed by Adani-owned Marine Infrastructure Developer Private Limited. The environment impact assessment report says the port would be set up partially on poromboke waterbodies and another 1,967 acres will be created by reclaiming sea. Coming together as Save Pulicat Campaign, the two groups launched an art campaign by children and youth to save the Pulicat sanctuary and the livelihoods of fishers dependent on the wetlands.

More than 450 children from nearly 20 city schools have signed a letter urging the Chief Minister to drop the project and protect the interests of future generations. "For a city that is at risk from cyclones, floods and water scarcity, it is absurd to contemplate handing over 5,167 acres of ocean and inland water bodies to Adani and call it develop-

Public hearing postponed

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JAN. 19

Tiruvallur district administration on Tuesday postponed the public hearing scheduled on January 22 for the multi crore revised master plan development of Kattupalli port.

In a release, District Collector P. Ponniah stated that the public hearing for the proposed revised master plan development of Kattupalli Port by M/S. Marine Infrastructure Developer Private Limited,

Kattupalli Port, Ponneri taluk, Tiruvallur District, scheduled on January 22 at 11.00 am at Bhagavaan Mahaveer Auditorium, Shree Chandraprabhu Jain College, Minjur, Tiruvallur district, has been postponed due to the fact that more number of public is expected to gather at the venue site and so as to avoid any consequence of Covid-19 health hazard.

The public hearing will be conducted on a later date which will be intimated in due course by the district collector.

The port is being developed by Adani-owned Marine Infrastructure Developer Private Limited. The environment impact assessment report says the port would be set up partially on poromboke waterbodies and another 1,967 acres will be created by reclaiming sea

ment," said J. Prasanth, a volunteer with CCAG.

Sara Mohan, a school teacher, said children were concerned about the implications of the project on the lives of fisherfolk and the health of the Pulicat wildlife sanctuary.

Yashoda, a fisher elder from Kattupalli Kuppan colony, said their village had already been forcibly evicted once to make way

for the L&T Port. With the proposed expansion, the beach will be lost and six important fishing grounds will be buried under the Adani port.

K. Vijayan, president of Centre for Indian Trade Unions, said more than 55 percent of Tamil Nadu's port capacity is currently lying idle. There is no need for a mega port now at this location, he said.

Plea seeks basic infra for PHC

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JAN. 19

A Public Interest Litigation has been filed in the Madras high court to direct the authorities to take steps to provide basic infrastructure facilities and other amenities to the Government Primary Health Centre at Kannankurichi in Salem district.

A division bench comprising Justices R.Subbiah and Sathi Kumar Sukumara Kurup before whom the PIL filed by L.Sofiamary, a social activist came up for hearing ordered notice to the State government and posted after two weeks, further hearing of the case.

According to Sofiamary, the Government Primary Health Centre was situated near to her residence in Salem district. When she visited the PHC recently, she noticed several defects in the centre. Several villagers in the hamlet avail

the facilities offered by the PHC.

Mainly the PHC provides infant immunisation programmes, anti-epidemic programmes, birth control programmes, pregnancy and related cares and other emergency cases.

In view of the number of villagers availing the services of this PHC right from its establishments and several defects prevailing in the PHC, the PHC has to be upgraded. Therefore, she gave representations to the authorities pointing out the defects to be rectified immediately.

However, there was no response. She also gave a representation to the Chief Minister, when he visited Salem on November 27, 2020. The said representation was duly forwarded to the authorities. However, there was no response. Hence, she has filed the present PIL, she added.

According to Sofiamary, the Government Primary Health Centre was situated near to her residence in Salem district. When she visited the PHC recently, she noticed several defects in the centre. Several villagers in the hamlet avail the facilities offered by the PHC



Sturden attend class at St Theresa girls higher secondary school, Pallavaram on Tuesday. — DC

Enthusiastic students tread back to school

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI/OOTY, JAN 19

After a gap of 10 months, schools were reopened for classes 10 and 12 on Tuesday with students undergoing body temperature and oxygen level checks before entering the premises.

The pandemic crisis had confined students inside their homes and online coaching had become the order of the day since the lockdown last March, but they experienced the joy of being back to school, on Tuesday. The 218 schools across Nilgiris re-opened for class 10 and 12 stu-

dents. The scene was equally enthusiastic in rural schools and tribal residential schools here.

It was a moment of joy for children to meet their friends and classmates after 10 months, and for the teaching community, it is time to focus on teach-

ing to prepare the students who will be appearing for the public examination in the coming months.

Schools here have made all arrangements in compliance with Covid-19 prevention norms to accommodate the students with proper social distancing and wearing of face

masks. Collector of Nilgiris J Innocent Divya, visited the government tribal residential school at Devala on the Nilgiris border, and talked to the students there on the need to stick to Covid-19 prevention norms, besides focusing on studies.

Schools here have made all arrangements in compliance with Covid-19 prevention norms to accommodate the students with proper social distancing and wearing of face masks



A teacher of Everwin Vidhyashram in Kolathur tests students with thermal scanner on Tuesday. Students use hand sanitizer and maintain social distancing on the premises. — DC

SHORT TAKES

Trial run of paddy drier unit held

DC CORRESPONDENT
THANJAVUR, JAN. 19

The trial run of a drier unit that may bring down the moisture content in paddy from 24 per cent to 18 per cent was held at Ponnapur village in Orathanadu taluk, in the presence of Collector M Govinda Rao and TNCSC officials.

The collector said that Thanjavur district received 295 mms of rainfall during this month of January, and moisture content in paddy increased to touch 24 per cent to 26 per cent levels. If the paddy is treated in a drier, the moisture content will come down to 18 per cent which is the permissible limit for procurement.

Depending upon the success of the drier, proposals will be sent to the government for introducing them in various places, so that farmers can overcome the moisture problem in paddy, the collector added.

TN records 543 new Covid cases, 9 fatalities take toll to 12,281

Chennai, Jan 19: Tamil Nadu has reported 551 new COVID-19 cases, taking the overall infection count to 8,31,866 while nine more fatalities pushed the death toll to 12,281, the Health department said on Tuesday.

Recoveries continued to outnumber the new infections with 772 people walking out of healthcare facilities after getting discharged aggregating to 8,14,098, a bulletin said. —PTI

CM to inaugurate Jaya's memorial on January 27

Chennai, Jan 19: The phoenix-themed memorial to ex-AIADMK supremo and former chief minister J. Jayalalithaa, which was under construction over the last few years, is all set to be inaugurated on January 27, the state government said on Tuesday.

Chief Minister K. Palaniswami will inaugurate the memorial, an official release said here. Deputy Chief Minister O. Panneerselvam would preside while state assembly speaker P. Dhanapal, ministers, parliamentarians and party MLAs and other officials would take part in the event. Palaniswami and Panneerselvam in May 2018 had jointly laid the foundation stone for the memorial adjacent to the memorial of party founder and former chief minister M. G. Ramachandran located on the Marina beach. The government had earmarked Rs 50 crore for constructing the phoenix-themed memorial abutting the spot where Jayalalithaa, fondly called 'Amma' (Mother) was laid to rest following her demise on December 5, 2016.—PTI

40 fishermen detained by Lankan Navy released, reach Chennai airport

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JAN. 19

Forty Tamil fishermen detained and imprisoned by the Sri Lankan navy last month were released and brought to Chennai by a flight.

The Sri Lankan Navy arrested Tamil Nadu fishermen with boats and imprisoned them at Sri Lankan jails on December 16 and 19 for fishing on Sri Lankan waters.

Following this, the family of the fishermen requested the Central and state governments to take action for the release of the Tamil Nadu fishermen. Several political parties in the state also demanded their release.

After this, the Central Government held talks with the Government of Sri Lanka. Indian External Affairs Minister Jaishankar visited

Sri Lanka and held talks with the Government of Sri Lanka.

Meanwhile, last week 40 Indian fishermen in Sri Lankan jails were acquitted by a Sri Lankan court and they were handed over to the Indian Embassy in Sri Lanka.

The Indian Embassy in Sri Lanka has taken steps to send Tamil Nadu fishermen to Chennai by flight. The Indian embassy also issued emergency certificates for flight travel without a passport and the flight tickets for them were given by the Indian government. On Tuesday afternoon, they arrived at the Chennai international airport on an Air India special passenger flight from Sri Lanka.

On arrival, they were investigated by the officials at the airport for about 2 hours, after which they were welcomed by the officials of the department

of fisheries. Official sources said that of these 40 fishermen, 29 were from Ramanathapuram, 7 from Thoothukudi and 4 from Pudukkottai.

Speaking to the reporters outside the Chennai airport, one of the fishermen said "Our boats have been captured by the Sri Lankan Navy and they haven't returned. Therefore, the Central and state Governments should take appropriate action to rescue the boats otherwise our livelihood will be severely affected." He said, "When we were fishing in the Indian Ocean, the Sri Lankan navy trespassed and arrested us with boats. They tortured us. We requested them to release us but they continued to torture us". The fisherman requested the Central and state Governments to rescue the boats or their livelihood will be affected.

