



'CENTRE CONCERNED
ABOUT THE RICH AND
POWERFUL'

P5



\$82 BN INVESTMENT
IN PORT PROJECTS
BY 2035: MODI

P8



US SETS SANCTIONS
OVER RUSSIA OPP
LEADER'S POISONING

P10



THE CEREBRAL,
SEASONED
CAMPAIGNER

P12

WEATHER

Mainly clear sky. Mist in the morning. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 30 and 14 degrees Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: Nil

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 88% Min: 44%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 28.8°C (+2) Min: 15.3°C (+2)

SUN RISES SUN SETS

06:43 hrs 18:22 hrs

MOON RISES MOON SETS

22:47 hrs 10:07 hrs

THUMBNAILS



Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath during a public rally 'Parivartan Yatra', at Gazole in Malda district on Tuesday.

Bengal polling time extended: The Election Commission has extended the polling time by 30 minutes for the first phase of West Bengal Assembly elections, and voters will now be able to exercise their franchise from 7 a.m. to 6.30 p.m., a notification issued by the poll panel on Tuesday said. The decision was taken in view of the Covid-19 restrictions, an election official said. The first phase of elections is scheduled to be held on 27 March in 30 assembly constituencies.

P5

Indigo flight makes emergency landing in Karachi: An Indigo flight from Sharjah to Lucknow made an emergency landing at the Karachi airport in Pakistan on Tuesday morning after a passenger on board fell sick and later died. An official of the Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority said the landing permission was granted to the Captain of the Lucknow-bound IndiGo flight 6E1412 after an elderly passenger identified as 67-year-old Habib Ur Rehman fell seriously ill. The official said that by the time the medical team boarded the flight to treat the passenger, he had died. The flight was allowed to take off around 8.36 a.m. for Ahmedabad after completion of all formalities, the official added.

BJP takes a swipe at Cong over internal dissidence

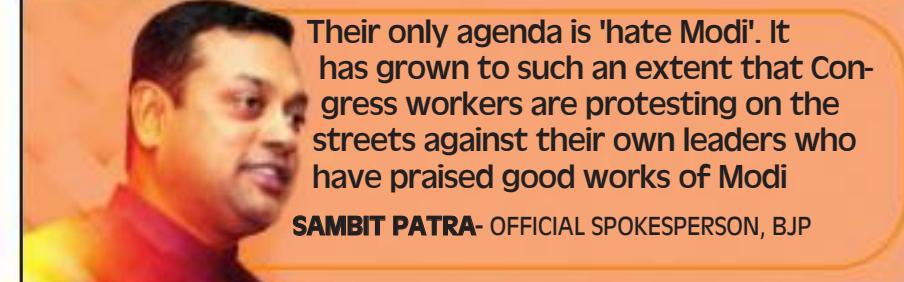
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 2 MARCH

The BJP on Tuesday took a swipe at the Congress amid a vocal dissidence within the opposition party, saying its ideology is all about fulfilling the Gandhi family's 'ambition', and anyone speaking against it or standing with the right-wing agenda of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is castigated.

BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra told a press conference that the Congress will 'castigate' anyone who wants democracy in the party, wants its president to be elected, speaks in favour of politics of development or stands with Modi's right-wing agenda.

While stating that the G23, a reference to the group of 23 Congress leaders who have



Their only agenda is 'hate Modi'. It has grown to such an extent that Congress workers are protesting on the streets against their own leaders who have praised good works of Modi

SAMBIT PATRA - OFFICIAL SPOKESPERSON, BJP

pushed for an organisational overhaul in the party, is an internal matter of the opposition party, Patra said it is "saddening" to see senior leaders like Ghulam Nabi Azad and others being targeted.

The Congress is now all about four leaders, he added, referring to its president Sonia Gandhi, her son Rahul and daughter Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, both party general secretaries, and Priyanka's husband Robert Vadra.

"Their only agenda is 'hate

Modi'. It has grown to such an extent that Congress workers are protesting on the streets against their own leaders who have praised good works of Modi," he said, mocking Rahul Gandhi as an empty missile.

Patra's comments, in an answer to a question, came after Azad praised Modi at an event in Jammu on Saturday, saying he speaks frankly about his past as a tea-seller and does not try to hide his background from the world.

Another senior Congress leader Anand Sharma had on Monday slammed the party's tie-up with Indian Secular Front (ISF) led by Muslim cleric Abbas Siddiqui in West Bengal, saying it was against the party's core ideology and Gandhian and Nehruvian secularism.

Congress workers in Jammu on Tuesday set ablaze an effigy of Azad and accused him of conspiring against the party at the behest of the BJP to weaken it for "personal gains".

This is the first such protest against Azad, who is a former chief minister, and had a huge following in J&K. However, his statements against the party leadership have not been relished by the majority of his supporters.

Datasource on page 5

HC grants bail to BARC's ex-CEO in TRP scam

MUMBAI, 2 MARCH

The Bombay High Court on Tuesday granted bail to Broadcast Audience Research Council's (BARC) former CEO Partha Dasgupta, accused in the alleged Television Rating points (TRP) rigging scam.

Justice P D Naik granted bail to Dasgupta (55) on a personal bond of Rs 2 lakh and two solvent sureties of the same amount.

The court allowed him to furnish a temporary cash surety of the same amount for a period of six weeks, until which he would have to submit the solvent sureties.

The permission was given after Dasgupta's counsel Aabid Ponda told the court that the process of preparing and submitting the solvent sureties will take time.

The court directed Dasgupta to surrender his passport to the police station concerned and not leave India without permission of the trial court.

"The applicant shall attend the police station concerned on the first Saturday of each month for a period of six months. After that, he shall appear once in three months," it said. The court directed Dasgupta to attend the case trial as and when required and not tamper with evidence or witnesses in the case.

Dasgupta was arrested on December 24 last year.

India accuses Pak of giving pensions to terrorists

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 2 MARCH

India today accused Pakistan of not only hosting the largest number of terrorists proscribed by the United Nations but also providing them pensions.

Pakistani leaders have themselves admitted the fact that their country has become a factory for producing terrorists, said Pavan Badhe (in photo), India's delegate at the 46th session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) in Geneva while exercising India's 'Right of Reply' on the statements made by Pakistan and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

He said Pakistan has ignored that terrorism was the worst forms of human rights abuse and the supporters of terrorism were the worst abusers of human rights.

Badhe said the HRC should ask Pakistan why the size of its minority communities such as Christians, Hindus and Sikhs has drastically shrunk since independence and why other communities such as Ahmadis, Sikhs, Pashtuns, Sindhis and Baloch have been subjected to draconian laws, systematic persecution, blatant abuses and forced conversions.

Holy and ancient sites of religious minorities in Pakistan have been attacked



and vandalised daily, he noted.

The Indian diplomat said enforced disappearances, extra-judicial killings and arbitrary detentions of those who try to speak against the establishment were rampant in Pakistan and have been carried out by state security agencies with impunity.

He said Pakistan, a country in dire economic situation, would be well advised to stop wasting time of the HRC and its mechanisms, stop state-sponsored cross border terrorism and end institutionalised violation of human rights of its minority and other communities.

Rejecting the reference to Jammu and Kashmir in the OIC's statement at the HRC, Badhe said it has no locus standi on Jammu and Kashmir, which is an integral part of India.

"It is regrettable that OIC continues to allow itself to be exploited by Pakistan to indulge in anti-India propaganda," he added.

China rejects reports of cyberattacks against India

NEW DELHI, 2 MARCH

Rejecting reports of Chinese cyberattacks on India's power system, ports and two vaccine companies, China said it is "firmly opposed to such irresponsible and ill-intentioned practice".

The allegations are pure rumours. Cyberattacks are highly complicated and sensitive, and their origin is difficult to trace. Speculation and fabrication have no role to play on the issue of cyberattacks. It is highly irresponsible to accuse a particular party when there is no evidence," a spokesperson of the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi said.

The New York Times on Sunday quoted a report by a US-based cybersecurity firm which claimed that Chinese state-sponsored groups had targeted the power sector in India with malware. This came months after the clash between troops of the two nations at the Galwan Valley in June 2020.

On speculation about China's 'theft' of other countries' vaccines through hacker attacks, the spokesperson said, "China takes the lead in vaccine research and development, we don't need to and will not rely on stealing to obtain vaccines," he added.

He said China was firmly opposed to politicising and stigmatising cyber security issues.

SNS

Unemployment high due to 'ill considered demonetisation decision': Manmohan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, 2 MARCH

Attacking the Centre, former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Tuesday said unemployment is high in the country and its informal sector is in shambles following the "ill considered" demonetisation decision" taken by the BJP-led government in 2016.

He also criticised the Central government for not holding regular consultations with the states.

Inaugurating a development summit virtually organised by the Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Development Studies, an economic think tank aligned to the Congress ideology in

poll-bound Kerala, Singh said temporary measures by the Central government and the RBI to paper over the credit problem cannot blind us to the looming credit crisis ahead that could affect the small and medium sector.

The summit, "Pratheeeksha 2030", was organised to launch a Vision Document, a framework of ideas for development of Kerala well in advance of the state elections.

He observed that in Kerala and many other states, public finances were in disarray with states having to resort to excessive borrowing, which creates an intolerable burden on future budgets.

Federalism and regular

consultation with states, which was the cornerstone of India's economic and political philosophy as enshrined in the Constitution, no longer finds favour with the present Central government," he said.

Singh said while Kerala's social standards are high, there are other sectors that need strong attention in the future.

"There are many roadblocks ahead that the state has to overcome. The global downturn of the last two or three years, aggravated by the pandemic, has made the global interface of Kerala more fragile."

"While the increased use of digital modes of work may keep the IT sector afloat, tourism has been hit badly and

the rate at which the pandemic is galloping in Kerala poses challenges for this industry," Singh said.

Noting that the focus on health and education has enabled Kerala to take advantage of job opportunities elsewhere in the country and in all parts of the world, Singh said this has led to a growing stream of remittances from abroad which created a booming real estate sector and

sharp growth of the services sector, led by tourism and information technology.

The former PM also hailed the decision of the leadership of Kerala's Congress-led UDF to incorporate "radical

ideals" like "NYAY" in its Assembly election manifesto, saying the scheme outlined in the Congress manifesto of 2019 Lok Sabha polls will provide direct benefit transfer to the poorest among us.

He said this, together with other measures such as no-bill health care through more medical establishments and other measures to strengthen the social infrastructure will provide a framework for inclusive development, focused on the needs of the underprivileged.

"This is the essence of Congress ideology and it is a matter of gratification that all UDF parties think alike on this."

According to Singh, while



MANMOHAN SINGH
FORMER PRIME MINISTER

DETAILS ON PAGE 5

providing support to the poor, such schemes will also kick-start the economy as demand will be stimulated, leading to more production particularly in the small and micro sector, in agriculture and in the unorganised sector, creating more employment opportunities and bringing the economy rapidly back to normalcy after the prolonged economic slowdown at the national level.

"In the midst of all the gloom, I see the UDF's steadfast adherence to planned growth with a clear sense of direction and concern for the common man a beacon of hope, not only for Kerala, but for the whole country", he said.



Earlier, youths from UP searched for jobs in Bengal and now it is just the opposite

YOGI ADITYANATH, CHIEF MINISTER, UTTAR PRADESH

DURING A RALLY IN MALDA WHERE HE SLAMMED THE WEST BENGAL GOVERNMENT

Uptick in Covid cases, but no fresh fatality in Capital

Delhi logs 217 new corona cases, active cases rise to 1,543, recovery rate dips to 98.05 pc

SNS & PTI
NEW DELHI, 2 MARCH

The count of fresh coronavirus infection-linked fatality in Delhi was nil today even as the city logged 217 new cases, according to the Delhi government's latest health bulletin.

This was the fifth time within a month that there was not a single daily fatality from the pathogen in the national capital.

The infection tally rose to 6,39,681, the health bulletin said. Over the last 24 hours

78 more people recuperated from the deadly, contagious virus, taking the number of total recoveries in the city to 6.27 lakh, the bulletin stated.

Delhi's active Covid cases rose to 1,543 from yesterday's 1,404 and the positivity rate came down from 0.44 per cent to 0.33 per cent. As many as 66,624 samples were tested, higher than 39,733 tests conducted yesterday, according to the bulletin.

The city's cumulative positivity rate and fatality rate stood at 5.12 per cent and 1.71 per cent respectively. The number

Antibodies significantly higher after 7 days of vaccine among seropositive people

PTI
NEW DELHI, 2 MARCH

The antibody response for COVID-19 was significantly higher after seven days among those who were seropositive after receiving the first dose of coronavirus vaccine, a study on 135 people who were inoculated has found.

Seropositive people are those who were infected at some point of time. So there are high chances of prevalence of antibodies in them.

The study, conducted by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research's (CSIR) Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB) and Max Hospitals, found that seronegative people, who were administered the first dose of coronavirus vaccine, saw significant antibody levels after 14

days.

"It was observed that the antibody response at seven days, in the people who were seropositive, was significantly higher than the individuals who did not have antibodies prior to vaccination," the paper said. Shantanu Sengupta, scientist with the IGIB and one of the co-authors of the papers said the study started in the end of January in the Saket, Gurgaon and Shalimar Bagh branches of the Max Hospitals.

"We found that those who were seropositive recorded significant antibodies on the seventh day after administering the first dose. By 14th day, the antibodies had stabilised. In case of those who were seronegative, a significant presence of antibodies was observed after 14 days and it continued to rise at 28 days," he said.

The national capital's recovery rate dipped slightly to 98.05 per cent, the bulletin added.

"Seropositivity is acting like a booster dose," he said.

The inoculation process started on January 16, first for healthcare workers and later for frontline workers. From March 1, it was expanded to include everyone above 60 years of age and those over 45 with co-morbidities.

"This preliminary study reassures the scientific world as well as community at large about our vaccination programme initiated by the government," Sujit Jha from Max Hospitals, who is also a co-author of the paper, said. "As the first study from India, it was assuring to observe an effective antibody response and outcomes which could derive policy measures for control of this pandemic. This should encourage more people to get vaccinated," Sengupta added.

Earlier, no Covid-related fatality was registered in Delhi on 9, 13, 17 and 25 February. February 9 was the first time

when the daily death count was zero in the city after a gap of nearly nine months. There was no death from the virus on 11 May last year, as per the official data.

Delhi had yesterday recorded 175 coronavirus infections and one fatality, even as the positivity rate had risen to 0.44 per cent.

The active Covid cases had mounted to 1,404 from 1,335 the previous day. The recovery rate was 98.07 per cent. The total number of compartment zones was reported to be 562.

Delhi had last Sunday reported 197 new Covid cases and one fatality. On preceding three days, the count of daily cases had stood at 200+ mark or beyond.

On Saturday, 256 Covid cases were registered, the highest in February, while on Thursday and Wednesday the count had stood at 220 and 200, respectively.

On Sunday, the positivity rate was 0.34 per cent.

During 1-23 February, the count of daily Covid cases had been recorded below 200 in the city. It had reported 94 Covid cases on 16 February, which was the lowest in more than nine months.



Rustagi said.

Ram Kumar (33), a Delhi Police personnel attached with the Battalion 4, came to the Delhi Heart and Lung Institute for his monthly heart checkup, but eager to get himself vaccinated against COVID-19, he consulted his doctor on getting the first dose as he underwent angioplasty in December last year.

Kumarsaid on December 23, he was working out on the police ground in the Kingsway Camp when he suddenly felt chest pain and rode his motorcycle to the hospital. After tests, he was shocked when doctors told him he had a 95-per cent blockage in his heart and was suggested angioplasty immediately.

On January 23, when he received a message from his department about his vaccination against COVID-19, he went to a hospital near his residence, but the doctor was not sure if Kumar should take the risk of getting vaccinated as he had recently undergone a heart surgery and was already on medication.

Kumar decided to put it on hold. However, when his saw his colleagues, who were above 50 years of age and were heart patients, getting vaccinated, it instilled confidence in him. On Tuesday, he went ahead with the vaccination after his doctor gave him the green signal.

Delhi'ites say PM taking jab inspired them to get vaccinated against virus

PTI
NEW DELHI, 2 MARCH

A day after Prime Minister NarendraModi took his first shot of the COVID-19 vaccine, 70-year-old Mukesh Sehgal underwent the process at the Delhi Heart and Lung Institute here on Tuesday and said the PM's move encouraged him to get inoculated against the viral disease.

Sehgal did not inform his family members about his decision to get vaccinated. However, soon after taking the first dose of COVAXIN, he sent out a WhatsApp message, informing them about it.

Under observation for half-and-hour after being administered the first dose of the vaccine, Sehgal said he was feeling well and relaxed.

Asked what encouraged him to go for vaccination, he said, "Yesterday, when Modiji took the vaccine shot, it encouraged me and boosted my confidence."

Asked if this wife is also ready to get herself vaccinated against COVID-19, Sehgal, a resident of Vijay Nagar, said, "It is very difficult to convince a wife. In fact, I did not tell anyone from my family about it. But I encourage all my family members to get vaccinated now as I have taken my first dose."

A resident of New Rajinder Nagar, KaminiSoni(69), who took her first vaccine shot after her



husband, said they had no apprehensions about taking the jab.

"We desperately waited for the vaccine to arrive and when our prime minister, who is a role model for us, took the shot, we were totally assured," she said.

Sunil Rustagi (61), resident of Sarai Rohila, said he consulted a doctor at the AIIMS on Monday before registering for the vaccination and felt confident to go ahead as the prime minister himself took the first dose of the vaccine.

Two weeks before Diwali last year, Rustagi and his wife got infected with the deadly coronavirus. Both were in home quarantine and got infected in spite of taking all precautions, he recalled while under observation after taking the jab.

"I got infected first and then my wife. I had fever only for three days, but my wife had a real tough time. She had fever for 10-12 days. It was a difficult time. My wife will also take her first vaccine shot probably on Saturday,"

Classified

LEGAL NOTICES

COURT NOTICE
(U/O 5 Rule 20 CPC)
IN THE COURT OF
MS. HARJOT KAUR
Civil Judge
(Junior Division),
Gurugram
Hari Chand
Versus
M/s. R.K. Enterprises Ltd.
CNR No. HRGR02-003548-
2020

Next Date: 26-04-2021

Publication Issued to:
M/s. R.K. Enterprises Ltd.:
45/1 Krishan Bhawan,
H-Block, Cauhnaught Place,
New Delhi, Through its
director.

In the above titled case, the defendant(s)/respondent(s) could not be served. It is ordered that defendant(s)/respondent(s) should appear in person or through counsel on 26-04-2021 at 10.00 a.m.

For details logon to
<https://highcourtndrtd.gov.in/?t=rs-tdctc.notice&district=gurugram>.

Dated, this day of 02-03-2021.

Civil Judge
(Junior Division),
Gurugram

Seal of the Court

PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for notice of the general public that a political party is proposed to be registered by the name of 'MISSION EKTA PARTAY'.

