



## Political opportunity

PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti terms the visit of Union ministers to J&K a “curated photo” opportunity to show there is normalcy in the region

### SHORT TAKES

## NOT ANXIOUS, BUT ANGRY: NASEERUDDIN

New Delhi, Jan. 22: Stating that he is not anxious but angry about the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), actor Naseeruddin Shah says he cannot produce a birth certificate, like many other Indians, and asks why 70 years of living here is not proof enough of him being a citizen.

The actor, who stressed that he was speaking as a concerned citizen and not a Muslim, said that he has contributed to the country in the social and educational spheres and five generations of his family are buried in this land.

Shah, one of Hindi cinema's best known actors, joins others from the industry such as Anurag Kashyap, Vishal Bhardwaj and Richa Chadha to speak on the intense debate over CAA.

“I don't have a birth certificate. I cannot produce one. Does that mean we are all going to be excluded? I do not need any reassurances that Muslims don't need to worry. I am not worried,” Shah said in an interview.

“If living here for 70 years does not prove me to be an Indian, I don't know what does. I am not afraid, I am not anxious, I am angry that such a law has been imposed on us,” he added. Referring to the protests across the country, he said the youth has risen and suddenly realised they are being trampled upon.

## COMPLAINT AGAINST SONI RAZDAN

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, JAN. 22

A police complaint has been filed in Delhi on Wednesday against actor Soni Razdan for her controversial remark on Afzal Guru.

Advocate Rajeev Kumar Shrivastav, practicing at Supreme Court, filed a complaint at Tilak Marg police station in Delhi against Razdan's “provocative” tweet that the executed Kashmiri terrorist Mohammad Afzal Guru was made a “scapegoat” for the attack on Parliament.

“Soni Razdan has been playing with the sentiments of Indian citizens for cheap publicity and it is really condemnable,” Kumar said in his letter to the police seeking her apology.

“This is a travesty of justice. Who is going to bring back a man from the dead if he is innocent? This is why the death penalty is not to be used lightly. And this is why there also needs to be a solid enquiry into why Afzal Guru was made the scapegoat,” Razdan had tweeted.

Afzal Guru was given capital punishment for his role in the attack on Parliament.

Five armed terrorists belonging to Jaish-e-Mohammad and Lashkar-e-Taiba tried to gain access to the Parliament House and gunned down nine security personnel in December 2001.

The terrorists were also shot down by security personnel.

## POLICE USE FORCE ON PROTESTERS

Etawah (UP), Jan. 22: People protesting against the CAA were allegedly lathicharged by the police in a Muslim-dominated area in Uttar Pradesh's Etawah district.

A video of the incident, where policemen can be seen using batons and chasing away protesters in the area on late Tuesday night, has also gone viral.

Violence broke out when police tried to disperse the protesters who were on a sit-in since Tuesday morning in Pachraha area, defying prohibitory orders imposed there.

“The police indulged in force against us while we were holding a peaceful protest. Our brothers and cousins were beaten up and we were abused. We were physically tortured,” one of the women protesters said. Responding to the allegations, the police said the protesters staged dharna defying prohibitory order imposed in the area and were pelting stones. Police said they had to use mild force to chase the protesters. In the video, police can be seen entering the houses. The sit-in was organised in solidarity with women protesting at Shaheen Bagh.



Protesters take part in a demonstration against new citizenship law in Kolkata.

—PTI

# Only non-BJP states targeted on CAA: Didi

Mamata asks Amit Shah to tell truth on CAA, NRC & NPR

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC  
KOLKATA, JAN. 22

Hitting back at Union home minister Amit Shah a day after he blamed her of lying on the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has asked him to tell the “truth” to the nation about the CAA, the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and National Population Register (NPR).

The Trinamul Congress supremo not only wondered whether a person, once declared a foreigner, would be allowed to apply for citizenship through the CAA but also alleged that the Centre has been targeting non-BJP ruled states for the implementation of the CAA, NRC and

To cover up the situation, the Centre has drafted this policy like *Chhupa Rustam*. But if and when we raise our voice, we are labelled as Pakistanis — **MAMATA BANERJEE** West Bengal Chief Minister

NPR. She even branded the BJP as *Chhupa Rustam* to justify her argument that it drafted the three policies secretly to cover up its wrong decisions earlier. Banerjee, who has been on a visit to the North Bengal, was addressing a rally at Chowkbazar in Darjeeling against the CAA-NRC-NPR on Wednesday after leading a four-kilometre-long march in the hills.

“I saw how the Union

home minister delivered a lot of sermons on Tuesday. He claimed we spread lies. If it is, you tell us what is the truth? Will a person be declared a foreigner first and then allowed to apply for citizenship in the CAA?”

The CM reiterated that the BJP-led Central government would have to “throw her out first” before driving out any person from the state.

She tried to convince the people of the Hills, mainly the Gorkhas, that the CAA-NRC-NPR would not be implemented in the state. Referring to Shah, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee asked, “Why is it not happening in Tripura? Why is it halted there? Is the number of Bengalis there less than us here?”

She pointed out, “It is

halted there because it is their (BJP) state. Then why do you want to implement it in those states where the BJP is not power?”

She observed, “Such a situation has evolved in the country that you can not withdraw your money even if you have it in your bank account.”

The Chief Minister added, “To cover up the situation, they drafted this policy like *Chhupa Rustam*. But if and when we raise our voice, we are labelled as Pakistanis.”

She reasoned that all the states, except West Bengal, attended the NPR meeting, called by the Union home ministry, out of fear. “I asked why they had gone. Did they know what was written in it,” she noted.

## COS MOVING AWAY FROM COUNTRY: BARU

DC CORRESPONDENT  
KOLKATA, JAN. 22

Criticising the Narendra Modi government's industrial policy, former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's media advisor Sanjaya Baru on Wednesday observed that Indian companies' exodus from the soil for ventures under a “business environment” in Bangladesh have been ushering a rapid industrialisation in the neighbouring country.

“Our global competitiveness is still not adequate. And doing business in India despite of the government of the day say about ‘Ease of Business’ etc is not as easy as doing business anywhere else. Forget Japan, Korea, Taiwan or even Singapore,” he said at Eastern Union.

The Economic Summit, jointly organised by the Centre for East and North East Regional Studies, Kolkata and the Bengal Chamber in the city.

Baru pointed out, “Look at Bangladesh which is witnessing a rapid industrialisation than India. More and more business from India are now setting up production bases in Bangladesh. What is Bangladesh doing that we are not doing? It is creating an environment for business,” he said.