Kamal Haasan undergoes leg surgery

Chennai, Jan 19: Actor-politician Kamal Haasan on Monday underwent a leg surgery at a Chennai hospital and is doing well, his daughters Shruti Haasan and Akshara Haasan said in a statement on Tuesday.

Kamal had on Sunday said he would be undergoing a follow-up surgery on his leg. Shruti and Akshara took to Twitter on Tuesday to update followers on the veteran actor's health following the surgery, which they said was a success. —PTI



A volunteer dressed like Lord Yama creates awareness on road safety, organised by Vepery traffic police, at Doveton signal in Purasawalkam on Tuesday.—DC

Government wasting public money on publicity: MP Kanimozhi

DC CORRESPONDENT
KANYAKUMARI, JAN. 19

Thoothukudi MP and DMK's women's wing secretary, Kanimozhi Karunanidhi, on Tuesday char-

ged the state government of wasting public money on false advertisements released in view of the forthcoming assembly election. Campaigning in Nage-

roil as part of the DMK's 'Stalinin Kural', Kanimozhi referred to the government advertisement 'Vetrinadaipodum Tamilagam' featuring its achievements, said that the

advertisement was a complete farce as the Palanisami-led government had failed in all fronts.

Further, alleging that the government could not take

decisions on its own without taking orders from Delhi rulers, Kanimozhi criticised the BJP of running a proxy government in Tamil Nadu, and added, "This

will not last long as the DMK is to sweep the election."

Kanimozhi earlier visited the Tiruvalluvar statue at Kanyakumari and paid tribute to the saint poet.



The injured wild tusker at Singara jungles on Tuesday morning before it was tranquilized. —DC

Wild tusker dies in MTR

B. RAVICHANDRAN | DC
OOTY, JAN. 19

It was a case of 'operation success, but patient died' here in the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR) on Tuesday, as the efforts taken by the foresters to treat an injured wild tusker at MTR went in vain, as the animal died even before the treatment began.

It may be recalled that the MTR administration did a laudable job a couple of weeks ago to corner a 40-year-old wild tusker with the help of kumkis in Bokkappuram limits, and treated it for a deep injury on its back. Though its injury healed after some time, a couple of days ago, this elephant was seen moving again in human settlements in Masinagudi area, with a fresh injury on its left ear region.

On Tuesday noon, with the help of four kumkis, MTR forest and a veterinary team were successful in locating the injured tusker along the Singara jungles, and sedated it. After that, they shifted the jumbo to a truck to move it to the elephant camp at MTR for treatment. Though the animal made it well through the 10 km stretch, it suddenly collapsed and died on reaching the elephant camp at Theppakadu area.

LCS Srikanth, deputy director, MTR (buffer zone), said that the jumbo was very weak for the past few days, and hence, it was decided to take it to the camp for further treatment and care. Till reaching near Theppakadu camp it was alive. But, on entering the elephant camp premises it died. A post-mortem will be done on Wednesday, he added.

Rajini: Permit testimony via video-conferencing

ARULOLI. M | DC
THOOTHUKUDI, JAN 19

A petition was submitted before the Justice Aruna Jegadeesan commission on Tuesday on behalf of film star Rajinikanth to permit him to make his submission before the commission through video-conferencing.

Representing Rajinikanth on Tuesday before the one-man commission probing the Sterlite police firing case on behalf of Rajinikanth, advocate Ilambharathi said that the actor had sought exemption to appear in person before the panel, on health grounds.

The advocate again added that Rajini was ready to answer the commission's questions in writing if he was given a question-

aire as the commission did one-year ago on February 24, 2020, exempting him from appearing before it.

"The questionnaire sent through me last year was properly answered in writing and was submitted before the commission within a month, on March 2020," added Rajini's advocate. According to commission sources, chairman of the commission, Justice Aruna Jegadeesan accepted the petition submitted on behalf of Rajinikanth for consideration.

She is reported to have said that she was even ready to give two or three months' time for the actor to appear in person at Chennai itself, as Thoothukudi camp office did not have video-conferencing facilities.

Three sites for International cricket stadium in Tamil Nadu identified

Coimbatore, Jan 19: The Tamil Nadu government has identified three places in and around the city to construct an international cricket stadium, state minister S. P. Velumani said on Tuesday.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of opening of a skating rink here, the Municipal Administration Minister said the land has been identified near Bharathiar University, bypass and another on the outskirts.

The government would build the stadium for the benefit of cricket-lovers of the region, he added. —PTI

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SHORT TAKES

BIRD FLU: RED FORT SHUT TILL REPUBLIC DAY

New Delhi, Jan. 19: A sample of a dead crow from Red Fort has tested positive for bird flu and orders have been issued to restrict the entry of public into the monument, officials said on Tuesday.

Around 15 crows were found dead in the premises of Red Fort a few days ago. A sample from a dead bird was sent to a Jalandhar-based laboratory for testing, Rakesh Singh, the director of the Delhi government's animal husbandry department said.

Entry of public into monument has been restricted till January 26 as a precautionary measure, he said.

On Saturday, samples from a dead owl in the Delhi zoo had tested positive for avian influenza.

Last week, the Delhi government had banned the sale of processed and packaged chicken brought from outside the city and ordered the closure of the Ghazipur poultry market in east Delhi for 10 days after samples taken from crows and ducks at parks and lakes in the national capital tested positive for avian influenza.

Municipal corporations of the city had also imposed a temporary ban on sale and storage of poultry or processed chicken meat in view of the bird flu situation here.

However, the ban was lifted on Thursday after all the 100 samples taken from Ghazipur, Asia's largest poultry market, tested negative.

SC PANEL DOWNPLAYS PRIOR OPINIONS

FROM PG1

CJI Bobde said: "If you appoint a committee and if they had taken a view (earlier) it does not mean they should not be in the committee... It is okay. You have taken a view and you are entitled to change your opinion. Generally, there is a peculiar lack of comprehension on the constitution of a committee. They are not judges."

Noting their "biggest challenge" was to convince the protesting farmers to appear before the panel, Mr Ghanwat said the first meeting with the stakeholders had been scheduled for Thursday. So far, nine rounds of talks have also taken place between the government and the agitating unions without any concrete resolution. The next round of talks between the farmers' representatives and the Centre are now scheduled for 2 pm on Wednesday at New Delhi's Vigyan Bhavan. He said the laws implemented over the last 70 years were not in the interests of farmers, and 4.5 lakh farmers have committed suicide. "Farmers are getting poor and are under debt. Some changes are needed."

VACCINATION PICKS UP, ADVERSE EFFECT 'NEGLECTIBLE'

FROM PG1

Bharat Biotech on Tuesday again issued a fact-sheet saying people with a history of allergies, having fever, bleeding disorder or those who are on a blood thinner, pregnant or lactating, and with any other serious health-related issues must not be take Covaxin. The company listed pain, swelling or itching at injection point, body ache, headache, fever, malaise, weakness, rashes, nausea and vomiting as possible side effects of the vaccine. "In a document for this vaccine, it is mentioned that if there is a causal relation between immunisation and adverse event, hospitalisation cost would be borne by the authorities. There is a robust mechanism in place to track and monitor AEFI," Union health secretary Rajesh Bhushan said.

However, after the resident doctors association of Delhi's LNJP Hospital raised concerns over Covaxin on Sunday, the latest to raise a red flag is the Karnataka Association of Resident Doctors.

"The Central government has approved Covid-19 vaccine Covishield and Covaxin. Covishield has at least got an interim analysis report. However, Covaxin is still in the phase-III trials, where the trial is being done on healthcare workers. We strongly condemn this. Health workers should be given a choice of the vaccine. We demand that the government should provide a vaccine which has interim analysis," said Dr Dayanand Sagar.



Narendra Modi

AASU THREATENS TO RESUME ANTI-CAA STIR

MANOJ ANAND | DC GUWAHATI, JAN. 19

The All Assam Students' Union (AASU) here on Tuesday announced to resume anti-CAA movement by staging demonstrations across the state during the proposed visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union home minister Amit Shah to express their resentment against the BJP-led government.

The Prime Minister is scheduled to visit Jorajga Pathar in Upper Assam's Sivasagar district on January 23, where he is likely to distribute land pattas to over 1 lakh beneficiaries in a public function. He is also slated to address a public rally.

AASU president Dipanka Kumar Nath told reporters that the BJP-led government ignored the Assam Accord by imposing the Citizenship Amendment Act on the people of Assam. "Both the Centre and the state government have no interest in implementing the Clause 6 of the Assam Accord that pledges safeguards for the protection and promotion of Assamese identity and heritage. The BJP-led government at the Centre instead of taking steps to deport illegal foreigners are seeking to provide citizenship to the illegal Bangladeshis in the name of 'Hindu' religion," he said.

Accusing Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal of failing to take steps for implementing the Clause 6 of the Assam Accord, the AASU president said, "They have also not fulfilled their promise to seal the porous border with Bangladesh as yet."

He announced that the AASU will hold mass torch rallies on January 22 across the state. On January 23, the day Prime Minister is scheduled to visit Jorajga Pathar in Sivasagar, all district and regional units of AASU will wear black badges and stage demonstrations.