The office of the party is located at HOUSE NO. 790/12, SALLARAH MOHALLA ROHTAK HARYANA, 124001. This party has submitted application to the Election Commission of India, New Delhi for its registration as political party under section 29A of the Representation of People Act 1951. Name/address of the office bearers of the party are as follows:

President- KANTA DEVI

General Secretary- KRISHNA RANA

Treasurer- RAVINDER KUMAR

If any one has any objection to the registration of MISSION EKTA PARTAY they may send their objection to the Secretary (Political Party) Election Commission of India, New Dehli, 110001 within 30 days of the publication of this notice.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to public at large that my client Smt. Shashi Verma, w/o Shri Pawan Verma aged about 58 years, r/o Hosue No. 2/413, Ilam Floor, Subhash Nagar, New Delhi-110027, is the absolute owner of the plot bearing Municipal No. 4/265, Subhash Nagar, New Delhi-110027 by way of duly registered gift executed by her husband and my client has absolute rights to do with her property in any manner she likes to do and no one has any right to raise any type of objection.

Vineet Sharma

Advocate

Enrolment No. D/479/1996

(R) Advocate

Office:- F 12/31, Opp.

BSES Office

Krishna Nagar,

Delhi-110051

Mob. 9810139485,

E-mail: simmy1advocate@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

Know all men by this pre-

sents that my clients Minati

Bose and Ashish Bose,

Moham Bagam Lane,

Kolkata-700024, being the

joint owners decided to

make an application with

KMC for deletion of names

of Manmath Nath Bose,

Balai Lal Bose, Nemai Lal

Bose and Sunil Kumar Bose

from the records of the Mu-

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the Premises No. 20,

Mohan Bagam Lane,

Assessee No. 1101100020,

if any person, having any

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notified.

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The party's election campaign 'Bangla Nijer Meyekai Chay' is in sync with the consistent efforts made to ensure women get better representation everywhere.

REMINDING TMC HAS 17 WOMEN MPs IN LOK SABHA WHICH IS A RECORD OF SORTS COMPARED TO OTHER PARTIES

Row over Congress MLAs' suspension rocks HP House

Oppn Cong and ruling BJP MLAs exchange fireworks; Cong members demand revocation of suspension of their 5 colleagues including LOP, stage walkout from the Assembly

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 2 MARCH

The issue of suspension of five Congress MLAs, including Leader of Opposition (LOP) Mukesh Agnihotri, from the Himachal Pradesh Assembly for the entire budget session for their gherao of Governor, Bandaru Dattatraya, on the first day of the budget session on 26 February, rocked the Assembly today.

Amid the demand by the Opposition Congress members to revoke the suspension of their five party MLAs and their allegation that the Jai Ram Thakur-led BJP government was responsible for the 26 February incident, there were heated exchanges between the Congress and the BJP MLAs, following which the Congress members staged a walkout from the House.

While Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur called it the "most unfortunate incident" in the history of the Himachal Assembly, which has "brought a bad name to the state in the entire country, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Suresh Bhardwaj told the Congress members to tender unconditional apology to the Governor for the 'shameful act' if they wanted some dialogue on the issue.

Amid frayed tempers, there were arguments between Congress MLA Vikramaditya Singh and Deputy Speaker, Hans Raj, in the House when the Congress members alleged that Hans Raj had jostled the Congress



HP Congress MLAs after walking out from the state Assembly, in Shimla on Tuesday.

LALIT KUMAR

MLAs, pushing them towards the passage from where the Governor was going.

Later, Hans Raj urged Speaker Vipin Singh Parmar for a privilege motion against Vikramaditya Singh for his conduct in the House.

After the episode on the first day of the Assembly session, I am getting threatening calls from those associated with National Students Union of India (NSUI) and Congress party," he alleged, seeking protection from the Speaker.

As soon as the House assembled for the day in the morning, Congress member Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu raised a point of order and demanded that the suspension of five Congress MLAs be revoked. He termed the action "illegal" and said the Congress was not at fault and if one goes by the sequence of events, the government was responsible for the incident. He said the government acted "undemocratically".

On this, the Congress members started raising slogans and wanted to speak again, not listening to the Speaker's requests to keep quiet and let the Question Hour begin.

After permission by the Speaker, however, senior Congress member, Asha Kumari said whatever the Parliamentary Affairs Minister said was not based on facts.

She said the Congress members welcomed the Governor when he came for the address and when he spoke about the 50 years journey of HP's statehood.

"We are proud of HP as the Congress party has a major contribution in its statehood and development," she said.

Asha Kumari questioned the government as to why it did not inform the Congress in the All Party meeting that the Governor will cut short his address and why the Leader of Opposition and senior members were not invited to the tea gathering involving the Governor. "We did not do any gherao. Your members pushed us towards the Governor. The Chief Minister allowed everything to happen," she charged.

She said the Congress members were not informed on time when the House resumed.

She said they got an SMS at 12.46 PM that the House would resume at 12.50 PM.

She charged that the Deputy Speaker was jostling the Congress members all along. When the Deputy Speaker got up to speak, the Congress members started raising slogans and entered into heated arguments with him. The Chief Minister said Hans Raj had every right to speak and the entire government backed him. He condemned Vikramaditya Singh for shouting at the Deputy Speaker.

Later, the Speaker announced the Question Hour and while it was going on, the Congress members staged a walkout from the Assembly.

Western UP lawyers to 'lock courts' on 4 March to demand arrest of accused in Bar leader's suicide

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
MEERUT, 2 MARCH

In support of their demand for arrest of the accused in the suicide case of a Meerut lawyer in which BJP MLA from Hastinapur Dinesh Khatik was also named, lawyers of 22 districts in Western UP have decided to "lock the courts" in these districts on 4 March.

The lawyers of Meerut have been agitating for the past 15 days to demand the arrest of the accused in the suicide case of a senior lawyer Omkar Tomar, who was also General Secretary of Bar Association in Meerut. The alleged accused include BJP MLA from Hastinapur Dinesh Khatik whose name was also purportedly mentioned by the deceased lawyer in his suicide note, sources said.

Tomar had died by suicide on February 13 at his residence in Ishapuram colony of the

day. Protests would be done at the kutchery (court) gates on that day, he said adding that Lok Adalats would also not be allowed to function in different districts.

"Lok Adalats takes place on different dates in different districts and in Meerut it is scheduled on March 6," said Chaudhary, adding that the lawyers of respective districts would ensure that Lok Adalats are not allowed to function as per the schedule there.

The deceased lawyer Omkar Tomar's son was married to a girl from Khatauli town of district Muzaffarnagar in February last year. But the marriage could not last long and the couple was

separated only a few months later. The girl lodged a case of dowry against the lawyer's son and family members. MLA Dinesh Khatik was a mediator in this case for settlement. He is accused of allegedly harassing and humiliating the lawyer due to which he reportedly took the extreme step.

Since then the lawyers have been pressing for the immediate arrest of the accused including the MLA. They are also sitting on relay hunger strike inside the premises of the district magistrate's office for the past 13 days in this regard. The lawyers had taken out a march to the ADG (zone) office and handed over a memorandum to ADG Rajeev Sabharwal. They also formed a human chain at the city's busiest Begum bridge crossing after taking out a peaceful march last week in connection with their demand.

He said that the courts would be locked in all 22 districts of Western UP on March 4 and judicial work would not be allowed to be done on that

date. The protesters would be demanding the arrest of the accused in the case of Omkar Tomar.

He said that the courts would be locked in all 22 districts of Western UP on March 4 and judicial work would not be allowed to be done on that

IIT Mandi alumnus bags INYAS award for research excellence

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 2 MARCH

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Mandi's alumnus Dr Navneet Chandra Verma has won the Indian National Young Academy of Sciences (INYAS) National Award 2020 for Research Excellence.

Dr Verma, who completed his Ph.D from the IIT Mandi in 2020, received the award for contribution in fundamental understanding of chemical structure and functional relationship of the carbonogenic nanoparticles and their application in super-resolution light microscopy.

Dr Verma had custom built a "most advanced single molecule super resolution nanoscopic technique, for the first time in India".

Chaturvedi expressed happiness over the achievement and said it is a proud moment for the IIT Mandi community that Dr Navneet's thesis has been selected for the best thesis award in the area of Carbon Materials in the prestigious INYAS National Awards 2020.

"This award will inspire the young students of IIT Mandi to overcome all the difficulties and excel," he added.

Chaturvedi said Dr Verma is currently working as a post-doctoral fellow in Technion, Israel Institute of Technology Haifa, Israel, on the development of super resolution microscopy and sin-



Dr Verma had custom built a 'most advanced single molecule super resolution nanoscopic technique, for the first time in India'.

gle molecule measurement based robust sensitive fast and high throughput advanced diagnosis devices for protein fingerprinting liquid biopsy and future medical application.

It is worth mentioning here that Indian National Science Academy (INSA) founded INYAS award in 2014 to promote Science education and networking among young scientists at National as well as International level.

INYAS provides a platform to exchange ideas, initiate discussions on scientific topics, collaborations among the new generation of scientists and to make the voices of the young researchers be heard by senior academicians and policy makers of the country.

IIT Mandi director Prof Ajit

2021



STATE BANK OF INDIA, Stressed Assets Management Branch-II, 11th Floor, Jawahar Vyapar Bhawan, STC Building 1 - Tolstoy Marg, New Delhi - 110001 E mail id : sbi.50950@sbi.co.in, Ph. : 011-23701209

E-Auction Sale Notice

"APPENDIX- IV-A" [See proviso to rule 8 (6)]

Sale notice for sale of Immovable Properties,

Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that below mentioned Immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor (State Bank of India & Punjab National Bank), the Physical / Symbolic Possession mentioned below of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of State Bank of India (Secured Creditor), will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" Basis on 19-03-2021 for recovery of amount as mentioned below, due to the Secured Creditor from Borrowers, Guarantors and Mortgagors. The reserve price is mentioned below and the earnest money to be deposited is mentioned respectively.

Name of Borrower (B)/ Guarantor(s) (G) / Corporate Guarantor/s (CG) with address/es	Address of Security charged covered under Auction	Reserve Price(RP) EMD Amount 10% of The Reserve Price Incremental Amount	Outstanding Dues for recovery of which properties are being sold	Date of E-Auction / Time for 60 minutes each
M/s. Jagat Agro Commodities Pvt. Ltd Regd. Office : 5, Sea Lord, A. First Floor, Cuff Parade Road, Colaba, Near President Hotel, Mumbai, Maharashtra 400005 Also at : 802, 8th Floor, Ambedkar Building, 14, K.G. Marg, New Delhi-110001	Land & Building plot measuring 42 Kanals and 4 Marlas situated at 38/39 Km Stone in the area of Village Rai, Distt. Sonepat in the name of M/s Shree Balaji Agro Industries vide registration no. 4093 dated 28.11.1991 (Physical Possession with the Bank)	₹ 1930.00 Lac ₹ 193.00 Lac ₹ 1.00 Lac	Outstanding Dues towards M/s Jagat Agro Commodities Pvt Ltd for recovery of which properties are being sold (1) Name of Bank : State Bank of India, Date of Demand Notice : 13.10.2016 Amount dues : Rs. 374,77,17,968.82 (as on 06-01-2018) plus future interest on contractual rate of interest from 07.01.2018 + expenses, cost, less recovery vide auction dated 31-01-2018 & 07-09-2018 & 10-12-2018, 05-01-2019, 06-01-2020, 21-01-2020, 26-11-2020 & 02-03-2021 + other charges thereon. (2) Name of Bank : Punjab National Bank, Date of Demand Notice : 18.11.2016, Amount dues : Rs. 78,58,54,929.14 (as on 20.12.2017) plus future interest on contractual rate of interest from 21.12.2017 + expenses, cost, less recovery vide auction dated 31-01-2018 & 07-09-2018 & 10-12-2018, 05-01-2019, 06-01-2020, 21-01-2020, 26-11-2020 & 02-03-2021 + other charges thereon.	19-03-2021 From 11:00 AM to 12:00 Noon with unlimited extensions of 5 Minutes each.
			Authorised Officer : Sh. K. S. Meena, Mob. No. 8130333248 Date/Time of on - site Inspection of Property 12-03-2021 from 12.00 Noon to 03.00 PM The intending purchasers / bidders are required to deposit EMD amount either through NEFT / RTGS in the Account No. 65156762491, in name of the beneficiary the Authorised Officer, State Bank of India, SAM Branch-II, New Delhi, FSC Code: SBIN017891 Original physical copy of RTGS/NEFT acknowledged by remitting bank must be submitted to SBI Authorised office, Bidder must visit office in-person to submit bid with all original KYC Documents	
			TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE E-AUCTION ARE AS UNDER: 1. E-Auction is being held on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" basis and will be conducted "On Line". The auction will be conducted through the Bank's approved service provider M/s CTIndia Pvt. Ltd. (Contact No. 0124-4302020 to 24 at their web portal https://www.bankeauctions.com . E-Auction Tender Document containing online e-auction Bid form, Declaration, General Terms and Conditions of online auction sale and payment terms and conditions.	Date and time for personally submission of request letter of participation, KYC Documents, PAN Card, Proof of EMD etc.

2. To the best of knowledge and information of the Authorised Officer, there is no encumbrance on the property/ies. However, the intending bidders should make their own independent inquiries regarding the encumbrances, title of property/ies put on auction and claims / rights / dues / affecting the property, prior to submitting their bid. The e-Auction advertisement does not constitute and will not be deemed to constitute any commitment or any third party claims / rights / dues.

3. The Earnest Money Deposit(EMD) of the successful bidder shall be retained towards part sale consideration and the EMD of unsuccessful bidders shall be refunded. The Earnest Money Deposit shall not bear any interest. The successful bidder shall have to deposit 25% of the sale price, immediately on acceptance of bid price by the Authorised Officer and the balance of the sale price on or before 15th day of sale. Default in deposit of amount by the

successful bidder will entail forfeiture of the whole money, already deposited and property shall be put to re-auction and the defaulting bidder shall have no claim/ right in respect of property/ amount.

4. The sale shall be subject to rules / conditions prescribed under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.

5. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link at the web portal <https://www.sbi.co.in/portal/web/home> and <https://www.bankeauctions.com>

Date : 03-03-2021, Place : New Delhi

Sd/- Authorised Officer, State Bank of India

H'yanagovt's bid to curb liquor smuggling continues: Khattar

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 2 MARCH

Haryana Chief Minister, Manohar Lal Khattar, on Tuesday said a one-member committee of chief secretary Vijai Vardhan has been constituted to do the analysis of recommendations submitted by various committees constituted to probe various liquor complaints including the issue of deaths on account of consumption of spurious liquor across Haryana, smuggling and illegal stocking, etc.

"The members of these committees have separately submitted their recommendations to the government and now the chief secretary after analyzing these recommendations would take strict action against those found guilty," he said.

Khattar said that constant efforts have been made to curb liquor smuggling. This is a very serious matter and a close vigil has been kept by the offices concerned.

However, smuggling and other liquor offences were increased during the lockdown period but even then the Government left no stone unturned to take strict action against those found guilty, he added.

The CM said the state government has adopted a zero-tolerance policy against corruption. Be it registration of land, starting e-RAVANA and other digital reforms have been brought in every sector to ensure minimum government and maximum governance.

"More than 5900 kilowatt of power theft was caught in this raid, which would bring down the line loss. With these raids, the Electricity Board would be collecting huge revenue of around Rs 100 Crore," he added.

est example. For the first time in the history of Haryana, this kind of biggest action has been taken to curb power theft and because of this, in last two days, checking of many as 7728 power connections in industry, domestic and commercial was done on 27 February and 28 February out of which 2733 power thefts have been caught," the CM said.

"More than 5900 kilowatt of power theft was caught in this raid, which would bring down the line loss. With these raids, the Electricity Board would be collecting huge revenue of around Rs 100 Crore," he added.

HERE'S YOUR SECOND CHANCE AT A SECURE FUTURE

An opportunity to revive your lapsed policy with concessional late fee and medical relaxations

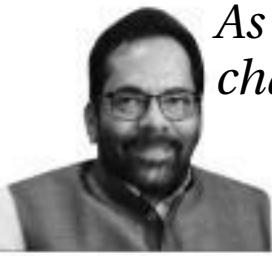


REVIVE RESTORE RISK COVER REMAIN SECURE

PERIOD 07/01/2021 TO 06/03/2021

Certain concession in health requirements* and concession in late fee for eligible policies*

Total Receivable Premium (₹)	Late Fee Concession (%)	Maximum Concession Allowed



UNION MINISTER MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI

SAYING CONFIDENCE IN DEVELOPMENT WOULD BE A 'STRONG CRITERION' IN THE UPCOMING POLL

India

Karnataka budget to be downsized

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, 2 MARCH

The state budget to be presented by chief minister B S Yediyurappa on 8 March is expected to be downsized considerably, a clear fall out of Covid-19 pandemic. The outlay for most sectors may be reduced drastically. Also, extremely heavy rains and floods during the monsoon took their toll, leading to a reduction in overall mobility.

sation of revenue.

The farm sector, however, could find itself witnessing a comparatively better allocation than last year. Officials here expect an improved availability for the sector against the Rs 16,472 crore that it received for 2020-21. This itself was lower than the Rs 22,309 crore in 2019-20.

Last year the CM had tabled a budget totalling an expenditure of Rs 23,789 crore, up five per cent over the revised estimates for 2019-20.

The ensuing budget will focus on farm sector and development work while keeping women's welfare as a priority.

According to official sources, possibilities of the budget providing a little more allocation, from the limited resources, for the farm sector cannot be ruled out, including support to cope with the soaring fuel prices, especially diesel.

TENDER

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed item rate/percentage rate tender on Form No. 6&8 are hereby invited by the Executive Engineer, Horticulture Division, HP, PWD, U.S. Club Shimla on behalf of the Governor of Himachal Pradesh for the following works from the competent (In this regard the decision of the Executive Engineer shall be final) contractors enlisted with HP, PWD in appropriate class whose registration stood renewed as per revised instruction and also registered dealers and original manufacturers under G.S.T. Act.. The application for tender form will be received upto 10.03.2021 up to 4.00 P.M. The tender form will be issued on 12.03.2021 upto 4.00 P.M. The tender form will be received on 15.03.2021 up to 10.30 A.M. and will be opened on the same day at 11.00 A.M. in the presence of the contractors or their authorized representative who may like to be present. The form can be had from this office against cash payment as shown below (Non refundable) during the working hours on 12.03.2021. The earnest money should be deposited in the shape of National Saving certificate, Time deposit/Post Office saving bank account in any of the Post Office H.P. duly pledged in the name of the Executive Engineer, Horticulture Division, HP, PWD, U.S. Club Shimla and tender form will be issued only those contractors who will deposit the Earnest Money at the time of tender. The conditional tender shall not be entertained. If holiday is declared suddenly by the govt. on the above date due to some reason the tender shall be received and opened on the next working day. The intending contractors/firms will have to produce all required documents at the time of making application such as Income Tax clearance certificate for the preceding year, registration/renewal of registration and sales tax number (Under H.P.G.S.T.) Act. Special care should be taken to write the rates both in figures and in words, failing which their tender will be rejected. No tender form shall be issued to the contractors/firms who have already two works in H.P.P.W.D. The Executive Engineer reserves the right to accept or reject the tender without assigning any reason.

S.No	Name of work	Estimated cost.	Earnest money	Form	Cost of form	Time limit
1.	A/R and M/O to various nurseries under horticulture Division HPPWD, Shimla	2,81,770/-	5635/-	6&8	350/-	One Months
2.	Maintenance of potted plants in Nirman Bhawan PWD Headquarter.	2,73,600/-	5472/-	6&8	350/-	Twelve Months

Executive Engineer,
Horticulture Division,
HP,PWD, U.S. Club Shimla

6220/2020-2021 HIM SUCHNA AVAM JAN SAMAPRK

Six killed as truck overturns in Kanpur

KANPUR, 2 MARCH

A coal-laden truck overturned near Maukhals village leaving six people dead and 13 others seriously injured, police said on Tuesday. The incident took place on Monday when the truck was carrying labourers and their family members to Firozabad.

