

# DECCAN Chronicle

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KARIMNAGAR | SATURDAY | 13 FEBRUARY 2021



**NATION | 4**

**TMC MP Dinesh Trivedi quits Rajya Sabha**



**WORLD | 5**

**Myanmar protests swell amid US curbs**

**SPORTS | 7**

**India take on England in second Test from today**



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## WEATHER

Max: 34.0°C  
Min: 17.0°C  
RH: 81%  
Rainfall: Nil  
Forecast: Cloudy.  
Max/Min temp.  
34/17°C

## COVID-19 COUNT

CASES (+11,636)  
DEATHS (+93)  
1,08,91,462 1,55,569

### STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+143) (+1)  
TS: 2,96,277 1,614  
(+68) (+1)  
AP: 8,88,760 7,162

### CASES AROUND THE WORLD

10,84,74,469  
DEATHS 23,83,558  
COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES 219  
worldometers.info/coronavirus

## ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari: Uttarayana  
Tithi: Magha Shuddha Vidiya till 12.58 am  
Star: Shatabhisha till 3.14 pm  
Varjyam: 10 pm to 11.41 pm  
Durmuhurtam: 6.47 am to 8.18 am  
Rahukalam: 9 am to 10.30 am  
HIJRI CALENDAR  
Jamadi-ul-Akhir 30, 1442 AH  
PRAYERS  
Fajar: 5.43 am  
Zohar: 12.40 pm  
Asar: 4.40 pm  
Maghrib: 6.22 pm  
Isha: 7.30 pm  
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.43 AM  
SUNSET TODAY 6.17 PM  
MOONSET 7.46 PM  
MOONRISE 7.53 AM

## INSIDE

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KLIP is the biggest scam of TRS govt, says Bhatti

## Massive quake jolts Northern India

New Delhi, Feb. 12: A high intensity earthquake of magnitude 6.1 hit Delhi NCR and several other parts of north India on Friday night. According to the National Centre for Seismology, the epicentre of the quake was Amritsar. The quake occurred at a depth of 10 km at 10.34 pm, it added. However, there were no immediate reports of any

loss of life or damage to property. Tremors were felt in Pakistan capital Islamabad and major cities of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab provinces and Pakistan occupied Kashmir. Stills on news channels showed panic-stricken people rushing out of their homes, reciting verses from the Holy Quran. No losses of life or property has been reported so far. —PTI

## 4 FROM CITY DIE AS BUS FALLS IN ARAKU GORGE

DC CORRESPONDENTS  
VISAKHAPATNAM/  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 12

Four persons, including a few months old baby were killed and 19 others sustained injuries when a mini-bus in which they were travelling plunged into a 100-feet deep gorge in Anantagiri mandal in Visakhapatnam district on Friday evening. All the passengers in the bus belonged to the families of five brothers and were residents of Shaikpet in Hyderabad. They had hired the bus for a trip to Araku valley in Visakhapatnam district. They left in the bus hired from Dinesh Travels, also based in Shaikpet, on February 10 and were expected back on February 14. According to officials involved in the relief and rescue operations at the accident site, among the dead were two men, a woman and a baby. Officials said that the family left Borra Caves around 5.30 pm on Friday.

■ Page 2: Driver overshoot a sharp bend

## Indian territory not conceded to China: Def Min

PAWAN BALI | DC  
NEW DELHI, FEB. 12

The defence ministry said on Friday that India had not conceded any territory to China in the disengagement agreement on Pangong Tso. The next military-level talks will take up the outstanding issues at Hot Springs, Gogra and the Depsang plains. The MoD statement also said India has persistently maintained the right to patrol till Finger 8 in Pangong Tso, including in the current pact with China. "India has not conceded any territory. On the contrary, it has enforced observance and respect for the LAC and prevented any unilateral change in the status quo," the MoD said. The defence ministry said it had taken note of some "misinformed and misleading" comments on the disengagement at Pangong Tso. This comes

after Congress leader Rahul Gandhi accused Prime Minister Modi of "giving away Indian territory". Mr Gandhi said the Army held the Finger 4 area in Ladakh along the LAC, but now it will move back to its permanent base near Finger 3. As per the agreement, the Chinese troops will move east of Finger 8 and the Indian troops will move to their permanent base at Dhan Singh Thapa Post near Finger 3. The area between Finger 4 and Finger 8 will be "no go" zone for some time for both the armies. The ministry said the assertion that Indian territory is upto Finger 4 is categorically false. "Even the LAC, as per the Indian perception, is at Finger 8, not at Finger 4. That is why India has maintained the right to patrol upto Finger 8, including in the current deal with China," the MoD said.

## UNEMPLOYED TO GET ₹3,016 DOLE IN NEXT BUDGET

L. VENKAT RAM  
REDDY | DC  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 12

Unemployed youth in Telangana state will have to wait a bit longer to start receiving the unemployment allowance of ₹3,016 per month from the state government. With the election code coming into force from February 11, thanks to the Election Commission issuing schedule for MLC elections for two graduates' constituencies, the chances of Chief Minister K. Chandrababhan Rao making an announcement on this scheme is ruled out until March 22, when election code will end. Meanwhile, the finance department has initiated a process to draft a State Budget for 2021-22, in which it has proposed to allot a token amount of ₹1,000 crore for the "unemployment allowance". Official sources in the finance department said that since the Chief Minister cannot make any announcement on extending unemployment allowance due to election code, it will be mentioned in the Budget. The sanctioning of ₹1,000 crore shows that the government may not be able to implement the scheme, which remains a key poll promise of the TRS during 2018 Assembly polls, in fiscal 2021-22. In the vote on account for 2019-20 tabled by the Chief Minister in February 2019, the government had allotted ₹11,810 crore towards unemployment allowance.

■ Page 2: Covid affected TS' financial position

## It's a budget for growth: FM

Says strong stimulus will provide short-term solutions, long-term growth

FC BUREAU  
NEW DELHI, FEB. 12

Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday said that strong stimulus measures announced in her Budget 2021-22 would not only provide quick short-term solutions but also ensure long-term and sustainable economic growth, helping the country remain one of the fastest-growing economies in the world.



Nirmala Sitharaman

ies in the world. She also said that the Budget was an instrument for promoting Atma

Nirbhar Bharat when economies across the world had suffered due to the Covid-19 pandemic. "The post-pandemic economies have suffered all over the world and the Union Budget 2021 was an attempt to provide a "strong stimulus" to deal with this situation. In doing so, it will not only provide quick short-term solutions that were created, but we also looked at

medium, long-term and sustainable growth that will help us remain one of the fastest-growing economies in the world," she said in her reply to Budget debate in Parliament. In her Budget, she had promised a slew of economic measures, including a significant increase in health and capital expenditure along with an aggressive disinvestment policy. "The Budget 2021

has been carefully thought out after listening to views, suggestions and opinions from experts and economists around the country and the world," she said. Silencing Opposition's hue and cry over their "false narrative" around her budget of being pro-rich, she said the government helped the poor by providing free foodgrains, gas, building roads, houses etc.

## Party meeting



TRS working president and minister K.T. Rama Rao at a party meeting in Sircilla on Friday.

## TS EAMCET FROM JULY 5 TO 9, ECET TO BE HELD JULY 1

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 12

TS Eamcet will be held from July 5 to 9, ECET on July 1, and TS PGECET from June 20, the Telangana State Council of Higher Education (TSCHE) said on Friday. According to the schedule, these exams will be conducted by the Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University, Hyderabad (JNTU-H). The entrance exam dates for Icet, Edcet, Lawcet PGLawcet and Pecet will be notified shortly, TSCHE chairman Prof. T. Papi Reddy said.

■ Page 2: Inter 2nd year exam to end on May 20

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## COUNTER POINT



## SHORT TAKES

## AIMES TO HOLD SEMINAR ON FEBRUARY 13

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 12

The All India Muslim Educational Society will be organising a seminar, 'Professional Development for Principals and Educators' from 9.30 am on February 13 at the auditorium of the Azaan International School, Seven Tombs Road, Tolichowki, Hyderabad.

The seminar will be addressed by M.A. Mohsin, director, True Skills; Syed Sadat, director, Scientific Minds; Mohd Mushtaq Ali, management consultant and CEO Consulting Point.in; Rubina Majid, CEO, The Learning Resource Center; Prof. Vibha Asthana, Principal, Ghulam Ahmed College of Education.

## END-STAGE PATIENT GETS LIVER TRANSPLANT

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 12

A liver transplant was conducted on a 58-year-old retired government school teacher from Nizamabad who was suffering from end-stage liver failure. The patient came to the hospital with the problem of cellulitis and it was found that his liver was dysfunctional.

He was registered with the Jeevandan committee of the government and an organ became available from a brain dead patient in Kamineni Hospital, LB Nagar.

The organ was harvested and brought to Sunshine Hospital for transplant. "The patient was in the high risk group due to end-stage liver failure and was obese. This made it challenging but the patient responded well to the treatment," said Dr Vimalakar Reddy, liver transplant specialist.

This is the first liver transplant performed in Sunshine Hospital. Dr A.V. Gurava Reddy, managing director and chief joint replacement surgeon, said, "We are now one of the hospitals offering liver transplant service to patients. Our first patient has recovered well."

## E-CLASSES FOR RURAL GOVT SCHOOL KIDS

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 12

Vidyakansha, a non-profit organisation started by three alumni of top business schools, has partnered with the state government to take digital learning to government schools. The organisation has signed an agreement with Mulugu collector Krishna Aditya and set up smart classrooms in rural government schools in the district.

Aishwarya Mishra, alumna of Indian School of Business, Hyderabad (ISB), Arushi Verma from IIM-Bangalore and Vartika Chaudhary of IIM-Ahmedabad had in May 2020 through Vidyakansha started working towards providing free, quality online education to rural students. They started this initiative in Bihar with five volunteers teaching 10 students over WhatsApp.

In the first phase of their pilot in Mulugu district that commenced on February 1, the organisation set up six smart classrooms in three government schools, with over 12 laptops, speakers, projectors and modems over which the nearly 360 students of Classes 9 and 10 are being taught by volunteer-teachers.

The organisation has over 270 volunteers from the leading institutes teaching over 840 students in Telangana, Bihar, Uttarakhand, Bengal and Gujarat.

## Governors should be apolitical: Tamilisai

I convinced CM to accept Ayushman Bharat, says Governor

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 12

While releasing a coffee table book on her work on completion of her first year at Raj Bhavan, Telangana Governor Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan said, "politicians can become Governors but once they take office, they should not think about party politics. I see my office and responsibility is to act as a bridge between Centre and state, and the state government and people."

Smilingly responding to questions on deteriorating Gubernatorial standards and strains between some opposition-ruled state government and the Raj Bhavans in different parts, Dr Soundararajan, increasingly being given the sobriquet of the 'People's Governor' for her proactive engagements with people, taking petitions and following up on them, said, "I focus on constructive ideas and outcomes, not controversies. The state government is responding positively to my suggestions, including during the Covid pandemic."

Giving an example of how her patient approach without confrontation has yielded results, she said, "Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao was not keen on implementing Ayushman Bharat, saying Aarogyashri is better. Citing examples of Tamil Nadu, where the state and central schemes have been merged, I explained as a doctor how if he agrees, people from other states can benefit from Hyderabad's exceptional health infra. Similarly,



Governor Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan along with her husband Dr P. Soundararajan at the launch of a coffee table book on Friday.

Telangana people living in other states can get benefits in all parts of India. The government has now agreed to implement this scheme."