He lamented, “However despite 30 years of reform from 1991 when Narasimha Rao and Manmohan Singh began the programme of opening up the economy, we are still in a situation where the Indian business does not enjoy a level-playing field. We lag behind almost all countries in the east in terms of different categories of education including technical and vocational.”

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said that the amended citizenship law is a “brazen attack on the core fundamental rights envisaged under the Constitution and violates the fundamental guarantees under Article 14.

# Postpone CAA implementation: Sibal

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He said that the operation of CAA be stayed as it violated Assam Accord of 1985, which fixes cut-off date for grant of citizenship as March 24, 1971.

“Assam is facing a peculiar situation due to the migrants coming from Bangladesh as earlier cut off date for grant of citizenship was 1950, then cut of date was extended to March 24, 1971. This extension has been challenged before the apex court and the matter is pending,” he said.

Another senior counsel, K.V. Vishwanathan said marking people as “doubtful” citizens was creating a huge problem as there are apprehensions of them being disfranchised.

“There was insecurity, amongst the minorities and anguish amongst the Hindus,” Vishwanathan told the bench.

On the larger issue, senior counsel Kapil Sibal, appearing for one of the petitioners opposing the Citizenship Amendment Act, told the bench that they were not asking for stay of the law under challenge but were only asking for the “postponement” of its implementation.

Sibal was joined by senior counsel Abhishek Manu Singhvi who told the court that if this process has not started for last 70 years it can sure wait for another two months.

Referring to Uttar Pradesh, Singhvi said that even without framing of

the rules for the implementation of the amended citizenship law, in 19 districts over 40,000 people have been tick-marked for verification and this is creating anxiety amongst the people.

Opposing their plea, Venugopal said postponement was as good as staying the law itself.

The top court is flooded with the petitions challenging the Citizenship Amendment Act. It has been contended by the petitioners that besides being violative of the secular principles and spirit — a component of the basic structure of the Constitution — the amended law is in breach of Articles 14, 21 and 25.

Starting with Indian Union Muslim League, the

law has been challenged by the Kerala government, Communist Party of India, Trinamul Congress Lok Sabha member Mahua Moitra, Congress law maker in Rajya Sabha Jairam Ramesh, former high commissioner Deb Mukherjee, All Assam Students Union and AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi, among others. They have contended that religion based citizenship is a negation of secularism.

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said that the amended citizenship law is a “brazen attack on the core fundamental rights envisaged under the Constitution and violates the fundamental guarantees under Article 14.

## India slips 10 places in Democracy Index

New Delhi, Jan. 22: India slipped 10 places to 51st position in the 2019 Democracy Index's global ranking, according to The Economist Intelligence Unit, which cited “erosion of civil liberties” in the country as the primary cause for the downturn.

India's overall score fell from 7.23 in 2018 to 6.90 in the index that provides a snapshot of the current state of democracy worldwide for 165 independent states and two territories.

The report said India dropped ten places in the Democracy Index's global ranking. The index is based on five categories — electoral process and pluralism, the functioning of government, political participation, political culture, and civil liberties. Based on their total score, the countries

are classified as one of four types of regime — full democracy scores greater than eight; flawed democracy scores greater than six and less than or equal to eight; hybrid regime scores greater than four and less than six; authoritarian regime scores less than or equal to four. India was included in the “flawed democracy” category. Meanwhile, China's score fell to 2.26 in the index, and the country is ranked 153rd, close to the bottom of the global rankings.

The overall list was topped by Norway, followed by Iceland and Sweden. Other countries in the top 10 include New Zealand at the fourth place, Finland (5th), Ireland (6th), Denmark (7th), Canada (8th), Australia (9th) and Switzerland (10th). — PTI

### TOUGH LESSON

A call for total shutdown was given by the student unions

## Colleges, varsities in Assam boycott classes

Guwahati, Jan. 22: Classes across universities and colleges in Assam were affected on Wednesday due to the “total shutdown” call given by students unions of nine varsities from North East on a day the Supreme Court heard pleas on the CAA.

However, examinations were conducted peacefully as the agitators had kept it out of the shutdown.

The students unions of Tezpur University, North Eastern Hill University, Gauhati University, Assam Women's University, Assam Agricultural University, Dibrugarh University, Nagaland University, Rajiv Gandhi University and North Eastern Regional Institute of Science and Technology called for the boycott.



Students of Cotton University during a protest against CAA, in Guwahati on Wednesday.

—PTI

“We will not accept the CAA at any cost. We called for class boycott on Wednesday and our agitation will continue till the Act is repealed,” Dibrugarh University Post Graduate Students Union General Secretary Rahul Chetry said. Hundreds of students

wearing black badges and carrying black flags gathered at the gate of Dibrugarh University and burnt copies of CAA.

Chetry informed that 21 universities of North East will organise a “Tiranga March” in Guwahati on January 26 against the law.

## Rift between Governor, Kerala govt set to widen

GILVESTER ASSARY | DC  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM  
JAN. 22

The stage is set for next round of confrontation between Kerala Governor Arif Mohammad Khan and the state government.

Cabinet has approved draft of Governor's address for the budget session of the State Legislative Assembly beginning on January 29 in which the government has explained its opposition to Centre's decisions on Citizens Amendment Act (CAA), National Register for Citizens (NRC) and National Population Register (NPR).

The address contains issues on which Governor has serious differences with the state government. Over past couple of weeks the Governor has come out in the open on many occasions against the government, even terming its decision to file a suit in Supreme Court against CAA as “unlawful.”

Khan had termed the decision unlawful as the government had not informed him about the decision to file suit in the apex court.

According to him it was violation of Rules of Business of the Government.

The clause 34(2) of rules of Business of the Government has clearly

listed the classes of cases which needs to be submitted to the Governor for approval before taking a decision.

These classes of cases include cases pertaining to relations of the state government and government of India, the Supreme Court and high court.

Sources said considering the serious differences on these issues, the Governor has the option of sending back the draft to the Government and seek changes. But Cabinet can accept or reject the suggestions and go ahead with the original draft.

In such a situation the Governor can skip the portions which are against CAA and the central government while delivering the address on the first day of the budget session.

All eyes are now set on the Governor's reaction to the address.

The government's stand had received support from unexpected quarters on Tuesday. Former Governor P. Sathasivam had stated that there was no need to send a file or get permission from the Raj Bhavan for important government decisions.

However, being the first citizen of the state normally any elected government is supposed to apprise him of such decisions.