Shivraj's cabinet meet signals phase out of Covid rules in MP

Restrictions on transfer of employees due to pandemic to be withdrawn

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, JAN. 19

For the first time during the pandemic period, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Tuesday held a physical cabinet meeting here signaling that restrictions imposed in Madhya Pradesh in the wake of outbreak of Coronavirus last year would be phased out gradually.

Shivraj Singh Chouhan, who assumed office for the fourth time on March 20, ended the trend of holding virtual cabinet meetings by chairing the meeting of his council of ministers in the state secretariat in the morning.

The Chief Minister announced that the restrictions imposed on transfer of state government employees due to the pandemic would be withdrawn on April one and the routine transfer of employees would continue till April 30.

A dozen ministers in the Shivraj ministry including the Chief Minister had tested positive for Coronavirus. All of them have since recovered.

Till date, the Chief Minister has been holding cabinet and other official meetings through video conferences in view of the pandemic.

Meanwhile, in a sign of slowing down of the pandemic, the number of fresh Coronavirus positive cases in Madhya Pradesh dipped to 304, the lowest since the outbreak of the pandemic, on Monday. The state recorded three deaths on Monday.

As on Monday, MP has reported a total 2,51,882 positive cases and 3,756 deaths.

Total 2,42,996 Coronavirus patients have so far recovered in the state.

Madhya Pradesh has also reported vaccination of 9,543 people on January 16, recording 63.2 per cent of vaccination of registered persons on the day.

Similarly, the state has reported vaccination of 8,995 people on January 18, recording 59.9 per cent of vaccination of registered persons on the day.



A medic vaccinates a healthworker with Covishield vaccine during a countrywide inoculation drive against Coronavirus, at Rajawadi Municipal Hospital in Mumbai on Tuesday.

— PTI

Odisha: Health workers refusing vaccination may miss free shots

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC BHUBANESWAR, JAN. 19

The Odisha government on Tuesday sent a veiled caution to a section of health workers in the state who were not showing interest to take the Covid-19 vaccines. It said the health workers refusing to take Covid vaccination may lose the chance to get Covid-19 vaccine free of cost later.

"Many health workers have informed us in writing that they will not take vaccines as a mark of protest to non-fulfillment of their certain demands. We appeal to them to come forward and get themselves vaccinated so that they would be safe as well as family members. Those who remain absent during

● **MANY HEALTH** workers have informed in writing that they will not take vaccines as a mark of protest to non-fulfillment of their certain demands.

● **AS MANY** as 32,526 health workers were immunised in 375 sessions against the government target of 31,902 on Monday.

the vaccination, will be considered subsequently but those who refuse to take the vaccine may not get the same free of cost later," said state health director Bijay Panigrahy. Panigrahi said that the second day of the first phase was successful. As many as 32,526 health workers were immunised in 375 sessions against the government target of 31,902. The government achieved a 102 per cent target by vaccinating more health workers on Monday, he added.

As many as 192 sessions

were conducted on Tuesday vaccinating 16,261 health professionals, he pointed out.

Similarly, 92 sessions will be held on January 20, 436 sessions on January 21, 141 sessions on January 22, 178 sessions on January 23 and 279 sessions on January 25.

On Saturday, Covid vaccines were administered at 161 session sites across the state after the roll out of the vaccination initiative while the government while the inoculation drive on Sunday.

About 15,000 multipur-

pose health workers have refused to take Covid-19 vaccine in protest against the state government's alleged callousness in cadre restructuring and designation change.

The health workers, under the banner of Odisha state male and female multipurpose health workers'/health supervisors' united association, wore black badges on Friday as a symbolic protest and refused to take the vaccination if their demands are not met.

In a related development, the phase-II Covishield vaccines on Tuesday reached Bhubaneswar at 4 pm by a special Spice Jet flight. The vaccines — 33,450 vials — will be dispatched to various district headquarters in the next three days, sources added.

France announces vital 'strategic triangle' with India and Japan

SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI | DC NEW DELHI, JAN. 19

In a major move, France on Tuesday announced that there would be a "strategic triangle" along with India and Japan "committed to a rules-based Indo-Pacific" region. The announcement made by French ambassador Emmanuel Lenain in New Delhi during an "India-France-Japan Workshop on the Indo-Pacific" organised by thinktank Observer Research Foundation is being seen by foreign policy watchers as significant, given the increasing Chinese military and economic assertiveness in the

region.

France, though essentially a European nation, has territories in the Pacific Ocean and Southern Indian Ocean and so is also an Indo-Pacific nation. France is also a major strategic partner of India. It may be recalled that India, along with the United States, Japan and Australia, is already a member of the four nation Quad, an arrangement that aims to preserve a "rules-based order" in the Indo-Pacific region.

"We are building a strategic triangle between Paris, Tokyo and New Delhi, committed to a rules-based Indo-Pacific and in keeping with our

● **FRANCE, THOUGH** essentially a European nation, has territories in the Pacific Ocean and Southern Indian Ocean and so is also an Indo-Pacific nation.

values. Our joint work focuses on maritime security and digital connectivity," Lenain tweeted.

Participating in the workshop, Japanese ambassador Satoshi Suzuki said, "This vision of a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific cannot be achieved by a single country alone. It requires collective efforts of likeminded countries like India and France. At the heart of this shared vision are uni-

versal values such as freedom, openness, and inclusiveness. ... It goes without saying that India is the indispensable partner in Japan's endeavor to achieve our vision. A free and open Indo-Pacific is a natural shared goal for the two Asian maritime powers: Japan in the Pacific and India in the Indian Ocean."

Speaking at the workshop, Indian foreign secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla said, "An Indo-Pacific guided by norms and governed by rules, with freedom of navigation, open connectivity, and respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all states, is an article of faith for India."

AIADMK to spare 70 seats for BJP and allies

FROM PG1

It is said that the AIADMK had told the BJP that it would like to contest in 164 seats in the Assembly elections and not concerned as to whom the rest of the 70 seats goes. It means the BJP can distribute the 70 seats among the rest of the allies.

So if the BJP was keen on accommodating AMMK, it can give some seats from the 70 in their bag. Such an arrangement would give relief to the AIADMK from being intimidated by the PMK, which has laid down a precondition for continuing in the alliance, or the DMDK.

Those smaller parties would be negotiating with the BJP for seat-sharing and not the AIADMK. As Mr Palaniswami himself told the media at New Delhi that different parties would have different ideologies and would like to develop their own outfits and that an alliance did not mean compromise on ideology, the AIADMK would like to go to the people on the strength of its own popularity.

Perhaps reflecting that stand was a tweet by school education minister K.A. Sengottayan on Tuesday, saying that no one can shake the Dravidian movement in Dravidian land. Saying that it was the land of

Periyar and the will of C.N. Annadurai and M.G. Ramachandran had reigned, he said J. Jayalalithaa had eliminated the evil from the land.

The tweet sounded more like a message to the BJP and other parties like the PMK that had been speaking against Dravidian ideology and traditionally speaking about eliminating Dravidian parties, which include the AIADMK.

The AIADMK now hopes to romp home in the elections by enlightening the people about the various achievements of the government in the last four years and not by depending on other parties for votes.

POLITICAL | SCENE

People's Conference cites breach of trust between partners for decision

Lone's party quits Gupkar alliance

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC SRINAGAR, JAN. 19

People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), an alliance of Jammu and Kashmir's regional Opposition parties and their allies from the national Left parties, suffered a major setback on Tuesday as People's Conference (PC), one of its important constituents, pulled out of it saying there has been a breach of trust between the partners.

It cited fielding of proxy candidates by some constituents in the recently held District Development

Council (DDC) elections as the main reason for its parting of the ways.

"There has been a breach of trust between partners which we believe is beyond remedy," said PC chairman and former minister Sajad Gani Lone in a letter to the PAGD president Farooq Abdullah. He, however, assured Abdullah that the PC would continue to adhere to the objectives for which the alliance was forged.

"Gupkar Declaration" was a pledge for defending Article 370 and 35A by Kashmir's mainstream parties which they took at a meeting held at

Abdullah's residence along Srinagar's Gupkar Road on August 4, 2019, a day before the state was stripped of its special status and split up into two Union Territories.

The alliance performed well in J&K's maiden DDC elections by winning 110 out of the 278 seats last month.

However, Lone who was the official spokesman of the PAGD has complained that many of the alliance's official nominees had to face serious issues due to the presence of proxy candidates in the fray.

"I am writing to you in reference to the recently

held DDC elections and a spate of statements issued by leaders belonging to our party. The recurring theme of the statements was the fielding of proxy candidates by constituent parties against the officially mandated candidates of the PAGD," he said in the letter.

He claimed that the predominant feeling in the PC meeting was that the PAGD sentiment at top was not emulated on the ground. He said that the sad reality that emerged was that in majority of the places the party fielding the candidate on behalf of PAGD was left to fend for

itself and secured the votes that his party managed. "In most places other parties were silent bystanders or worst compounded the problem by fielding proxy candidates," the letter said.