The governor released the book along with her husband, renowned Nephrologist Dr P. Soundararajan, and several senior journalists. The book chronicles her various initiatives, meetings, programmes and a host of activities during her first year in office, including her proactive work in fields of education, healthcare and tribal wel-

fare. "Though I am from Tamil Nadu, I felt a great connect with the sisters of Telangana because we share several aspects of our culture. As a supporter of women empowerment, I am happy that from the day I took oath, we have two women ministers in state government and two ladies being elected as mayor and deputy mayor of Hyderabad," she said.

Getting emotional and personal, she said, "It is a rare coincidence and destiny that I share both my

● **GETTING EMOTIONAL** and personal, she said, "It is a rare coincidence and destiny that I share both my initials (TS) and date of birth of June 2 with Telangana."

"My approach is to patiently listen to grievances of people. This is a professional inclination, being a doctor who had a thriving practice before I joined public life. When people submit their grievances, I am not just a post box. We write to ministers concerned and follow up. E-office has been launched at Raj Bhavan to help people submit representations in a hassle-free manner," she said.

Elaborating on her focuses, she said, "from day one, I have shown keen interest in the development of universities. My wish is to see Telangana as the number one state in quality of higher education. Similarly, government hospitals must be strengthened to offer best possible medical services to the poorest of the poor."

When asked about her happiest day in office, she replied, "it was the day a Covid vaccine developed in Hyderabad got approval. It is a true symbol of Atma Nirbhar Bharat."

On the question of vaccines, she said, "I will take the vaccine when my turn comes as a common citizen. I do not want to jump the line"

Secretary to Governor K. Surendra Mohan, senior officers of Raj Bhavan and others were present.

## Sports meet



Minister for sports and youth services Srinivas Goud participates in the closing ceremony of Annual Sports and AMES meet organised by the city police at Goshamal stadium on Friday.

## Don't test our patience, KTR tells BJP, Congress

PULI SHARATH KUMAR | DC  
SIRCILLA, FEB. 12

"We will not sit quiet if BJP and Congress leaders talk without sense against Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao. There is a limit to our patience. If they cross the limits, we are not afraid to speak out against even the Prime Minister," said TRS working president and minister K.T. Rama Rao.

He was addressing party workers at a function hall in Rajanna Sircilla district on Friday. Rama Rao said no party had the guts to face the TRS. "KCR protected the self-respect of the people by achieving Telangana state. On several occasions, we have resigned from our posts and participated in the statehood movement."

"By winning one or two seats, the BJP leaders are flying high and talking in an irreverent manner

● **HE HIGHLIGHTED** the TRS government providing uninterrupted 24x7 power supply, introducing Rythu Bandhu and Rythu Bhima and waiving farm loans.

against the Chief Minister and the TRS. There is no gain for the BJP to have a state chief in the form of Bandi Sanjay Kumar, he can only make provocative statements."

Rama Rao said: "The TRS is a party that made former chief ministers of united Andhra Pradesh run away from this region. The BJP leaders should not forget this. We will give a fitting reply to the BJP at the appropriate time."

"Union ministers had on several occasions appreciated the good work of KCR. They even lauded us saying Telangana is the only state supplying sufficient water for both irriga-

tion and drinking needs." He highlighted the TRS government providing uninterrupted 24x7 power supply, introducing Rythu Bandhu and Rythu Bhima and waiving farm loans.

Rama Rao appealed to his partymen to focus on strengthening the party from the grassroot level. "The Rajanna Sircilla district must stand at top place in the TRS membership drive by enrolling the maximum number of people to the party."

Later, the minister participated in various developmental activities, inaugurated the Rythu Vedika and laid the foundation stone for the gram panchayat building and Palle Prakruthi Vanam in Rajeshwar Rao Nagar. He inaugurated the newly constructed bridge in Mallupally as also the crematorium, Palle Prakruthi Vanam, and an open gym in Gorantla village.

## Inter exams to end on May 20

From Page 1

The Intermediate second year exams will conclude on May 20.

Like last year, the entrance test will be conducted in multiple sessions spread across three to four days for engineering, and two to three days for

the agriculture stream.

While the entrance for admissions into engineering, agriculture, pharmacy and allied courses is organised in May every year, the pandemic derailed the schedule in 2020, when it was delayed by four months, with the test being held in

September.

A total of 1,43,326 candidates had registered for the engineering stream of the TS Eamcet 2020, of which 1,19,183 appeared and 89,734 qualified. In the AM stream, 78,981 candidates registered, 63,857 appeared and 59,113 qualified.

## Covid added to financial woes of state treasury

From Page 1

However, the scheme could not be formulated. The Coronavirus pandemic further compounded the financial woes of the state government.

In this backdrop, the government wants to allot ₹1,000 crore for the scheme in the upcoming Budget but give the allowance to the unemployed only in FY 2022-23.

Another issue bothering officials is lack of clarity on who should be considered as "unemployed". Therefore, there is no clarity on the number of unemployed persons in the state. Chief Minister Rao is

likely to appoint a panel of senior IAS officials to formulate the scheme and its guidelines by 2022-23.

Nearly 10 lakh candidates have registered with employment exchanges of the state government. Over 20 lakh candidates have registered with the Telangana State Public Service Commission (TSPSC) for government jobs.

Even if unemployed youth are estimated at 10 lakh, the government will have to earmark ₹3,600 crore per year to cover all of them. Some sections of the unemployed are already demanding that the scheme be implemented with retrospective effect from

December 2018.

There is already an ongoing war of words going on between the government and opposition over the former's claim on jobs provided during the last six years.

Rama Rao as IT and industries minister claimed that 1.31 lakh people were recruited since 2014, including 36,000 youth recruited through the TSPSC. He further claimed that 14.50 lakh job opportunities were provided to youth through 14,000 companies, given permissions under TSIPASS, the flagship industrial policy, under which, new industries are given all permissions within 14 days of an online application.

## Driver overshoot sharp bend

The bus was on its way to Visakhapatnam from Araku valley

From Page 1

The driver, as he was not familiar with the road, or possibly because of brake failure, overshoot a sharp bend and the bus went down the gorge. Among the injured, along with several adults, were children.

As per Swamy Goud, who responded to a phone call to Dinesh Travels, three persons had booked the vehicle for a family trip to Araku. There were 26 persons in all in the bus, he said.

Meanwhile, the Hyderabad district collector was instructed to visit Shaikpet and inquire and assist in relief operations.

According to the Anantagiri district police, the bus fell into the gorge while negotiating a hair pin bend on the hilly road between Dumuku and Tyda villages. The bus was on its way to Visakhapatnam from Araku valley and was about 100 km from its immediate destination.

Anantagiri sub-inspector K. Sudhakar said the bodies of the victims were being shifted to S. Kota community health centre,



Accident victims being taken to hospital on Friday.

where the injured persons were taken for immediate care and treatment.

Some of those who received serious injuries were to be taken to Visakhapatnam for better treatment.

As the police scrambled to mount relief efforts, officials reached out to any available vehicle and roped in taxi cabs to rush to the accident spot and to carry the injured to hospitals.

"The incident might have taken place around 7.30 pm and we got a call 10



Family members gather at the residence of the bus accident victims in Sitanagar, Shaikpet, on Friday.

— R. PAVAN

minutes later. We mobilised all available vehicles including 108 ambulances and rushed to

the accident spot 30 km away," said taxi driver Ramesh, from Borra Caves.

## ILLEGAL ACT Encroachers built houses on graves, say committee officials

## Shias allege graveyard land grab

SANJAY SAMUEL PAUL | DC  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 12

An eighteen-acre graveyard here that was considered sacrosanct because of a connection to Karbala, the city of high significance in Islam, has over the years reduced to about 10 acres. It faces the prospect of being further squeezed thanks to rampant encroachments.

The Daira Hazrat Meer Mohammed Momin Qibla Astrabadi, also known as Meer Momin Sabh Daira at Sultan Shahi, Mogulpura, is the only graveyard in the twin cities for the Shia community. Some 420 years ago, Hazarat Meer Momin Sabh initiated the process of converting this land

into a burial ground for the Shias. He is believed to have brought sacred soil from Karbala in Iraq and spread it over the area.

The Meer Momin Sabh Daira protection committee has been urging the government to take action against the encroachers who built houses inside the graveyard.

A complaint is also that the graveyard is being used by gangs for illegal activities, like sale of ganja. Committee members say a series of petitions and complaints had been lodged with the police, the Wakf Board and the district collector.

Finally, there was some respite from the encroachments. But fresh efforts began being made in

● **THE MEER Momin Sabh Daira protection committee has been urging the government to take action against the encroachers who built houses inside the graveyard.**

recent days to again encroach on to the graveyard land, they say.

On February 1, a donation box at the graveyard was found stolen along with four CCTV cameras from the site. Boundary walls are routinely pulled down, and electric lights were mostly seen destroyed.

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, the committee's joint secretary Syed

Hameed Hussain Jaffery, said: "Only 10 of the 18 acres of the graveyard land is left here now. Encroachers have built their houses on the graves. Valuable stones laid on some heritage graves were stolen."

In 2018, the then Hyderabad district collector who surveyed the area promised to restore the encroached land to the graveyard, but this did not happen."

He pleaded that the government take strict action against encroachers, restore the lost land to the graveyard and ensure proper protection to the graves. Notably, some members from the Quli Qutub Sha, Salarjung, and some from the family of the Nizam are buried in

this graveyard.

Ironically, this graveyard had been recognised by the Archaeological Survey of India as a protected monument. It bagged an award in 2016 for the best-maintained old graveyard.

The committee members urged the ASI to renovate the damaged heritage graves.

According to Syed Azmath Hussain Jaffery, a representative of the Telangana Shia Youth Welfare association, the six-lakh Shia Muslims in Telangana state expects of the government to do justice to them and the graveyard.

"Despite many complaints with the Wakf Board and the police, no action is being taken for its protection," he said.

## Governor, CM condole deaths

DC CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD, FEB. 12

Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan and Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao expressed shock and grief at the tragic bus accident at Araku on Friday that has claimed at least four lives.

The Governor posted on Twitter: "I am deeply shocked and saddened to know about the death of many tourists from Hyderabad in an accident at Araku Valley ghat road. I express my deep condolences to the bereaved family members. Wish early recovery and best possible medical care to the injured & admitted."

The CM expressed grief over the loss of lives in the

● **CM expressed grief** over the loss of lives in the tragic incident. "I express my deepest condolences to the families of the bereaved."

tragic incident. "I express my deepest condolences to the families of the bereaved. I pray for the early recovery of the injured."

IT minister K.T. Rama Rao said on Twitter, "Shocked & anguished to learn about the tragic bus accident at Araku where several tourists from Hyderabad have lost lives. Have requested AP Govt officials to provide all support My deepest condolences to the families of the bereaved. Prayers for the well-being of the injured."



## OTHER STORIES

## REMOVE WATER METERS IN KMC, DEMANDS CPM

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KHAMMAM, FEB. 12

CPM district secretary Nunna Nageswara Rao demanded the government to remove meters to the water connections under Mission Bhagiratha in Khammam Municipal Corporation.

He said that TRS government promised to extend drinking water at free of cost and how it will fix meters to the connections. He said that the people started fearing water bills after noticing the meter fixation. He said that there is no need to the meters when the government decided to give water at free of cost. He said that the officials are fixing water meters in many colonies in 32nd division.

## MODI CHEATING FARMERS, SAYS KUNAMNENI

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KOTHAGUDEM, FEB. 12

Communist Party of India state deputy secretary Kunamneni Sambasiva Rao said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is cheating farmers on three farm acts. Instead of repealing the acts, the Prime Minister is trying to convince farmers on it.

He said that the farmers had perfect understanding on the farm acts and dangers if they were implemented. The farmers are firm on their stand and they will continue their stir till Modi bow down. He said that corporate companies will be benefited more with the farm laws than the peasants.