The labourers and their family members boarded the truck at Bhognipuri crossing. While some of them were seated on top of the truck, others were seated inside the driver's cabin, SP (Kanpur Dehat), Keshav Kumar Chowdhary, said.

PTI

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT E-Procurement INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)					
1. The Executive Engineer Mandi Division No.II HPPWD Mandi H.P. on behalf of Governor of H.P. invites the online bids on item rate in electronic tendering system in 2 cover system for the following works from the eligible and approved contractors/Firms registered with HPPWD department.					
Sr. No	Name of Work	Estimated cost	EMD	Cost of tender	Eligible class of contractor
1	C/O Zonal Hospital at Mangwain Mandi HP (SH-C/O building portion, WS & SI and rain water harvesting system)	Rs. 3,16,29,450/-	Rs. 3,48,800/-	Rs. 5000/-	"A" One year
2	C/O New building of Govt. Primary School Bal Mandi (U-block) Dist. Mandi HP (SH-C/O Building portion, WS & SI and rain harvesting system)	Rs. 2,34,59,803/-	Rs. 2,67,100/-	Rs. 5000/-	"A" One year
3	C/O CPO to Praphar road km 0/00 to 2/500 (SH-CIO wing wall of slab culvert at RD 2/00) Lot side)	Rs. 8,87,518/-	Rs. 17,800/-	Rs. 350/-	"A" Two months
Starting date for downloading bid:- 4.3.2021 Deadline for Submission of Bid:- 12.3.2021 up to 10.00 AM Date of Opening of Bid:- 12.3.2021 at 11.30 AM The bidders are advised to note other details of tenders from the department website www.hptenders.gov.in					
Executive Engineer, Mandi Division No.II HPPWD Mandi					

6217/2020-2021 HIM SUCHNA AVAM JAN SAMAPRK

Ker LIFE mission officials colluded with UAE to get kickbacks: CBI to SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 2 MARCH

CBI has told the Supreme Court that officials of the Kerala government's LIFE Mission project colluded with officials of the UAE Consulate General to receive kickbacks on foreign contributions routed through two proxy firms.

The agency told the apex court that evidence reveals that M/s Unitac and Sane Ventures are proxy firms of LIFE Mission used for receiving foreign contribution from UAE and by receiving funds in the said manner a CAG Audit, government formalities and the rigours of FCRA were avoided so that kickbacks could be received.

Unitac and Sane Ventures received a contribution from a foreign source for and on behalf of Life Mission and the said money received was used to pay kickbacks and costly gifts to government servants and employees of Life Mission, it said.

The submission was made in response to a plea filed by the CEO of Life Mission Project of the Kerala government



challenging the High Court order allowing probe by the central agency into the corruption allegations with regard to the construction of dwelling units and a health centre for flood victims in the state.

Kerala HC on 12 January, had dismissed a petition challenging the CBI investigation into alleged irregularities in the project which is a massive housing campaign to build houses for families without land or housing.

In the project, emphasis will be on financial empowerment and providing means of livelihood. All landless and homeless will be rehabilitated. The alleged FCRA violation and corruption in the project had snowballed into a major political issue.

AIADMK-led NDA faces seat-sharing, alliance problems

BJP pushing party to accommodate TTV's AMMK

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHENNAI, 2 MARCH

AMMK chief Dhinakaran says anyone opposed to DMK and willing to accept his party's leadership was welcome to join the alliance

J Jayalalithaa and expelled AIADMK general secretary, into the party after her release from Bengaluru jail.

When asked if he was okay to be in an alliance with the AIADMK and BJP to defeat DMK, the AMMK chief said any party opposed to the DMK and willing to accept his party's leadership could join its led combine."Dhinakaran had just finished a meeting with Sasikala, at her residence in TNagar on Tuesday.

Sasikala had on Jayalalithaa's birth anniversary last week called upon all supporters of Jayalalithaa to come together and make her dream - that AIADMK should rule the state for 100 years - come true.

But in the meeting with Amit Shah and other informal talks with BJP leaders, according to sources, chief minister Palanisamy has been

steadfast on his stand that Sasikala cannot come back to the AIADMK and the party did not want any ties with TTV Dhinakaran's AMMK. Sources say that O Panneerselvam who had been the first to rebel against Sasikala as she prepared to become the CM of the state in February 2017, is of moderate approach towards the idea because he is concerned that there would be a split in the votes of the Thevar community as the AIADMK does not accommodate Sasikala and her nephew Dhinakaran.

The alliance faces another threat of losing DMK, another ally, due to seat-sharing differences. After talks with AIADMK and DMK hit a roadblock on Monday, DMK deputy general secretary LK Sudhish took to social media and hinted that the party may contest alone in the upcoming polls. He posted an image saying "Our CM Vijayakant, our symbol Murasu (war drum) and our flag is DMK O Panneerselvam".

AIADMK has allotted PMK 23 seats, but DMK is expecting half the seats allotted to PMK.

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Telephone No: 01907-256827, e-mail: ee-seraj-hp@gov.in

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed item rate tender(s) on PWD form No. 6 & 8 are hereby invited by the Executive Engineer, Division, HP.PWD. Seraj at Janjehli Distt. Mandi (HP) on behalf of the Governor of H.P. for the following works from registered contractors in HPPWD (B&R) in appropriate class "C" and "D" so as to reach in this office on 24.03.2020 upto 10.30 A.M. and will be opened on the same day at 11.00 A.M. in the presence of contractors or their authorised representative who wish to be present at that time. The application for obtaining the tender form will be received on 22.03.2020 between 11.00 A.M. to 4.00 P.M. The tender form can be had from this office against cash payment (Non-refundable) on 23.03.2020 between 11.00 AM to 5.00 PM.

The earnest money in the shape of National Saving Certificate/Time Deposit Account/ Saving Account of the Post office in Himachal Pradesh duly pledged in favour of the Executive Engineer, Division, HP.PWD. Seraj at Janjehli Distt. Mandi H.P. must accompany with the tender form. Ambiguous/ Telegraphically/conditioned tenders or tender by FAX shall not be entertained/considered in any case. The tenders without earnest money shall summarily be rejected. The offer of the tender shall be kept open for 90 days. The Executive Engineer, Division, HP.PWD. Seraj at Janjehli reserve the right to reject/accept any offer of tender without assigning any reasons.

Sr. No	Name of work	Estimated cost	Earnest money	Cost of tender	Eligible class of Contractor
1	Construction of balance work for HPPWD Rest House at Chhattri , Distt: Mandi(HP) (SH:- P/L Interlock paver block in approach road at rd 0/00 to 0/050)	4,99,960/-	1000/-	350/-	Class D-C
2	C/O Behwan to Badchoti road in GP Gattu (SH:- R.O.F.D. In km 1/600 to 1/850)	4,99,960/-	1000/-	350/-	Class D-C
3	C/O Gadagusai to Chandhi road km 0/00 to 1/800 (SH:- C/O wire crate R/Wall at Rd 0/120 to 0/140)	4,99,850/-	1000/-	350/-	Class D-C
4	C/O Gadagusai to Chandhi road km 0/00 to 1/800 (SH:- C/O wire crate R/Wall at Rd 0/140 to 0/160)	4,98,520/-	1000/-	350/-	Class D-C
5	R/R damages on Kelodhar Chhatri road km 19/00 to 32/00 (SH:- C/O R/Wall at Km 23/405 to 23/425)	3,27,795/-	6000/-	350/-	Class D-C
6	Construction of balance work for HPPWD Rest House at Chhattri , Distt: Mandi(HP) (SH:- C/O Entrance gate and water storage tank platform)	4,99,960/-	1000/-	350/-	Class D-C
7	R/R damages on Tapnali Khauri road km 0/00 to 15/00 (SH:- P/L of Kharana stone soling at various rds between km 0/00 to 2/00)	4,99,980/-	1000/-	350/-	Class D-C
8	R/R damages on Tapnali Khauri road km 0/00 to 15/00 (SH:- P/L of Kharana stone soling at various rds between km 2/00 to 3/00)	4,99,990/-	1000/-	350/-	Class D-C
9	R/R damages on Benthwan Paindapani (Portion Handel to Nehari Khad') km 0/00 to 4/950 (SH:- C/O R/Wall at Rd 4/435 to 4/450)	4,99,990/-	1000/-	350/-	Class D-C
10	C/O Bhatkhdar to Bagi road km : 0/000 to 7/000 (SH:- C/o 900mm dia Hume pipe culvert at RD 0/555)	1,12,166/-	2500/-	350/-	Class D-C
11	C/O road from Ketti to Jainsila Km 0/000 to 6/000 (SH:- C/o 900 mm dia Hume pipe culvert at RD 0/950 with both side wing wall)	2,47,553/-	6000/-	350/-	Class D-C
12	C/o road from Ketti to Jainsila Km 0/000 to 6/000 (SH:- C/o 900 mm dia Hume pipe culvert at RD 1/112 with both side wing wall)	2,67,280/-	6000/-	350/-	Class D-C
13	R/R damages on Bhatkhdar to Bagi road km : 0/000 to 2/000 (SH:- C/o R/Wall in PCC 1:4:8 at RD 5/397 to 5/405)	3,09,489/-	8500/-	350/-	Class D-C
14	RRD on road from Kuhuan to Didder Teeldehar road : km : 0/000 to 6/000 (SH:- C/o B/wall and edge wall at RD 1/420 to 1/440 and 1/780 to 1/790)	3,64,768/-	8000/-	350/-	Class D-C
15	C/o link road from Choakhad Saulikhad to Mathyana km : 0/000 to 1/500 (SH:- F/C 5/7 mtr wide in km : 0/420 to 0/660)	4,95,816/-	1000/-	350/-	Class D-C
16	C/o link road Galu to Mathyana road Km 0/000 to 1/500 (SH:- F/C 5/7 mtr width in Km 0/195 to 0/390)	4,97,339/-	1000/-	350/-	Class D-C
17	C/o Link road from Shimahata to Village Shimahat km : 0/000 to 2/000 (SH:- R/oF.D in km : 0/000 to 0/360)	4,45,142/-	1000/-	350/-	Class D-C
18	C/o Link road from Shimahata to Village Shimahat km : 0/000 to 2/000 (SH:- R/oF.D in km : 0/360 to 0/660)	4,80,196/-	1000/-	350/-	Class D-C
19	C/o Link road from Shimahata to Village Shimahat km : 0/000 to 2/000 (SH:- R/oF.D in km : 0/660 to 0/960)	4,12,863/-	9000/-	350/-	Class D-C
20	A/R & M/O under Badsar Sub-Division HPPWD Badsar (SH:- Supplying of sign board and speed breaker)	3,98,174/-	9000/-	350/-	Class D-C
21	A/R & M/O under Baitchowki Sub-Division HPPWD Baitchowki (SH:- Supplying of sign board and speed breaker)	4,02,081/-	8		



People of Bihar living in West Bengal will vote for development...

AFTER RJD LEADER TEJASHWI YADAV VOICES SUPPORT TO TMC

The Statesman

05

NEW DELHI, WEDNESDAY 03 MARCH 2021

CCTVs in offices of probe agencies: SC expresses displeasure

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 2 MARCH

The Supreme Court Tuesday expressed displeasure over the Centre for dragging its feet by seeking more time on the issue pertaining to installation of CCTV cameras in the offices of investigating agencies including CBI, ED and NIA.

A bench headed by Justice RF Nariman, which observed that this issue concerns the rights of citizens, said it is not accepting the excuses given in the letter filed by the Centre seeking adjournment in the matter.

We are getting a distinct impression that you are dragging your feet, the bench, also comprising Justices B R Gavai and Hrishikesh Roy, told Solicitor General Tushar Mehta who was representing the Centre.

The apex court had on 2 December last year directed the Centre to install CCTVs and recording equipment at the offices of investigating agencies—the Central Bureau of Investigation, National Investigation Agency, Enforcement Directorate, Narcotics Control Bureau, Department of Revenue Intelligence, Serious Fraud Investigation Office and any other agency which carries out interrogations and has the power of arrest.

During the hearing conducted through video-conferencing on Tuesday, Mehta told the bench that adjournment has been sought as the matter may have ramifications. This concerns the rights of citizens, the bench said, adding, We are not accepting the excuses.

STUDENT'S CRY



Students of Women College protest against the college administration's decision to conduct offline examinations, in Jammu on Tuesday. ■ AGENCY

Nadda to Raj BJP leaders: Do self-analysis on contribution

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JAIPUR, 2 MARCH

BJP chief J P Nadda on Tuesday asked party leaders in Rajasthan to do self-analysis about their contribution to the organisation and work to take everyone along, remarks which come in the backdrop of rising factionalism in the state unit.

Addressing a state executive committee meeting

Defeat BJP in polls: SKM leaders' plea to farmers

Say vote for candidates who can defeat BJP that failed to address farmers' issues

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 2 MARCH

Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM), which is spearheading anti-farm law protests in Delhi, will send its leaders to poll-bound states to appeal to farmers there to defeat the BJP in assembly elections, leaders of the outfit said on Tuesday.

The protesting farmers will also block the KMP (Western Peripheral) Expressway on 6 March as the anti-farm law protest at Delhi borders completes 100 days. The expressway will be blocked at various points for five hours, from 11 a.m. on 6 March, SKM leader Yogendra Yadav said.

He said SKM leaders will hold a public meeting in Kolkata on 12 March to appeal to the farmers of poll-bound states. SKM leader Balbir Singh Rajewal said that SKM teams will visit poll-bound states, including West Bengal and Kerala, to appeal to farmers to defeat the BJP.

"We will not seek votes for any party. We will appeal to them to vote for those candidates who can defeat the BJP which has failed to address farmers' issues," Rajewal said at a joint press conference of SKM and Singh border.

On Women's Day on March 8, women protesters will lead the protest at Delhi borders and other places across the country, Yadav said.

Ghazipur border closed again:

The Delhi Police on Tuesday afternoon closed the Ghazipur border again, hours after it reopened a portion of NH-9

Central govt only concerned about rich, powerful: Priyanka

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BISHWANATH (ASSAM),
2 MARCH

Congress general Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Tuesday slammed the BJP-led government at the Centre for not paying heed to farmers' concerns over the new agricultural laws, and said its policies are designed to benefit only the rich.

Interacting with women workers of the Sadharu Tea Estate near here, she said farmers have been protesting in and around the national capital for months, but Prime Minister Narendra Modi is yet to meet them and end the impasse.

"More than three lakh farmers are sitting on dharna for the last two months, barely four to five km from where the PM stays, but he has not gone to meet them."

"What is the problem if he goes to meet them once, talk and if the farmers have a problem with the laws, then make changes for their benefit... but the policies of this government is for the rich and powerful and not for the

common people," the Congress leader said. Gandhi, who is on a two-day visit to poll-bound Assam, sat with the women workers in the tea garden and discussed with them a host of issues.

During the interaction, the women reportedly told her that only a few get benefits of the schemes meant for them, but the others have to frequently visit government offices to enquire, which is not feasible during work hours. They also highlighted the problems due to price rise, housing and lack of toilet facilities in the gardens.

"It is the 'dharma' of the parties to fulfil the promises made by them when they



visit you during elections. You have the power to vote and teach a lesson to the government which does not keep its words. We have promised Rs 365 as minimum daily wages..." said the Congress leader.

Gandhi, clad in a traditional 'mekhla chador' for the second consecutive day, was seen putting on a tea-plucking basket on her back and going round the gardens.

She attempted a few steps of 'jhumer', the folk dance of tea tribe community, and was gifted a white and red bordered saree that the women wear while dancing. Priyanka then visited the home of a tea garden worker.

for traffic movement, officials said.

The stretch was closed since January 26 when violence broke out during the farmers' tractor parade in the national capital on Republic Day.

The one side of the road which goes towards Ghaziabad from Delhi was opened for traffic in the morning.

Thousands of farmers, mostly from Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh, have been camping at the Delhi border points—Singhu, Tikri and Ghazipur—demanding a repeal of the three farm laws enacted by the Centre in September last year.

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Stuttering start

Conventional political analysis has it that a General Election in India is not merely a sum of the results of Assembly polls across the country. Conversely, though, the ideologies, personalities, and programmes of the competing political parties in various states, especially the larger ones in terms of Lok Sabha seats, have an exaggerated impact on the national narrative. While this principle applies across the board, it is particularly true of national parties and major regional players with ambitions of becoming a part of a coalition at the Centre. It is vital for the above backdrop to be kept in mind when trying to assess the impact of the stuttering start of the 'third player' in the March-April eight-phase Assembly poll in West Bengal – the alliance between the Left Front, Congress, and Indian Secular Front led by Muslim cleric Abbas Siddiqui. Siddiqui, a bit player at the state-level and a non-entity nationally, publicly undermined the alliance at its first big campaign rally at Brigade Parade Ground in Kolkata on Sunday when he failed to even mention the Congress. "You could ask me why I did not take the name of any other party. I will say that they have not shown maturity like Biman da (Biman Bose, Left Front Chairman in Bengal). Thanks to him and Mohamed Selim we got 30 seats," Siddiqui iterated, unapologetic about the brand of identity politics he champions. He followed up this barb in post-rally media interactions in which he was more pointed in his criticism of the Congress. Asked what he would do if the Congress sticks to its stand of not ceding seats from its last remaining pockets of support in Murshidabad and Malda to the ISF, which wants a total of about 60 seats to contest, he replied that his party would in that case fight all seats sans those being contested by the Left Front.

Take a step back, now, and consider the optics. The Congress, with ambitions to win back its place in national politics usurped by the BJP, is in an alliance with the ISF-AIMM in West Bengal, Indian Union Muslim League in Kerala, and the Badruddin Ajmal-led AIUDF in Assam for the 2021 Assembly polls. All three parties are clear about their community-specific priorities. Does the BJP really need to 'polarise' nationally when the Congress is doing the dirty work for it? Next, let us examine the Left Front which is essentially a regional force with a role to play in central coalition politics. The 'Ram 2021, Baam 2026' theory for West Bengal (and something similar in Tripura with the time period adjusted accordingly) and a robust drive to retain Kerala are its priorities. Unlike the Congress, it is showing signs of having at least recognised that its slide into irrelevance would be an accomplished fact if it doesn't follow a 'tactical line' – or what non-Marxists would term utilitarian approach. It will not hesitate for a moment to discard the Siddiquis of the world once they have served their purpose. Or, indeed, bludgeon them into moderation if they ever come back to power.