## Kishor dares Shah to implement CAA

NAYEAR AZAD | DC  
PATNA, JAN. 22

JD(U) leader Prashant Kishor on Wednesday challenged Union home minister Amit Shah to implement the CAA and NRC in the “chronology” that was announced to the nation.

Prashant Kishor's tweet is significant as Amit Shah, during a public meeting in Lucknow on Tuesday said that the CAA would be implemented despite ongoing nationwide protests.

“Being dismissive of citizens dissent couldn't be the sign of the strength of any government. If you don't care for those protesting against CAA-NPR, why don't you go ahead and try implementing the CAA and NPR in the chronology that you so audaciously announced to the nation”, JD(U) leader Prashant Kishor said in a strongly worded tweet on Wednesday.

Reports also suggest that Kishor in his tweet was referring to Amit Shah's earlier statement in which he had claimed that CAA would be implemented first followed by the NRC.

In a hard-hitting reply to Prashant Kishor's tweet BJP state unit spokesperson Nikhil Anand said, “He has all

the right to disagree but selective propaganda on religious lines to suit the Congress-style politics of Muslim appeasement must not be encouraged. The Gazette notification to start the process of NPR and implement CAA is published and won't be taken back”.

Prashant Kishor and Pavan Varma, two prominent JD(U) leaders, have been raising questions on the CAA-NPR-NRC. On Tuesday Pavan K. Varma sought “ideological clarity” from Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar over party's alliance with BJP in Delhi.

JD(U) leaders in Patna told this newspaper that regular tweets and statements by both the leaders may cause a dent to the NDA during Assembly elections which is scheduled to be held in October-November this year.

The state unit leaders also hinted that the party may initiate stern action against “such leaders who have been defying party's official stand on issues like supporting the CAA in the parliament and forming an alliance with the BJP in Delhi”.

Both Prashant Kishor and Pavan Varma have already been dropped from the list of campaigners for the Delhi assembly elections which is scheduled in February.









SHORT TAKES



### SPOTIFY TO PICK INFLUENCERS FOR STORIES

Hyderabad, Jan. 22: Going by Spotify's plans, it appears that the music streaming company will soon let influencers share stories alongside their public playlists. According to *TechCrunch*, Spotify's will allow select users to share video clips that contain snippets of songs and album art. They may be similar to the stories shared on Snapchat, Instagram, Tinder and YouTube.

Apparently, Spotify is not sharing the new feature with artists, who received their own version of Spotify stories last year. Instead, this will be available to select influencers. It is, however, unclear how many followers users will need in order to qualify for the stories feature and what other factors will be taken into consideration.

The Spotify stories are only available on the iOS and Android apps at the moment and there is no desktop version.

— Agencies



### AMAZON FLEX LAUNCHED IN AUSTRALIA

Hyderabad, Jan. 22: On the lines of Uber's delivery service, Amazon has launched its 'Flex' service to allow individuals the chance to earn money while delivering Amazon packages to customers.

"Amazon Flex puts delivery partners in the driver's seat, enabling them to earn extra money with the flexibility to choose their own schedule," said Amazon Australia operations director Craig Fuller.

Individuals in Sydney and Melbourne can sign up to be a delivery partner through the Amazon Flex app, downloadable via the Apple and Android app stores.

According to an Amazon spokesperson, each contractor is required to complete a background check before starting to ensure the security of customers and their packages.

— Agencies



### NETFLIX HOLDS GROUND IN STREAMING WAR

San Francisco, Jan. 22: Netflix is holding its ground in the streaming wars, passing its first big test since Apple and Disney launched rival services. The company added 8.8 million worldwide subscribers during its fourth quarter, surpassing expectations at a time when it faces heated competition.

Netflix had said it expected to add 7.6 million subscribers, and analysts thought the service would fare even better. The increase pales slightly next to the 8.9 million subscribers the service added in the fourth quarter of 2018.

The stock dropped about 2.5 per cent immediately in after-hours trading, likely due to a cautious forecast for the first quarter. But shares rebounded and later traded up more than 2 per cent.

The company now boasts more than 167 million subscribers worldwide, bolstered by a list of well-received movies and shows released late last year.

— Reuters

# GM unveils first driverless ride-sharing EV

## Cruise in fully engineered shape; production cost estimated to be half that of high-end electric SUVs

San Francisco, Jan. 22: General Motors' self-driving car unit, Cruise, on Wednesday unveiled a prototype electric vehicle with no steering wheel or pedals for use in its planned autonomous ride-sharing service.

The vehicle, named "Cruise Origin," was developed with Honda Motor Co. Ltd., which took a minority stake in Cruise in 2018 in an effort to catch up with rivals in developing a technology with enormous costs and risk and no market-ready products.

Cruise's chief executive officer, Dan Ammann, said the boxy vehicle about the size of a large SUV with sliding doors on each side will be used for the company's own ride-hailing service, but did not say when the new competitor to Lyft and Uber would launch.

Cruise was valued at \$19 billion in May. In July, it



delayed plans to launch a commercial robo-taxi service by the end of 2019, and still does not have a permit from California

regulators to test self-driving cars without a safety driver.

Alphabet's Waymo is the only company that has

received permission to test without a driver.

While car makers across the world are racing to develop self-driving vehi-

cles, the technology has yet to gain widespread consumer acceptance as recent accidents involving such vehicles raised

■ **THE BOXY** electric vehicle, about the size of a large SUV with sliding doors on each side, will be used for the company's own ride-hailing service.

doubts about its readiness for public roads.

"We're obviously still working on something that's never been done before. So the timelines given aren't completely certain, but we are moving really quickly," Ammann told reporters following the event.

Cruise operates a ride service for its employees in San Francisco that have self-driving cars with safety drivers behind the wheel.

Most of Cruise's 180 test cars operate in the city, and Ammann said they could be used to start a commercial ride-sharing service before the driverless prototype vehicle is

ready. While Ammann said the Cruise Origin was a "fully engineered vehicle that's on its way to production," he said he was still talking to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration for a waiver to be able to deploy vehicles without human controls on the roads.

He expects prototypes to be tested at private facilities this year and forecast the production cost of an Origin could be half that of a high-end electric sports-utility vehicle (SUV).

Details about where the prototype will be manufactured will come in the next few days, Ammann said.

Cruise is not the only company to propose using vehicles without human controls, and companies such as Navya and May Mobility have developed vehicles that can be used for ride sharing.

— Reuters

## FB asked major banks to study digital currencies

Tokyo, Jan. 22: The challenge posed by Facebook's Libra cryptocurrency likely prodded major central banks to set up a new group to study the potential for issuing their own digital currencies, a former Bank of Japan (BOJ) executive said on Wednesday.