The NDA government is so adamant on the laws and insisting the farmers to accept it.

He said that Centre did not discuss with the farm experts before making them as laws and various flaws took place due to lack of scientific approach.

● He said that the farmers had perfect understanding on the farm acts and dangers if they were implemented.

## Min. assures suitable posts to loyal workers

260 BC gurukul schools were established in six years

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KARIMNAGAR, FEB. 12

The TRS party workers by facing lathi charge and a lot of hardships achieved separate statehood of Telangana. Very soon, Chief Minister, K. Chandrasekhara Rao is going to allot suitable positions to all those committed workers said, the Backward Class minister, Gangula Kamalakara speaking in the party meeting held here at a private function hall in Karimnagar on Friday.

Mr. Kamalakara said that the TRS party is essential for the people of Telangana. Many people in Telangana are liking CM KCR leadership. But the

leaders of opposition parties are criticizing TRS party. They are taking the kind nature of TRS leaders as an advantage. "As we are in power, we have some limitations and we abide by it," he added. Many CMs and PMs changed in 74 years after India got Independence. But any party did not think about the welfare of the people belonging to the backward class community. It is the CM KCR who is striving hard for the well being of the BC community.

When only 19 gurukul schools were established in the 72 years of Telangana history, 260 BC gurukul schools were established in the past six years under the leadership

● **MANY CMs and PMs changed in 74 years after Independence. No political party think about the welfare of the BC community, other than KCR.**

of CM KCR. It is because of several innovative welfare schemes which were introduced by CM KCR, the people of all sections including farmers were able to live happily in Telangana, he informed.

It is the responsibility of party cadre to protect the party. Every family in Telangana was benefited after the TRS party came to power in the state. Many people are ready to take membership.

The party leaders must participate in the membership drive and must make it a huge success. Those who enrolled their names in the party as an active member will be given an identity card along with ₹2 lakh of insurance, he added.

District incharge of TRS party, MLC Baswaraju Saraiah, Koleti Damodar, MP Captain Laxmikantha Rao, MLC Naradasu Laxman Rao, MLAs Sunke Ravi Shankar, Rasamayi Balakrishna and Vodithala Satish Kumar, ZP chairperson K. Vijaya, city mayor Y. Sunil Rao and deputy Mayor Challa Swarupa Rani were among those who were present along with others.

## KLIP is the biggest scam of TRS govt, says Bhatti

DC CORRESPONDENT  
WARANGAL, FEB. 12

Telangana state, which was formed for fulfilling aspirations of people with regard to water, funds and jobs for locals, is yet to derive these benefits, as Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhara Rao's claims of providing water to people of the state is the biggest scam, charged CLP leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka.

Speaking to reporters at Kaleshwaram on Friday, he said even after spending ₹1.15 lakh crore, Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project (KLIP) has not provided water to even an acre of land.

"KLIP is a huge scam of TRS government. TRS redesigned the irrigation projects only to loot public money. The state could have saved thou-



CLP leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka addresses press meet at Kaleshwaram. — BY ARRANGEMENT

sands of crores had it gone ahead with earlier Congress government's proposed plan of lifting water from Tummidi Hatti," Bhatti remarked.

He accused the CM of being concerned only about benefitting himself and contractors. "They are yet to complete construction of distributary canals under KLIP. Still, KCR is presenting a colourful but false picture to people that farm-

ing taking place in Telangana is due to KLIP. This is how the Chief Minister is cheating people," the CLP leader explained.

MLA D. Sridhar Babu and MLC Jeevan Reddy were among those present at the press conference. Earlier, Bhatti and other Congress leaders offered prayers at Kaleshwara Mukteeshwara Swamy temple.

## FARMERS TO SELL TURMERIC IN SANGLI MARKET

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NIZAMABAD, FEB. 12

A section of farmers shifted turmeric for sale in Sangli market yard in Maharashtra. Hoping for remunerative price for the produce, the farmers are showing interest to shift the turmeric to Sangli instead of Nizamabad market yard. Traders in Sangli offered ₹ 9,000 per quintal turmeric for the last few days.

The Rajpuri variety of turmeric is being sold for ₹10,000 per quintal. Farmers from Armoor, Velpur, Balkonda, Mendora, Morthad, Kammarpally and other areas shifted turmeric to Maharashtra.

## TRS LEADERS START MEETING WITH CLAPS TO BOOST UP CADRE

**Adilabad:** The TRS leaders on Friday asked the party cadre present at the meeting to clap for five minutes continuously in order to get activated and enthusiastic after a prolonged lull in the party activities.

Jogu Ramanna asked the

cadre and leaders to give a boost by clapping loudly at the meeting organized on the occasion of launching party membership drive.

The TRS leaders said start a new beginning with the hope that things will be set right this year.

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## National Entrance Screening Test 2021

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(Autonomous Institutions under the Department of Atomic Energy, Government of India)

The National Entrance Screening Test (NEST) is a compulsory test for admission to the 5-year Integrated MSc programme in basic sciences - Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics and Physics - at National Institute of Science Education and Research (NISER), Bhubaneswar and University of Mumbai - Department of Atomic Energy Centre for Excellence in Basic Sciences (UM-DAE CEBS), Mumbai. NEST 2021 will be conducted in around 90 towns and cities all over India on **Monday, June 14, 2021**.

The candidates admitted to the programme are eligible to receive an annual scholarship of Rs 60,000 through DISHA program of Department of Atomic Energy, Government of India. In addition, the scholarship recipients receive a grant of Rs 20,000 per annum for summer internship. Candidates selected by DST for the INSPIRE-SHE program are endorsed for INSPIRE scholarship by NISER and CEBS.

For detailed information on NEST 2021 application procedure and previous years' question papers please visit NEST 2021 website: [www.nestexam.in](http://www.nestexam.in)

Application:	Examination:
Through ONLINE portal ONLY. Visit <a href="http://www.nestexam.in">www.nestexam.in</a> to apply.	ONLINE/computer based ONLY. Date of examination: <b>June 14, 2021 (Monday)</b> Time: 9:00 AM - 12:30 PM (1 <sup>st</sup> session) 2:30 PM - 6:00 PM (2 <sup>nd</sup> session) Results announcement : <b>June 30, 2021</b>
Online portal opens on <b>Feb. 24, 2021</b> , & closes on <b>Apr. 30, 2021</b>	
<b>Address for correspondence :</b> The Chief Coordinator, NEST 2021 NISER Bhubaneswar, P.O. Jatni Jatni, Khurda 752050, Odisha, India E-mail: <a href="mailto:nest-exam@niser.ac.in">nest-exam@niser.ac.in</a> Website: <a href="http://www.nestexam.in">www.nestexam.in</a>	<b>Fees structure and mode of payment :</b> Male (General and OBC categories) : Rs 1200/- Male (SC and ST categories) : Rs 600/- Female (all categories) : Rs 600/- Divyangjan candidates : Rs 600/- Pay ONLY via Net banking/ Credit card/ Debit card

## FOREST DEPT TOLD NOT TO DISTURB PODU FARMERS, SAYS SATYAVATHI

DC CORRESPONDENT  
WARANGAL, FEB. 12

Minister for Tribal Welfare Satyavathi Rathod on Friday said that officials have been instructed not to disturb the podu cultivation by tribals. Addressing the issues over the forest department officials digging trenches to mark forest land and obstruct podu cultivation, she directed the district officials not to trouble the tribal farmers.

Speaking during the TRS party membership drive at Mahabubabad she said the Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhara Rao also

assured justice to the podu farmers.

The minister said that they have a target of enrolling 50,000 members in each Assembly segment. The party membership drive will continue till February 28 and committees from the ward level to state level will be formed before the election of party president on April 27.

Satyavathi said that TRS is the only party that has concern for its members. Even the Congress that has more than 100 years of history and the ruling BJP never thought about the welfare of their cadres.

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The detailed NIT and Bid documents can be viewed and / or downloaded from NMDC website <http://www.nmdc.co.in>, Central Public Procurement portal (CPP PORTAL) <http://www.eprocure.gov.in/epublish/app> and MSTC portal <https://www.mstccommerce.co.in> from 13-02-2021 to 06-03-2021.

For accessing the bid document from MSTC portal, bidders to visit MSTC website and search **Tender Event No. NMDC/HO/120/20-21/ET/838**.

The Bidders, on regular basis are required to visit the NMDC's website / CPP Portal / MSTC websites for corrigendum, if any, at a future date.

For further clarification, the following can be contacted :

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**26<sup>th</sup> February : Andhra Pradesh, Kerala area**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> March : Hyderabad, Telangana area**  
**5<sup>th</sup> March : Chennai, Tamilnadu area**  
**9<sup>th</sup> March : Andhra Pradesh, Kerala area**  
**12<sup>th</sup> March : Bangaluru Karnataka area**  
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SHORT TAKES

MP COPS PROVIDE SECURITY TO KANGANA

Bhopal, Feb. 12: Madhya Pradesh police have put in place thick security cover around Bollywood actor Kangana Ranaut in the wake of a threat by some state Congress leaders that they would not allow her shoot for a film if she did not apologise to farmers over her tweets, an official said on Friday.

Shooting for *Dhaakad*, Ranaut's new film, is going on in Sarni area of Betul district. Sarni City Superintendent of Police (CSP) Abhay Ram Choudhary said, "Security has been tightened for the actress after MP home minister Narottam Mishra directed Betul Superintendent of Police Simala Prasad to do so."

Police personnel equipped with batons and firearms are deployed around the coal handling plant (CHL) near a power project, where the shooting is on, he added.

"Police will man gate numbers two and four of the CHL, from where actors usually enter the shooting venue," Choudhary said.

An inspector has been assigned to oversee Ranaut's safety at the resort, located around 45 kms from Sarni town, where she is during for the shoot, he said.

"We will ensure that she does not face any disturbance during the shoot," the CSP added.

ASSAM CUTS FUEL PRICES BY ₹5, DUTY ON LIQUOR BY 25%

MANOJ ANAND | DC GUWAHATI, FEB. 12

Assam government on Friday announced to cut petrol and diesel prices by ₹5 and reduced the duty on liquor by 25 per cent. The new rates will come into effect from Friday midnight.

The announcement has come months before the Assembly election and especially at a time when fuel prices have been touching new highs across the country.

While presenting a vote-on-account for six months, finance minister Himanta Biswa Sarma told the Assembly that the move will result in losses of nearly ₹80 crore revenue per month.

"When the Covid-19 was at its peak, we had increased taxes on petrol and diesel. With the Covid-19 situation improving and the additional burden on the health sector reducing, the state cabinet has decided to withdraw the additional taxes on these fuels," Sarma said.

"Effective from Friday midnight, prices of petrol and diesel will decrease by ₹5 per litre. As a result, Assam will have the record of providing cheapest petrol in the country after Gujarat. Even prices of diesel would be the lowest after Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh," he stated. Sarma further announced that additional taxes of 25 per cent imposed on liquor products at the peak of Covid-19 has also been withdrawn.

INDIA RECORDS STEEP DECLINE IN COVID-19 CASES

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, FEB. 12

India on Friday recorded 9,309 fresh cases and 87 deaths due to Covid-19 as the country's total active caseload saw a sharp decline, falling to 1.35 lakh.

The positive cases now comprise only 1.25% of the total cases and the day to day change of active cases in the last few weeks is showing a consistent decline, said Union health ministry officials.

The distribution of new cases in India in the last 24 hours shows a positive picture with only one state reporting over 1,000 cases while the rest of the states and UTs reporting less than 1,000 new cases. Four states and union territories have not reported any new cases in the last 24 hours. These are Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, Ladakh, Tripura and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

A significant decline in the daily deaths too has been noticed as 18 states/UTs have not reported any new deaths in the last 24 hours while 13 states/UTs have reported between 1-5 new deaths.