Lone further said, "We believe that the votes polled against the PAGD are majorly the votes cast by proxies of PAGD constituent parties against official PAGD candidates. And the net outcome of selectively voting for and against PAGD is a very poor vote share. This is certainly not the vote share that people of J&K deserved post August 5...we look at the

statistics but out there on the ground people look at our actions and our intentions."

Lone informed the PAGD president that it was difficult for the PC to stay on and pretend as if nothing had happened. "There has been a breach of trust between partners which we believe is beyond remedy. The majoritarian view in our party is that we should pull out of the alliance in an amicable manner rather than waiting for things to get messier," he said adding "we will no longer be a part of the PAGD alliance."

Mumbai/Bhopal, Jan. 19: The makers of *Tandav* on Tuesday agreed to implement changes to their controversial webseries after several FIRs were filed against the political drama for alleged inappropriate depiction of Hindu deities and calls for its ban.

The day also saw many political leaders expressing the need for close monitoring of OTT platforms besides protests at some places with the demonstrators burning effigies of series director Ali Abbas Zafar among others. —PTI



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Letter No. 21/PU-NIVIDA/01

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On behalf of the Chairman Uttarakhand Peyjal Sansadhan Yojna Evam Nirman Nigam (Uttarakhand Peyjal Nigam), Dehradun sealed tenders in **Single Bid Two Cover Bid System**, on item rate contract Design, Build and Operate basis (inclusive of all materials), are invited for the construction, operation and maintenance of works of following water supply scheme from technically and financially capable bidders up to prescribed time & date and on the portal as mentioned in terms and conditions given below:-

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		1.3	Dhandara Water Supply Scheme Block Narsan Distt. Haridwar	75.00	10000.00+ GST (18%)		
13	World Bank Project Unit, Uttarakhand Peyjal Nigam, Haldwani	2-	Construction of following water supply scheme including review of design, Supplying, Laying, Jointing & testing of Rising Main, Distribution System, Construction of OHTs, Drilling & development of Tube wells and all appurtenant Civil & E&M works etc. Including Five-year Operation, Maintenance & Management on pre-defined Performance standards.			18 Months Construction + 3 Months Trail & Run + 60 Months Operation and Maintenance Total 81 Months	
14		2.1	Gauajali Uttar water supply scheme Block Haldwani Distt. - Nainital.	33.50	10000.00+ GST (18%)		
		2.2	Utmakhand water supply scheme Block Khatima Distt. Udhham Singh Nagar	42.50	10000.00+ GST (18%)		
		2.3	Mohafiy water supply scheme Block Khatima Distt. Udhama Singh Nagar	54.35	10000.00+ GST (18%)		

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"जल स्रोत को प्रदूषित करना दण्डनीय अपराध है"

DECCAN
Chronicle

20 JANUARY 2021

Amid turbulence, Biden's
US will re-engage world

It is at a particularly tense moment in American history that Joseph Robinette Biden Jr will take the oath of office on Wednesday. He will be tasked with reuniting a nation fractured by the misrule of Donald Trump, who has disavowed even the normal decorum of transfer of power rituals that exemplify the elegance of democracy. Mr Biden and his deputy Kamala Harris inherit a fractured nation ravaged by the Covid-19 pandemic, economic turbulence and cultural fissures caused by deep racial divisions. Between them, Mr Biden and Ms Harris represent vividly the true state of the United States of today of a mixed racial and cultural milieu but they will be up against a white supremacist cult living in a world of alternate reality that Mr Trump cultivated with his lies and converted into a bankable core of a dangerous vote bank.

The taut atmosphere in fortress Washington as it prepares to deal with violent threats to national security after the Capitol Hill invasion of January 6 is illustrative of what the new presidential team is up against. However distracting and divisive the prospect of convicting Mr Trump in the Senate trial and disbarring him from holding high office in the future may be, Team Biden will have to address the more immediate and impressive actions he has lined up like the \$1.9 trillion pandemic response that would need bipartisan legislative support and overhaul of health care, education and criminal justice systems with executive decisiveness. And all of that has to be done while attempting to "restore the soul of the nation" that he has promised. There will not be much place for the middle ground when it comes to dealing with facts like institutionalised racism and xenophobic anti-immigration.

Major reversal of policies are anticipated on the mix of sources for the energy grid with greater emphasis on alternative energy sources to keep in line with the Democrats' belief that climate change is real. A greater impact on the people will, however, depend on impetus to the US jobs scene but many nations will be pleased that the country will be rejoining the collective effort to try and bring down global warming. Putting a full stop to the beliefs of Trump Republicans that climate change does not pose a threat would in itself be a great contribution to protecting science and advancing solutions based on it. Leadership from the US in this fight for humanity would be even more welcome.

Sweeping American foreign policy changes can be expected and India, as a more trusted ally of the US in recent history, can hope to do much better than at a time when Mr Trump's empty promises came to nought and India is paying a price in not being able to pick up Iranian oil just as its techies faced hurdles in the H-1B visa program. As a driver of the India-US nuclear deal, Mr Biden is an old hand in dealing with India and his White House administration will have, besides vice-president Kamala Harris, as many as 20 persons of Indian origin with a majority of them in key positions. Pinpricks there may be in US views on J&K, CAA and other matters, but the chances of more meaningful country-to-country ties just got brighter.

Handle Nepal with sensitivity

The inability of Nepal foreign minister Pradeep Gyawali — who was on a three-day visit to New Delhi last week to attend the sixth meeting of the India-Nepal Joint Commission — to call on Prime Minister Narendra Modi in spite of his request for a meeting is in an indicator that India does not regard bilateral relations as being normal until Kathmandu restores status quo ante on the sensitive border issue.

In May last year, Nepal — without warning — incorporated Indian territories of Kalapani, Lipulekh and Limpiyudhara, into its maps. Prime minister K.P. Sharma Oli — raising a nationalist chorus to attract the support of other parties for the move — even had the Constitution changed to show these areas as part of Nepal. More, it placed its military police to demarcate these areas, although these had long been acknowledged as Indian lands by Kathmandu.

The Joint Commission has a development agenda. India stuck to that in talks with the Nepal foreign minister. New Delhi has also promised the Covid vaccine once domestic requirements are met. These steps suggest India's position of maintaining solidarity with the people of Nepal but not necessarily with its government until Kathmandu reverses its unilateral actions on the border issue. Only when that happens is India likely to discuss the boundary question with Kathmandu.

The domestic politics in Nepal is unsettled, and also evidently unstable. PM Oli has dissolved Parliament. National elections are scheduled for April. However, it is to be seen if these can indeed take place in the present atmosphere when the ruling Communist Party of Nepal has, in reality, split. China is taking an unusual interest in the situation and may well engender political impulses to prevent return to status quo ante on the border issue with India. In these circumstances the actions of the various domestic constituencies, including the armed forces and the royalists, besides the Madhesi — the terai people — bear watching. A wobbly Nepal invites undue foreign attention, and the Modi government has not been sen-

Subhani



Biden has tough task, to
keep autocrats in check



Anand K. Sahay

Far & Near

The aftereffects of the attempted "insurrection" at the US Capitol in Washington on January 6, which have turned American society and politics upside down, may be expected to reverberate worldwide. The impact of signal events is not confined to particular geographies. The history of the last 100 years shows this amply.

Although the Indian national movement against colonial rule was not fully formed then, the defeat of Czarist Russia in the 1904-05 war at the hands of Imperial Japan boosted nationalist sentiments in this country and created the confidence that Europeans can be defeated by an Asian country. Later, the Russian revolution of 1917 became an inspiration, creating the sense that the poor can overthrow empires. India's own independence in 1947 had set the tone for the dynamics of decolonisation worldwide.

Enough has been said about the sense of entitlement that sections of white America are thought to harbor, and that it was this feeling that Donald Trump — although he was in the White House — was willing to mobilise in his failed effort to overturn the result of a presidential election that he had lost fair and square. It has also been noted that the great institutions of American democracy held, though their weaknesses have also been widely observed.

As he assumes office on Wednesday, President Joe Biden will no doubt be deeply conscious that he is comes in as the chief at a deeply corroding moment in American life. He may perhaps worry how this may impact his capacity to work at policies in relation to the rest of the world.

America's leadership in the world depended not only on its wealth, its technology, and its great military power, but on its adherence to the idea and rules of democracy in a fundamental way, no matter how flawed this was in the perception of the people of the world. This democracy quotient, which gave the US an edge over any other powerful nation, has been brought into question by recent events.

Governments may continue to kowtow — probably in a wobbly way — to even the reduced US hegemony of the present day since Washington still has enormous financial clout and military muscle, but America has lost the constituency of the people on the world stage.

It is this disenchantment, brought about by events that have played out on television screens across the world, that has now unexpectedly empowered tyrants, authoritarians, semi-despots, crypto-fascists, military dictators, and managers of police states. The overlords of terrorism will now have less to fear.

These recent developments have also denuded America of its legitimacy. The US can no longer call out grimy regimes. These will now be more emboldened than before to inflict pain on sections of their own people and act in conscious denial of humanist values. Their policies are now likely to be less directed toward assuaging the hunger of their own people, and directed more toward aggression, militarism and narrow nationalisms, making the world even more unsafe for the most vulnerable.