The central banks of Britain, the euro zone, Japan, Canada, Sweden and Switzerland on Tuesday announced a plan to share experiences to look at the case for issuing digital currencies, amid a growing debate over the future of money.

Hiroimi Yamaoka, former head of the BOJ's division overseeing payment and settlement systems, said the decision was a sign of how Libra has triggered a global competition among central banks to make their currencies more appealing.

"The latest decision (by the six central banks) is not just about sharing information. It's also an effort to keep something like Libra in check," said Yamaoka who, during his stint at the BOJ, was directly in charge of negotiations on new technology.

"Something like Libra would make transactions costs much cheaper. Major central banks need to appeal that they, too, are making efforts to make settlement more efficient with better use of digital technology," he told Reuters.

Currently a board member at IT consulting firm Future Corp., Yamaoka oversaw the BOJ's research into digital currencies and retains close contact with global central bank policymakers.

Central banks across the world have quickened the pace at which they are looking at issuing their own digital currencies, also known as CBDCs. Facebook's push to launch its Libra cryptocurrency has added fuel to ques-

## Vodafone leaves FB's Libra entity

London, Jan. 22: Britain's Vodafone Group has left the entity that manages the Facebook-led effort to launch Libra, a global digital currency, Libra Association said on Wednesday.

The association has seen an exodus of its backers including financial companies Paypal Holdings and Mastercard amid regulatory scrutiny.

Facebook announced in June last year a plan to launch the digital currency in partnership with other members of the association, but the project quickly ran into trouble with skeptical regulators around the world.

"We will continue to



monitor the development of the Libra Association and do not rule out the possibility of future co-operation," a Vodafone spokesman said in a statement.

— Reuters

tions over whether nation states will continue to control money in the decades ahead.

Of the major central banks, China's has emerged as the frontrunner in the drive to create its own digitised money, though details of its project are still scarce.

The BOJ has undertaken a joint research project with the European Central Bank, but has said it has no plan to issue CBDCs in the near-term horizon.

Yamaoka said the creation of the joint study group could speed up moves by the central banks to use blockchain technology for large-scale, wholesale settlement.

But the hurdle for central banks issuing digital currencies for small, retail settlement remains "very high," as doing so would stifle private-sector competition, he said.

Yamaoka also countered the view, held by some academics, that central banks could deepen nega-

tive interest rates more easily by issuing digital currencies.

"In the world of central bankers, the idea of using CBDCs to enhance the effect of monetary policy seems to have subsided somewhat," he said.

"There are increasing doubts about the effect of negative interest rates as a policy tool," Yamaoka said. "If so, do you want to issue CBDCs for the sake of deploying a policy with questionable effects?"

The more imminent factor driving central banks into studying CBDCs is the need to boost their currencies' convenience so they survive in an age of diversifying settlement means, he said.

That is why the Federal Reserve, which issues the world's most-used currency, isn't interested in CBDCs, Yamaoka said.

"If you want to make monetary policy effective, you need to ensure people keep using the currency you issue."

— Reuters



### UBER MULLS NEW FARE-DECIDING PROCESS

San Francisco, Jan. 22: Uber on Wednesday said it is testing a feature that allows some drivers in California to set their own fares, hoping the change will help it show that its drivers are independent contractors rather than employees under state law.

Uber drivers ferrying passengers from airports in Santa Barbara, Palm Springs and Sacramento can now charge up to five times the fare set by the company, Uber said.

The company in a statement said it has made these and several other product changes to preserve flexible work for its drivers since California's new law designed to improve working conditions in the gig economy went into effect this year.

"We are now doing an initial test of additional changes which would give drivers more control over the rates they charge riders," Uber said. Drivers at the three airports will be able to set a fare multiple of up to five times Uber's base rates. Starting next week, drivers will also be able to charge less than Uber's rates if the company surges prices at times of high demand.

The initial tests are limited to the three airports and do not represent a final version of the feature, the company said, adding that drivers' control over their earnings will evolve in the coming weeks.

This is the latest in a series of changes the company has made in response to the new law.

— Reuters



### GOOGLE APPS FOR DIGITAL WELL-BEING

Google has designed three experimental apps to help users find a balance with technology by making them use phones less often. The Digital Wellbeing Experiments is a collection of ideas and tools aimed at inspiring developers and designers to consider digital wellbeing in their designs. The tech giant has made all the code open-sourced and helpful guides and tips are available to kick start new ideas. Activity Bubbles and Envelope are two of the most interesting experiments which assist in cutting down on phone usage time.

■ The Envelope app has a set of envelopes which temporarily transform the phone into a simpler, calmer device, helping users take a break away from the digital world.

■ The experiment involves sealing the phone in special paper envelopes which completely transform the functionality of the phone for the time it is sealed inside, leading to fewer distractions for a while.

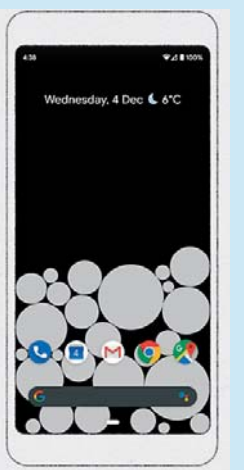
■ One such envelope turns the phone into a very basic device which can only make and receive calls, while the other turns the phone into a photo and video camera with no screen, helping users focus on the real world.

■ Printed buttons which subtly light up allowing users to dial and take photographs, creating a magical 'Envelope User Interface.'

■ Activity Bubbles is another experiment helps users discover what the phone usage looks like in a day. Each unlock creates a new bubble on the home screen. The longer the user stays on the phone the bigger the bubble grows. It feels like a virtual timer with live visuals. If the home screen is covered in bubbles, it might be a sign that the phone has been used for too long.

■ Google said it was inspired by a recent trend where people purchase a second, simpler phone for holidays and weekends, as a way of limiting their access to technology. "We wanted to create a more accessible version of it, which would enable people to try a day without a phone without committing to purchasing a new device."

■ The experiments currently support only the Google Pixel 3a. The apps can be downloaded on the Play Store, and the code can be accessed on Github.



### Back panel leak



Rear port layout of an allegedly leaked prototype of Microsoft's Xbox Series X, slated for release in December 2020.

# Passwordless safety pitched at Davos

Davos, Jan. 22: With weak or stolen passwords accounting for an average of four out of five global data breaches, a new study has said it is safer not to have a password.