National Recovery Rate is 97.32 per cent, which is one of the highest globally. Officials said the continued high rise in the recoveries has led to progressively improving national Recovery Rate.



TMC Rajya Sabha MP Dinesh Trivedi pays tribute to Mahatma Gandhi after resigning as MP during the ongoing Budget Session of Parliament in New Delhi on Friday.

TMC MP Trivedi resigns, says party no longer in Didi's hands

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, FEB. 12

In yet another major blow to West Bengal Chief Minister and Trinamul Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee, TMC Rajya Sabha MP Dinesh Trivedi dramatically announced his resignation on the floor of the House on Friday, saying he felt "helpless" over the political violence in his state. He added, "The kind of violence that is happening in Bengal, it is a threat to democracy. I feel very strange sitting here. I think of what I should do. I think of Rabindranath Tagore. Obey party discipline? Of course, but I feel stifled. My soul is saying I sit here and say nothing, what is the point? I resign."

KHARGE ALL SET TO BE LEADER OF OPPOSITION IN RAJYA SABHA

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, FEB. 12

Senior Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge is all set to replace retiring member Ghulam Nabi Azad as the Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha. There were several frontrunners to the post of LOP but the scales were loaded in favour of Kharge as he is a loyalist and has the experience of leading the Congress from 2014-2019 in Lok Sabha.

He was sent to Rajya Sabha after he lost the 2019 Lok Sabha election. He was also handling the affairs of Maharashtra till recently as the General Secretary of the AICC. Others who were in reckoning included Anand Sharma, P. Chidambaram and Digvijaya Singh. In the end it was loyalty and seniority of Kharge that ensured his selection.

He is a nine-time Karnataka MLA and two-time Lok Sabha MP. He has also held the important portfolios at the center of Railways and Labour.

Ghulam Nabi Azad was given an emotional farewell by the House and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who broke into tears while heaping praises on the Congress leader.

In his speech, Prime Minister said it would be difficult for anyone to fill the shoes of Ghulam Nabi Azad as he cared not only about his political affiliation but also about the country and Rajya Sabha.

Azad was a member of the Upper House from Jammu and Kashmir, which does not have an Assembly currently after it was made a Union Territory with the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution.

Hence, it was difficult to repeat him and at present there is no vacancy. He officially retires on February 15.

He said he was feeling "suffocated" in the TMC which he said was "no longer in the hands" of Mamata Banerjee. Trivedi's resignation came two days after he endorsed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's speech in the Lok Sabha in which he had called for a key role for the private sector.

Trivedi, a former railway minister, announced his resignation in the Upper House during a debate on the Budget, saying he can't speak about the violence in his state. He handed over his resignation to Chairman M. Venkaiah Naidu and it has been accepted. He explained to Naidu that he had resigned of his own will and there was no pressure on him to quit.

Minutes after his resign-

ation, BJP general secretary and West Bengal in-charge

Kailash Vijayvargiya said Trivedi was welcome in the party.

Trivedi said, "If you sit here quietly and cannot do anything, then it is better that you resign from here and go to the land of Bengal and be with the people. The way violence is taking place in our state, sitting here, I am feeling perplexed as to what I should do."

Talking to reporters after submitting his resignation, he said, the TMC is no longer in Mamata Banerjee's hands. It has been taken over by a corporate professional who doesn't understand politics. And there is no forum within the party to air our views."

Trivedi had endorsed

Modi's Lok Sabha speech on Twitter, saying, "I am personally in agreement with this. The way forward is to let our young talented minds innovate, create and distribute wealth. Pay Govt levies, create jobs. For that, our Govt officers (babus) too, need to encourage the youth." He was trolled for his tweet with many saying he may switch from the party.

TMC Rajya Sabha deputy leader Sukhendu Sekhar Ray said that Trivedi was "ungrateful" and had betrayed the trust of the masses. "For the last so many years he (Trivedi) did not say anything. Now all of a sudden, just months before the Assembly polls, he has complaints. This shows his true colours," Ray said.

12 workers killed, 36 hurt in fire mishap in TN factory

DC CORRESPONDENT VIRUDHUNAGAR, FEB. 12

As many as 12 workers were killed and around 36 injured in a fire accident in a cracker manufacturing unit near Sivakasi in Virudhunagar district on Friday.

The accident occurred at around 11 am when more than 120 persons were working in Mariammal Fire Works at Achankulam village near Satur. The accident is suspected to have been caused by mishandling of the chemical mixture in the process of manufacturing fancy type crackers. It damaged 20 work sheds fully, killing five persons including a woman on the spot while seven more succumbed to burns at the hospital. Around 36 injured persons were undergoing treatment at the government hospitals in Virudhunagar, Sivakasi, Satur, Kovilpatti.

Fire and rescue personnel from the fire stations at Sivakasi, Virudhuagar



Police personnel inspect after an explosion ripped through a fireworks factory near Sattur in Virudhunagar district of Tamil Nadu on Friday.

and Satur had to struggle for four hours to contain the spread of the fire further and to put it out by 3 pm, according to the district fire officer Ganesan.

District collector R. Kannan said after inspecting the accident spot that those workers who suffered more than 50 per cent burns were referred to Madurai Rajaji government hospital for further treatment. A detailed enquiry would be conducted, which will help

identify the exact cause of the fire that sparked the explosion.

The local villagers, who first rushed to the rescue of the workers on hearing the deafening sound of the blast, however, complained that eight workers were made to work in a shed against the permitted four.

This caused congestion that prevented workers from running out when the accident occurred, said a villager.

HARMFUL | CONTENT

On Feb 4, Twitter was asked to take down 1,178 a/cs with links to Pak

Twitter: Won't block a/cs of journalists, leaders

New Delhi, Feb. 12: Twitter has blocked over 97 per cent of the accounts and posts flagged by the IT ministry for provocative content and misinformation around farmers' protest, sources said.

This followed a meeting between Twitter representatives and the information technology secretary on Wednesday evening where the US-based microblogging platform was issued a stern warning to comply with local laws or be prepared for action.

The ministry had questioned Twitter's delay in taking action on its order to block provocative content that could impact public law and order, whereas the American company

had been quick to crack down when a similar instance occurred at US Capitol Hill.

According to the sources, Twitter has now complied with the orders and over 97 per cent of the accounts flagged have been blocked.

Twitter did not respond to queries on the matter.

On February 4, Twitter was asked to take down 1,178 accounts with links to Pakistan and Khalistan supporters that were spreading misinformation and provocative content related to farmers' protest.

Prior to that, the government had sought blocking of 257 tweets and handles in connection with the agitation by farmers over the new agricultural laws. Twitter had complied with

● **THE MINISTRY** had questioned Twitter's delay in taking action on its order to block provocative content that could impact public law and order, whereas the American company had been quick to crack down when a similar instance occurred at US Capitol Hill.

● **THE GOVERNMENT** had made it clear that it will not negotiate with the platforms while insisting on compliance with its orders.

the orders only to restore the accounts hours later.

Twitter on Wednesday morning had said it has suspended over 500 accounts and blocked access to several others within India, but maintained that it would not block accounts of "news media entities, journalists, activists and politicians" as doing so "would violate their fundamental right to free expression"

guaranteed under the

ITBP command unit in Leh likely

Spl unit will operate independently, will focus exclusively on Ladakh sector

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, FEB. 12

In view of the increasing incidents of border disputes with China in the Ladakh region, the Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), which is the Indo-China border guarding force is likely to set up a special command unit in Leh.

The move is significant as this unit will operate independently of the ITBP's western command based at Chandigarh and will focus exclusively on the security situation in the entire Ladakh sector.

At present the ITBP's Western Command based at Chandigarh, is largely responsible for border areas of Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

But following recent incidents of incursions by Chinese Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) in some parts of the Ladakh sector there is a growing view within the home ministry that a separate specula command unit should be set up exclusively for the Ladakh region for ITBP as this had now become an "extremely sensitive sector."

"The special command unit based in Leh will ensure quick and timely action as a team of senior officers will be permanent stationed who can take decisions seeing the ground situation. They will not have to wait for decisions from the Chandigarh based Western command. Since the security situation in Ladakh is constantly evolving we need to take decisions according to the increasing Chinese activities in the region," a senior home ministry official said.

The 90,000 strong ITBP, with 56 service battalions and several other technical and specialised units, is responsible for the peacetime management of the 3,488-km-long Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China, with some of its posts being located at heights of 20,000 feet. During the ongoing stand-off with China, the forces bolstered its presence along the LAC, particularly in the Ladakh sector where the deployment of ITBP has been substantial enhanced.

In addition, latest surveillance equipments and weapons have also been provided to the ITBP unit deployed in the entire Ladakh region.

US welcomes India, China move

Washington, Feb. 12: The US has welcomed the ongoing efforts by India and China to de-escalate the situation in eastern Ladakh and said it would continue to monitor the situation closely as both sides work toward a peaceful resolution.

Defence minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday announced in Parliament that India and China have reached an agreement on disengagement in the North and South banks of Pangong lake in eastern Ladakh that mandates both

sides to cease forward deployment of troops in a "phased, coordinated and verifiable" manner.

"We're closely following reports of initial troop disengagement. We welcome the ongoing efforts to de-escalate the situation," a state department spokesperson said. "We will, of course, continue to monitor the situation closely as both sides work toward a peaceful resolution, the spokesperson said while responding to a question on China and India pulling back their

troops from eastern Ladakh," spokesperson added.

Congressman Michael McCaul, lead Republican in the House Foreign Affairs Committee, also welcomed the disengagement of troops. It's heartening to see India stand strong in defending its sovereignty, he said in a tweet.

The Chinese Communist Party's constant territorial aggression, from the East and South China Seas to the waters of the Mekong, to the Himalayas, has no place in the 21st century, he said.

Public Policy and Jim Baker, Deputy General Counsel and Vice President Legal, had affirmed Twitter's commitment towards following Indian laws and rules.

The executives had also requested for better engagement between the Indian government and the company's global team. Sources said Twitter's latest move to block the flagged accounts is itself a validation that the government's orders were backed by sound reasoning and logic.

The government had made it clear that it will not negotiate with the platforms while insisting on compliance with its orders as it believed that a private commercial entity in India

cannot unilaterally decide on public law and order, ignoring the democratic values of the country. IT ministry was of the view that Twitter, being an intermediary, was required to take immediate action after receiving the government's notice to block handles, but did not move with haste to take down "atrocious" hashtags and "incendiary" content even amid a volatile situation.

IT minister Ravi Shankar Prasad had recently emphasised that the government is all for freedom of speech and expression and that it remains investor-friendly, but disrespecting democratic values is not acceptable.

WAR OF WORDS



Why has he asked the Defence Minister to make the statement, the Prime Minister should say – I have given Indian land to China, this is the truth. Finger-4 is our territory, that is where our post used to be. So, now we have moved from finger-4 to finger-3. Why has the Prime Minister Modi given up Indian Territory to the Chinese? This is the question that needs to be answered by him and by the Defence Minister

— Rahul Gandhi, Congress leader

A new edition of Congress circus today, again due to @ Rahul Gandhi. Why is he bent upon falsely claiming that disengagement is a loss for India? Is it a part of INC-China MoU? With the armed forces leading the disengagement strategy, isn't this an insult of our brave forces? No Indian land has been given up by the government as part of the current disengagement process. If anyone committed the sin of giving up thousands of sq km, it is one corrupt, cowardly dynasty that has broken the country to keep their power intact

— J. P. NADDA, BJP president



Army chief: China's move led to distrust

PAWAN BALI | DC NEW DELHI, FEB. 12

Indian army chief General M.M. Naravane said on Friday that the rising footprints of China in India's neighbourhood and its attempts to unilaterally alter the status-quo along "our disputed borders" have created an environment of "confrontation and mutual distrust."