Callous authoritarians typically seek to draw acceptance from the atavistic sentiments of the

majority population in society, or on a linguistic majoritarian basis. The people who are not of the same language, religion, ethnic stock as the majority may now expect to suffer more than before from perpetrators that may be direct agencies of the government or civilian gangs which routinely inflict public violence on fellow-civilians as the one-sided, discriminatory State looks on, in some cases still dubiously proclaiming faith in the tenets of democracy.

In India, both variants of the game have found play in recent years. Indeed, there are now not too many examples remaining of properly functioning democracies where the rule of law is for real, or even of seriously aspiring democracies for that matter. The dice was always loaded against the practice of democracy in the last century and in the first two decades of the present. With the fall of America from its pedestal, and India, the most populous aspiring democracy, already having taken a tumble, autocracy will have a field day unless people rise to resist.

America's much-vaunted institutions have just about held in the face of the vicious January 6 onslaught. No section of the US military was (probably) a party to that shame. But sections of the police evidently were. Among the mobilisers and participants were some armed forces and security services veterans, and they went into the Capitol with loaded weapons to look for key elected officials to kill. We might as well be talk-

ing about benighted places like Afghanistan or Iraq.

The fate of the Republican Party, the ruling party of the past four years, is uncertain. Many of its most senior figures appear keen to appease the constituency that raided the Capitol, suggesting that such sections carry traction. And this is the party of Abraham Lincoln, mind, not a clone of the Ku Klux Klan or white supremacists. If the fundamentals are to be noted, influential sections of the Republicans look ready to pander to the base that has come to harbour a sense of entitlement because this base has a deep sense of grievance arising from economic fragility and existential vulnerabilities.

Documented studies and surveys suggest that the new generation of Americans, not excluding the white, harbours a disappointment. Their life prospects appear inferior to those that their parents knew. Evidently, there is a serious structural malady which, if left untended, can lead to monstrous political outcomes.

American capitalism, and its military-industrial complex, has permitted the US war machine to rain bombs on countries around the world, restricting the US government's capability to come to the aid of those in trouble in its own society. This is a readymade situation for an ambitious demagogue like Mr Trump to exploit in the future also, and other demagogues in the world to follow his vile example. So, we should all keep our fingers crossed.

It is this situation that the incoming US President has to address on an urgent basis. Mr Biden has a difficult, complex, sensitive job on his hands. If he succeeds, an impulse toward future insurgencies can be held in check. In any event, pressing domestic concerns are likely to demand his immediate attention, but if the new President's energies in engaging with the world are severely rationed, autocrats around the world will be left smiling.

LETTERS

CUT HIM TO SIZE

Breaking rules with impunity is an old pastime of members of the film fraternity, the latest villain of the piece being actor Vijay Sethupathi. He cut his birthday cake with a machete which is considered an offence. In fact, the Chennai police have taken strict action against all those who had cut cakes using machetes and swords in the past. Tendering an apology subsequently is meaningless since the actor is expected to know what he had done was against the law. If rowdy Binu Papachan could be arrested (in 2018), there is no reason why Vijay Sethupathi should be treated differently for the same offence. Punishment is all the more necessary for those who make violations flaunting their celebrity status.

P.G. Menon,
Chennai

HISTORY REWRITTEN

The highest successful run chase in Brisbane was in 1951 when Australia made 236-7 against the West Indies. The Australians haven't lost at the Gabba since 1988, but Team India rewrote history by tenaciously scoring 329 runs for 7 wickets, clinching the series 2-1 in style. Dashing opener Shubman Gill's fluent 91, Dravid-like Pujara's 56 with 10 body blows facing 211 deliveries, the match-winning 89 not out by the resolute Rishabh Pant, the record seventh wicket partnership of 123 runs between Washington Sundar and Shardul Takkur and last but not least the brilliant, maiden 5-wicket haul by newcomer Mohamed Siraj silencing the Aussies in their second innings will be etched in the minds of cricket fans.

S. Vaithianathan,
Madurai

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Skand Tayal



North Korea's
Kim sends a
clear signal to
new US Prez

At the eighth congress of the ruling Workers' Party on January 5-12, North Korea's supreme leader Kim Jong Un (KJU) was bestowed with an additional title of "general secretary". In Communist parties, the general secretary of the central committee is the most powerful post as the party secretariat controls personnel, internal affairs and discipline. In the old Soviet Union, Josef Stalin eliminated all rivals as the CPSU's general secretary. After the abolition in 1982 of the post of chairman of the Communist Party of China, the country's paramount leader is the central committee general secretary, a position held by President Xi Jinping. In North Korea, KJU's father Kim Jong Il as well as the republic's founder Kim Il Sung had occupied this powerful position.

In recent times KJU has shown increasing sensitivity to the poor living conditions of the long oppressed North Korean masses and has given more attention to economic growth. The economy suffered badly from the sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council, the most recent in Resolution 2371 of August 2017. The North Korean regime is faced with an existential dilemma. Any compromise on giving up its nuclear

weapons capacity could threaten the regime's survival as it could open a window for a US-led external attack or internal revolt.

In an autocratic system where the supreme leader is seen as infallible, it was surprising for KJU to accept failures on the economic front. In his address at the congress KJU noted with regret that "the goals we set were immensely underachieved in almost all areas". In a candid assessment reflecting the economy's dire condition, KJU said the last five years were "the worst of the worst" for North Korea.

The North Korean economy, crippled by sanctions, was further hit by the devastating floods of 2020. Western observers estimate North Korea's economy may have contracted by 8.5 per cent last year after a modest 0.4 per cent growth in 2019. Covid-19 has also badly impacted the North Korean economy as it closed its borders with China.

The unprecedented 2018-19 dialogue with outgoing US President Donald Trump was triggered by the North Korean leader in his New Year message of January 2018 in the hope that North Korea may obtain some easing of sanctions without giving up its nuclear deterrence capability. In the three summits

between Mr Trump and KJU in Singapore, Hanoi and the DMZ, the US establishment managed to restrain President Trump from signing a limited deal that would have eased the sanctions without a time-bound roadmap towards "complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization" of North Korea.

In a signed article in Foreign Affairs last April, then candidate Joe Biden had set out his approach towards North Korea: "I will empower our negotiators and jumpstart a sustained campaign with our allies and others, including China, to advance our shared objective of a denuclearised North Korea." Herein lie the seeds of fundamental differences between the two parties: North Korea's stated objective being "denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula".

At the party congress, KJU issued a stern warning to the incoming Biden administration, threatening to expand its nuclear arsenal. He exhorted his scientists to develop new capabilities of solid-fuel ICBMs, hypersonic missiles and tactical nuclear weapons. This would alarm both South Korea and Japan as any future threat of using tactical nuclear weapons may elicit an equivocal response from the United States'

guaranteed nuclear umbrella. The development of tactical nuclear weapons would also require fresh nuclear testing.

In his opening speech, KJU designated the United States as its "biggest enemy", but also kept the door for dialogue ajar by asserting that the US changing its "hostile policy" was necessary to establish better ties. In his closing remarks, KJU vowed to "strengthen the nuclear war deterrent".

North Korea has not slowed down its development of nuclear weapons and delivery systems. In October, at the military parade marking the 75th anniversary of the Workers' Party, a massive new ICBM was displayed. In another military parade on January 14, North Korea unveiled a new submarine-launched missile claiming it was "the world's most powerful weapon".

To draw Washington's attention, KJU is likely to resume the time-tested North Korean policy of brinkmanship and shrill rhetoric. He may refrain from personal attacks on President Joe Biden but apply pressure by threatening an ICBM or nuclear test. The Trump administration's one success was to pressure KJU to temporarily cease high-profile testing. The last North Korean

nuclear test was in September 2017 and the last ICBM test in November 2017.

After nine years at the helm, the young 37-year-old KJU has evolved as a confident and mature personality. He met President Donald Trump thrice in full media glare and often made extempore unprepared remarks. He has gradually given some visibility to his sister Kim Yo Jong after ruthlessly eliminating any possible challenger to his untrammelled power. However, at the congress, Kim Yo Jong seems to have been dropped from the politburo which she joined as an alternate member last year.

The world at large needs to appreciate KJU's efforts to lead North Koreans in the direction of a better life while ensuring regime survival along with peace and stability on the Korean peninsula. South Korea's President Moon Jae-in is a sympathetic partner of KJU in this endeavour. India would hope that the two Koreas and the US work in harmony to pursue the twin objectives of the denuclearisation of North Korea and peace and tranquility in Northeast Asia.

The writer is a former Indian ambassador to South Korea

quick BITES

INDICATORS	%
Sensex	49398.29 1.72
Nifty 50	14521.20 1.68
S&P 500*	3,788.36 0.53
Dollar (₹)	73.16 0.17
Pound Sterling (₹)	99.61 -0.48
Euro (₹)	88.70 0.34
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	48,480 198 0.40
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	55.90 2.10
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.936 -0.35
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.116 0.019

* As of 8:30 PM IST

SBI, ICICI & HDFC systemically important banks

The RBI said state-owned SBI, along with private sector lenders ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank continue to be Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs) or institutions which are 'too big to fail'. SIBs are subjected to higher levels of supervision so as to prevent disruption in financial services in the event of any failure. The Reserve Bank had issued the framework for dealing with D-SIBs in July 2014.