Gasp to death

From Madhya Pradesh, where four coronavirus patients died last September, and Maharashtra to Africa and Latin America, the severe shortage of medical oxygen has impeded the treatment of coronavirus at a critical juncture, specifically when a fresh bout of the dreaded ailment is sweeping several nations, including Britain. The crippling scarcity of medical oxygen is no less dreadful than the disease per se. Warnings in Africa and Latin America were said to have been ignored, resulting in what doctors call "unnecessary deaths". The scenario of doom and gloom has thus deepened a year or so after Covid-19 became a scourge. It takes about 12 weeks to install a hospital oxygen plant and even less time to convert industrial oxygen manufacturing systems into medical-grade networks. But in Brazil and Nigeria, as well as in less populous nations, decisions to fully address inadequate supplies only started being made last month, after hospitals were overwhelmed and patients started to die. The sluggish approach is inexplicable in parts of India, and in Africa and Latin America, both on the cusp of poverty and inadequate wherewithal to treat coronavirus. Indeed, the gap in the "availability of medical oxygen is one of the defining health equity issues," was the lament of Peter Piot, director of the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine. Doctors in Nigeria anxiously monitor traffic as oxygen deliveries move through the streets of Lagos. It is a measure of the parallel crisis in healthcare that families of patients around the world sometimes turn to the black market. Governments take action only after hospitals are overwhelmed and the infected die. In Brazil's Amazonas state, a pair of swindlers were caught reselling fire extinguishers painted to look like medical oxygen tanks. In Peru, people queued up to get cylinders for sick relatives. While the desperation is less acute in India, there is no scope for complacency. Governments in the afflicted countries attempted to address the problem only after the lack of oxygen was blamed for the deaths of four people at an Egyptian hospital in January. Six people perished for lack of oxygen in Pakistan in December. It would be critical to quote John Nkengasong, director of the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: "Medical oxygen is a huge critical need across the continent of 1.3 billion people and is a main reason that Covid-19 patients are more likely to die there during surges". Even before the pandemic, sub-Saharan Africa's 2,600 oxygen concentrators and 69 functioning oxygen plants met less than half the need, leading to preventable deaths, especially from pneumonia, according to the World Health Organization. The number of concentrators has gone up to about 6,000, mostly from international donations, but the oxygen produced "isn't pure enough for the critically ill". The ballooning price of medical oxygen is no less a matter of concern.

Turbid Policy

The total government subsidy for fertilizer, food and petroleum was aggregated to Rs 1,96,769 crore. This constitutes 56.53 per cent of central petroleum revenue and 34.18 per cent of the total petroleum sector's revenue. This clearly shows that this sector meets the Centre's entire subsidy burden; so, it would be wrong to say the subsidy to the sector is a burden on the government

Crude and Petrol Price in 2013, 2018, 2020 and 2021

Year/ Details	Crude price Per barrel (159 litres)	Rupee/Dollar Exchange rate	Price per barrel (in Rs)	Per litre rate	Petrol price in Delhi
2013 (3 Sep)	\$ 111.59	Rs. 66.89	Rs. 7,464	Rs. 46.94	Rs. 76.06
2018 (20 May)	\$ 79.14	Rs. 68.12	Rs. 5,391	Rs. 46.94	Rs. 76.24
2020 (April)	\$ 19.90	Rs. 75.27	Rs. 1,498	Rs. 9.42	Rs. 70.00
2021(January)	\$ 54.79	Rs. 72.90	Rs. 3,994	Rs. 25.12	Rs. 86.34



People demand satisfactory answers to these six questions to know why the petrol and diesel prices in India are again on the boil: 1) Is it because the international crude prices are skyrocketing? 2) Has the dollar price increased steeply, whereby more rupees are to be spent to get the same amount of crude? 3) Are oil marketing companies incurring huge losses? 4) Is the government untenably burdened with a high petroleum subsidy which it wants to ease through oil price hikes? 5) Or, is it the market that determines the price where the government has no role to play and therefore it has become a silent spectator when the prices unrealistically move upwards and forget to go southwards in tandem when international prices fall? 6) Although people's memory is short, they also want to know why the party now in power, which vehemently opposed the price hike when it was in opposition and which made the people believe that it would not allow the hike if and when it came to power, is indulging in a steeper hike after coming into power, belying its supporters' hopes?

For sure, the government doesn't have a 'yes' answer to any of these questions because there is enough evidence to refute all of them, one by one.

First, the international crude prices have not reached a never-before level although petrol prices have now reached close to Rs.100 a litre in some states and the diesel prices are moving in tandem. High import prices are no reason for the present hike. The Indian basket of crude cost was \$54.79/b barrel (about 159 litres) in January 2021 when petrol, for instance in Delhi, was sold at Rs 86.34. But it was higher at \$111.59/barrel in September 2013 and the petrol in the same city was sold at a lower

price, Rs 76.06. Then does the second presumption, the exchange rate must be higher than before making the crude costlier in rupee terms, apply? No. Crude import price per litre was Rs 46.94 when the rupee-dollar exchange rate was Rs 66.89 in 2013 whereas in January 2021, the exchange rate was Rs 72.90 and the per litre crude cost at that rate was Rs 25.12.

Third, are oil marketing companies losing money? No. No losses to them; the Petroleum and Natural Gas (PNG) statistics confirm that beyond any doubt. The CPSEs under PNG Ministry earned a combined Profit After Tax of Rs 69,714 crore in 2018-19; the profits have been constantly increasing for a seven-year period, for which the data is given, from Rs 39,419 crore in 2012-13.

Fourth, is it because of the subsidy burden on the government? No. Revenues to central and state governments keep rising continually as the 2012-13 to 2018-19 data compilation shows. As per the 2018-19 provisional figures, the state and central governments received:

(i) Royalty from crude oil of Rs 16,964 crore; (ii) Royalty from gas of Rs 2,364 crore; (iii) Oil Development Cess of Rs 18,984 crore; (iv) Excise & Custom duties of Rs 1,63,162 crore; (v) Sales Tax of Rs 2,01,265 crore and (vi) Dividend of Rs 30,323 crore. All this adds up to Rs 43,062 crore – a single-year revenue.

The subsequent revised figures have shown a still higher amount of Rs 5,75,632 crore that year of which the Centre's share was Rs 3,48,041 crore, equal to 22

per cent of its revenue receipts. The remaining Rs 2,27,591 crore went to states which was equal to 8 per cent of their revenue receipts. That year, the Centre's actual subsidy to the petroleum sector, as per the budget document, was Rs 24,837 crore which equals to 7.13 per cent of what it receives from the sector and 4.3 per cent of the total revenue of Centre and states together. This means that the government doesn't give but takes a lot from the industry.

The total government subsidy for fertilizer, food and petroleum was aggregated to Rs 1,96,769 crore. This constitutes 56.53 per cent of central petroleum revenue and 34.18 per cent of the total petroleum sector's revenue. This clearly shows that this sector meets the Centre's entire subsidy burden; so, it would be wrong to say the subsidy to the sector is a burden on the government.

Fifth, the government is helpless; so is all this the making of market forces? No. It could halt the rise in prices although international crude prices went up during the election season. Strictly speaking, the government should not interfere with the prices after allowing them to market control after discarding the administered price mechanism. But it did intervene and suspend the hike when it wanted.

Also, the government can reduce the price through tax reduction if it wants.

Sixth, the ruling party, BJP, vehemently opposed when UPA hiked prices; it had protested in parliament and outside. The news archives are replete with news of this opposition and agi-

tation. True, India heavily depends ~ up to 85 per cent ~ on imports for its petroleum needs; it produced only 32.2 MMT of crude in 2019-20 against 214.1 MMT consumption that year. Yet, that is no justification for the current price hike. Imports are a burden, but India exports petroleum products, too. Putting its excess refining capacities to good use in 2019-20, for instance, India refined 48.8 MMT crude more than was domestically required. It had imported 262.9 MMT crude against 214.1 MMT consumption. It could thus export petroleum products worth \$38.8 billion which accounts for 11.4 per cent of its gross exports value. The import bill of POL (Petroleum, Oil and Lubricants) that year was \$119.1 billion, equal to 25 per cent of India's gross imports. So, while thinking of costs, export earnings and the domestic production of crude should also be factored in and not just the crude import cost.

A democratic government should be transparent enough to share all the details with the people but should not scare them with misleading assertions and information.

Also, the government should share with the people the profits it makes in different modes ~ tax and non-tax ~ by keeping the prices within the specified bounds.

Instead of indulging in mutual accusations and holding opponents responsible for the price hike, political parties and governments should understand and accept petroleum to be a key and strategic industry, its interest being closely intertwined with public interest not only because of the high import dependence of the sector but because of its potential to increase overall inflation in the country with the resultant erosion of real incomes of people.



Supply chain & national security

For all the talk of "decoupling" the U.S. economy from that of China, the reality was always that there would be, at most, a limited and selective redesign of global supply chains. China produces too much, too efficiently for the rest of the world to exclude it from all multinational production networks. The Biden administration's review of critical supply chains, announced Wednesday, makes more sense ~ if it leads to the establishment of resilient supply chains for the United States and its economic partners. Success is only possible, however, with a focus on national security concerns that embraces cooperation with allies and like-minded countries. Japan must do its part.

While the Covid-19 pandemic made clear the world's reliance on China for production of personal protective equipment, there have been other indications of China's central role in vital manufacturing networks. Vulnerability was first exposed in 2010, when China, which controls about 80 per cent of global rare earth refining capacity, cut off shipments of those minerals to Japan during the dispute over the Senkaku Islands. Rare earths are critical to high-tech products, including many leading-edge military applications.

Ever since, Japan, the United States and other partners, such as Australia, have developed alternative sources to ensure that they are not held hostage in another political dispute. Tokyo, Canberra and Delhi took a potentially important step last September when they announced

The Japan Times

supply chain resilience initiative (SCRI), which aims to promote regional cooperation to build a resilient supply chain in the Indo-Pacific. The following month, during his first trip overseas as prime minister, Yoshihide Suga pledged in Vietnam that he would help Japanese companies diversify their supply chains across Southeast Asia.

Tokyo is offering money to businesses that either reshore operations (return them to Japan) or move them from China to somewhere else in Asia. Targeting is key to the success of any such project. Businesses will be tempted to see offers of assistance as easy money rather than a national imperative.

National security strictly defined should drive government action, not a desire to protect domestic companies. The U.S. will be looking for that sweet spot in the wake of President Joe Biden's announcement that federal agencies will review critical supply chains to reduce dependence on any rival.

PERSONAL

THE ANNUAL General Meeting of the Bengal Tuberculosis Association (BTA) will be held on Monday, April 19, 2021 at 4-00 p.m. in the Auditorium of the Association. This is for the information of Life and Ordinary members of BTA.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

editor@thestatesman.com

BJP unlikely to win the magic figure

SIR, Prashant Kishore's latest tweet regarding the impending West Bengal Assembly election, saying that the BJP won't be able to secure double-digit seats in the House and that Mamata Banerjee will once again come to power, actually presents a clear picture of the political scenario by indicating which way the wind will blow after the Assembly election. He has also highlighted in his tweets the false hype of the mainstream media which is leaving no stone unturned to convey the impression that this time the BJP will be victorious. However hard the electronic media tries to convince the common people regarding the might and power of the BJP, the party will not secure the magic number that is required to form the Government. The people of West Bengal are actually united and they can't be divided on the lines of language, culture, religion, and majority versus minority tussle.

The BJP Government at the Centre has failed miserably in terms of strategies and plans to address the basic problems of the people. The hike in the prices of essential commodities and the growing band of unemployed youth seem to have gone out of control of the present dispensation.

On the other hand, the functioning of the present government, headed by Mamata Banerjee, has been generally appreciated. Almost every section of our society has



gained something from this people-friendly Government. The manner in which this Government helped the people at the peak of the pandemic reaffirms the high standards and ethical values that this government aspires to pursue. The return of Mamata Banerjee as the Chief Minister ought not to surprise any sensible person.

Yours, etc., Iftekhar Ahmed,
Kolkata, 28 February.

LESS THAN JUSTICE

SIR, This refers to the report, 'MBS backed operation to kill Khashoggi' (28 February). Saudi Arabia's initial version of the killing of dissident Saudi journalist, Jamal Khashoggi in a "fistfight" inside its consulate in Istanbul was rather illogical and hence difficult to believe. Riyadh's explanation that Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, its de facto ruler, was unaware of the operation was also

difficult to accept. He had arrogated to himself enormous powers within a year of the anointment and has even been micromanaging policy decisions. A killing inside the consulate could not have been carried out without his clearance. Washington on Friday released a long-delayed intelligence report that Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman of approving Khashoggi's 2018 murder in Istanbul, drawing a rebuke from Riyadh, which strongly rejected the assessment.

President Biden's decision not to penalize Saudi Arabia's MBS over the Khashoggi killing, fearing breach in ties with longstanding Middle East partners, is disappointing. The Washington-based campaign group Freedom House said it was "disappointing and frustrating that the U.S. is yet unwilling to act on its own intelligence" and impose sanctions on the Saudi

OBSESSION WITH THE VIRTUAL

SIR, The need for setting up a mechanism to regulate Over-The-Top platforms, in the virtual world and social media, has become a matter of debate. Sometimes unreliable information tarnishes the image of a particular section of society. Such contents need to be filtered. The sentiments of a section of society are offended. On the pretext of the freedom of the right to expression being a constitutional right, some users misuse platforms to publicize their biased ideological perceptions. Such ideas spoil the social environment and stoke negativity. One section of society is always engaged in condemning the Modi government through sponsorship. Online web series broadcasting films make entertainment content easily accessible on TV, laptop, mobile and keep users obsessed with the virtual world.

Yours, etc., Yugal Kishore Sharma, Faridabad, 27 February.

A WELCOME MOVE

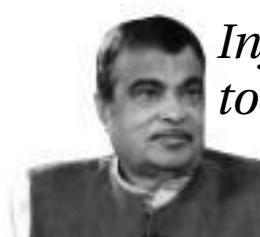
SIR, The joint statement between India and Pakistan that the two countries have agreed to maintain

strict observance of a ceasefire along with Line of Control is a welcome step. It was in 2003 that the two countries had signed a ceasefire pact, only to make a mockery of it soon after by following it neither in letter nor in spirit. During all these years, relations between these two countries had gone from bad to worse.

Sustained peace along the LOC will lead to the resumption of further talks on bilateral issues of trade and tourism, besides safety of people living along the LOC.

A reduction in tension and a condemnation of cross-border terror are imperative to start a dialogue on Kashmir. This is a positive step not only for India and Pakistan, but a positive step towards greater peace and stability in the whole of South Asia.

Yours, etc., SK Khosla, Chandigarh, 28 February.



Infrastructure projects in the pipeline will help boost tourism as well as create opportunities for MSMEs

NITIN GADKARI
UNION MINISTER

THUMBNAILS

Prestige agreement: Realty firm Prestige Estates Projects on Tuesday said it has signed definitive agreements with global investment firm Blackstone to sell 12 assets/undertakings comprising completed office, retail and hotel properties in the first phase of Rs 9,160-crore deal. In November last year, it had signed term sheet to sell a large portfolio of completed as well as under-construction office, retail and hotel properties to Blackstone for an enterprise value of Rs 9,160 crore. The company will use the fund to retire its debt and future expansion. PTI

Coal import substitution: Coal India Ltd (CIL) on Tuesday said its drive for coal import substitution has gained tempo with consumers opting for about 71 million tons (MT) of indigenous coal during the April-February period of the current fiscal. Predominant among them was a robust 43.5 MT increase in e-auction bookings during April-February period of FY21 compared to the year-ago period, it said. PTI

IIFL Finance cash chase: Non-banking financial company IIFL Finance will open a public issue of bonds on Wednesday to raise up to Rs 1,000 crore for the purpose of business growth and capital augmentation. The bonds offer up to 10.03 per cent interest, said a Press release. IIFL Finance will issue unsecured redeemable non-convertible debentures (NCDS), with a base of Rs 100 crore, and a green shoe option to retain oversubscription up to Rs 900 crore (aggregating to a total of Rs 1,000 crore), said the release. SNS

DICV market share: Daimler India Commercial Vehicles (DICV) on Tuesday said despite unprecedented headwinds, it has achieved a 3.3 per cent rise in its domestic market share to 9.1 per cent in 2020 from 5.8 per cent earlier. The company's domestic sales increased by 46 per cent in October-December quarter of 2020 compared to the same period of the previous year, said a Press release. SNS

Haier launch: Home appliances & consumer electronics maker Haier on Tuesday announced the expansion of its Google-certified Android LED TV series. The new additions to the K-series flaunt a stunning 4K picture quality on screen sizes ~ 108cm (43), 127cm (50), 146cm (58), 165cm (65), and 190cm (75), respectively, said a company release. SNS

TK Elevator: TK Elevator, a leading player in the elevators and escalators market, on Wednesday announced the launch of its new global brand ~ TKE. The new brand name results from the change in ownership that took place during the middle of last year, said a Press release from the company. SNS

Port projects to see \$82 billion investment by 2035, says PM

Prime Minister Narendra Modi urges global players to make India preferred investment destination

SNS & PTI
NEW DELHI, 2 MARCH

India will invest \$82 billion in port projects by 2035, raise share of clean renewable energy source in maritime sector, develop waterways, augment seaplane services and boost tourism around lighthouses, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said today urging global players to make India a "preferred investment destination".

As many as 400 projects with investment potential to the tune of \$31 billion are ready for investors, who can be a part of India's growth trajectory, Modi said inaugurating the Maritime India Summit.

"More than 574 projects at a cost of \$82 billion or Rs 6 lakh crore have been identified under the Sagarmala project for implementation during 2030 and 2035... We will encourage private investment in the port sector... India's long coastline awaits you. India's hardworking people await you."

"Invest in our ports. Invest in our people. Let India be your preferred trade destination. Let Indian ports be your port of call for trade and commerce," the Prime Minister said as he invited players to invest in Indian ports, shipyards and waterways.

The ministry of ports, shipping and waterways is ready with a list of 400 investable projects with investment potential of \$31 billion or Rs 2.25 lakh crore, Modi said, adding, this will further strengthen India's

commitment of overall development of its maritime sector.

"Through this Maritime India summit, I want to invite the world to come to India and be a part of our growth trajectory. India is emerging as a leading blue economy of the world. Our leading focus area includes upgrading current infrastructure, creating next generation infra, boosting the reform journey. Through these steps, we aim to give vision to our Aatmanirbhar Bharat"

our Aatmanirbhar Bharat," he said.

Modi further noted that "ours is a government that is investing in waterways in a way that was never seen before. Domestic waterways are found to be cost effective and environment friendly ways of transporting freight. We aim to operate 23 waterways by 2030." He said this will be done through infrastructure enhancement, fairway development, navigation aid and river information system provisions and focus will also be given on augmenting regional connectivity to Bangladesh, Bhutan and Myanmar.

New Maritime Infra will usher in ease of living through launch of roll-on, roll-off and other projects for harnessing rivers.

"Waterdromes at 16 locations are being developed to enable seaplane operations... River cruise terminal infra and jetty are being developed on five national waterways. We aim to develop domestic and international cruise terminals by 2023," the Prime Minister said.

Asserting that the government is working towards holistic maritime development that is not in silos, he said plans have been drawn for developing tourism on land adjacent to 78 out of 189 lighthouses on Indian coastline.

The Prime Minister said:

"We are in the process of installing solar and wind based power systems in all the major ports across the country. We aim to increase usage of renewable energy to more than 60 per cent of all energy by 2030 in three phases across Indian ports," he said.

Modi said, Indian ports have reduced waiting time for inbound and outbound cargo. "India is very serious about growing in the maritime sector and emerging as a leading blue economy of the world," he said.

The government of India is also focusing on the domestic shipbuilding and ship repair market, he said, adding to encourage domestic shipbuilding, a Shipbuilding Financial Assistance Policy for Indian Shipyards has been approved.