The new report released by the World Economic Forum, here during its 2020 annual meeting, said that freeing ourselves of passwords will actually make individuals safer and businesses more efficient.

Cybercrime is set to cost the global economy \$2.9 million every minute in 2020, and some 80 per cent of these attacks are password-related.

Knowledge-based authentication whether with PINs, passwords, passphrases, or whatever we need to remember is not only a major headache

■ Relying on passwords as the primary means for authentication no longer provides the security or user experience that consumers demand

— ANDREW SHIKIAR, executive director and chief marketing officer, FIDO Alliance



for users, it is costly to maintain, the study found.

For larger businesses, it is estimated that nearly 50 per cent of IT help desk costs are allocated to password resets, with average annual spend for companies now at over \$1 million for staffing alone.

"Passwordless authentication does not mean

■ With the growing availability of biometrics and next-generation technology, consumers are demanding a better digital experience while wanting to be secure online

— ADRIEN OGEE, project lead, platform for shaping the future of cybersecurity and digital trust



removing all security barriers to our digitalized society. It means harnessing tools such as artificial intelligence and machine learning to save users time and save company money," the WEF said.

With the growing availability of biometrics and next-generation technology, consumers are demanding a better digital

experience while wanting to be secure online," said Adrien Ogee, project lead, platform for shaping the future of cybersecurity and digital trust, World Economic Forum.

Better authentication practices are not just possible they are a necessity. The report, produced in collaboration with the FIDO Alliance, has sug-

gested five top passwordless authentication technologies, ready for implementation by global companies. They are biometrics, behavioural analytics, zero-knowledge proofs, QR codes and security keys.

"Relying on passwords as the primary means for authentication no longer provides the security or user experience that consumers demand," said Andrew Shikiar, executive director and chief marketing officer of the FIDO Alliance.

The path forward is with standards-based, cryptographically secure authentication that keeps login info secure and private, while providing a fundamentally better user experience.

— PTI





## The Raid

Agents from Venezuela's Sebin intelligence service have raided the offices of opposition leader Juan Guaido

### IN BRIEF

## Russian air strikes in Syria kill 15

**Beirut:** Russian air strikes killed at least 15 civilians Tuesday in northwestern Syria, as renewed violence tightened the noose around the country's last major rebel-held bastion and deepened an already dire humanitarian crisis. Retaliatory rocket attacks blamed on rebels and jihadists killed three more civilians in the government-held city of Aleppo in northern Syria, state news agency SANA said. The spike in violence in the neighbouring provinces of Aleppo and Idlib follow so far unsuccessful diplomatic attempts to reduce hostilities in the flashpoint region, with the latest truce in theory going into effect less than two weeks ago. Most of Idlib and parts of Aleppo province are still controlled by factions opposed to President Bashar Assad's regime, including a group that includes onetime members of Al-Qaeda's former Syria franchise.

## Israeli troops kill three Palestinians

**Jerusalem/Gaza:** Israeli troops on Tuesday shot and killed three Palestinians who threw an explosive towards them after attempting to cross the border from neighbouring Gaza, Israel's military said. The military said troops had cordoned off an area near the southern end of the Palestinian coastal enclave after spotting "three suspects" crossing the frontier. "(They) searched the area towards the suspects who hurled a grenade or explosive device at the troops," who then opened fire on the three Palestinians, the military said in a statement. A military spokeswoman confirmed they were killed. Two of the Palestinians killed were aged 18 and the third aged 17, a police source in Gaza said. The source said they were civilians without militant affiliations in Gaza. He questioned Israel's account that they threw explosives towards troops. There was no immediate comment from Gaza's Islamist rulers Hamas or other militant groups in the enclave. Israel and Hamas have fought three wars in the last decade, in addition to dozens of other skirmishes.

## Join N-arms talks, US urges China

**Geneva:** Washington called Tuesday on Beijing to join its nuclear arms talks with Moscow, warning that lack of transparency around China's growing weapons stockpile posed a "serious threat". The United States and Russia have held two rounds of talks aimed at reducing misunderstandings about critical security issues since the collapse of a Cold War nuclear pact last year, which triggered fears of a new arms race. Washington has hinted previously it believes Beijing, with its growing nuclear arsenal, should join the discussions. President Donald Trump has insisted any new disarmament pact would need China to come on board. US Ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva Robert Wood said Tuesday that Washington was intent on convincing China to join the discussions.

## FIRST WOMAN JOINS JAPAN'S SUB ACADEMY

**Tokyo, Jan. 22:** The first female student was admitted to Japan's national naval submarine academy Wednesday after the end of a ban on women on the country's submarines. Saki Takenouchi, 26, entered the academy in a western region of Hiroshima along with about 20 other men, after the Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force overturned previous restrictions. "I hope not to put too much pressure on myself as the first woman," she told reporters. "Instead I hope to work with my classmates and train to become a submarine crew member." The navy has long only allowed men to serve on submarines, citing the difficulty of accommodating gender privacy concerns. But it changed the rules in late 2018, after assessing that gender-specific privacy needs can be met without major submarine remodelling, a navy spokesman told AFP. "This is a part of our efforts for efficient use of human resources," he added. Japan's military as a whole is attempting to expand the role of women in its ranks as the Self-Defence Forces struggle to attract young talent, with local media saying the navy has had particular difficulty attracting candidates to serve on submarines.

# Historic impeachment trial opens

In a 228-193 vote, House appoints 7 impeachment managers for removing Trump from office