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Most sectors see employment recovery Jobs move to low productivity fields

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, JAN. 19

Jobs have marked a recovery in most sectors but seen a visible shift in their composition. Jobs have moved from higher productivity sectors like manufacturing and services to lower productivity areas such as agriculture and construction.

In fact, agriculture saw higher job generation than pre-lockdown levels while real estate and construction jobs bounced back almost to the FY20 levels.

However, manufacturing, which accounted for 40 million jobs in 2019-20, saw employment dropping to 24.6 million in the June quarter of 2020, implying a loss of over 15 million jobs, finds a CMIE report. Manufacturing jobs recovered to 27.1 million in the September quarter and then to 28.8 million in the December quarter. "The shortfall is still quite high at 11.4 million. Every major manufacturing industry, except pharmaceuticals, employed less people in all three quarters of 2020-21 compared to the employment in 2019-20," CMIE said.

Similarly, jobs in the services sector fell to 128 million in the quarter of June 2020 from 154 million in March, recovered partially to 146 million in the September quarter and then 148 million in the December quarter. It is still short of the levels of March 2020. Retail trade, travel and tourism, educa-



- Employment in agriculture exceeds last year's levels
- Real estate and construction record near-complete recovery
- Manufacturing job shortfall is still high at 11.4 million
- Services jobs are still short of March 2020 levels

tion and personal non-professional services took the biggest hit on employment during the last three quarters.

On the other hand, agriculture saw the number of jobs going up during this period. Agriculture, which accounts for about 36 per cent of total employment in India, was the only sector that did not suffer any job loss during the lockdown. Employment in the agriculture sector hovered between 140 million and 150 million till the quarter ended June 2020. It shot up to a record 158 million during the September quarter, which was 5.5 per cent higher than the number of jobs in the year-ago quarter. It declined marginally to 154 million in the December quarter, but it was still 3.5 per cent higher than its level in the

year-ago quarter of December 2019.

"The increase in employment in agriculture during the lockdown indicates both, shift in labour from shrinking employment opportunities in non-farm sectors and also, favourable agricultural conditions during the year. This excess labour flow into agriculture shows in the record area sown under the kharif crops of 2020," said Mahesh Vyas, managing director of CMIE.

Real estate and construction industry saw a near-complete recovery in terms of employment. The industry employed an estimated 61 million persons in 2019-20, which fell to 28 million in the June 2020 quarter but recovered almost all the 33 million job losses by the December 2020 quarter.

E-VEHICLES GET FIRST BATTERY THAT CAN CHARGE IN 5 MINS

RACHEL MORISON
JAN. 19

Israeli company StoreDot Ltd has manufactured the first battery for electric vehicles that can be charged in just five minutes, a step toward making refuelling as fast as cars at a gas station.

The lithium-ion samples were produced by StoreDot's strategic partner in China, Eve Energy Co, and have been used as a demonstration in a two-wheeled scooter. StoreDot said that rapid charging batteries could overcome range and charging anxiety, a critical barrier to mainstream EV adoption.

However, batteries that charge this quickly probably won't be achievable at scale for years with existing charging infrastructure. Degradation relating to use of fast-charging also is an under-appreciated issue.

"This is a huge positive to the industry, making rapid charging on the go more convenient and reducing a huge barrier to adoption," David Watson, chief executive officer of EV-charging company Ohme Technologies UK Ltd. "But these benefits will take a while to come on stream."

—Bloomberg

Stocks soar as institutional buyers stay on sidelines

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD
MUMBAI, JAN. 19

Indian stocks rallied on the Asian markets' strength and hopes of the Chinese economy making a strong recovery in 2021 after a four-decade low growth last year. Equities made up most of the losses in the previous two sessions from across-the-board gains on Tuesday.

The Sensex gained 834 points, or 1.72 per cent, to close at 49,398 while the Nifty-50 gained 239.85 points, or 1.8 per cent, to close at 14,521.

However, provisional data showed both foreign portfolio investors and domestic institutions have turned cautious and remained on the sidelines, as FPIs were net buyers by just Rs 257.55 crore while the domestic

institutions were net sellers by Rs 199.30 crore.

The unusual surge in Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index helped other Asian markets to trade higher, leading to gains in the Indian market.

"Asian shares ascended on Tuesday as investors bet China's economic strength would help support growth in the region, even as pandemic lockdowns threatened to lengthen the road to recovery in the West. European stocks climbed

higher on Tuesday, sustained by hopes that an economic recovery following the coronavirus pandemic is not far off," said Deepak Jasani, head of retail research, HDFC Securities.

Among sectoral indices, BSE Realty (4.04 per cent), Metal (3.01 per cent), Auto (1.83 per cent), Capital Goods (2.70 per cent) and Bankex ((1.95 per cent) were the major gainers even as all sectoral indices closed with gains.

SALESFORCE INVESTS IN CLOUD STARTUP DARWINBOX

SARITHA RAI
JAN. 19

Salesforce.com Inc is making its first investment in an Indian company, a developer of human resources software that serves several of Asia's largest tech startups.

The US giant's venture arm is leading a \$15 million financing round for Darwinbox, its first in India and its only investment in Asia outside of Japan.

Headquartered in Hyderabad, the startup has already raised \$35 million from backers, includ-

ing Lightspeed India, Sequoia Capital and 3one4 Capital.

Darwinbox counts some of the world's largest brands and Asian startups among its customers including Puma, Nivea, Indonesian online mall Tokopedia and Singapore's Zilingo. It develops touchless attendance systems and provides hiring and onboarding and employment engagement tools to more than a million employees of 500 customers across 60 countries. The startup last raised funds in 2019 and has grown 300 per cent

since then, co-founder Jayant Paleti said. "Adoption of cloud-based services by enterprises was double the global average before the pandemic," Paleti said in a phone interview. The former investment banker co-founded the startup in 2015 along with a colleague and a childhood friend, a former McKinsey consultant. "Since the pandemic, we are seeing a shift to the cloud within a few quarters that would have otherwise taken three or four years," he added.

—Bloomberg

COFFEE-BREAK

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



Aries: Be on the look out for new opportunities. You should definitely try to be more considerate about other's wants and needs today. Failure to do this could create issues.



Taurus: If you are looking for a job change, chances are that there can be a connection. There may be some turbulence at home front, look out.



Gemini: Competition just might drive you to work harder than you used to. Communication may be a key to open a career door. Cultivate contacts.



Cancer: A stagnant or stifling situation may soon be removed or re-arranged. You could be a rising star at work. Joining a club will prove to be beneficial.



Leo: A relationship may teach you to let go of an old guilt or fear or negative attitude. The more you talk the more you will earn. So get yourself better informed about money matters.



Virgo: You will be single-minded as you take one step at a time and proceed towards your goal. You will be intent on taking chances with finances. You will be optimistic in real life.

You share your b'day with

Rainn Wilson, an American actor and writer. He is best known for his roles in *The Office*, *The Rocker*, *Super, Star Trek: Discovery*, *The Meg*, *Blackbird*, *Don't Tell A Soul* and *Utopia*.



Libra: You will have more work than what you can handle. You will know how to blow away the distress clouds from your life. You will be able to maintain a happy disposition.



Scorpio: Soon you might meet someone who is competitive or headstrong. Let go of any self-righteousness before it blows up in your face.



Sagittarius: Your religious or spiritual beliefs could be changing now. You may appear attractive to a person who likes a challenge. Do not get caught up in trivial issues.



Capricorn: You will hesitate to voice your opinion because you fear you will not be heard. You might feel that your life is not under your own control now. Take help from parents.



Aquarius: You will want to talk about a wider range of topics than usual, but are tending to shy of anything too emotional. Do not rush ahead too quickly when building a new relationship.



Pisces: Your spouse will be very supportive and shower you with love and affection. Today you should stand back and observe things from a wider perspective. Those in creative line will be successful.

bridge
PHILLIP
ALDER

COME ON PARTNER, HAVE SOME GOODIES

A Venezuelan proverb says: "A good friend will lift you like ring to finger." A good bridge partner will have cards in your long suit, giving you a good fit and allowing you to ring the scoring bell in that deal. Look only at the West hand in the diagram. With both sides vulnerable, your right-hand opponent opens two no-trump. What would you do? How high would you bid without a squeak from partner?