"Invest in our ports. Invest

Spectrum auction: Govt mops up ₹77,815 cr, Jio top buyer

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 2 MARCH

Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Jio cornered more than half of the telecom spectrum auctioned by the government over the past two days, offering about Rs 57,123 crore to consolidate its holding of the scarce resource that is used to carry mobile call and data signals.

Telecom giant Bharti Airtel bid Rs 18,699 crore to pick up 355.45 megahertz (MHz) out of the 855.60 MHz of radiofrequency, giving it "most formidable" spectrum holding in the country.

Vodafone Idea Ltd, which is facing a huge liability of unpaid statutory dues of past, bought spectrum worth Rs 1,993.40 crore, telecom secretary Anshu Prakash told

reporters here. In all, some 60 per cent of the spectrum offered was sold, according to Prakash, who said the bids came at the floor price ~ or minimum price that was acceptable to the government.

In the first auction of radio airwaves in five years, the government offered 2,308.80 MHz of spectrum in seven bands, at a reserve price of nearly Rs 4 lakh crore. However, airwaves in the premium 700 MHz and 2,500 MHz bands went unsold.

The telecom secretary said 855.60 MHz of spectrum was bought for Rs 77,814.80 crore in the two-day auction.

Spectrum refers to the radio frequencies allocated to the mobile industry and other sectors for communication over the airwaves.

Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd said it acquired the right to use spectrum in all the 22 circles or zones across India. In all, it won 488.35 MHz of spectrum, taking up its spectrum footprint by 55 per cent to 1,717 MHz. Jio raced to become the leading telecom operator in the country within four years of launching services in 2016.

Reliance Jio said it acquired airwaves that are suitable for use with 5G technology while loss-making Vodafone Idea Ltd said it won 11.8 MHz spectrum in five zones.

Separately, Bharti Airtel said it won spectrum across Sub GHz, mid-band and 2300 MHz bands, giving it a secured pan-India footprint that will help improve its deep indoor and in building coverage in every urban town.

Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd said it acquired the right to use spectrum in all the 22 circles or zones across India. In all, it won 488.35 MHz of spectrum, taking up its spectrum footprint by 55 per cent to 1,717 MHz. Jio raced to become the leading telecom operator in the country within four years of launching services in 2016.

Imports grew by 6.98 per cent to \$40.55 billion during the month, the data showed.

Trade deficit widens to \$12.88 billion

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 2 MARCH

\$8.99 billion. It was down by 40.18 per cent to \$72.08 billion during 11 months period of the current fiscal.

Major commodities of export that have recorded positive growth during February include oil meals, iron ore, rice, meat, dairy and poultry products, carpet, spices, pharmaceuticals, and chemicals.

The sectors that recorded negative export growth in February include petroleum products (-27.13 per cent), leather (-21.62 per cent), cashew (-18.6 per cent), gems and jewellery (-11.18 per cent), engineering goods (-2.56 per cent), tea (-2.49 per cent), and coffee (-0.73 per cent), it added.

Key import goods that registered healthy growth include gold, dyeing/tanning/colouring materials, chemicals, electronic goods, iron and steel, textile yarn fabric and made-

EXPORTS FALL

After recording positive growth for two months in a row, India's exports dipped marginally by 0.25 per cent to \$27.67 billion in February.

Imports grew by 6.98 per cent to \$40.55 billion during the month.

up articles. Sectors that recorded negative import growth include silver, newsprint, fertiliser, coal, leather, transport equipment, petroleum, pulses, machine tools, cotton raw and waste, pearls, and precious

and semi-precious stones.

Gold imports in February jumped to about \$3 billion.

Growing for the second consecutive month, the country's exports rose by 6.16 per cent year-on-year to \$27.45 billion in January 2021.

Federation of Indian Export Organisations (Fieo) president S K Saraf said they continue to see signs of further revival not only in the order booking positions but also in the demand from across the globe, paving way for much better days and months for the sector.

However, he said rising exports from China have led to the shortage of containers in the region, as most of the empty containers are available only for exports from China. The shipping lines and container companies are being paid hefty premiums for bringing empty containers back to China.

BSE Sensex reclaims 50,000-level

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 2 MARCH

MUMBAI, 2 MARCH

BSE benchmark the Sensex surged by 447 points to close above the psychological 50,000-mark today following hectic buying in auto and IT counters amid positive domestic and global cues.

The 30-share index swung

nearly 633 points during the session before ending at 50,296.89 points, showing a rise of 447.05 points or 0.90 per cent.

Likewise, the NSE Nifty climbed 157.55 points or 1.07 per cent to settle at 14,919.10 points, extending gains to the second day.

Among Sensex stocks, Mahindra & Mahindra was lead gainer, rising by 4.98 per cent. NTPC rose by 3.83 per cent, Bajaj Auto by 3.53 per cent and Tech Mahindra by 3.44 per cent.

TCS, Maruti, Infosys, HCL Tech, Nestle and Bharti Airtel were among the gainers.

On the other hand, ONGC,

tively ~ outperforming the benchmark.

Analysts said investor sentiment remained upbeat due to encouraging GDP numbers for the third quarter as well as returning of calmness in global bond markets after the last week's turmoil.

Vinod Nair, head of research at Geojit Financial Services, said: "An improved outlook post-February auto sales numbers resulted in continued buying in auto stocks with IT

sector also being a major contributor in the rally."

S Ranganathan, head of research at LKP Securities, said that markets exhibited buoyancy today despite its share of volatility in afternoon trade. IT stocks and auto stocks led the rally while the broader market saw keen interest in paper stocks on rising product prices.

Notably, the volatility index contracted sharply for the second consecutive day by over 6 per cent, Binod Modi, head - strategy at Reliance Securities, said.

Elsewhere in Asia, bourses in Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong closed with losses after a sell-off in US treasury debt eased.

Meanwhile, Brent Futures rose 0.71 per cent to trade at \$63.76 per barrel.

On the foreign market front, the rupee surged by 18 paise to close at 73.37 against the US dollar today.

Flipkart plans to expand grocery services to 70 cities in 6 months

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 2 MARCH

most seamless grocery shopping experience, Flipkart said in a statement today.

The pandemic has led to millions of people turning to e-commerce for their grocery purchases that has driven the sharp growth in the e-grocery not only in metros but also from tier II cities and beyond.

Flipkart, which competes with US e-commerce major Amazon and billionaire Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance in the country's digital commerce space, has expanded its grocery services to more than 50 cities, including Kolkata, Ahmedabad and Bengaluru.

This expansion will provide users of seven large cities and more than 40 neighbouring cities access to high-quality grocery products, offers quick deliveries and the

managed to scale up "exponentially" in the past year.

"This expansion has brought the convenience of Flipkart's grocery service to users of metro cities such as Kolkata, Pune and Ahmedabad, with the help of Flipkart's dedicated grocery fulfilment centres... Flipkart Grocery has witnessed 3X growth in the last one year," it added.

"Grocery continues to be one of the fastest-growing categories, with the increase in demand for quality food and household supplies from users. In line with this, we have invested in scaling up our grocery operations across the country, strengthening ecosystem partnerships," Flipkart senior vice-president - grocery, general merchandise and furniture - Manish Kumar said.

Climate impact on biz pegged at ₹7,138 billion: Report

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 2 MARCH

Climate change's financial impacts are facing India Inc. and may limit its ambitious growth plans. Forty-two of the companies responding to investors through CDP's environmental disclosure system reported a staggering Rs 7,13,800 crore at risk from climate change in the next five years.

Growing disclosure requirements are prompting an increasing number of Indian businesses to wake up to the threat of climate change and commit to urgent climate action.

Despite 2020's catastrophic economic climate, 220 Indian companies responded to

investor requests and disclosed climate data through CDP an environmental non-profit.

Out of the companies requested to disclose by investors, 60 of the top 200 on the BSE (Bombay Stock Exchange) responded (out of a total 69). The rest were requested to disclose through CDP's supply chain programme by their corporate customers.

Out of these, four Indian companies have made it to the prestigious CDP A List for the first time and are amongst the 16 that have secured the Leadership Band in recognition of their bold climate action.

The findings were released in CDP's annual India report ~ "Building Back Greener:

India Inc. Demonstrates Climate Resilience".

Five years on from the Paris Agreement, and months away from COP26, India Inc. is ramping up environmental action to help the country build back a green and resilient economy. Findings indicate that investor-driven increased market pressure is compelling companies to embed climate concerns into their economic decision-making processes ~ 88 per cent of responding companies report incentivising top management for climate related issues; 66 companies, a whopping 99 per cent of the responding sample, have board-level oversight of climate-related issues.

Damandeep Singh, director, CDP India, said: "Data

shows that Indian companies have really upped their game on climate action. This

bodes well for future-proofing India's ambitious growth plans which are manufacturing centric. Environmental disclosures by leading companies via CDP's reporting platform feed data across capital markets to help investors

and customers make informed decisions and push businesses towards ramping up environmental action. With an ever-increasing number of companies being called to opt for greater transparency, the first step toward their climate-safe journey, India Inc.'s climate leaders hold out massive hope for their counterparts

~ by incorporating a climate-focused approach into their business strategy. Despite the Covid-19-induced economic distress, these businesses have moved a step closer to a climate-resilient future. With a focus on good governance and on sustainable business practices, they will also play a pivotal role in strengthening the country's transition from a grey to a low carbon, green and resilient economy as we recover from Covid-19."

CDP's findings elucidate that a growing number of top businesses are factoring in climate risks to evaluate and inform their business strategy. With 87 per cent (58) of reporting companies stating that climate related risks and

opportunities have impacted their operations. While 84 per cent (56) of those who responded claimed that climate related risks and opportunities led their company to change plans for products and services, 93 per cent (



The world's singular focus right now should be to keep transmission of Covid as low as possible

DIRECTOR OF WHO'S EMERGENCIES PROGRAMME, DR. MICHAEL RYAN
DURING A MEET

The Statesman
NEW DELHI, WEDNESDAY 03 MARCH 2021

09

Myanmar police fire tear gas, rubber bullets at protesters

Hundreds, many wearing construction helmets and carrying makeshift shields, gathered in Yangon

ASSOCIATED PRESS

YANGON, MYANMAR

Police in Myanmar repeatedly used tear gas and rubber bullets Tuesday against crowds protesting last month's coup, but the demonstrators regrouped after each volley and tried to defend themselves with barricades as standoffs between protesters and security forces intensified.

Myanmar authorities have escalated their crackdown on the protests in recent days, making mass arrests and firing into the crowds. The United Nations said it believed at least 18 people were killed on Sunday by security forces. Foreign ministers from Southeast Asian countries were meeting Tuesday to discuss the increasingly volatile crisis. Despite the crackdown, demonstrators have continued to flood the streets—and are beginning to more rigorously resist attempts to disperse them. Hundreds, many wearing construction helmets and carrying makeshift shields, gathered in Myanmar's largest city of Yangon, where a day earlier police had fired repeated rounds of tear gas. They dragged bamboo poles and debris to form barricades, chanted slogans and sang songs at the police lines. They even threw banana skins onto the road in front of them in a bid to slow any police rush.

The mainly young demonstrators fled in panic each time tear gas canisters were fired but soon returned to their barricades. Videos posted on social media showed similar chaotic scenes in the

Neighbours press for Suu Kyi's release, restoration of democracy

AGENCIES

Myanmar's neighbours pressed its ruling military on Tuesday to release ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi and cease what Singapore called the disastrous use of lethal force against opponents of their 1 February coup and work out a solution to the crisis.

The calls from fellow members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) came as Myanmar police again opened fire to disperse crowds after weeks of demonstrations against military rule.

ASEAN foreign ministers held talks with a representative of the junta in a video call two days after the bloodiest day of unrest since the military overthrew Suu Kyi's elected government. At least 21 people have been killed since the coup, which Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said



Protesters wearing safety helmets shout slogans and flash three-finger salutes during an anti-coup protest behind a barrier on a blocked road in Yangon on Tuesday. ■ AP

in an interview with the BBC was a "tragic" step back for Myanmar. The foreign minister of Indonesia, which has been pushing a regional diplomatic effort, urged Myanmar to "open its doors" to the ASEAN bloc to resolve the escalating tension.

Speaking to reporters in Jakarta, the minister, Retno Marsudi, called for the release of political detainees and for the restoration of democ-

racy, while pledging that ASEAN countries would not break their pledge of not interfering in each other's affairs.

The bloc's effort to engage with Myanmar's military has been criticised by supporters of democracy, with a committee of ousted Myanmar lawmakers declaring the junta a terrorist group and saying ASEAN's engagement would give it legitimacy.

Insein neighborhood of northern Yangon.

Protesters also took up their flags and banners to march through the streets of Dawei, a small city in southeastern Myanmar that has seen almost daily large demonstrations against the coup.

Yangon, Dawei and Mandalay were among the cities where security forces reportedly fired live ammunition into crowds Sunday, according to the U.N. Human Rights Office. There were reports that they also fired live rounds Tuesday, but they could not immedi-

ately be confirmed.

Some fear the junta's escalating use of force is meant to provoke a violent backlash by the demonstrators — who have largely remained non-violent — in order to discredit them and justify an even harsher crackdown. Videos from recent days show a greater number of protesters trying to stand their ground and throw objects at the police. "I beg the people in

Myanmar not to fall in this trap, so to stay peaceful," U.N. Special Envoy on Myanmar Christine Schraner Burgener said in interview with CNN, acknowledging that it was easier for her, safely away from the violence, to urge peaceful protesting. She also accused the authorities of spreading rumors about the conditions of people in detention to stir up even more anger on the streets.

The weekend crackdown drew international condemnation. In addition to the use of force, authorities also detained more than 1,000 people over the weekend, according to the independent Assistance Association for Political Prisoners. Those detained included at least eight journalists, among them Thein Zaw of The Associated Press. U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called the use of force and arbitrary arrests "unacceptable," according to his spokesperson. The U.S., British and other governments issued similar statements of concern.

But the military has shown no sign of backing down.

The protesters and their supporters have appealed for help from abroad, but there are few prospects for major intervention. The U.N.'s independent expert on human rights in Myanmar, Tom Andrews, has proposed that countries could institute a global embargo on the sale of arms to Myanmar and "tough, targeted and coordinated sanctions" against those responsible for the coup, the crackdown and other rights abuses.

US men accused of helping Ghosn flee arrive in Japan

TOKYO, 2 MARCH

Two Americans suspected of helping former Nissan Chairman Carlos Ghosn skip bail in Japan and flee to Lebanon in December 2019 were extradited from the U.S. and arrived in Tokyo on Tuesday.

Michael Taylor and his son, Peter, who had been detained in a Boston jail since last May, were handed over to Japanese custody on Monday.

Tokyo Deputy Prosecutor Hiroshi Yamamoto said the Taylors arrived at Tokyo's Narita International Airport, and were arrested on suspicion of aiding a criminal. AP

Watchdog urges release of media workers held in Ethiopia

ASSOCIATED PRESS

KAMPALA, 2 MARCH

At least four Ethiopian media workers assisting members of the international press have been detained

The Committee to Protect Journalists is urging Ethiopian authorities to free journalists and media workers detained in the Tigray region, where government troops and their allies are battling forces loyal to the local administration.

The BBC, AFP and the Financial Times had permission to operate in Tigray.

The scarcity of independent reporting coming out of Tigray during this conflict was already deeply alarming. Now, the Ethiopian military's arrests of journalists and media workers will undoubtedly lead to fear and self-censorship. Muthoki Mumo, sub-Saharan Africa representative of the Committee to Protect Journalists, said in the statement.

Ethiopian authorities should release these journalists and media workers immediately and provide guarantees that the press can cover the conflict in Tigray without intimidation.

The office of Ethiopia's prime minister announced on February 24 it was authorizing some members of the international press to report from Tigray, a northern province that has been in armed conflict with the federal government since November. But two days later a ruling party official, Habtay Gebregeziabher, told a state-run media agency that authorities would take measures against people he accused of trying to supply wrong information to international journalists in Tigray, according to

the statement by the Committee to Protect Journalists.

Alarm is growing over the fate of Tigray's 6 million people as fierce fighting reportedly continues between Ethiopian and allied forces and those supporting the now-fugitive Tigray leaders who once dominated Ethiopia's government. The United Nations in its latest humanitarian report on the situation in Tigray says the humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate as fighting intensifies across the northern region.

No one knows how many thousands of civilians have been killed. Humanitarian officials have warned that a growing number of people might be starving to death in Tigray.

ment will have to submit an updated report within a month to the FATF on the progress on legislation and other steps to be taken to address the outstanding concerns.

Since the government had changed almost three dozen laws over the past year to meet the FATF requirements, there should not be any hurdle in the way of making two more amendments, the report said.

The Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF) placed Pakistan on the grey list in June 2018 and asked Islamabad to implement a plan of action to curb money laundering and terror financing by the end of 2019 but the deadline was extended later due to pandemic. The new deadline was set by the FATF last month.

Pakistan has been scrambling in recent months to avoid being added to a list of countries deemed non-compliant with anti-money laundering and terrorist financing regulations by the FATF, a measure that officials here fear could further hurt its ailing economy.

The Dawn newspaper reported that the govern-

Groups ask France to probe 2013 Syria chemical attacks

PARIS, 2 MARCH

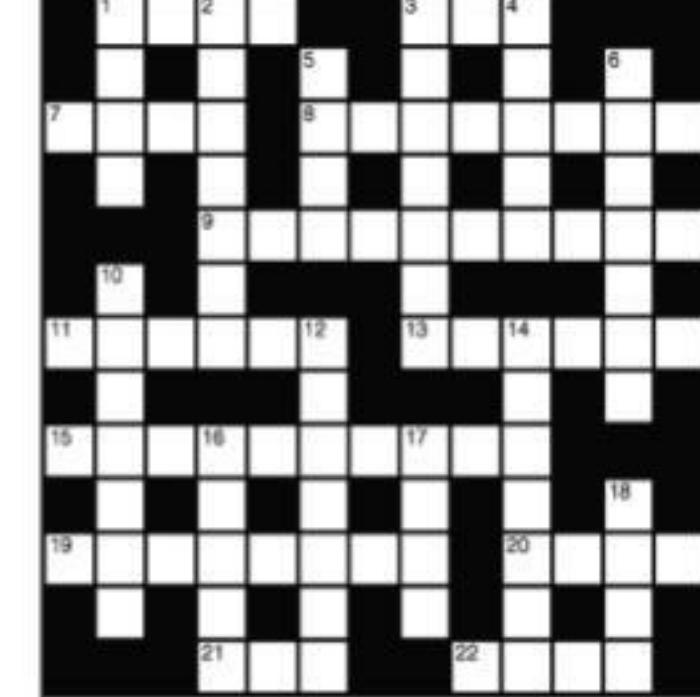
A group of Syrian chemical attack survivors and Syrian rights groups said Tuesday they have filed a criminal complaint in France over two August 2013 attacks outside Damascus, pointing to the alleged responsibility of the Syrian government in what would constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity. We have compiled extensive evidence establishing exactly who is responsible for these attacks ... whose horrific effects continue to impact survivors, said Hadi al Khatib, founder and director of Syrian Archive, which is supporting the initiative by the survivors and the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression.

The suit concerns 2013 attacks in Douma and the Ghouta. It is the second such effort in Europe in recent months seeking accountability in chemical attacks.