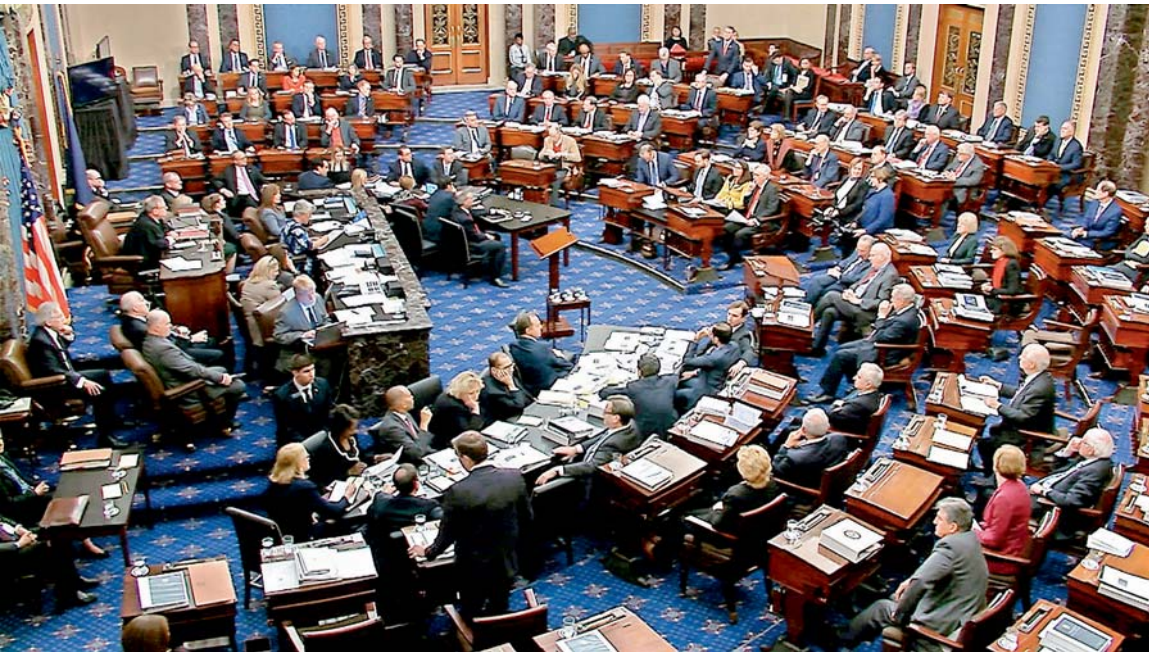
**Washington, Jan. 22:** The US Senate has started the historic impeachment trial of President Donald Trump amidst acrimonious scenes among the Senators from the ruling Republican party and the opposition Democrats over the rules of the game. The impeachment trial began on Tuesday and comes nearly a week after the House of Representatives, where the Democrats enjoy a majority, voted to send articles of impeachment against President Trump to the Senate.

In a 228-193 vote, which was mainly on party lines, the House had appointed seven impeachment managers to argue Democrats' case for removing Trump from office. The managers — Congressmen Adam Schiff, Jerrold Nadler, Zoe Lofgren, Hakeem Jeffries, Val Demings, Jason Crow, and Sylvia Garcia — were named by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. The 435-member House on December 18 charged Trump with "high crimes and misdemeanors" and impeached him for pressuring Ukraine to investigate former Vice President Joe Biden, a potential Democratic rival for the current president in the 2020 elections.

President Trump's lawyers submitted a trial brief Monday calling his impeachment by the House "a dangerous perversion" of the US constitution and demanding his immediate acquittal by the Senate. On Tuesday, the Senate started the historic trial in "utter acrimony" as the debate was a technical one about the rules and procedures.

Trump's close-ally Mitch McConnell laid out ground rules that would block subpoenaing key witnesses or documents while each side makes its case — potentially crippling prosecutors' arguments. Flexing his solid 53-47 majority, the Republican leader also made clear he would summarily block any Democratic attempts to change his rules. "The basic structure we're proposing is just as eminently fair and even-handed," he said.

Adam Schiff, the leader of the House impeachment



Senators vote on approving the rules for the impeachment trial against President Donald Trump in Washington, on Wednesday. — AP

## Relief to Indians as NJ to lower college costs of H1B visa holders' children

**New York, Jan. 22:** The US state of New Jersey will enact a legislation that will make college and universities more affordable for the children of H-1B visa holders, mostly Indian IT professionals, bringing a huge financial relief to them.

New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy on Tuesday signed the legislation 'S2555', allowing New Jersey students, who are the children of H-1B visa holders, to qualify for in-state tuition at public institutions of higher education.

A majority of H-1B visa holders are Indians and this legislation comes as a significant relief to them, amidst an environment of

stringent immigration laws and scrutiny under the Trump administration.

"New Jerseyans deserve equal access to higher education, and today we are taking another step towards making that possible. I'm proud to sign the legislation to help our students achieve their educational goals, pursue a successful future and live their dreams here in their home state," Murphy said.

The legislation exempts dependent students whose parents or guardians hold H-1B visas from paying out-of-state tuition provided they meet certain criteria, including having graduated from a New Jersey high school and having attended a New Jersey

high school for at least three years. New Jersey is home to prestigious institutions. Secretary of Higher Education Zakiya Smith Ellis said New Jersey is working to make college affordable for New Jerseyans and the legislation will expand postsecondary opportunities to more residents such as dependents of H-1B visa holders.

India's Deputy Consul General in New York Shatru Sinha welcomed the legislation. Primary sponsors of the legislation include Democratic Senator Vin Gopal, Senator M Teresa Ruiz and Assembly members Raj Mukherji, Daniel Benson, and Robert Karabinchak.

— PTI

managers prosecuting Trump, countered that the process "makes no sense" for a trial. Political experts say that Trump is likely to emerge victorious as his Republican party enjoys

majority. "The Democrats are an utter joke — they have no case, and this latest political stunt proves it. The idea that the Counsel to Trump has to turn over protected documents and

confidential information is ludicrous, and to imply he can't represent the President of the United States is absurd," White House Deputy Spokesperson Hogan Gidley said. — PTI

## Nobody likes Bernie Sanders: Hillary Clinton

**New York, Jan. 22:** Hillary Clinton launched a scathing attack on presidential hopeful Bernie Sanders, her rival for the 2016 Democratic nomination, telling a documentary that "nobody likes him". The former US secretary of state also refused to say whether she would endorse and campaign for Sanders if he becomes the Democrats' choice to take on President Donald Trump in November's election.

Her comments on Tuesday drew the ire of Sanders' supporters, who called on Clinton to support the candidate the party backs in their bid to remove Trump from the White House. "He was in Congress for years. He had one senator support him," Clinton says in a four-part series due to air on streaming site Hulu in March. "Nobody likes him, nobody wants to



Bernie Sanders



Hillary Clinton

work with him, he got nothing done. He was a career politician. "It's all just baloney and I feel so bad that people got sucked into it," she adds.

Sanders, a leftist senator from Vermont, is among the leaders in the race for the 2020 Democratic presidential nomination. He sits second in national polls behind centrist Joe Biden and ahead of Massachusetts senator Eliza-

beth Warren, two weeks before the first nomination vote in Iowa.

Sanders, 78, pushed 72-year-old Clinton to the wire four years ago in an acrimonious, months-long battle for the party's nomination. Clinton won that race but lost to Trump. She has criticised Sanders and his supporters for not sufficiently backing her in the presidential vote. — AFP

## Greece elects first woman president

**Athens, Jan. 22:** Greece's parliament on Wednesday elected the first woman president in the country's history, a senior judge with an expertise in environmental and constitutional law.