At the time, West over-called three hearts, which was Cappelletti, showing at least 5-5 in hearts and a minor — perfect. Then North doubled, a transfer to spades. This is called "stolen bid", meaning that if West had passed, North would have bid three hearts herself. I am not a fan of this agreement unless an opponent intervenes over one no-trump with two clubs, natural or showing a one-suiter some-

North	South
♠ A Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2	♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2	♥ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2	♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2	♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

Word Mine

Y
P T N
R U E L

TODAY'S RATINGS: 19 AVERAGE: 21
GOOD: 22 OUTSTANDING

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

Print your answer here:

Yesterday's Jumbles: BLEAK DODGE GLOSSY AT TACH
Answer: With every unit rented, the owners of the apartment building were happy. — TO SAY THE 'LEASED'

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Print your answer here:

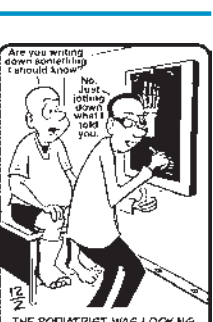
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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

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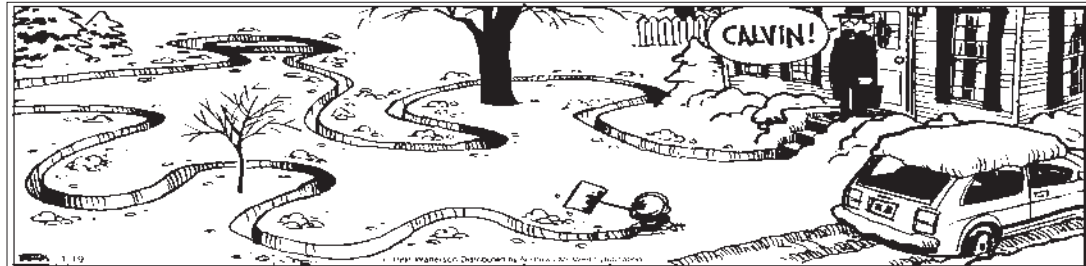
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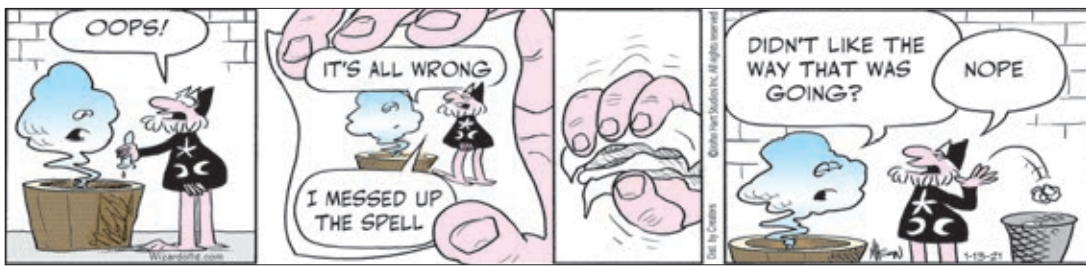
Yesterday's Jumbles: BLEAK DODGE GLOSSY AT TACH
Answer: With every unit rented, the owners of the apartment building were happy. — TO SAY THE 'LEASED'

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CALVIN AND HOBBS | Bill Watterson



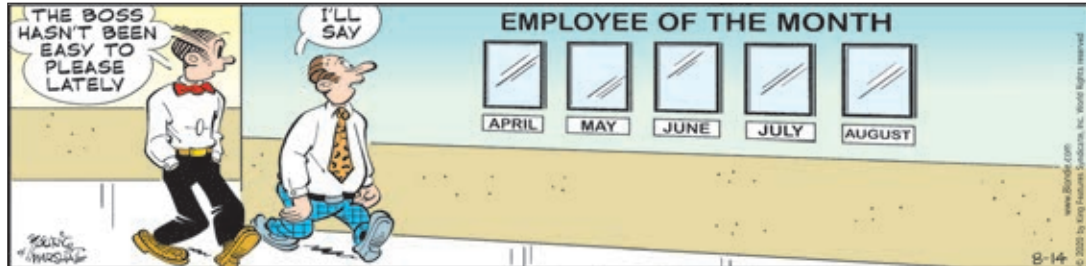
THE WIZARD OF ID | Parker and Hartsd



ARCHIE | Bill Henry Scarpelli & Craig Boldman



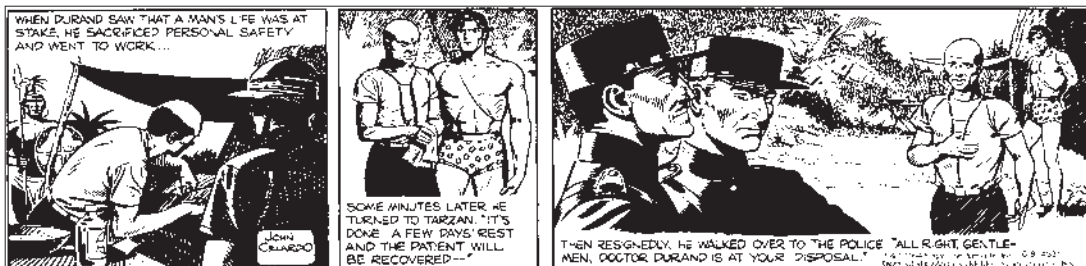
BLONDIE | Dean Young and John Marshall



ANDY CAPP | Reg Smythe



TARZAN | Edgar Rice Burroughs



SHORT TAKES

Shastri in tears after 'unreal' win

Brisbane: Ravi Shastri claims to be anything but an emotional person.

As a 22-year-old captain of the India U-25 team back in 1984, he had stopped the team manager from telling rookie Mohammed Azharuddin about his grandfather's ill health to ensure that the player, who was on the verge of breaking into the Indian team did not leave a match and hamper his chances. He is a 'khadoos' (resilient in Marathi) Mumbaier who will hardly get mushy. But that was before Tuesday when he watched Rishabh Pant take a lap of honour with the national flag, hand it over to a proud Mohammed Siraj and then to Shardul Thakur.

"I got emotional. I am not someone who generally has tears in his eyes and even I got emotional," the India head coach, still trying to soak in what his wards had achieved, confessed to a quote-hungry media after his team of mostly greenhorns outfoxed Australia 2-1 in a Test series.

"I had tears because this is unreal. What these guys have pulled off will go down in history as one of the greatest series ever played. When you look at the Covid situation and state of injuries and then to show the stomach for a fight, after being bowled out for 36 is unimaginable," said the veteran of 80 Tests.

Known for his one-liners, Shastri was still gathering his thoughts after what unfolded here. "This is the toughest tour ever. Nothing comes closer to this. This surpasses all," he said.

— PTI

Team to get ₹5cr bonus from BCCI

New Delhi: The BCCI on Tuesday announced a ₹5 crore bonus for the Indian cricket team after the Ajinkya Rahane-led side won the fourth and final Test against Australia to clinch the series 2-1 and retain the Border-Gavaskar trophy. BCCI President Sourav Ganguly and Secretary Jay Shah tweeted within minutes of each other to make the announcement. The Board later issued a formal statement, applauding the team. "It was a series that showcased grit, determination and resilience of the highest quality," the BCCI said.

"The Board applauds the efforts displayed by the team on and off the field... The BCCI is proud of this magnificent feat and has announced a cash reward of 5 crore INR to the team," it added.

Ganguly said the "value of this win is beyond any number." "We are extremely proud of the series win. Beating Australia in Australia by a young team will remain etched in the history of Indian cricket forever.

"It cannot get better than this. I am so proud of everyone. Congratulations to Ajinkya Rahane and Ravi Shastri and the rest of the touring party for this remarkable feat," he said.

BCCI secretary Jay Shah echoed the sentiment.

"Heartiest congratulations to every member of the Indian cricket team. The team overcame the odds, injuries and a tough opposition and showed great character, resolve and courage to win the historic Test series in Australia for the second time in a row." — PTI

Sundar retained for Eng Test series

New Delhi: Virat Kohli returned to lead India against England in the upcoming home Test series while the selectors also recalled all-rounder Hardik Pandya and pacer Ishant Sharma to bolster the squad, announced by the BCCI on Tuesday. Kohli, who headed back to India on a paternity leave after the Adelaide Test, was named in the 18-man squad along with pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, who missed the final Test in Brisbane against Australia due to an abdominal strain.

Squad: Virat Kohli (C), Rohit Sharma, Mayank Agarwal, Shubman Gill, Cheteshwar Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane (VC), KL Rahul, Hardik Pandya, Rishabh Pant, Wriddhiman Saha, R Ashwin, Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Ishant Sharma, Jasprit Bumrah, Md. Siraj, Shardul Thakur

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Indian players celebrate with the trophy after defeating Australia by three wickets on the final day of the fourth Test at the Gabba in Brisbane on Tuesday. India won the four-Test series 2-1.

— AP

RISHABH!

Rishabh leads India to series win after rookies demonstrate daredevilry

Brisbane, Jan. 19: An Indian cricket team saddled with broken bones and battered bodies showed a never-seen-before zeal to retain the coveted Border-Gavaskar trophy with a historic three-wicket win over Australia in the fourth and final Test here, successfully chasing a 328-run target to seal the four-match series 2-1.

A minefield of talent called Rishabh Pant (89 not out off 138 balls) channelled his inner 'Mad Max' to scare the daylight out of the Australians with his breathtaking stroke-play, ending the home team's 32-year-old unbeaten run at the 'Fortress Gabba'.

The result has the potential to end Tim Paine's reign as Australia captain having lost back-to-back home series against India.

"Whether it was with bat, ball or field, every time we had a chance to go ahead in the game, we let it slip," Paine said after the rather poor performance by his team.