In October, human rights groups filed a criminal complaint in Germany asking prosecutors to act over the 2013 sarin attack in Ghouta and a 2017 attack in the town of Khan Shaykhun. AP

LEISURE

10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1 Be dressed in (4)
- 2 Rodent (3)
- 3 Door fastener (4)
- 4 Winning competitor (8)
- 5 Tumbledown (10)
- 6 Drinking spree (Slang) (6)
- 7 Small cave (6)
- 8 Reprimand (Informal) (7-3)
- 9 Infinite time (8)
- 10 Midday (4)
- 11 Insect (3)
- 12 Prison room (4)
- 13 Rotund, chewy (4)
- 14 Knitting yarn (4)
- 15 Theme (5)
- 16 Mild curry (5)
- 17 Banded gemstone (4)
- 18 Gold mine, fat, overfull, 20 Prop, 21 Terse, 22 Veil.
- 19 Vigil, 19 Ic.
- 20 Gold mine, 21 Terse, 22 Veil.
- 21 Terse, 22 Veil.
- 22 Prison room (4)
- 23 Round, 24 Gazebo, 25 Gazebo, 26 Gazebo, 27 Gazebo, 28 Gazebo, 29 Gazebo, 30 Gazebo, 31 Gazebo, 32 Gazebo, 33 Gazebo, 34 Gazebo, 35 Gazebo, 36 Gazebo, 37 Gazebo, 38 Gazebo, 39 Gazebo, 40 Gazebo, 41 Gazebo, 42 Gazebo, 43 Gazebo, 44 Gazebo, 45 Gazebo, 46 Gazebo, 47 Gazebo, 48 Gazebo, 49 Gazebo, 50 Gazebo, 51 Gazebo, 52 Gazebo, 53 Gazebo, 54 Gazebo, 55 Gazebo, 56 Gazebo, 57 Gazebo, 58 Gazebo, 59 Gazebo, 60 Gazebo, 61 Gazebo, 62 Gazebo, 63 Gazebo, 64 Gazebo, 65 Gazebo, 66 Gazebo, 67 Gazebo, 68 Gazebo, 69 Gazebo, 70 Gazebo, 71 Gazebo, 72 Gazebo, 73 Gazebo, 74 Gazebo, 75 Gazebo, 76 Gazebo, 77 Gazebo, 78 Gazebo, 79 Gazebo, 80 Gazebo, 81 Gazebo, 82 Gazebo, 83 Gazebo, 84 Gazebo, 85 Gazebo, 86 Gazebo, 87 Gazebo, 88 Gazebo, 89 Gazebo, 90 Gazebo, 91 Gazebo, 92 Gazebo, 93 Gazebo, 94 Gazebo, 95 Gazebo, 96 Gazebo, 97 Gazebo, 98 Gazebo, 99 Gazebo, 100 Gazebo, 101 Gazebo, 102 Gazebo, 103 Gazebo, 104 Gazebo, 105 Gazebo, 106 Gazebo, 107 Gazebo, 108 Gazebo, 109 Gazebo, 110 Gazebo, 111 Gazebo, 112 Gazebo, 113 Gazebo, 114 Gazebo, 115 Gazebo, 116 Gazebo, 117 Gazebo, 118 Gazebo, 119 Gazebo, 120 Gazebo, 121 Gazebo, 122 Gazebo, 123 Gazebo, 124 Gazebo, 125 Gazebo, 126 Gazebo, 127 Gazebo, 128 Gazebo, 129 Gazebo, 130 Gazebo, 131 Gazebo, 132 Gazebo, 133 Gazebo, 134 Gazebo, 135 Gazebo, 136 Gazebo, 137 Gazebo, 138 Gazebo, 139 Gazebo, 140 Gazebo, 141 Gazebo, 142 Gazebo, 143 Gazebo, 144 Gazebo, 145 Gazebo, 146 Gazebo, 147 Gazebo, 148 Gazebo, 149 Gazebo, 150 Gazebo, 151 Gazebo, 152 Gazebo, 153 Gazebo, 154 Gazebo, 155 Gazebo, 156 Gazebo, 157 Gazebo, 158 Gazebo, 159 Gazebo, 160 Gazebo, 161 Gazebo, 162 Gazebo, 163 Gazebo, 164 Gazebo, 165 Gazebo, 166 Gazebo, 167 Gazebo, 168 Gazebo, 169 Gazebo, 170 Gazebo, 171 Gazebo, 172 Gazebo, 173 Gazebo, 174 Gazebo, 175 Gazebo, 176 Gazebo, 177 Gazebo, 178 Gazebo, 179 Gazebo, 180 Gazebo, 181 Gazebo, 182 Gazebo, 183 Gazebo, 184 Gazebo, 185 Gazebo, 186 Gazebo, 187 Gazebo, 188 Gazebo, 189 Gazebo, 190 Gazebo, 191 Gazebo, 192 Gazebo, 193 Gazebo, 194 Gazebo, 195 Gazebo, 196 Gazebo, 197 Gazebo, 198 Gazebo, 199 Gazebo, 200 Gazebo, 201 Gazebo, 202 Gazebo, 203 Gazebo, 204 Gazebo, 205 Gazebo, 206 Gazebo, 207 Gazebo, 208 Gazebo, 209 Gazebo, 210 Gazebo, 211 Gazebo, 212 Gazebo, 213 Gazebo, 214 Gazebo, 215 Gazebo, 216 Gazebo, 217 Gazebo, 218 Gazebo, 219 Gazebo, 220 Gazebo, 221 Gazebo, 222 Gazebo, 223 Gazebo, 224 Gazebo, 225 Gazebo, 226 Gazebo, 227 Gazebo, 228 Gazebo, 229 Gazebo, 230 Gazebo, 231 Gazebo, 232 Gazebo, 233 Gazebo, 234 Gazebo, 235 Gazebo, 236 Gazebo, 237 Gazebo, 238 Gazebo, 239 Gazebo, 240 Gazebo, 241 Gazebo, 242 Gazebo, 243 Gazebo, 244 Gazebo, 245 Gazebo, 246 Gazebo, 247 Gazebo, 248 Gazebo, 249 Gazebo, 250 Gazebo, 251 Gazebo, 252 Gazebo, 253 Gazebo, 254 Gazebo, 255 Gazebo, 256 Gazebo, 257 Gazebo, 258 Gazebo, 259 Gazebo, 260 Gazebo, 261 Gazebo, 262 Gazebo, 263 Gazebo, 264 Gazebo, 265 Gazebo, 266 Gazebo, 267 Gazebo, 268 Gazebo, 269 Gazebo, 270 Gazebo, 271 Gazebo, 272 Gazebo, 273 Gazebo, 274 Gazebo, 275 Gazebo, 276 Gazebo, 277 Gazebo, 278 Gazebo, 279 Gazebo, 280 Gazebo, 281 Gazebo, 282 Gazebo, 283 Gazebo, 284 Gazebo, 285 Gazebo, 286 Gazebo, 287 Gazebo, 288 Gazebo, 289 Gazebo, 290 Gazebo, 291 Gazebo, 292 Gazebo, 293 Gazebo, 294 Gazebo, 295 Gazebo, 296 Gazebo, 297 Gazebo, 298 Gazebo, 299 Gazebo, 300 Gazebo, 301 Gazebo, 302 Gazebo, 303 Gazebo, 304 Gazebo, 305 Gazebo, 306 Gazebo, 307 Gazebo, 308 Gazebo, 309 Gazebo, 310 Gazebo, 311 Gazebo, 312 Gazebo, 313 Gazebo, 314 Gazebo, 315 Gazebo, 316 Gazebo, 317 Gazebo, 318 Gazebo, 319 Gazebo, 320 Gazebo, 321 Gazebo, 322 Gazebo, 323 Gazebo, 324 Gazebo, 325 Gazebo, 326 Gazebo, 327 Gazebo, 328 Gazebo, 329 Gazebo, 330 Gazebo, 331 Gazebo, 332 Gazebo, 333 Gazebo, 334 Gazebo, 335 Gazebo, 336 Gazebo, 337 Gazebo, 338 Gazebo, 339 Gazebo, 340 Gazebo, 341 Gazebo, 342 Gazebo, 343 Gazebo, 344 Gazebo, 345 Gazebo, 346 Gazebo, 347 Gazebo, 348 Gazebo, 349 Gazebo, 350 Gazebo, 351 Gazebo, 352 Gazebo, 353 Gazebo, 354 Gazebo, 355 Gazebo, 356 Gazebo, 357 Gazebo, 358 Gazebo, 359 Gazebo, 360 Gazebo, 361 Gazebo, 362 Gazebo, 363 Gazebo, 364 Gazebo, 365 Gazebo, 366 Gazebo, 367 Gazebo, 368 Gazebo, 369 Gazebo, 370 Gazebo, 371 Gazebo, 372 Gazebo, 373 Gazebo, 374 Gazebo, 375 Gazebo, 376 Gazebo, 377 Gazebo, 378 Gazebo, 379 Gazebo, 380 Gazebo, 381 Gazebo, 382 Gazebo, 383 Gazebo, 384 Gazebo, 385 Gazebo, 386 Gazebo, 387 Gazebo, 388 Gazebo, 389 Gazebo, 390 Gazebo, 391 Gazebo, 392 Gazebo, 393 Gazebo, 394 Gazebo, 395 Gazebo, 396 Gazebo, 397 Gazebo, 398 Gazebo, 399 Gazebo, 400 Gazebo, 401 Gazebo, 402 Gazebo, 403 Gazebo, 404 Gazebo, 405 Gazebo, 406 Gazebo, 407 Gazebo, 408 Gazebo, 409 Gazebo, 410 Gazebo, 411 Gazebo, 412 Gazebo, 413 Gazebo, 414 Gazebo, 415 Gazebo, 416 Gazebo, 417 Gazebo, 418 Gazebo, 419 Gazebo, 420 Gazebo, 421 Gazebo, 422 Gazebo, 423 Gazebo, 424 Gazebo



Entire systems are not rebuilt in a day or in a few weeks. To put it succinctly, the prior admin dismantled our nation's immigration system

NEW HOMELAND SECURITY SECRETARY ALEJANDRO MAYORKAS

WEATHER

CITY	MAX	MIN
SINGAPORE	29°C	25°C
HONG KONG	17°C	13°C
TOKYO	07°C	04°C
LONDON	08°C	05°C
DUBAI	30°C	25°C
SAN FRANCISCO	08°C	04°C
NEW YORK	-02°C	04°C
MOSCOW	04°C	02°C

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

THUMBNAILS



Health-care workers walk through the post-vaccine waiting area at a mass vaccination clinic in Ontario on Tuesday. AP

Fire at Nepal market: At least 50 houses were gutted in a major fire that broke out in a market in eastern Nepal on Tuesday, officials said. The incident happened in Dohban Bazaar of Taplejung district when the fire broke out from a house and within a short span spread to the nearby areas, gutting 50 other houses. AP

EU court: The top European Union court ruled on Tuesday that Poland's new regulations for appointing judges to the Supreme Court could go against EU law. The ruling obliges Poland's government to discontinue these regulations and observe the principles of judicial independence and the right to judicial protection. AP

German unemployment: German unemployment still largely steady despite lockdown German unemployment held more or less steady in February despite the impact of lockdown measures, according to official data released Tuesday. Extensive use of a short-term salary support program is still keeping the figures in check. AP

Polish court
acquits activists
who put LGBT
rainbow on icon

WARSAW, 2 MARCH

A court in Poland on Tuesday acquitted three activists who had been accused of desecration and offending religious feelings for adding the LGBT rainbow to images of a revered Roman Catholic icon. The three women created posters in 2019 that used the rainbows in place of halos in an image of the Virgin Mary and baby Jesus.

Their aim was to protest what they considered the hostility of Poland's influential Catholic Church toward LGBT people.

The court in the city of Plock did not find any signs of a crime and also found that the activists were not motivated by a desire to offend anyone's religious feelings or to insult the image of the Virgin Mary, according to reports in the Polish media.

The case of the three women was being watched in Poland as a test of freedom of speech under a deeply conservative government that has been seeking to push back against secularisation and liberal views often seen as a foreign imposition. Abortion has been another flashpoint in the country after a top court ruling last year that resulted in a near total ban on abortion. One of the defendants, Elzbieta Podlesna, said when the trial opened in January that the 2019 action in Plock was spurred by an installation at the city's St. Dominic's Church that associated LGBT people with crime and sins.

The image that they created involved altering Poland's most-revered icon, the Mother of God of Czestochowa, popularly known as the Black Madonna of Czestochowa. The original has been housed at the Jasna Gora monastery in the city of Czestochowa Poland's holiest site since the 14th century. AP

Pfizer, Oxford vaccines reduce severe Covid-19 in elderly, study finds

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

LONDON, 2 MARCH

The Pfizer and Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccines for Covid are highly effective in reducing severe coronavirus infection among people aged 70 years and above, according to a study.

The research, posted as a pre-print and yet to be peer-reviewed, estimated the effect of both the Covid vaccines on laboratory confirmed symptomatic disease in individuals aged 70 years or older in England.

The researchers, including those from Public Health England (PHE), compared the rate of hospitalisation and deaths in confirmed COVID-19 patients aged over 80 who

were vaccinated more than 14 days before testing positive, with unvaccinated cases.

Data suggests that in the over 80s, a single dose of either vaccine is more than 80 per cent effective at preventing hospitalisation, around 3 to 4 weeks after the jab, PHE said in a statement.

Evidence for the Pfizer vaccine suggests that it leads to 83 per cent reduction in deaths from Covid, it said.

The data also shows symptomatic infections in over 70s decreased from around three weeks after one dose of both vaccines.

"Vaccination with either a single dose of Pfizer or Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccination was associated with a significant reduction in symptomatic

The data also shows symptomatic infections in over 70s decreased from around three weeks after one dose of both vaccines.

SARS-CoV2 positive cases in older adults with even greater protection against severe disease," said the authors of the study, adding both the vaccines show similar effects.

They said the protection was maintained for the duration of over six weeks of follow-up, and there is a clear effect of both the vaccines against the UK variant of concern. "This is extremely good news. In fact, the detailed data shows that the protection

that you get from catching Covid, 35 days after a first jab, is even slightly better for the Oxford jab than for Pfizer, albeit both results are clearly very strong," said UK Health Secretary Matt Hancock.

"These results may also help explain why the number of Covid admissions to intensive care units among people over 80 in the UK have dropped to single figures in the last couple of weeks," he said.

Experts say the new analysis adds to growing evidence that the vaccines are working, and are highly effective in protecting people against severe illness, hospitalisation and death.

"This adds to growing evidence showing that the vaccines are working to reduce

infections and save lives," Mary Ramsay, PHE Head of Immunisation, said in the statement.

"While there remains much more data to follow, this is encouraging and we are increasingly confident that vaccines are making a real difference," Ramsay said.

However, she cautioned that the protection is not complete and it is not known yet how much these vaccines will reduce the risk of someone passing the coronavirus onto others.

"Even if you have been vaccinated, it is really important that you continue to act like you have the virus, practise good hand hygiene and stay at home," Ramsay added.

England's Deputy Chief

Medical Officer, Professor Jonathan Van-Tam, said the data offered a glimpse of how the vaccine programme "is going to hopefully take us into a very different world in the next few months".

Energy-related emissions up in Dec despite pandemic

Global energy-related carbon dioxide emissions rose slightly in December compared with the same month of 2019, indicating the sharp drop seen due to the pandemic was short-lived.

Figures released Tuesday by the International Energy Agency show emissions from the production and use of oil, gas and coal were 2 per cent higher in December 2020 than a year earlier.

Twitter cracks down on vaccine misinformation: Twitter says it has begun labelling tweets that include misleading information about vaccines and using a "strike system" to eventually remove accounts that repeatedly violate its rules. The company said that it has started using human reviewers to assess whether tweets violate its policy against vaccine misinformation. Eventually, the work will be done by a combination of humans and automation, it said. Twitter had already banned some misinformation in December, including falsehoods about how the virus spreads, whether masks are effective and the risk of death. AP

Russia to face US heat over Navalny poisoning

Announced sanctions for 14 businesses most of which involved in production of chemical agents



ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 2 MARCH

EU slaps sanctions on 4 Russia officials

The European Union on Tuesday imposed sanctions on four senior Russian officials over the jailing of opposition leader Alexei Navalny, who is President Vladimir Putin's most high-profile political foe.

The 27-nation bloc imposed bans on travel and froze the assets in Europe of Alexander Bastrykin, head of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation, Igor Krasnov, the prosecutor general, Viktor Zolotov, head of the National Guard, and Alexander Kalashnikov, head of the Federal Prison Service.

EU headquarters said the four were listed over their roles in the arbitrary arrest, prosecution and sentencing of Alexei Navalny, as well as

the repression of peaceful protests in connection with his unlawful treatment. In February, a court sentenced Navalny to two years and eight months in prison for violating the terms of his probation while recuperating in Germany. The sentence stems from a 2014 embezzlement conviction that Navalny has rejected as fabricated.

The European Court of Human Rights has also ruled that it's unlawful. Navalny's arrest and imprisonment have fueled a huge wave of protests across Russia. Authorities responded with a sweeping crackdown, detaining about 11,000 people, many of whom were fined or given jail terms ranging from seven to 15 days.

figures and hacking abroad, including of U.S. government agencies and U.S. businesses. President Donald Trump had spoken admiringly of Navalny and resisted criticism and many proposed penalties of Putin's government.

The Biden administration coordinated the sanctions with the European Union,

which already had imposed sanctions against a small number of Russian officials and is expected to announce more. Some rights groups have faulted the EU for not targeting the most important Russian officials allegedly involved.

The Biden administration had forecast weeks of action against Russia.

Besides the Navalny sanctions, officials have said the administration plans to respond soon to the massive Russian hack of federal government agencies and private corporations that laid bare vulnerabilities in the cyber supply chain and exposed potentially sensitive secrets to elite Kremlin spies.

Navalny, 44, was sickened last August by a Russian nerve agent, Novichok, in an attack that the United States and others linked to Putin's security services. After months of recuperation in Germany, Navalny flew home to Moscow in January and was arrested upon arrival for an alleged parole violation.

His detention sparked street protests across Russia. Authorities have transferred the opposition leader to a penal colony to begin serving a sentence, after what rights groups said was a show trial.

FBI chief Wray to face questions about extremism, 6 Jan violence

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, 2 MARCH



FBI Director Chris Wray is set to testify for the first time since the deadly January 6 riot at the US Capitol, with lawmakers likely to press him on whether the bureau adequately communicated with other law enforcement agencies about the potential for violence that day.

Questions about the FBI's preparations for the riot, and investigations into it, are expected to dominate Wray's appearance Tuesday before the Senate Judiciary Committee. He's also likely to be pressed on how the FBI is confronting the national security threat from white nationalists and domestic violent extremists, and whether the bureau has adequate resources to address the problem.

The violence at the Capitol made clear that a law enforcement agency that revolutionised itself after the September 11, 2001, attacks to deal with international terrorism is now scrambling to address homegrown violence from white Americans.

The Biden administration has tasked his national intelligence director to work with the FBI and Department of

Homeland Security to assess the threat. Wray has kept a notably low profile since a violent mob of insurrectionists stormed the Capitol two months ago. Though he has briefed lawmakers privately and shared information with local law enforcement hearings, Tuesday's oversight hearing will mark Wray's first public appearance before Congress since November's presidential election.

The FBI is facing questions over how it handled intelligence in the days ahead of the riot, and whether warnings it had of potential violence reached the correct officials.