A cross-party majority of 261 MPs voted in favour of 63-year-old Ekaterini Sakellariopoulou, parliament chief Costas Tassoulas said. "Ekaterini Sakellariopoulou has been elected president of the republic," he said. The new president, until now the head of Greece's top administrative court, the Council of State, will take oath on March 13, he added. She was also the first



Ekaterini Sakellariopoulou

woman to head the Council of State. — AFP

### TWO EVENTS

■ 2 nations use interpretation of past for political gain

## Auschwitz anniv: Russia, Poland fight

**Warsaw, Jan. 22:** Over the next several days, world leaders will gather twice to mark the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the most notorious of Nazi Germany's death camps.

That there will be two competing ceremonies — one in Jerusalem on Thursday and the other at the Auschwitz site in southern Poland on Monday — underlines how politically charged World War II remains as nationalist governments in Russia and Poland seek to use their own interpretation of the past for contemporary political gain.

■ There will be two competing ceremonies. One will be held in Jerusalem and the other in Poland

Leaders at both sites, joined by elderly survivors, will pay tribute to the six million Jews killed in the Holocaust. Yet the commemorations risk being overshadowed by a bitter dispute between Poland — where Nazi German occupiers operated Auschwitz and other infamous camps — and Russia, the successor state to the Soviet Union. "I am afraid this will not

help the commemoration of the Holocaust," said Dariusz Stola, a Polish historian and former director of the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews.

Such commemorations, he said, should ideally be a moment "for the present to serve the past."

"Now the past is serving the aims of current politics," he told.

Soviet forces liberated Auschwitz on Jan. 27, 1945. But the country had also signed a nonaggression accord with the Nazis shortly before the war began in 1939.

— AP

## Prosecutor: Senate chief 'rigged' trial

**Washington:** Senate Republican Majority Leader Mitch McConnell is organising a "rigged" impeachment trial for Donald Trump and working "in concert" with the president, chief House prosecutor Adam Schiff said on Tuesday.

"This is a process for a rigged trial," Schiff, the Democratic chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, told reporters after McConnell released proposed rules for the historic Senate trial.

"This is the process if you do not want the American people to see the evidence," said Schiff, who led the investigation that resulted in Trump's December 18 impeachment by the House of Representatives.

"This is a process you use if you want to, hand in hand, working in concert with the president, allow the president to continue to obstruct the Congress and deny the truth to the



Adam Schiff



Mitch McConnell

American people," Schiff said shortly before the Senate was to debate the rules.

## Want top aides to testify: Trump

**Washington, Jan. 22:** The US Senate plunged into President Donald Trump's impeachment trial with Republicans abruptly abandoning plans to cram opening arguments into two days but solidly rejecting for now Democratic demands for more witnesses to expose what they deem Trump's "trifecta" of offences.

Trump himself claimed he wants top aides to testify, but qualified that by suggesting there were "national security" concerns to allowing their testimony. "We have a great case," Trump said on Wednesday at a global economic forum in Davos. In a press conference before

returning to Washington, he said his legal team was doing a "very good job".

Trump said he'd like to see aides, including former national security adviser John Bolton, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, and acting chief of staff Mick Mulvaney, testify as witnesses.

Tuesday's daylong session started with the setback for Republican Senate leader Mitch McConnell and the president's legal team, but it ended near 2 a.m. on Wednesday with Republicans easily approving the rest of the trial rules largely on their terms. With the rules settled, the trial is now on a fast-track. — AP

## UN Security Council for quick ceasefire in Libya

● The UN meet followed up on a weekend Libya summit held in Berlin, which saw the formation of a military commission that is supposed to define ways of consolidating a cessation of hostilities.

● It is to comprise five members each from UN-recognised government in Tripoli and its opponents loyal to military strongman Khalifa Haftar.

as soon as possible," the Council said.

The North African country has been torn by fighting between rival armed factions since a 2011 NATO-backed uprising killed dictator Moamer Kadhafi and toppled his regime. Since April last year the UN-recognised Government of National Accord (GNA) in Tripoli has fought back against an offensive by fighters loyal to Haftar, who is supported by several countries, including Russia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and France.

The day before the international conference Haftar's forces blocked oil exports from Libya's main ports. The move to cripple the country's primary income source was to protest Turkey's decision to send troops to shore up Haftar's rivals.

The military commission is expected to meet in the coming days, according to the UN, tasked with turning an existing fragile ceasefire into a permanent truce as requested by the international leaders in Berlin.

— AFP



Rabbi Shlomo Koves at the gate of the former Auschwitz concentration camp, in Oswiecim, Poland — AP





Do well

We will do well only if others with us do well, says Google CEO Sundar Pichai

World

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DECCAN CHRONICLE

THURSDAY | 23 JANUARY 2020 | HYDERABAD

IN BRIEF

### Dubai announces record tourists

**Dubai:** Dubai welcomed a record 16.73 million tourists in 2019, an improvement over the previous two years driven by soaring Chinese, Russian and Omani visitor numbers. The number of international visitors grew by 5.1 percent last year but is still short of its 2020 target of 20 million tourists. "While the global economy remains in a state of flux, we can clearly see an exciting opportunity to further grow Dubai's dominance in the tourism industry in 2020," said Dubai Tourism chief Saeed al-Marri, according to the Dubai Media Office. By country, Indian tourists topped arrivals with nearly two million visiting Dubai, a slight drop from 2018. They were followed by 1.6 million Saudi visitors to the city-state, one of seven sheikhdoms that make up the United Arab Emirates. Like last year, Britons came in third with 1.2 million tourists. Visitors from Oman increased 24 percent to over one million, putting the neighbouring country in fourth place. Chinese tourists rose by 15.5 percent to 989,000 and Russian visitors increased by 7.4 percent to 728,000. Earlier this month, the UAE introduced a multiple-entry visa scheme valid for five years for all nationalities.

### Relief for quake victims

**San Juan, Puerto Rico:** - Puerto Ricans dealing with the effects of almost non-stop earthquakes since last month have begun to receive emergency supplies, the National Guard said. But the supplies were originally meant for hurricane victims two years ago. The aid was found abandoned in warehouses in the US territory over the weekend, leading to protests and a judicial investigation. On Monday, 10 of the towns most affected by the series of tremors received nearly 900 boxes of diapers, almost 1,400 cots, about 880 tarps and hundreds of boxes of batteries, gas stoves and bed sheets, among other items, Puerto Rico National Guard chief Jose Reyes said. "The mission continues today," Reyes said, "and the supplies will also be sent to other areas" as a preventative measure.