"The Regional Security Environment is characterised by Chinese belligerence in the Indo-Pacific, its hostility towards weaker nations and relentless drive to create regional dependencies through initiatives like the BRI," said Army chief during a seminar on 'Evolving Security Challenges in the North East and Way Forward.' Gen Naravane said that the resultant Sino-US rivalry has created regional imbalances and instability.

Army Chief noted that Nepal, India's traditional long term partner, which has witnessed heavy

Chinese investment, is going through a period of political volatility.

"While Bhutan has been cautious in its approach, we have seen an upswing in our relations with Bangladesh. India is celebrating Swarnim Vijay Varsh to commemorate its splendid victory over Pakistan in the 1971 War for Liberation of Bangladesh. The sight of the Tri-Service Contingent from Bangladesh marching down Rajpath on Republic Day bodes well for our future relations, although growing radicalisation in society remains a serious concern," said the Army chief. He pointed out that the ongoing dynamics in these neighbouring countries directly impacts the security environment in India's North East.

"A large number of initiatives are already underway to leverage military diplomacy with our Eastern Command playing the spring-board for fostering stronger bilateral relations," he said.



## SHORT TAKES

DANISH INTEL  
ARRESTS 14 FOR  
TERROR PLOT

Copenhagen, Feb. 12: Fourteen people arrested in Denmark and Germany suspected of planning an attack with explosives had "militant Islamist" motives, Danish intelligence services said on Friday.

Thirteen people were arrested at the weekend in a suburb outside Copenhagen, Denmark's PET intelligence service said Thursday, confirming another arrest had been made in Germany.

"The operation took place due to suspicions that a terror attack motivated by militant Islamism was being prepared," PET said in a statement.

The 13 arrested in Denmark were remanded in custody suspected of "planning one or more terrorist attacks or being accessory to attempted terrorism," PET said.

TIANWEN-1  
PROBE SENDS  
VIDEO OF MARS

Beijing, Feb. 12: China's space agency released video footage from its spacecraft circling Mars on Friday, two days after it successfully entered the planet's orbit in Beijing's latest ambitious space mission.

In the video, published by state broadcaster CCTV, the surface of the planet is seen coming into view out of a pitch black sky against the outside of the Tianwen-1, which entered the orbit of the Red Planet on Wednesday.

White craters are visible on the planet's surface, which fades from white to black through the video as the probe flies over the course of one Martian day, said official news agency Xinhua.

The five-tonne Tianwen-1 — which translates as "Questions to Heaven" — includes a Mars orbiter, a lander and a solar-powered rover and launched from southern China last July.

UK DEVELOPS  
TEST TO DETECT  
WOMB CANCER

London, Feb. 12: British scientists announced on Friday they had developed a test to detect womb cancer using urine samples, explaining the method could replace a painful and invasive procedure currently in use.

At present, clinicians diagnose the cancer by taking a biopsy, a process which requires a narrow telescope called a hysteroscope, to examine inside of the uterus and remove cells. Nearly a third of women who undergo the procedure have the process repeated because of technical difficulties or intolerable pain, the research showed.

Thousands of women in Britain who do not have womb cancer also undergo the procedure, with huge financial implications for the country's state-run National Health Service (NHS).

The study from Manchester University has developed a new detection tool which examines urine or vaginal samples that can be collected by women on their own at home.

The findings, published in the journal Nature Communications, showed analysis of the samples correctly diagnosed 91.7 percent of women with womb cancer.

18 BAGS OF  
HACKED-UP BODY  
PARTS FOUND

Mexico City, Feb. 12: Prosecutors in the western Mexico state of Jalisco say that police have found 18 plastic bags full of hacked-up body parts on the outskirts of the city of Guadalajara. Police found one human limb near a highway overpass, which led them to the heap of taped-up bags in a gully nearby, the agency said late Thursday. The severed limbs are being examined to determine how many corpses the parts belonged to.

In November, authorities recovered 113 bodies and additional human remains from a secret grave in the town of El Salto, just outside Guadalajara. A total of 189 corpses were discovered in the town throughout 2020.

The state is home to the Jalisco New Generation Cartel, one of Mexico's most violent and powerful. More bodies have been found in secret graves there than in any other state in recent years. The cartel has been fighting a breakaway faction in and around Guadalajara for years.

Myanmar protests swell as  
US sanctions coup leaders

Over 23,000 prisoners released as part of prison amnesty, no word on Suu Kyi

Yangon, Feb. 12: Huge crowds thronged cities around Myanmar to demand the return of ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi on Friday for a seventh straight day of protests, after Washington announced sanctions on the generals behind last week's coup.

A torrent of anger and defiance has brought hundreds of thousands of people out in nationwide rallies demanding the country's generals relinquish power.

Demonstrations have so far largely been peaceful, but police fired rubber bullets on students while dispersing a sit-down protest in the city of Mawlamyine, arresting at least five.

With teachers, bureaucrats and air traffic controllers among the government employees walking off the job to demand an end to junta rule, the country's new military leader Min Aung Hlaing told striking workers to return to their offices.

"Those who are away from their duties are requested to return to their duties immediately for the interests of the country and people without focusing on the emotion," he said, in a speech reported by state media.

The new US sanctions target Min Aung Hlaing and other top generals, after President Joe Biden



Protesters holding signs with the image of detained Myanmar civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi take part in a demonstration against the military coup in front of the Chinese embassy in Yangon on Friday.

— AFP

announced his administration was cutting off the military's access to \$1 billion in funds.

Ahead of another day of mass rallies, state media announced the release of more than 23,000 inmates as part of a prison amnesty. Friday was a public holiday in Myanmar and mass pardons to empty the coun-

try's overcrowded prison system are common on significant local dates.

More than 260 people have been detained in the days since the coup and about 20 released, according to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners monitoring group.

But there was no indication that Suu Kyi or any of

her allies were among those set to be freed.

"There is a serious concern that the sudden release... is to clear space for the detention of political prisoners," the AAPP said. Massive rallies were back underway in the commercial hub of Yangon on Friday, including a contingent of Premier League fans who

put aside their club rivalries to protest the coup.

"I hate the military coup more than Manchester United!" read one sign.

But further east in the port city of Mawlamyine, police moved quickly to clear a sit-in protest by university students, and footage showed officers hauling away several demonstrators. — AFP

Trump impeachment trial  
lawyers to urge his acquittalTwitter suspends pro-Trump  
activist group for violations

Washington, Feb. 12: Lawyers for Donald Trump take the Senate floor on Friday to rebut the Democratic-led impeachment of the former president for inciting insurrection, with Republican lawmakers then widely expected to vote to acquit.

Democratic impeachment managers rested their case on Thursday after two days of often emotional presentations.

Now the Republican property tycoon's lawyers will get a chance to respond. They are expected to make arguments brief, hastening the Senate verdict.

"There's no reason for us to be out there a long time. As I said from the start of this thing, this trial never should have happened," one of the lawyers, David Schoen, told Fox News.

The impeachment team charged Trump with stoking an insurrection after losing re-election to Joe Biden on November 3.

According to the case against him, the former president began to lay the groundwork for the riot within weeks of refusing to concede with claims

San Francisco, Feb. 12: A conservative activist group notorious for its use of undercover footage and publicity stunts was permanently suspended from Twitter on Thursday, after the group reportedly violated the platform's policies on sharing private information.

Project Veritas, a brash team of right-wing activists which has long been one of former US President Donald Trump's most fervent backers, was banned for "repeated vio-

lations of the companies anti-doxing policies", the group's founder James O'Keefe said in a tweet.

The suspension came a day after the group posted a video in which its journalists confronted Guy Rosen, Facebook's head of integrity and security, outside his home.

In a statement shared to multiple US outlets, Twitter said the group had been "permanently suspended for repeated viola-

tions of the companies anti-doxing policies", the group's founder James O'Keefe said in a tweet.

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Alexei Navalny

NAVALNY BACK  
IN COURT OVER  
DEFAMING PUTIN

Moscow, Feb. 12: Russia's main Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny was back in court Friday for allegedly defaming a World War II veteran, after being ordered to prison in another case that sparked global outrage and mass protests in his country.

The hearing came a little over one week after the 44-year-old opposition leader, a persistent thorn in President Vladimir Putin's flesh, was sentenced to serve nearly three years in jail.

The anti-corruption campaigner appeared in a glass cage for defendants at Moscow's Babushkinsky district court wearing his trademark blue hoodie, an AFP journalist reported.

Heavily-armed riot police surrounded the court and set up cordons outside. — AFP

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Americans to be  
vaccinated with  
200 mn doses

Washington, Feb. 12: US President Joe Biden announced plans to vaccinate most Americans by the end of July with the help of 200 million newly acquired doses, as the country's inoculation campaign kicked off a new phase in drugstores and supermarket pharmacies, some of which will offer shots as of Friday.

Even as the Biden administration inked deals to acquire "100 million more Moderna and 100 million more Pfizer vaccines" and Covid-19 cases fall in Europe, the World Health Organisation warned against rash reopenings, in a sobering reminder of the long global battle ahead in taming the pandemic.

"The decline in cases conceals increasing numbers of outbreaks and community spread involving variants of concern," said WHO Europe director Hans Kluge.

"At this point, the overwhelming majority of European countries remain vulnerable," he added, pointing out the "thin line between the hope of a vaccine and a false sense of security."

More than a million cases are still registered every week across the 53 member states in the UN agency's European region, which includes several Central Asian countries.

With the latest vaccine purchases, the United States — the world's hardest-hit country with more than 4,70,000 deaths — is on track "to have enough supply for 300 million Americans by the end of July," Biden said, meaning enough inoculations for all eligible people.

He made the announcement Thursday after touring the National Institutes of Health near Washington, with a million previously acquired vaccine doses already headed to around 6,500 drugstores and supermarket pharmacies.

The US immunisation

campaign got off to a shaky start in December, and even as recently as Thursday, Los Angeles moved to temporarily close five major inoculation centers including its giant Dodger Stadium site, due to vaccine shortage.

Mass Covid-19 vaccination programs are being ramped up in many countries in the race against more contagious variants, and governments are urging populations to continue to cope with closures as the inoculation campaigns move forward.

Worldwide deaths now stand at nearly 2.4 million, with the Middle East surpassing 1,00,000 fatalities on Thursday. — AFP

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## DECCAN Chronicle

13 FEBRUARY 2021

### Go slow on peace thrust, up the ante during talks

Once the breakthrough was achieved after several rounds of talks at various levels, the India-China agreement on disengagement at Pangong Tso in Ladakh is only a promising start towards peace. Surprisingly speedy the process of China moving back its armour from the shores of the lake may seem, but India would have to be most cautious on how the de-escalation exercise works out because it will be surrendering a lot of leverage in giving up the Kailash range heights for securing just the Pangong Tso disengagement in the north and south banks.

Given the history of fraught relations exacerbated by border tensions over the last few years since China's intrusion in 2017, it should be considered fortunate if this initial pullback leads to lasting peace. India would do well to remember how disadvantageous the narrow agreement seems right now because armed Chinese soldiers can be present at Finger 8 while India will be confined to its Finger 3 base and will be unable to patrol up to the Chinese perception of LAC, which used to be east of Finger 8 prior to April 2020.