Last week, for instance, the acting chief of the Capitol Police said a January 5

report from the FBI made its way to investigators within the police force and to the department's intelligence unit but was never sent up the chain of command. The report warned about online posts foreshadowing a war in Washington the following day.

The FBI has said the report, which it says was based on uncorroborated information, was shared through its joint terrorism task force.

Wray may also face questions about the FBI's investigation into the massive Russian hack of corporations and US government agencies, which happened when elite hackers injected malicious code into a software update.

Calls for Cuomo's resignation mount as 3rd accuser emerges

ASSOCIATED PRESS
NEW YORK, 2 MARCH



Two top Republican lawmakers have introduced a legislation in the House of Representatives calling for the US to resume formal diplomatic relations with Taiwan and end the outdated and counter-productive one-China policy.

The US maintained normal diplomatic relations with the government in Taiwan until 1979, when then-President Jimmy Carter abruptly cut off formal ties with Taipei and recognised the Communist regime in Beijing. China views Taiwan as a rebel province that must be reunified with the mainland. Introduced by congressmen Tom Tiffany and Scott Perry, the bill directs the Biden administration to support Taiwan's membership in international organisations, and to initiate negotiations with Taipei on crafting a US-Taiwan Free Trade Agreement.

I was so confused and shocked and embarrassed, Ruch, now 33, told the Times, which published a photo of the encounter showing the governor's hands on her face and asked if he could kiss her.

Ruch told The New York Times late Monday that she removed the Democratic governor's hand from her back, but he said she seemed aggressive, promptly put his hands on her face and asked if he could kiss her.

I turned my head away and didn't have words in that moment. An email seeking comment was sent to Ruch's photography business. Her social media accounts were private. An email was also sent to Cuomo's administration for comment.

The account from Ruch, who worked as a photographer at the White House during President Barack Obama's second term, made her the second woman to accuse Cuomo of touching her without permission, and fueled broader calls for Cuomo to step down, including from some in his own party.

The pattern of sexual harassment and predatory behavior by Governor Cuomo is unacceptable, and I believe the women coming forward, New York City Councilman Antonio Reynoso tweeted in comments echoed elsewhere. Governor Cuomo must resign.

The latest accusation follows sexual harassment allegations against the governor from two women who had worked for his administration.

Thank you for your courage and strength.

RING OF FIRE



Mount Sinabung spews volcanic material during an eruption in Karo, Indonesia on Tuesday. The 2,600-metre (8,530-feet) volcano is among more than 120 active volcanoes in Indonesia, which is prone to seismic upheaval due to its location on the Pacific "Ring of Fire," an arc of volcanoes and fault lines encircling the Pacific Basin. AP

Senate to debate Covid Bill after Dems retreat on minimum wage

ACENCIOS
WASHINGTON, 2 MARCH

Some moderate Democrats, including Senator Joe Manchin, have rejected the \$15 figure as too high and suggested an \$11 target could be more realistic.

\$10 per hour, but said employers should verify the wage is going to workers who are legally in the United States.

The Democratic-controlled House of Representatives early on Saturday narrowly approved the Covid package, one of Biden's top priorities. The House bill included the minimum wage hike.

Democrats aim to pass the legislation in the Senate through a maneuver known as

"reconciliation," which would allow the bill to pass with a simple majority rather than the 60 votes normally required by chamber's rules.

Senate debate on the Covid bill could begin as early as Wednesday, a Senate Democratic aide said.

Some moderate Democrats, including Senator Joe Manchin, have rejected the \$15 figure as too high and suggested an \$11 target could be more realistic.

"We worked through the weekend and it became clear that finalizing plan B with the caucus would delay passage and risk going over the jobless benefits cliff on March 14," one source said. Democrats want the COVID-19 bill signed into law by March 14, when enhanced unemployment

benefits expire.

A group of House progressives urged Biden on Monday to overrule the Senate parliamentarian, who determined last week that the \$15 proposal could not pass by reconciliation.

"This ruling is a bridge too far," said Democratic Representative Ro Khanna. "If we don't overrule the Senate parliamentarian, we are condoning poverty wages for millions of Americans." The White House has previously ruled intervening.

Senator Bernie Sanders, an independent who caucuses with the Democrats, said on Monday night he would introduce an amendment to increase the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2025 in the final rec-

onciliation bill, adding he believed the Senate should ignore the parliamentarian's advice.

"I am not sure, however, that my view at this point is the majority view in the Democratic Caucus," Sanders said in a statement. The Senate's No. 2 Democrat, Dick Durbin, told reporters that lawmakers should look for another venue to raise the minimum wage, but that "if it takes some 60 votes or a supermajority of some kind, it's going to be very difficult, obviously." To pass

The classic story of a person chopping the branch of the tree that she was sitting on is about knowing the effect one's actions would have on one's body. The story has been turned around to see how animals can make out the effect one's body has upon the environment.

Rita Lenkei, Tamás Faragó, Börbála Zsilák and Péter Pongrácz, from ELTE Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary, write in the journal, *Nature Scientific Reports*, that dogs are as aware of their body as an 18-24-month-old human baby. Humans, the paper says, use a mental representation of their own body when they confront the physical environment. While being aware of one's body is the beginning of creating a mental picture of oneself, there has been little work on how far non-human animals have this awareness, the paper says.

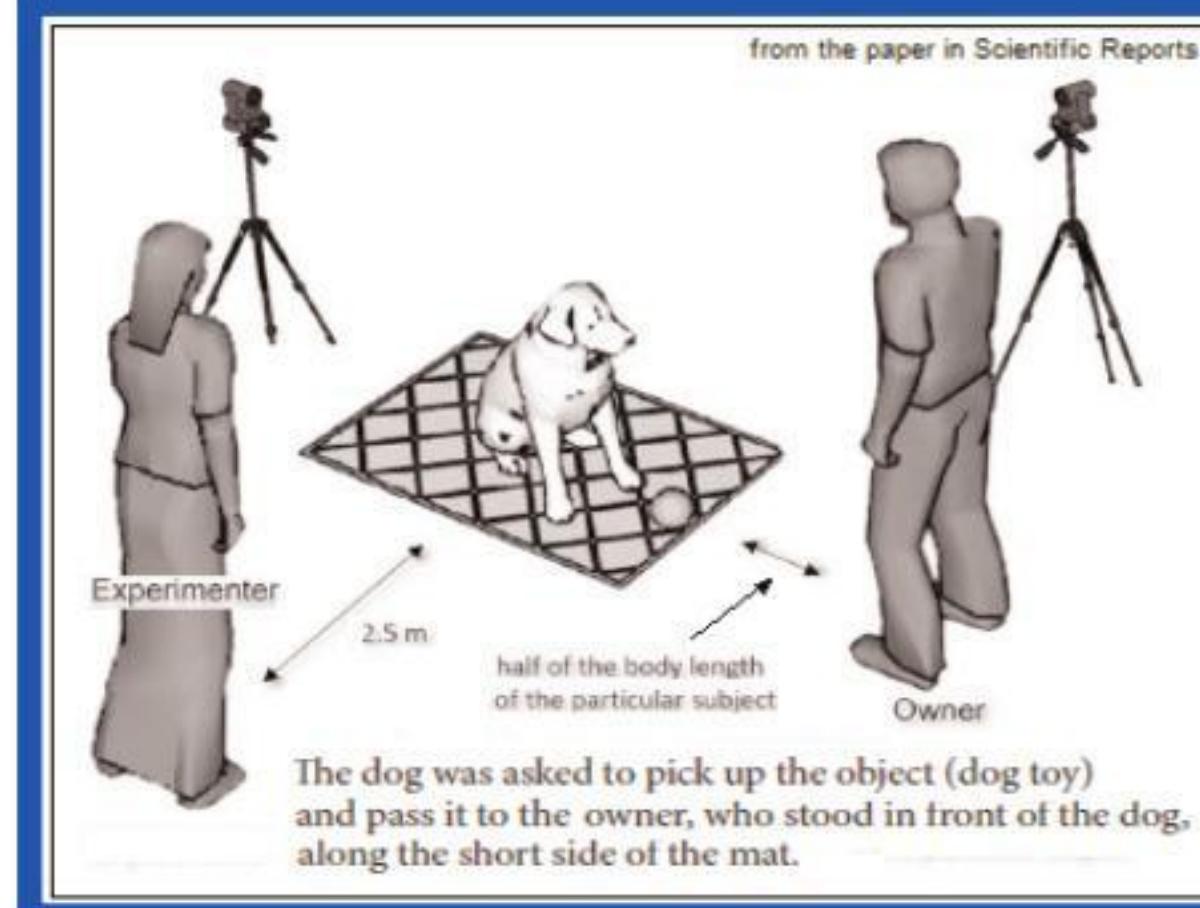
The studies so far, like the well-known mirror test of the American psychologist, Gordon Gallup Jr., address more developed aspects of self-awareness, rather than just the consciousness of the body, the paper says. Gallup's mirror test, which was developed in 1970, tests whether an animal has the capacity of visual self-recognition. In the tests, chimpanzees, two male and two female, were placed in separate rooms and gradually familiarised with a full-size mirror that was introduced into the rooms. The reaction of the chimpanzees, on seeing their reflections, progressed from feeling threatened by the image, to exploring the mirror, and behind the mirror, to interacting with the image in the mirror.

The next step was to see if the chimpanzees recognised the images as representation of themselves. For this, the chimpanzees were anaesthetised and marked with an odour-free dye, not apparent to the touch, at places not visible to the animals, like above the eyebrow and the top half of the ear. The significant feature was that the marking could not be seen by the chimpanzee or made out by touch or smell. They were then allowed to recover, in the room, but with the mirror removed. Any acts of touching the marked areas would hence be only by chance, and the frequency of such events, over 30 minutes, was recorded.

The mirrors were then brought back into the rooms. Then, when the chimpanzees saw their reflections, they would see an image that was marked with the dye. The frequency of the chimpanzees touching the marked areas on their own bodies was

This is Fido's body

Do dogs have a picture of themselves in their minds?



then recorded. It was found that these events were then four to 10 times more often. The chimpanzees would sometimes look at, or smell their fingers after touching the marks, and turn and adjust their position before the mirrors to better view the marks. In a control test, if the chimpanzees were marked without having been first exposed to the mirror, there was no change in the mark-touching behaviour before and after the mirror was introduced.

As the chimpanzees that had been trained with the mirror could apparently make out the mark in the image as a mark on themselves, it was considered that the chimpanzees had recognised the images as representation of themselves. Other animals that "passed" the mirror test are European magpies, certain dolphin and whale species, certain species of primates, an instance of an elephant and, significantly, human babies when they are about 18 months old.

Human babies appear to make an early start, at about five months of age. The paper cites a study which found that babies, at five months, could tell apart movement of their own limbs, as opposed to video recordings of movements by themselves or others. The feedback of what the infant sees, as a cause and the

result of the infant's action, has been found to relate to the emergence of self-awareness, the paper says. In order to glimpse the mechanism of a stage before the awareness that Gallup was able to show, the authors investigated the body awareness of the dog, *canis familiaris*. The dog, the authors say, has not displayed any of the features of higher order self-awareness, but its behaviour and character suggest that it has body-awareness.

In any organism, the paper says, body-awareness would be an ability that would enable the organism to navigate the environment when the shape and size of its body becomes an obstacle. This awareness, the paper quotes a study to say, is "the ability to hold information about one's own body in mind, as an explicit object, in relation to other objects in the world," and considers the ability to be a "building block of self-representation".

The experiments with dogs were an adaptation of experiments based on observations of the Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget, where human toddlers were required to hand over the blanket that they were standing upon. Children over 18-24 months old were able to identify the obstacle and step off the blanket. The dogs were simi-

larly challenged, to identify their own body as the obstacle in a given task and then act to remove the obstacle.

The task set for the dogs was that they were to pick up an object, which was a ball of string, placed on a mat that the dog was standing on, and offer it to the handler, on command. The first requirement was hence that dogs be trained to perform this task, apart from general obedience training, like sitting on command.

The experiment, proper, was the same task, but where the object was not simply placed on the mat, but was either attached to the mat, the "test" condition, or attached to the ground, by a short halter, the "control" condition. In both cases, the object could not be lifted – attached to the ground in the "control" condition and because of the weight of the dog, in the "test" condition. The difference was that in the first case, the dog would feel a pull under its forepaws.

In the first case, the dog would need to see that the problem was its weight on the mat, and step off, when the object would come up. In the second case, lifting the object was not possible, although the dog would also step off the mat, in time. The objective was to see how soon the dog stepped off the mat in the cases that the object was fixed to the mat.

The result of the trials, with 32 dogs, which remained after several results were discarded for technical reasons, was that the dogs came off the mat more frequently and sooner, in the "test" condition, compared the "control" – an indicator that the dogs were able to work it out, based on the pull under their paws in the cases where the object was attached to the mat, that it was their own weight that was preventing the object from being moved, and to act, by stepping off the mat. "This is the first convincing evidence of body awareness through the understanding of the consequence of own actions in a species where previously no higher-order self-representation capacity was found," the paper says.

Human babies succeed in the "body as obstacle" test about the same time as the "mirror mark test", the paper says. Dogs cannot manage the "mirror mark". This may be because visual cues are not important instruments for the dog, which relies more on mechanical or scent-related cues, the paper says. Self-representation would hence involve different cognitive skills, and the building blocks would vary according to the species, the paper concludes.

The writer can be contacted at response@simplescience.in

PLUS POINTS

Similar to us



Dolphins have similar personality traits to humans and primates, despite evolving in completely different environments, according to research.

The project, which studied 134 bottlenose dolphins held in captivity around the world, has helped scientists understand how certain human personality traits have developed independently of immediate environments.

The study identified personality traits that humans and dolphins have in common involve curiosity and sociability, in particular. This is despite dolphins having evolved in a totally different environment from primates and their last common ancestor living around 95 million years ago.

Blake Morton, lead author of the research, said, "Dolphins, like many primates, have brains that are considerably larger than what their bodies require for basic bodily functions; this excess of brain matter essentially powers their ability to be intelligent, and intelligent species are often very curious."

Morton, a psychology lecturer at the University of Hull, UK, told PA news agency the team chose dolphins because, like primates, they are intelligent animals who live in social groups but are very different in many other ways.

He said the most widely accepted model of human personality was defined by five traits – openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism. These are replicated everywhere in humans, regardless of environment.

"Scientists still do not fully understand why our behaviour comes down to those five traits, so one way of doing that is to compare ourselves to other animals – what we share in common and why," Morton said. "Most research has been done on primates, so we decided to do something different and look at dolphins."

Morton added, "We reasoned that if factors such as intelligence and gregariousness contribute to personality, then dolphins should have similar personality traits to primates."

He said, "I don't want people to misinterpret that and say humans and dolphins have the same personality traits -- they don't. It's just that some are similar."

For their study, the authors collected data on 56 male and 78 female dolphins, from captive facilities in eight countries, and assessed each dolphin's personality using questionnaires for staff.

—THE INDEPENDENT

FOLLOWING RAMAN'S EXAMPLE

Every National Science Day is a time to remember the great physicist and his credo of self-reliance in science

healthcare systems as a priority in our primary healthcare infrastructure. It will solve the issue of the lack of quality medical practitioners in villages.

Providing industry 5.0
India badly needs to incorporate a high level of automation in every industry to compete with the global industrial market. Our people must learn to work alongside robots and smart machines. Robots help humans to work better and faster by leveraging advanced technologies like the IoT and big data.

Next generation education
The pandemic has transformed our education from kindergarten to research and made everything go digital. We need to incorporate IoT, AI, virtual and augmented reality in our curriculum. Accelerated remote learning and personalised learning will bring education to the 4.0 level. The concept of providing universality of education will become a reality if we leverage the potential of science and technology.

New habitable areas in space
The future of a nation might well depend on how successful one becomes in building habitable space colonies for its citizens. The Indian Space Research Organisation, along with many international agencies, are researching ways to find planets where humans could live. Projects like "Gaganyaan" have been visualised in that direction. The successful launch of NASA's Mars Perseverance rover has sped up the race to colonise space. With private players vying for business, India needs to play an active role in space colonisation and space diplomacy.

Indigenous benchmark in quality
We always look for the standards fixed by agencies from Western countries in assessing the quality of our products. It must be reversed with those countries accepting our quality standards.

Promoting Indian journals

Scientific discoveries will be accepted only if they are published in a peer-reviewed journal for which most of our scientific community depends on foreign journals. No one will publish their important data in reputed Indian journals like *Current Science* or the *Indian Journal of Experimental Biology*, if they get an acceptance from journals like *Nature* or *Science*. The government should make it mandatory to publish the results of all publicly funded projects only in Indian journals. It should seriously think of developing our own Altimetric tools. The system being used in scientific circles now is based on Clarivate Analytics, which follow the quality standards visualised by Western journals. It cannot evaluate the works being published in regional languages in a fool-proof manner. Also, when the government is stressing on researchers to publish in regional languages, we need quality journals in those languages.

Raman was a true nationalist who, unlike many of his contemporaries or even today's scientists, didn't accept great offers from Western universities. He wanted to work for the country. That said, many highly competent Indian scientists are working abroad now because of the bureaucracy culture followed in our institutions. The government should take steps to bring all the talent pool back and provide more academic and administrative freedom to scientists.

Every National Science Day is a time to reflect. The progress of any nation can be assessed by looking at the achievements it has made in the field of science and technology. Let's hope another Indian scientist, one who has studied and worked exclusively in the country with indigenous instruments, adorns the chair alongside Raman.

The writer is a research scholar, CSIR-National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources, New Delhi

Volume turned low

Earth had its quietest period in decades during 2020 as the Covid-19 pandemic significantly reduced human activity and its impact on the planet's crust, according to scientists working on a global study.

An international group of seismologists from 33 countries measured a drop of up to 50 per cent in so-called ambient noise generated by humans travelling and factories humming after lockdowns came into force around the world. The team, which included experts from the Swiss Seismological Service at ETH Zurich, a university, measured lower noise levels at 185 of the 268 seismic stations analysed around the world.

Urban ambient noise fell by up to 50 per cent at some measuring stations during the tightest lockdown weeks, as buses and train services were reduced, aircraft grounded and factories shut down. This made it much quieter than Christmas, traditionally the quietest time of the year.

"The weeks during lockdown were the quietest period we have on record," said seismologist John Clinton, referring to data archives covering the last 20 years. "With human noise always increasing, it is highly likely that it was the quietest period for a very long time."

The experts, led by Thomas Lecocq from the Royal Observatory of Belgium, were able to track the "wave of quiet" around the world as lockdown came first in China, then Italy, before spreading across the rest of Europe and onto the Americas.

Lower background noise during lockdowns also means small earthquakes that otherwise would not be observed have been detected in some places. Small tremors allow us to improve our understanding of the seismic hazard, said scientist Frederick Massin, and also help assess the probability of larger earthquakes in the future.

"This was an unprecedented opportunity. There's no way we would normally be able to do this kind of experiment," said Massin.

—THE STRAITS TIMES/ANN



BIJU DHARMAPALAN

National Science Day is celebrated across the country on 28 February every year, commemorating the discovery of the Raman effect by Indian physicist CV Raman on 28 February 1928. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in physics for his discovery in 1930. In 1986, the National Council for Science and Technology Communication asked the Government of India to designate 28 February as National Science Day and it has been observed since. This year's focal theme is "Future of STI: Impact on Education, Skills and Work".