The highlights package of Pant's battle with Nathan Lyon on Tuesday night repeatedly in times to come as he demolished the 100-Test man in company of debutant Washington Sundar (22), who

hooked the world's best fast bowler, Pat Cummins, for a six.

No one moved from their seats as Pant cut, drove, and paddle-swept to make a statement to his detractors while gifting India one of their finest overseas wins during the dying moments of the final session with an off-driven boundary.

While Shubman Gill (91 off 146 balls) announced his arrival on the global stage, Cheteshwar Pujara (56 off 211 balls) surpassed all the pain barriers en route his slowest Test fifty that held the game in balance for Pant to launch a final assault.

The Australian team wouldn't feel too good about not being able to win a Test match with an opposition that was finding it difficult to field a fit first XI a day prior to the Test match.

Add to it, the visitors were also left quite hurt by the racial slurs directed at the likes of Mohammed Siraj and Jasprit Bumrah by the crowd during the Sydney Test. The series will be remembered for ages and the impact that Ajinkya Rahane's team had on the cricketing fraternity and the fans in general will be written in golden words when a fresh history of Test cricket after 2000 is written.

— PTI



Mohammed Siraj (right) celebrates India's series win with Rishabh Pant at the Gabba in Brisbane on Tuesday. — AFP

AUSTRALIA'S FIRST LOSS AT GABBA SINCE 1988

■ Australia's defeat was their first at Brisbane in 32 years. Last time they lost was against the West Indies in 1988. In between these two defeats, Australia went unbeaten for 31 Tests. The only other venue to witness a longer streak is Karachi, where Pakistan remained unbeaten for 34 successive Tests between 1955 and 2000.

■ India won the four-Test series 2-1 despite losing the first Test match. This is only the fourth instance in which a team has come back from a Test down or worse to beat Australia in Australia. On all the three previous occasions, it was England — in 1882-83, 1911-12 and 1954-55 — who managed that.

PANT SURPASSES DHONI

■ Rishabh Pant became the 68th Indian batsman to complete 1,000 runs in Test cricket. By completing the same in the 27th innings of 16th Test match, he is the fastest among the seven Indian wicket-keeper to score 1,000 runs in Tests. Mahendra Singh Dhoni who completed 1,000 runs in 32 innings of 20 Test matches, held the previous Indian record.

INDIA'S JOINT 4TH SMALLEST WIN IN TESTS

■ India recorded their joint fourth smallest win in Tests by beating Australia by three wickets in fourth Test at Brisbane. India's one-wicket win over Australia at Mohali in 2010-11 is the smallest win followed by two two-wicket victories against Australia at Mumbai in 1964-65 and at Chennai in 2000-01. India also achieved a three-wicket win over the West Indies at Chennai in 1978-79.

■ India's 329/7 is their third highest fourth innings total to win the match. The highest is 406/4 against the West Indies at Port of Spain in 1975-76. India beat England by six wickets at Chennai in 2008-09 after making 387 which is India's second highest fourth inning total to win in Tests.

■ This is also the fifth-highest successful chase in Australia. In the last 20 years, only South Africa have chased down a higher total in Australia, when they scored 414 at Perth in 2008.

— S. PERVEZ QAISER

Biggest moment of life for Pant

Brisbane, Jan. 19: After playing a key role in India's breathtaking and successful run chase in the series-deciding fourth Test against Australia, Rishabh Pant on Tuesday called the historic win as the "biggest moment" of his life.

"This is one of the biggest moments of my life now, and I'm happy that all the support staff and all my teammates supported me even when I wasn't playing," Pant said at the post-match presentation ceremony.

India did not play Pant in

● **Rishabh Pant took the intimidating Australian attack on a challenging fifth day track by the scruff of its neck to conjure up an unbeaten 89-run knock that powered India to a 2-1 Test series victory.**

either the preceding ODI or the T20 series. But the young wicketkeeper-batsman made an impression in the Test series, playing a combative 97-run knock in the second innings in Sydney and again here on Tuesday.

"It's been a dream series. The team management

always backs me and tells me, you are a match-winner and you have to go win the match for the team. I keep thinking every day that I want to win matches for India, and I did it today," Pant said.

Asked about the pitch that had cracks all over, Pant said, "It was a fifth-day

pitch and the ball was turning a bit. I thought I have to be disciplined with my shot selection."

India skipper Ajinkya Rahane initially struggled to find words but gathered himself to praise his courageous teammates.

"It means a lot to us. I don't know how to describe this, but our boys showed a lot of character and determination after the Adelaide Test," Rahane, who led India in the absence of Virat Kohli, said.

"I'm really proud of each individual."

— PTI



We are all overjoyed at the success of the Indian Cricket Team in Australia. Their remarkable energy and passion was visible throughout. So was their stellar intent, remarkable grit and determination. Congratulations to the team! Best wishes for your future endeavours.

— NARENDRA MODI
Prime Minister

EVERY SESSION WE DISCOVERED A NEW HERO. Every time we got hit, we stayed put & stood taller. We pushed boundaries of belief to play fearless but not careless cricket. Injuries & uncertainties were countered with poise & confidence. One of the greatest series wins! Congrats India.

— SACHIN TENDULKAR
India legend

WHAT A WIN!!! Yesssssss. To everyone who doubted us after Adelaide, stand up and take notice. Exemplary performance but the grit and determination was the standout for us the whole way. Well done to all the boys and the management. Enjoy this historic feat lads.

Cheers @BCCI.
— VIRAT KOHLI
India captain

This win is going in history books! Young team beating a experienced Australian side I don't think I was so proud while I was playing for india Flag of India #Unbelievable stuff #test cricket at it's best congratulations boys Man dancingFisted handFisted handFisted hand #IndiansAustralia

— YUVRAJ SINGH
Ex-India all-rounder

Khushi ke maare pagal. This is the new India. Ghar mein ghuskar maarta hai. From what happened in Adelaide to this, these young guys have given us a joy of a lifetime. There have been World Cup wins but this is special. And yes, there is a reason Pant is extra special.

— VIRENDER SEHWAG
Ex-India opener

No matter what happens, we shall always play like the team called INDIA! You don't get to see such performances everyday. Take a bow champs!

— DINESH KARTHIK
India wicket-keeper

Congrats to the Indian cricket team @BCCI... That's one of the best series wins I can ever remember on Aust soil & to do it after being bowled out for 36, plus a depleted squad-shows tremendous character, resilience, courage & belief.

— SHANE WARNE
Former Aussie spin wizard

Test cricket's heart is beating strongly! That was an extraordinary win @BCCI & a fantastic series to watch. Aussies not lost at The Gabba since 1988. Wow

— STUART BROAD
England player

India thoroughly deserved to win this series, against all odds they stood tall. Australia has some serious thinking to do, had the advantage of home series, fitness and the toss across the series! #AUSvIND

— TOM MOODY
Former Australia player



Indian captain Ajinkya Rahane (left) applauds supporters as the team takes a victory lap carrying the national flag around The Gabba in Brisbane on Tuesday.

— AP

Pujara exemplified raw courage

From Page 1

Displaying guts and gumption in the Test arena that are especially expected of him, Cheteshwar Pujara exemplified raw physical courage in the face of hot pace on a wearing pitch, taking nearly 10 blows on his body and helmet, some so painfully on his hands that it would be a miracle if he did not suffer broken bones. Without Pujara keeping an end up while others sought runs more positively from the other, India would have been in no position to sustain the showing on a fifth day surface sporting cracks and playing up.

It was India's good fortune that the Met office was as wrong as it usually is in that the spectacular Brisbane thunderstorms they forecast

A doting dad Virat Kohli could only watch all this on television like the rest of us but he had contributed enough for this Team India to grow under his leadership in the last six to seven years with the dynamics of modern cricket drilled into them that victory must be chased at all costs, except when it proves impossible in a Test match.

stayed away, as if in tribute to the guts, grit and glory of Team India. In great weather, courageous batting methods promised resistance while Shubman and Pant took the battle to the bowlers.

A fumbling skipper and wicket-keeper Tim Paine was to be at the receiving end as India recovered remarkably from the depths of 36 all out against the pink ball in Adelaide to victory in Melbourne, an astonishing young brigade of Indian cricketers who have

then the series-clinching win in Brisbane.

The valiant efforts of a Pat Cummins of a Glenn McGrath kind of pinpoint accuracy were not sufficient for Australia to keep the Indians at bay. It was appropriate then that the baby-faced Rishabh Pant, often the subject of ridicule for his lapses as wicket-keeper, should carry the Indian tricolour with pride around the 'Gabba'. For he is a splendid representative of a fearless and emerging young brigade of Indian cricketers who have

grown up basically on white ball cricket and yet excelled with or against the red ball when the call of duty was at its most intense.

A doting dad Virat Kohli could only watch all this on television like the rest of us but he had contributed enough for this Team India to grow under his leadership in the last six to seven years with the dynamics of modern cricket drilled into them that victory must be chased at all costs, except when it proves impossible in a Test match and then a draw could become a badge of fortitude as it did at the SCG. And what a finale for a group of cricketers who have been away from home for months on end since the IPL ventured into the Covid world with a bio-secure bubble.