The disengagement is indubitably positive but India must monitor the progress closely and also press for the resolution of all remaining issues, which are many considering the number of hotspots in Ladakh and further east, including the Depsang plateau where China has held Indian territory of around 1,000 sq km and the PLA has also been stopping the Indian troops from patrolling traditional points. Obviously there is far more to do in terms of tough negotiating in military commander level talks that are to be held within two days and in higher-level negotiations afterwards.

The border situation cannot be dealt with in isolation as China seemed to demand in its call to set right ties, including trade even as talks went on about de-escalation. The point to ponder is whether China is aiming for a larger resetting of ties in a global sense in view of the change in the White House, which Joe Biden signalled with a tough sounding phone call to Chinese President Xi Jinping. It would be a great development for world peace if indeed China is willing to negotiate even from its stronger position post-Covid vis-a-vis economic recovery from worldwide lows imposed by the pandemic.

The trust deficit, including between China and its largest trading partner, the United States, has been enlarged by suspicions over the origin of the coronavirus being Wuhan. A sliver of hope is to be spotted in China seeking peace while agreeing to try and resolve the border issue, even if it did so only on facing India's strong position on its capturing of the Kailash range heights. Doubts will remain over whether China will remobilise quickly as it has the advantage over India in terms of infrastructure capabilities, which is why abundant caution is advised as well as the highest vigil on friction points beyond Eastern Ladakh. Negotiations over easing punitive economic actions taken by India can wait until it is established that the push for peace is real.

### Kamal's black humour

There is never a dull moment in Tamil Nadu's political scene, particularly when the state gears up for an Assembly election. But when a celebrated actor like Kamal Haasan tickles the funny bone, the entire realm turns a theatre of the absurd. When the general council of Mr Haasan's party, named differently as the Makkal Needhi Maiam (People's Justice Centre), made him the "permanent president" by passing a resolution, his detractors, who never miss an opportunity to pick holes in whatever he does or says, raised serious questions, quite out of sync with the prevailing mirth.

What's that general council? How were those members elected? By whom? So wondered the dirty disparagers without realising that it's an internal matter of the party that others should not poke their noses into. They also asked if someone could remain permanently on a high pedestal in a domain where there are no permanent friends or enemies. But Mr Haasan, who hails from a world of make-believe, perhaps believes in the juxtaposition of surrealism with harsh political realities, hoping that it would provide relief from the ennui caused by the ubiquitous harangue and pageantry.

Whatever it was, he made the people laugh though they had heard of even "permanent chief ministers", as hailed in the rhetoric of fawning sycophants, in the past. Displaying a similar sentiment, those who inherited the mantle of running the government from the late J. Jayalalithaa accorded her the exalted status of "permanent general secretary" of the AIADMK posthumously and kept the post vacant "permanently" after throwing out V.K. Sasikala, who had succeeded her. Perhaps it was the spectacular return of Ms Sasikala to reclaim the post that inspired Mr Haasan to look for permanency in the party president's job. Anyway, the same general council's resolution to make Mr Haasan the Chief Minister of the state did not evoke any laughter.

#### DECCAN CHRONICLE

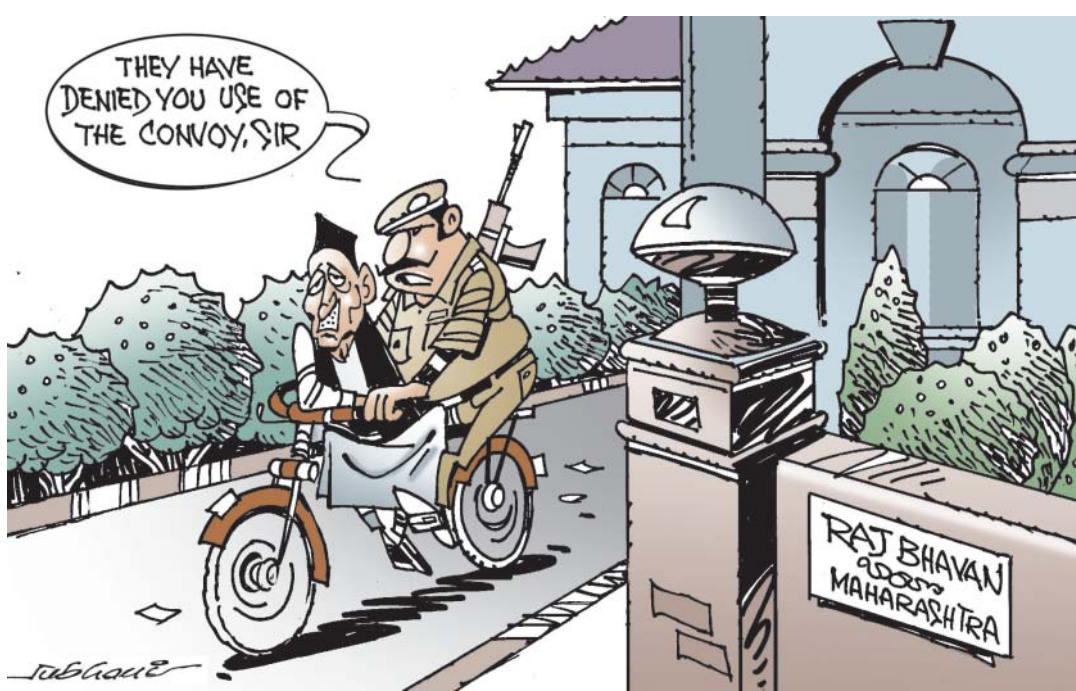
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Subhani



## Why China 'disengaged': Always carry a big stick



Syed Ata Hasnain

After nine rounds of talks at the military theatre level which appeared to be tapering off without any results, we find a positive development announced by the Raksha Mantri in Parliament on Thursday: a decision to disengage between the Indian Army and China's People's Liberation Army in the over nine-month-long standoff in eastern Ladakh. The issues worth examining are the triggers which created a positive sentiment, the modalities involved in the disengagement and the strategic dynamics for the future.

Why has China accepted a mutual disengagement? There is speculation that its strategic objectives having been met, it was willing to disengage; but this many not entirely be true. The objectives have been analysed to a great extent. My belief veers on the coercion theory; that India's soaring strategic confidence through the past five years deeply worried China. The feasibility of India actually becoming a part of military equations and alliances and thus upsetting the strategic balance in Asia was not too appealing for China. India's talk about regaining all territories of J&K was perceived as becoming a national obsession, emboldening beyond acceptable limits. Limited military coercion to force India back to the starting line was felt necessary. However, China was surprised by India's push-back and deep sense of resolve to stick it out. A border conflict or even general war was not the intent as it was unwinnable for China without a major redeployment. It couldn't afford creation of near permanent voids elsewhere. A continuing standoff gave

no real advantage to China except the projection of threat of a two-front war for India, which too sounded hollow given Pakistan's precarious internal economic, political and social health.

With the world slowly recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic, shaking into a reset and a potential new order emerging, China cannot miss the opportunity to draw favourably from it. Remaining in confrontation mode with committed troops paid no real dividends. By agreeing to disengage it is attempting to project a sense of reason and political maturity; in reality it is an exit that is giving it face. No one should expect that the agreement to disengage will be achieved overnight or that conflict resolution is on the cards. There are likely to be many revisits, especially because India just cannot trust China to implement what it has agreed upon.

The Indian government invested in a new strategy of trusting its military leadership to undertake negotiations which were really in the political-diplomatic-military domain. In nine rounds, the military stood its ground well, reflecting an intellectual and pragmatic approach. Of course, it runs the risk of coming up against obstacles in implementation. The last time it tried implementing what was agreed upon in theatre level border meetings, it led to the Galwan incident. The Indian Army is not one which will simply move back to implement an agreement with a country with whom there is virtually zero trust. It will verify and verify, just like its officers and soldiers did in June 2020, which led to Galwan. With caution and the lessons learnt, that procedure has to be implemented all over again.

It is unlikely we have

seen anything close to a final agreement. I do perceive it is incomplete at present as it primarily relates only to the northern and southern banks of Pangong Tso. While the actions in north Pangong Tso have been spelt out more specifically, the same is absent in relation to the south. The details of this will need to be probably thrashed out when the stage for the pullback of forward deployed infantry comes up. Limits have been put on patrolling north of the lake to avoid physical contact between the troops of both sides. The theatre-level military-diplomatic talks will at some stage have to come down to border meetings at lower levels to restore trust and confidence.

What India should be insisting upon is the physical delineation of the LAC without prejudice to anything permanent. It will get rid of the one issue which is the bane of the LAC's management: that is, the perception about where ours or the Chinese claim line exists. This is unlikely, of course, but must remain the pressure point on the Chinese side as a terminal objective of the current talks, the tenth round of which is likely to come up soon. The Raksha Mantri in his Rajya Sabha statement laid it out clearly: "The House should also know that there are still some outstanding issues with regard to deployment and patrolling at some other points along the LAC in eastern Ladakh. These will be the focus of further discussions with the Chinese side". The reference was to other areas in contention, especially Depsang, where a much greater threat exists to our defences, as also an

opportunity for us to threaten the main Chinese highway to Xinjiang. Without an operational-tactical advantage, if this is vacated at the Kailash heights, it is difficult to foresee any further concessions by the Chinese. Perhaps there is more to it and will emerge in due course as understandably full transparency on military operational issues is not currently possible.

Progress on the agreement and subsequent moves towards more positive signs is not contingent upon only the events in eastern Ladakh. Everything here is linked to geopolitical issues relating to Chinese and Indian interests elsewhere in South Asia; relations with countries such as Bangladesh and Sri Lanka being an example. It would be helpful if India can detach the developments in eastern Ladakh from the dynamics of Sino-Indian relations elsewhere. India will find itself under increasing pressure from China regarding its strategic equations with the Quad nations. Having come thus far and also having received fair importance from the United States in its perception of India's role in the Indo Pacific region, New Delhi may feel it's in a dilemma. However, its interests clearly lie where it has established greater trust and identified commonality of interests. It cannot afford to be seen to be submitting unreasonably to Chinese demands. The inevitability in India's approach towards the emerging situation should be to waste little time in enhancing its conventional military capability through the self-reliance route towards modernisation. As far as its northern borders are concerned, all disengagements and de-escalation will always be a temporary phenomenon. While remaining positive in its stance, India will always need to carry a big stick, as big or bigger than all its adversaries.

*The writer, a retired lieutenant-general, is a former GOC of the Srinagar-based 15 Corps*

#### LETTERS

#### ENCROACHMENTS

Courts directed the GHMC to remove encroachments earlier too (*Remove foot-path encroachments: HC, DC, Feb. 12*). Permanent constructions have come up on footpaths. Electric poles are moved to facilitate them. It is rampant in bylanes. Encroachments removed soon resurface within a short time.

**S. Venkateswara Rao**  
Hyderabad

I did not realise the pain of riding through crowded lanes until I got a two-wheeler. Most footpaths are occupied by hawkers who force pedestrians to walk on road. I request the government to ensure liquor buyers stand in queue.

**D. Megha**  
Secunderabad

#### WOMAN MAYOR

A strong message of women's empowerment is sought to be sent to society by having a woman as Mayor. However, she was nominated in a sealed cover. If people had a direct say in the mayor's election like Teegala Krishna Reddy a long time ago, it would have been welcome.

**Phaneendra V.**  
Hyderabad

#### MIXOPATHY BAD

The Centre doesn't seem bothered about repercussions of laws they enact (*Doctors' relay hunger strike enter 10th day, DC, Feb. 12*). Not only doctors, but also citizens need to protest against this. It confuses patients trying to diagnose illness with a doctor. Even Ayurvedic doctors who are allowed now to do surgeries with six months training are doing a risky job.