Raman's life is a perfect example of how good science can be done within India if one has passion and perseverance. As is evident from his biography, he never depended on the government for funds but instead collected money through private partnerships and from philanthropists. He had an aversion to scientists working with government funds as he felt that they were not doing good science.

Raman also showed how good science can be done using indigenous techniques without any sophisticated instruments. The culture of promoting foreign equipment and journals in scientific and academic institutions is a curse for Indian science. He started the Indian Academy of Sciences and the journal, *Current Science*

with the sole aim of promoting Indian science across the country and even abroad. But it took nearly four decades after his death for the government to seriously look into the issues our great scientist had highlighted years before.

When we look at the life of Raman, it truly goes with the current draft report of the Science, Technology and Innovation Policy 2020 that stresses on self-reliance and indigenous technologies in science. During the coronavirus pandemic and after the PM's call for "Atmanirbhar Bharat", our scientific community worked in unison for the first time to find an answer to Covid-19. From making personal protective equipment and critical care equipment to rapid diagnostic tools and drug development, our scientists, both in the public and private sector, were able to reduce the mortality rate considerably through concerted effort.

But self-reliance should not be limited to controlling Covid-19 only. Here are a few areas, where the same principles can be applied.

Food security

In order to make farming less labour-intensive we have to use the Internet of Things in agriculture, so that every individual can manage their farm without the assistance of others. Similarly, we must use molec-

ular breeding and modifications using gene editing to improve the quality and yield of produce.

Energy security

We depend on Gulf countries for fuel, which often affects our economy adversely and therefore, we should tap into our own resources in non-conventional energy. Even though we have been utilising solar and wind energy, the solar voltaic cells and wind turbines are mostly imported. That needs to change.

We must also promote the large-scale production of alternative fuel technologies like bioethanol and biodiesel developed by our scientists from the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research – Indian Institute of Petroleum to become self-reliant in the fuel sector.

Digital communication security

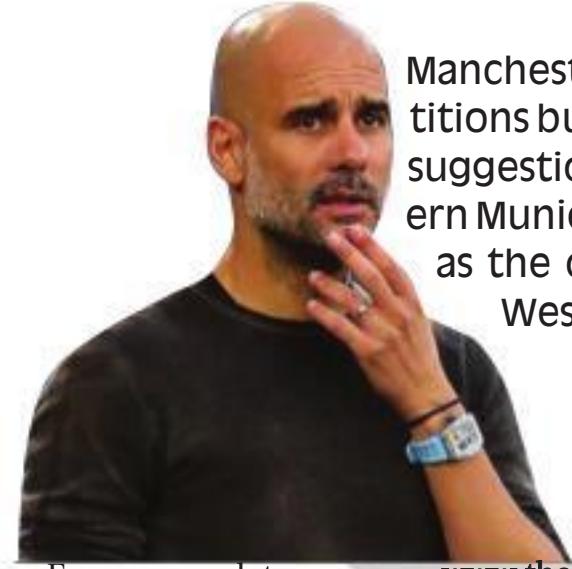
In this world of digital communication, even people in remote villages use smartphones, especially for banking operations. It's the duty of the government in power to ensure that the privacy of citizens is not compromised by external forces. That can be achieved only if we develop our own smartphones, IoT technologies and apps.

Healthcare security

We need to build telemedicine and artificial intelligence-based

systems to reduce the burden on healthcare systems as a priority in our primary healthcare infrastructure. It will solve the issue of the lack of quality medical practitioners in villages.

The writer is a research scholar, CSIR-National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources, New Delhi



TRUTH TO TELL
Manchester City are on a 20-game winning streak in all competitions but manager Pep Guardiola (in photo, left) has dismissed suggestions that his club are the best in Europe. He gave Bayern Munich the honour. David Moyes anointed Guardiola's team as the continent's most dominant force after watching his West Ham side lose 2-1.

For more updates www.thestatesman.com

THUMBNAILS

Kohli's followers: India captain Virat Kohli has become the world's first cricketer to have 100 million followers on Instagram. Cristiano Ronaldo tops the chart with 265 million followers, ahead of Lionel Messi and Neymar, who are second and third on the list.

First dose: The Indian cricket team's head coach, Ravi Shastri, on Tuesday received his first dose of the Covid-19 vaccine. India's inoculation drive entered its second phase on Monday to include everyone above 60 and those over 45 with co-morbidities.

New job: Former England opening batsman Marcus Trescothick has been named batting coach of the senior men's team, the England and Wales Cricket Board said on Monday. He played 76 Tests for England, will step down as assistant coach of Somerset.

Taxing times: Bangladesh One-Day Internationals skipper Tamim Iqbal said it had felt like he met his teammates after years when they were all allowed to leave their rooms after spending three days in self-isolation inside a hotel since landing in New Zealand.

Fans barred: The last three matches of New Zealand's Twenty20 series against Australia will be played at the closed Wellington Regional Stadium as fans have been barred after a Covid-19 lockdown in Auckland. NZC moved the final match to Wellington from Taupo.

Mirza returns: Sania Mirza returned to the Women's Tennis Association circuit as she and her Slovenian partner Andreja Klepac beat Ukrainians Nadia Kichenok and Lyudmyla Kichenok 6-4, 6-5 (7-5), 10-5 to reach the doubles quarter-finals of the Qatar Open.

Federer out: Roger Federer is withdrawing from this month's Miami Open so he can spend extra time preparing to work his way back out on tour. The 20-time Grand Slam champion has not competed in more than a year after having two operations on his right knee.

Madrid held: Coach Zinedine Zidane's attempt to push Real Madrid forward by switching formations midway through the game against Real Sociedad backfired on Monday, leading to a 1-1 home draw that kept them from getting within range of their city rivals.

Narrow victory: Everton ended their worst home run since 1958 by beating Southampton 1-0 in the English Premier League and keeping their Champions League dream on track. Richardson scored for the third consecutive match inside the first 10 minutes on Monday.

Manika, Sreeja advance into final: Star paddler Manika Batra and young Sreeja Akula moved to the final round of the women's singles qualifiers at the WTT Contender after winning their respective matches in Doha on Tuesday.

2nd phase of League: The second phase of the 2020/21 League season will be played from March 5 to 27, the All India Football Federation (AIFF) said on Tuesday. March 5 will feature six teams in action with Real Kashmir facing Churchill Brothers in the first match of the day at 2 pm, Mohammedan SC playing Tidim Road Athletic Union (TRAU) FC at 4 pm and Round-Glass Punjab playing Gokulam Kerala at 7 pm. While the 2 pm kickoff is set to take place at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan, the other two matches will be hosted at the Kalyani Municipal Stadium.

Expect another turner, says Rahane

AGENCIES
AHMEDABAD, 2 MARCH

Ajinkya Rahane on Tuesday said there is no need to take criticism of the spin-friendly pitches in the country "seriously" as not a word is spoken about the "damp" tracks elsewhere and England can expect another turner in the fourth Test. Wicket will be a lot similar to last two test matches

technique of the Indian batsmen, I don't feel we need to take seriously what people say," Rahane was sharp in his response. "...You see, when we tour abroad, the first day wicket is damp. When wicket becomes grassy and behaves up and down, then the pitch becomes dangerous but we haven't complained about it or we have never spoken about it."

On spinning tracks, it's imperative to play the line, Rahane said. "When you play on spinning tracks, you have to play the line... If ball is spinning too much, you don't have to think too much."

While playing the line, the footwork plays a more significant role and how to use that is an individual batsman's choice. "Everyone's game is different. One player may love to come on front-foot while others like to stay on the back-foot but either way, it is important to use your footwork, trust your defence on a track that offers turn," he explained. Also another key aspect is communication between a player who has just

come in and one who has been bat for some time.

"When a new batsman comes to the crease, the communication between the two batters is important -- like how the pitch is behaving, how much turn on offer, which kind of game is suited, all these points are important. Yes, spinning track was a challenge but we overcame it well." Despite the humiliation that India inflicted on England in the third Test, Rahane was respectful of England's chances on another turner.

"Pitch looks similar but I don't know how it's going to play. We have to wait and see," he said.

"We respect the England team. They are a very good team. We played good cricket in last two Tests and England played really well in the first game. "We are not taking them lightly, and both teams will go out there and look to give their best to win the Test match," he said. He also hinted that veteran pacer Umesh Yadav might get a lookin. "Umesh is ready to go. Looking good and had a good

session at the nets. We are really happy that he is back," Rahane said.
'Jadeja's return won't be easy'

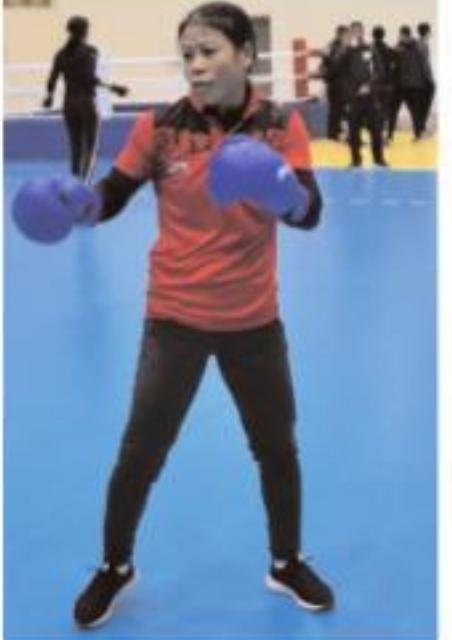
All-rounder Ravindra Jadeja may not be able to walk into the Indian Test squad considering how his replacement, Axar Patel, has performed in his first two games, said Sunil Gavaskar.

Gavaskar joked Jadeja might be wondering why it was taking so long for his dislocated thumb to heal. "Jadeja is now wondering what happened to his thumb. He is asking the doctor why his dislocated thumb has taken so long to recover. He got hit on the 10th of January and it is now the end of February," Gavaskar said on television. Jadeja was ruled out of the Indian squad for the Test series against England owing to the broken thumb that he sustained during India's third Test against Australia in Sydney in January. He was not named in the squad for the five-match Twenty20 Internationals series against England which would be played from 12 March. In his absence, Axar Patel made his debut in the longest format of the game in the second Test in Chennai and ended up taking seven wickets. He then took 11 wickets in the Test that was played at Narendra Modi Stadium, his home ground, in Ahmedabad.



Mary Kom, Panghal one win away from medal in Spain

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
CASTELLON (SPAIN), 2 MARCH



Six-time world champion Mary Kom (51 kg) and World Championship silver medalist Amit Panghal (52 kg) are both one win away from securing a medal at the Boxam International Tournament in Castellon, Spain after they were drawn in the quarterfinals of the tournament.

Mary faces Italian Giordana Sorrentino in her opening bout on Wednesday while Panghal will be up against local favourite Gabriel Escobar in his quarterfinal clash. Both pugilists got byes in their respective first round bouts. Meanwhile, Vikas Krishan (69 kg) also got a bye in the first round and will fight Italy's Vincenzo Mangiacapre. Ashish Kumar (75 kg), and Sumit Sangwan (81 kg) are also drawn in the quarter-finals because of the lesser entries in their weight classes. Satish (+91 kg), the first super heavyweight from

the country to qualify for the Olympics, is also drawn in the quarterfinals of his weight category.

Among women, Jasmine and Manisha are drawn in the 57 kg quarterfinals after getting first-round byes. Simranjit Kaur (60 kg), Lovlina Borgohain (69 kg) and Pooja Rani (75 kg), all of whom have qualified for the Olympics, will also be competing in the quarterfinal stage on Wednesday.

Ashwin constantly reinventing himself: Laxman

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 2 MARCH



Ravichandran Ashwin (inphoto) is a thinking cricketer, who is constantly reinventing himself, said former India batsman VVS Laxman, insisting that preparation was the key to the veteran off-spinner's success.

Ashwin recently became the fourth Indian bowler to take 400 Test wickets. He achieved the feat by dismissing Jofra Archer in the pink-ball Test at Ahmedabad which the hosts won by 10 wickets in less than two days.

Ashwin, 34, also became the second fastest bowler to reach the landmark after Sri Lanka spin wizard Muttiah Muralitharan. "I think he's (Ashwin) a very intelligent person. When you're playing at the highest level, then it's not only about your skill, it's about your preparation, your planning and execution are so critical. "So, he works out what the weaknesses of the batsman are. He plans those dismissals and that's why I think he is reinventing himself," Laxman, who had played

134 Tests, said on television. To prove his point, Laxman cited the example of Steve Smith's troubles against Ashwin during India's recent tour of Australia. "We saw recently in the Australia series how he (Ashwin) troubled someone as great as Steve Smith and that's another thing that makes Ashwin or any champion player special, that he wants to be the best and compete against the best," he said.

Former India opener Aakash Chopra too lavished praise on Ashwin, saying he was one of the biggest match-winners the country had ever

produced.
"78 Test matches for 400 Test wickets. Let the naysayers be! He's been absolutely phenomenal with the craft that he has displayed over a period of time and as he's growing as a bowler, he's picking up a lot of wickets. So, that question also getting answered quite nicely," said Chopra. "If he's an absolute rockstar, he's one of the biggest match-winners that India has ever produced, of course Anil Kumble will still remain at No. 1," added 43-year-old, who has played 10 Tests for the country.

Eager to learn
England's Jack Leach is in awe of Ashwin and Axar Patel and eager to learn the nuances of spin bowling from the Indian duo in the fourth and final match starting on Thursday. India won the day-night third Test to take a 2-1 lead in the four-match series. Ashwin and Axar used the spin-friendly Motera pitch to great effect, picking up 18 of the 20 English wickets to demolish the visitors. "When you see players having so much success, like Ashwin and Axar Patel, of course, you try to learn from them," Leach wrote in a column for Sky Sports.

"It's important not to look at it too emotionally though and think I just want to bowl exactly like them! Ashwin is right-arm, for a start, so I'm not going to bowl like him! Even Axar, he's a left-arm spinner, but he's taller than me - I can't change my height!" The 29-year-old left-arm spinner felt the experienced Ashwin was very clever with the way he changed his seam position. "He (Ashwin) will bowl to the same spot but the way it gets there and whether it hits the seam or hits the lac-

quer varies and the ball reacts very differently," Leach said.

"Then Axar is someone who seems to present every ball the same way, as a quasicrash seam, then a few sides - that has been so effective on the wickets we've played on."

Leach is up for the challenge that awaits him in the final Test and sounded confident after picking up the wickets of the top four Indian batsmen in the third Test.

"We're all keen to learn and are excited by the challenge; you have to be because if it was all easy then it wouldn't be Test cricket and it wouldn't be as much fun when you have those good moments. It's something that I'm relishing," he said.

"I was really pleased with the way I got the wickets, lbw and they were all from straight balls, obviously the balls before spin and then you get the wicket with the straight one."

He said he would not get a better four-wicket haul than the one he grabbed in the last Test, seeing off Rohit Sharma, Cheteshwar Pujara, Virat Kohli and Ajinkya Rahane.

Players picked

NEW DELHI, 2 MARCH

Chinese media urges change after champions' financial collapse

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
SHANGHAI, 2 MARCH

and exorbitant transfer fees - Shanghai SIPG signed Oscar from Chelsea in 2017 for an Asian-record 60 million euros.

But the Chinese Football Association has since brought in a raft of measures to cool spending, including a 100 percent transfertax and salary caps.

The CFA said on Monday that it was "sorry to hear" about Jiangsu's subrespectful behaviour towards the club's decision, and vowed to plough on with its attempts to make China a leading football power.

However, the times are tough for Chinese clubs, where money began to dry up even before the coronavirus pandemic.

"The most important thing at the moment is to... reload and start again, rather than being lost in confusion or remorse," said Xinhua. "To some extent it is a good thing that the bubble has burst earlier (than expected)," it added. "Chinese professional football has ushered in its first 'watershed' after its high-speed, wild growth."

"Respect the laws of football, respect the laws of the market, adhere to youth training and work for the long term," Beijing Youth Daily said the implosion of Jiangsu, who are based in the eastern city of Nanjing, was an opportunity for renewal.

Barca officials detained

BARCELONA, 2 MARCH

Catalan police detained several people after raiding Barcelona's stadium on Monday in a search and seize operation, adding to the club's turmoil less than a week before they elect a new president.

The operation was related to last year's "Barcagate," in which club officials were accused of launching a smear campaign against current and former players who were critical of the club and then-president Josep Maria Bartomeu.

Police said detentions had been made but did not say who or how many people were taken into custody. The Spanish media said Bartomeu and other former club officials were among those detained. Authorities spent several hours at the team's headquarters searching documents and talking to employees.

The club, mired in debt of more than 1.1 billion euros, said it offered "full collaboration to the legal and police authorities to help make clear facts which are subject to investigation."

It added the case was related "to the contacting of monitoring services on social networks."

Cricket takes a back seat in IPL: Steyn

AGENCIES
KARACHI, 2 MARCH



South Africa pace great Dale Steyn (in photo) has claimed that cricket takes a back seat at the Indian Premier League, insisting that money is given more importance than the game in the lucrative T20 tournament.

Justifying his on-and-off IPL career, Steyn said this was one of the reasons he had not featured regularly in the world's biggest franchise-based T20 tournament.

"I think when you go to the IPL, there are such big squads and so many big names and so much emphasis on maybe the amount of money players earn and everything like that, so sometimes, somewhere down the line, cricket gets forgotten," said Steyn, who was part of the Royal Challengers Bangalore squad in the last IPL tournament.

In January this year, Steyn announced that he is opting out of the IPL 2021 but will play other leagues around the world. Steyn's decision influenced RCB to release him ahead of the IPL 2021 auction.

Steyn has played 95 IPL matches, picking up 97 wickets with a best of 3 for 8. But the South African's repeated injury breakdowns didn't help his cause as he just featured in 12 IPL matches in the last three seasons.

The South African fast bowler, who is representing Quetta Gladiators in the Pakistan Super League 6, said he took the break as he needed time off from the game and also because he found playing in other leagues around the world more rewarding as a player.

"When you come to like the PSL or the Sri Lankan Premier League, for that matter, there is an importance on cricket. I have only been here for a couple of days and I have had people in and out of my room, just wanting to know about where I have played and how I went about it," Steyn said.

"Steyn has played 95 IPL matches, picking up 97 wickets with a best of 3 for 8. But the South African's repeated injury breakdowns didn't help his cause as he just featured in 12 IPL matches in the last three seasons.

Steyn has appeared at least in six IPL seasons for RCB, and erstwhile Deccan Chargers which has now been rechristened Sunrisers Hyderabad.

Steyn went for runs in his final over against Peshawar Zalmi the other day in Karachi in the PSL but said he was not too bothered about it.

"But it would have been nice to get over the line against Peshawar Zalmi. Played three, won one would have been really good for us," he said.

"Hopefully we can make a comeback in the upcoming games."

Steyn also described big-hitting West Indian Chris Gayle as "a bit of a freak," who according to him is "God" of T20 format. Gayle has left for national duty after playing just two games in the event for Quetta and has been replaced by South African Faf du Plessis.

"Chris Gayle is a bit of a freak, he is a T20 God. But when you look at his replacement and the guys we have got in the shed, they are incredible players."

"Faf du Plessis has flown in, Tom Banton has been around for the last two years and has done really well. I don't think that it comes down to one player to win you cricket games. Everybody has to pull their weight," he said.