**P.J. David**  
Hyderabad

#### 50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

#### India is on the threshold of change: Indira

NEW DELHI, February. 12

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi opined that in India today "there is a conflict between the forces of change and of the 'status quo'". Mrs Gandhi, in an interview to the French national radio, also affirmed her party's belief in democracy and said, "we are trying to give it greater meaning". "We believe the interests of the people are best safeguarded in a democracy, because a democracy is perhaps the only system which strengthens people themselves".

Farrukh Dhondy  
Cabbages & Kings



*"Oh Bachchoo let's have due regard For the story-telling genius of Scheherazade Who over a thousand and one nights Scaled creation's narrative heights*

*She held a king under her spell Assuring him there was more to tell And so, with each inventive breath Do story-tellers stave off death."*

— From **Lambey Laments** by Bachchoo

To: UK Home Office, 2 Marsham Street, London SW

*My dear Priti Patelji,*  
I am writing to apply for the post of Chief Speechwriter for which you advertised this week.

Your advertisement specifies that "the successful candidate will be someone who can imitate the Home Secretary's personal style".

Let me start by saying, Pritiji, that I have closely followed your career, from the time you were thrown out of your job by the then PM Theresa May, for attempting unofficial deals and private contact with Israeli officials and businesswallas, to when you favoured

hanging and capital punishment, to your generous policies regarding police pay, illegal entrants to Britain and your speeches attacking anti-terrorism and the Covid crisis.

I am sure that, being a Parsi with a knowledge of fluent Gujarati, I am best qualified for the job. Please tear up and bin any applications from Goras, Punjabis, Pakistanis, Bengalis, etc. None of them will understand the prejudices you have imbibed as a child of immigrant shopkeepers from Uganda. I must confess never having been to Uganda or kept a shop, but as a writer of stage plays, etc, I constantly think myself into the mentality, prejudices, and styles of thought and speech of different characters. I am sure you will consider this my Trump card (I know you got the joke. Ha ha!).

Of course, I don't expect you to call me instantly and offer me the job without testing my abilities to deliver superb text in your voice, so I am setting out some samples below:

The first is a sample address to the Tory Conference.

"Comrades, Lords and Ladies,  
I stand before you as your new Home Secretary appointed by our brilliant

elected Prime Minister Doris Bronson who has very perceptively recognised my fantastic talents for this job. I am fully aware of the heavy responsibility that this places on my head such as keeping the wogs out of the country (loud cheers and standing ovation), making the police more effective by cutting their numbers and pay (shuffling in the audience), zero tolerance for criminals with a lock-up-and-throw-away-the-key approach, with the building of five thousand more jails and bringing back hanging (second standing ovation)—er um... I didn't mean by ropes, I meant hanging as in suspending people, like my Chief Civil Servants if they express any opinions...."

I guarantee Pritiji, these thoughts of yours which I have humbly attempted to put into words will get you to be PM after this fellow—whose name you characteristically forget.

Secondly, here is a sample address to the Police Federation as you are now in charge of all PC Plods.

"My brave and dedicated servants of the law, let me start by announcing that I intend to immediately boost police pay (huge applause and cat

calls). I have instructed my office to see that every police officer gets paid at least £3 and 12 shillings per week (total silence). This is in recognition of the fantastic work your forces are doing in fighting and combatting anti-terrorism, which must be wiped off the face of this planet. (Huge cheers from Islamicist policemen)...."

And next, Pritiji, your address to the House of Commons on immigration.

"Mr Speaker, the gravest crisis facing this country is not the shortage of grave-diggers caused by the Covid virus, but the illegal entry of immigrants and so-called asylum seekers across our land-borders with Europe. The previous Labour government under Terrestrial May lived up to its Prime Minister's name by declaring that these criminals *May* use the *Terrestrial* tunnels to enter our country (Here you pause for the laughter that will certainly follow this joke!). I propose, Mr Speaker, to build a wall across these borders with barbed wire on top to stop people coming in. We shall have a Ugandan and Cayman Island style immigration policy by which all Asians will have to leave the country and only tax-

dodgers and drug lords will be admitted to the free ports declared by our hedgey-boy chancellor Wishy Anorak. Doris has already told me that he will get the Norwegians to pay for this wall...."

And then perhaps Pritiji, the PM may ask you to take to the TV lectern to address the nation on the Covid crisis and the government's efforts to combat it in accordance to the science. So, here's what you might say:

"It is with great sadness that the statistics today reveal that Britain has suffered 66 million deaths in the last 24 hours. My thoughts and condolences go out to all these deaths' families. Now despite some mother lovers opposing lockdown, what the epicologists, etc tell us that not only is lockdown a good thing, we should also have lock-up—which means anyone who tests positive for Covid should be locked up and the key thrown away. And if any scientist or civil servant opposes my sane policies they can bloody-well F-off and die—effing wankers—I know where you live...."

*Your future ventriloquist, Obsequiously, Farrukh Dhondy*

How to apply for a job to home secy of Blunderland!



## SHORT TAKES



Amritha (left) and Srihitha Mandava pose with their trophies at the Boulder Hills Golf and Country Club in Hyderabad.

## Mandava sisters bag golf titles

**Hyderabad:** Hyderabad girls Srihitha and Amritha Mandava won the age group titles at the Young Master Southern India Classic golf tournament played at the Boulder Hills Golf and Country Club in Hyderabad. Srihitha tallied 231 over 36 holes with round scores of 78, 73 and 80 to take the top spot in the Girls 12-13 years category ahead of Anvithi Gangisetty (271) and Riya Jadon (281). Amritha got a total score of 242 over 36 holes in three rounds (79, 81, 82) to emerge winner in the Girls 14-15 section. Lavanya Jadon (249) and Amishi Jain (300) were second and third respectively. Drishti Karumbaya was the best in Girls 16+ with a score of 220 (73, 72, 75) ahead of Jasmine Sachdev (234 — 77, 78, 79) and Vidushi Keni (236 — 77, 78, 81). Aarya Goyal and Sanjana took the first and second spots in the Girls 7-9 category.

## State cue sports from Feb. 22

**Hyderabad:** The Telangana Cue Sports Association is organising the Telangana State Ranking Snooker & Billiards Championship (junior and senior) from February 22 to March 7. The top five players in senior snooker and finalists in junior snooker, senior and junior billiards will represent Telangana at the Nationals. Himanshu Jain, Nabil Lakdawala, Md Ghouse, Khizar Raoof, D. Arvind Kumar (senior snooker); Mushtaq Hussain, Vishwanath and Vibhas (junior snooker & billiards) are among the top players participating in the championship.

## Rashmika in singles final

**Hyderabad:** Hyderabad girl Shrivalli Rashmika entered the final of the singles event at the MPTA AITA Open Women's Tennis tournament being played at Chennai. In the semifinals played on Friday, Rashmika defeated Pooja Ingle of Maharashtra in straight sets at 6-4, 6-1.

## Hyderabad FC hold East Bengal 1-1

**Vasco:** Aridane Santana scored a last-gasp equaliser to help Hyderabad FC hold SC East Bengal to a 1-1 draw and dent the Kolkata side's hopes of making it to the playoffs of the Indian Super League here on Friday. Bright Enoabakare scored in the 59th minute for SC East Bengal, who seemed to be cruising towards the win until the stoppage-time leveller from Santana. The result extended the Nizams' unbeaten run to nine games. With the draw, Hyderabad are at third spot with 24 points from 17 matches. — PTI

## Live on TV

## TENNIS

**Australian Open:** First round matches from 5.30 am on Sony Six, from 1.30 pm on Sony Ten 2, HD

## CRICKET

**India vs England:** Second Test, Day One, from 9.20 am on Star Sports 1

**Pakistan vs South Africa:** Second T20 from 6.30 pm on Sony Ten 1

## FOOTBALL

**English Premier League:** Leicester City vs Liverpool from 6 pm; Crystal Palace vs Burnley from 8.30 pm; Manchester City vs Tottenham Hotspur from 11 pm; Brighton vs Aston Villa from 1.30 pm (Sunday) on Star Sports Select 1, HD

**Italian League:** Napoli vs Juventus from 10.30 pm; Spezia vs AC Milan from 1.15 am (Sunday) on Sony Ten 2, HD

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Indian captain Virat Kohli during a practice session at the Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai on Thursday.

— BCCI

## PITCHED BATTLE

## Chepauk surface in focus again as India look to hit back

C. SANTHOSH KUMAR | DC CHENNAI, FEB. 12

The wound hasn't healed. And the dust is yet to settle. Four days after being battered by the visiting England team in their own den, India have the unenviable task of lifting themselves for yet another 'pitched' battle at the same venue. Round two starting here at the M.A. Chidambaram stadium on Saturday will be a test of character for Virat Kohli & Co.

India find themselves in an unexpected situation. It's only the second time this decade that India have started a bilateral series (minimum three Tests) at home on a disappointing note. When it happened last time, against Australia in February 2017, they roared back with vengeance to clinch the series 2-1 eventually.

Much like in the opening game, the focus will once again be on the pitch. A different strip with black clay on the top layer will be used this time around. With just a three-day gap, the groundsman didn't have much time. Both teams know what to expect — the track will turn from day one.

England skipper Joe Root has already shown the ideal way for counter-spin in subcontinental conditions. But this pitch is expected to pose a bigger challenge to Root.

Annoyed with the flat surface, Kohli had blamed his supporting spinners Shabbaz Nadeem and Washington Sundar for leaking runs. But he backed Ajinkya Rahane despite his poor run of form. Rohit Sharma, who has just one half-century



Rohit Sharma plays a shot during a practice session at the Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai on Thursday.

— BCCI

in his last eight innings, hasn't faced much scrutiny either. Kohli still felt "all was well" in his batting unit. If not for the brilliant first innings knocks from Rishabh Pant and Washington, India would have slumped to further embarrassment.

With allrounder Axar Patel deemed fit and set for his Test debut, Shabbaz is back in the standby players' pool. If the team management decides to retain Washington for his batting ability, Kuldeep Yadav will continue cooling his heels. He hasn't played a Test since he took

a five-for at Sydney in January 2019.

England, on the other hand, have made four changes in their team. James Anderson who used reverse swing to rattle the Indian top-order has been rested. With Jofra Archer too being ruled out with an elbow injury and off-spinner Dom Bess to be replaced by Moeen Ali, England's bowling attack will sport a new look. In Anderson's absence, another experienced campaigner, Stuart Broad, will spearhead the attack. Fast bowlers Olly Stone and Chris Woakes will fight for the final spot.

## It will turn from Day One: Rahane

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, FEB. 12

"I am sure it will turn from day one," India vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane said it loud and clear. The flat pitch that offered no assistance to bowlers was one of the talking points after India's eight-match winning streak at home came to a halt in the opening Test against England earlier this week.

As India prepare to bounce back in the series, it's no surprise that "the wicket looks completely different."

"However, we have to wait and see how it behaves in the first session. We have to forget what happened in the first Test and focus on the job at hand. We know these conditions really well, so we have to put our best foot forward and move on," said Rahane.

Rahane's average of 37.35 in 28 Tests at home is not as impressive as his away numbers — 44.44 in 42 Tests. His last two innings of 1 and 0 have put him under the scanner. However, the Mumbai batsman doesn't want to read too much into the stats.

"We are playing at home after two years. The last big home Test series was against South Africa. If you take the records out, I'm sure you will find something there. And, it's not about individuals, it's always about the team. My focus is always on con-

tributing to the team's success. If you take out the last 10-15 Tests, you will see my performance. I don't worry about what happened in the first Test. I only worry about what the team wants from me," said Rahane.

England batsmen not only looked comfortable, but also played efficiently by employing sweep shots against the Indian spinners, but the same cannot be said of the hosts.

"It (shots that we play) depends on how they bowl. We play according to their line and length. England have come up with a plan to play sweep and reverse sweep. It's not necessary we have to copy them," further added Rahane.

When queried about the team's negative body language in the first Test, Rahane said: "There are moments when you don't have that energy but that doesn't mean it has happened because of a change in captaincy. As I have said earlier, Virat is our captain and will remain our captain. If you are trying to dig and find some masala, unfortunately you will not get it."

The second Test will allow 50 per cent spectators in the 45,000 capacity stadium. Rahane is excited to have the crowds back.

"We know how much that means for us. I hope people will come enjoy the cricket," added the seasoned Test batsman.

## Hazare selection turns hazardous

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, FEB. 12

Muck at the Hyderabad Cricket Association continues to fly after the flawed selection of State squad for the upcoming Vijay Hazare Trophy triggered tempers that have boiled over beyond cricket corridors.

After a memorandum was submitted to the Telangana State Human Rights Commission on Thursday, urging chairman Justice Gunda Chandraiah to look into the 'Murder of talent and grave violations of human rights by HCA' the secretaries of affiliated clubs whose players have been ignored despite consistent performances, are organising a protest at the Gymkhana grounds — Hyderabad's cricket cradle — at 11.30 am on Saturday.

The protest is "against the illegalities and autocratic decisions of select office bearers in selecting the team by violating all norms and constitutional obligations and in utter violation of Supreme Court approved registered Constitution," a note being circulated, read.

For the record, only one batsman from the Top 10 scorers in the League matches that were conduct-

ed to select State sides, has made Hyderabad's Vijay Hazare squad.

Mir Jaweed Ali of Budding Star, No.6 on the list, is the odd man out.

The bowling selection is even more baffling. Leg-spinner G. Arjun of Balaaji Colts leads the list with 45 wickets in 5 matches but has been surpassed by No.2 Ashish Srivastava who has 36 wickets against his name in 6 matches. Both are leg-spinners.

Arjun has also conceded fewer runs, has a better strike rate and has been more economical... he didn't see a googly coming.

All this leaves a bad taste in the mouth and drags the Gentleman's Game through muddied streets. It's time the HCA administrators played with a straight bat.

Aspiring players had risked contracting Covid to turn up for the local league matches after they, along with their parents, had to sign declarations stating they would not hold the HCA responsible should they catch the dreaded virus.

Turns out that there were no first aid facilities at the grounds to treat players who got injured during the course of play.

Now, this selection snub has hurt them even more.

## HYDERABAD'S TOP 10 BATSMEN

Player	M	Inn	Runs	Best	Ave
1. A. Varun Goud	7	11	788	227	87.56
2. Rohit Rayudu	8	13	741	165	61.75
3. P. Akshath Reddy	7	13	726	176	60.50
4. Yash Kapadia	7	12	706	194	70.60
5. Md Junaid Ali	7	12	704	170	58.67
6. Mir Jaweed Ali	6	10	697	237	77.44
7. M. Abhirath Reddy	5	8	694	222	115.67
8. M. Pratyush Kumar	8	16	673	119	44.87
9. A. Takshit Rao	6	11	631	151	63.10
10. Sarthak Bharadwaj	5	9	625	159	78.13

(Tabulated as matches played, innings batted, total runs scored, highest score, average)

## Hurt Djoker hints at exit from Open

**Melbourne, Feb. 12:** Defending champion Novak Djokovic admitted his Australian Open might be over after an injury-hit win on Friday as fans were kicked out ahead of a state-wide Coronavirus lockdown.

In the now-empty stadium, a grimacing Djokovic, who needed repeated treatment on an abdominal injury, recovered from losing the third and fourth sets to beat Fritz 7-6 (7/1), 6-4, 3-6, 4-6, 6-2. "I know it's a tear, definitely, of the muscle so I don't know if I'll manage to recover from that in less than two days. I don't know if I'm going to step out on the court or not, I'm just very proud of this achievement tonight," said the Serb.

Meanwhile, Russian qualifier Aslan Karatsev pulled

off the biggest shock when the world number 114 blitzed eighth seed Diego Schwartzman into submission 6-3, 6-3, 6-3.

Karatsev is making his Grand Slam debut at Melbourne Park and is incredibly yet to drop a set.

Meanwhile, ice-cool Dominic Thiem rallied from two sets down to tame flamboyant Nick Kyrgios 4-6, 4-6, 6-3, 6-4, 6-4.

In women's singles, Naomi Osaka had to deal with a butterfly landing on her nose but was otherwise little bothered as she breezed into the last 16.

The third seed clinched an easy 6-3, 6-2 victory over Tunisian 27th seed Ons Jabeur in 1hr 18min.

In another match, Serena Williams she wore down Anastasia Potapova 7-6 (7/5), 6-2. — Agencies

## Tanay, Mickil, Karthikeya, Ritwik, Vamshi on top

## Mujaheed, Raheem, Gunawith, Haji, Ayub and Sachith lead performers in A-2 division league

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, FEB. 12

Tanay Thyagarajan scored his second successive century to lift Budding Star to a four-wicket victory over R. Dayanand in the Hyderabad Cricket Association's A-1 Division one-day knockout tournament.

Tanay scored 118 in 101 balls with the help of 12 fours and four sixes as Star replied to Dayanand's 209 with 213 for 6 in 38.1 overs. Mickil Jaiswal also continued his run scoring spree. The MP Colts batsman cracked 170 in 151 balls smashing a dozen boundaries and an equal number of sixes to set up his side's 29-run win over Sporting XI, for whom speedster Karthikeya Kak took 5 for 49. Tanmay Agarwal was unfortunate to miss the century mark by two runs — the Sporting batsman fell on 98.

In the A-2 Division, G. Ritwik and Vamshi Ramavath topped the performers' list. Ritwik took 8 for 42 as SK Blues beat Saint Sai while Vamshi's



Mickil Karthikeya

G. Ritwik Vamshi

Mujaheed Raheem

Ayub Khan Rahman

Khalid Varun Tej

Vasistha

238 boosted Noble to 551 for 8, a total Mayura found just too hard to overcome. Mujaheed Khan (7 for 32) of Azad CC, Md Abdul Raheem (7/75) of Team Speed, Hyderabad Cricket Academy's Gaddam Gunawith (6/17), Syed Haji (6/38) of Sri Shyam, Md Ayub Khan (166) of Vijaypur Willowmen and Sachith Naidu (145) of Abhinav Colts were the other top performers in the two-day league matches.

## Brief scores:

## A-1 DIVISION ONE-DAY KNOCK-OUT TOURNAMENT

■ MP Colts 279 in 50 overs (Mickil Jaiswal 170 — 151b, 12x4, 12x6, G. Rahul Radesh 55, Karthikeya Kak 5/49 — 10-1-49-5) bt Sporting XI 250 in 48.3 overs (Tanmay Agarwal 98, G. Sadhan 53, Karthikeya Kak 34, G. Gireesh Goud 4/45).

■ R Dayanand 209 in 47.3 overs (K. Nitesh Reddy 68, Nishanth Yadav

## A-2 DIVISION (TWO-DAY) LEAGUE

■ Saint Sai 160 in 55.2 overs (Arjun 50, G. Ritwik 8/42 — 17-2-3-42-8) lost to SK Blues 164/5 in 39 overs (Ibrahim Khan 84). Points: SK Blues 5, Saint Sai 0.

■ Noble 55/8 in 90 overs (Vamshi Ramavath 238 — 142b, 35x4, 8x6, Y. Akash 57, Krishna Kant T 53 n.o., B. Ambarish 52, Shabbaz 3/109) bt Mayura 90/7 (all out) 36.5 overs (Adeeb 53, Rahul Reddy 4/77). Points: Noble 5, Mayura 0.

■ Anu CC 87 in 31.5 overs (Mujaheed Khan 7/32 — 14-2-32-7) lost to Azad CC 90/3 in 25.1 overs (K. Ganesh Kumar 44 n.o.). Points: Azad CC 5, Anu CC 0.

■ Team Speed 340 in 62.2 overs (M. A. Jayanth 91, Deepanshu Chowhan 85, Md Abdul Raheem

7/75) bt Elegant 187 in 66.5 overs (Shaik Abdul Razzaq 86 n.o., Rohan Prem 5/54). Points: Team Speed 5, Elegant 0.

■ Hyderabad Cricket Academy 295 in 77.4 overs (K. Pranav 77, Sahil Parikh 57, Shaik Zaheer Abbas 39, Ch Anvit Reddy 37) bt Shanti XI 182 in 54.2 overs (S. Venkatesh 39, Prateek Raj 44-74). Points: Hyderabad CA 5, Shanti 0.

■ Sri Shyam 145 in 63 overs (Mujeeb Ur Rehman 35, Thakur Utkarsh Singh 4/17, Md Babillail 3/41) lost to Deccan Wanderers 146/9 in 40.2 overs (Jawad Khan 42, Syed Haji 6/38 — 16-2-38-6). Points: Deccan Wanderers 5, Sri Shyam 0.

■ Vijaypur Willowmen 559 in 88 overs (Karun Yadav 64, B. Balaji 73, Md Ayub Khan 166 — 126b, 27x4, 2x6, Saketh Reddy 32, Md Nayeemuddin 42, Williams 55, Dhanush 48, Abhinav Kumar 3/112) bt Hyderabad Panthers 173 in 49.5 overs (M. Wilson 54, C. B. Suresh 56, M. M. Williams 4/45). Points: Willowmen 5, Panthers 0.

■ Abhinav Colts 424 in 67.1 overs (Varun Tej 52, Harish Reddy 48, Sachith Naidu 145 — 131b, 21x4, 4x6, Varun Reddy 53, Sunder Nara

59, Preetham Reddy 3/105, Satya Narayana 3/29) bt Bharath CC 289 in 67.1 overs (Preetham Reddy 35, Sai Revanthi Rahul 102 — 122b, 16x4, Varun Tej 5/36 — 16-3-36-5, Harish Reddy 3/49). Points: Abhinav Colts 5, Bharat 0.

■ Kishorens CC 124 in 39.1 overs (Surya Prakash 36, Mihir Dange 5/32 — 11-1-32-5) lost to Rushiraj CC 127/4 in 42.5 overs (P. Sunil 38, A. Nikshit 30, B. Sai Chandra 35 n.o.). Points: Kishorens 0, Rushiraj 0.

■ Secunderabad Gymkhana 285 in 89 overs (Md Adil 103 — 161b, 14x4, 1x6, A. Sai Prachotan 30, Anuj Singh 55, N. Saketh Reddy 3/60) bt Warangal District 213 in 49.2 overs (Banoth Kumar 115 — 116b, 17x4, 2x6, Bandari Suresh 36, P. Ravl 5/27 — 8-0-27-5). Points: Gymkhana 5, Warangal 0.

■ CC08 316 in (Abdul Rahman 109 — 181b, 16x4, Sai Kiran 41, Arham Kothari 46, Aparatim Tiwari 32 n.o., B. Sujay 3/53) bt Crown 268/7 in 73.2 overs (S. Raj Navaneeth 39, Aditya Singhal 94, K. Harsha Vardhan 38, N. Shashank Yadav 33). Points: HBCC 5, PKMCC 0.

■ CC08 316 in (Abdul Rahman 109 — 181b, 16x4, Sai Kiran 41, Arham Kothari 46, Aparatim Tiwari 32 n.o., B. Sujay 3/53) bt Crown 268/7 in 73.2 overs (S. Raj Navaneeth 39, Aditya Singhal 94, K. Harsha Vardhan 38, N. Shashank Yadav 33). Points: HBCC 5, PKMCC 0.

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■ CC08 316 in (Abdul Rahman 109 — 181b, 16x4, Sai Kiran





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