### Wedding venue no to lesbians

**Cape Town:** A wedding venue in South Africa is refusing to host a ceremony for a lesbian couple because of its Christian beliefs, sparking a row in the only African country to permit gay marriage. South Africans Sasha Lee Heekes and Megan Watling said they believed they had found the perfect venue for their wedding planned for April 2021. But after enquiring, the owners of Belottebos Wedding Venue told them they do not host same-sex weddings because of their Christian beliefs. After the rejection Heekes took to social media to express her shock. "You may not understand the hurt I feel, and how disheartened I am that such prejudices go unchallenged," Heekes said in recent days.

### Transgender soldier pleads to stay in army



Sergeant Byun Hui-su

**Seoul, Jan. 22:** South Korea's military decided Wednesday to discharge a soldier who recently undertook gender reassignment surgery, a ruling expected to draw strong criticism from human rights groups.

It was the first time in South Korea that an active-duty member has been referred to a military panel to determine whether to end his or her service due to a sex change operation. South Korea prohibits transgender people from joining its military but has no specific laws on what to do with those who have sex change operations during their time in service.

The army said in a statement that it concluded that the soldier's sex change operation can be considered as a reason for discharge. The statement said the decision went through due process and was based on a related military law on personnel changes.

Army officials cited the law's provision that allows the military to discharge a member with physical and mental disabilities.

# Pandemic? China virus toll rises to 17

Health experts warn disease may spread in ongoing holiday season when millions travel abroad

**Beijing, Jan. 22:** The death toll from the new coronavirus outbreak in China nearly doubled to 17 with the confirmed infection cases sharply rising to 543 on Wednesday, even as the cases of the deadly pneumonia were reported from the US, Hong Kong, Macao and Mexico.

Chinese authorities have warned that the disease could spread further in the ongoing holiday season during which millions travel at home and abroad amid official advisories to people of Wuhan, the epicentre of illness, not to leave the city.

Seventeen people have died due to the virus outbreak, state-run China Daily reported.

The coronavirus is a large family of viruses that causes illnesses ranging from the common cold to acute respiratory syndromes, but the virus that has killed people in China is a novel strain and not seen before.

Common symptoms of the novel coronavirus strain include respiratory symptoms such as fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties, according to the WHO.

Chinese health authorities said that 543 confirmed cases of pneumonia caused by a novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) had been reported in 13 provincial-level regions in the country. Hubei Province alone reported 444 cases of coronavirus infections.

Considering its potential to spread to different countries, the World Health Organisation (WHO) is holding a rare emergency meeting Geneva on Wednesday to consider declaring Wuhan virus as an international public health emergency, as it did with swine flu and Ebola.

Such a declaration, if



Masked pedestrians walk down a shopping street in downtown Wuhan, China on Wednesday.

—AP

**ALTHOUGH THE transmission route of the virus is yet to be fully understood, there is a possibility of virus mutation and a risk of further spread of the epidemic**

**LI BIN, Deputy director, National Health Commission**

made, will be seen as an urgent call for a coordinated international response in view of fears that millions of Chinese are travelling at home and abroad for the Chinese New Year and Spring Festival holidays starting from January 24.

The festival triggers biggest mass migration, clogging road, rail and air networks every year.

Altogether 149 new confirmed cases were reported on Tuesday, Li Bin, deputy director of the National Health Commission, told at a press conference here on Wednesday.

Li said China was now at the "most critical stage" of prevention and control following confirmation that human-to-human transmission of the virus had taken place.

The official said there was evidence that the disease was "mainly transmitted through the respiratory tract".

With most cases outside Wuhan are linked to the city, Chinese officials are advising 11.5 million peo-

ple of the city not to leave to make it easier to contain the virus.

"Basically, do not go to Wuhan. And those in Wuhan please do not leave the city," Li said.

State-run Xinhua news agency reported that strict measures have been taken to prevent the spread of the virus. A total of 15 thermal detectors have been set up in the Wuhan Tianhe International Airport, and 20 thermal detectors have been installed at three major railway stations of the city.

The city will also strictly monitor and control the farmers' markets, supermarkets and restaurants as well as toughen crackdowns on wild animal trade, Li said.

—PTI

### WOMEN'S OLY FOOTBALL QUALIFIERS MOVED FROM CHINA VIRUS EPICENTRE

**Beijing, Jan. 22:** Women's football qualifiers for the Tokyo Olympic Games will be moved from the Chinese city at the centre of a virus outbreak to another location in the country, the Asian Football Confederation said Wednesday.

Wuhan was supposed to host China, Taiwan, Thailand and Australia for the Group B qualifiers February 3-9, but they will now be held on the same dates in the eastern city of Nanjing, AFC said. It said the change was proposed by the Chinese Football Association.

—AFP

### OLYMPIC BOXING QUALIFIER IN CHINA SCRAPPED

**Tokyo, Jan. 22:** A boxing qualifier for the Tokyo Olympics scheduled for next month in China's Wuhan will be cancelled over the outbreak of a new virus, Japan's Kyodo news agency said Wednesday.

Citing organisers, Kyodo said the qualifiers would be rescheduled and moved from Wuhan, where the outbreak of the new strain of coronavirus is believed to have begun.

There was no independent confirmation from the organisers, and Japan's boxing federation said it was waiting to hear from the International Olympic Committee on the reported cancellation.

Kyodo said the IOC was expected to announce a new host and schedule for the qualifiers. Boxing has struggled in the run-up to the 2020 Games, and was almost excluded from the Olympic programme after a series of scandals. The amateur boxing body AIBA was stripped of the right to organise the Olympic competition and replaced with a special taskforce. Other measures have been introduced to rebuild trust in the sport, including a more transparent judging system.

The reported cancellation comes as China said the new strain of coronavirus has killed nine people and infected at least 440 others in the country.

Cases have also been reported outside China, in countries including the United States, South Korea, Japan and Thailand.

—AFP

## Harry, Meghan start new life in Canada



Prince Harry with his wife Meghan Markle

—AP

were used by The Sun and the Daily Mail newspapers.

Lawyers claimed the images were taken by photographers hiding in bushes and spying on the US former television actress, the BBC reported, and that she did not consent to the photos. The couple were prepared to take legal action, according to the BBC.

The lawyers claim there had been attempts to photograph inside their new home using long lenses, and say paparazzi are camped outside the prop-

erty.

A freelance photojournalist working in the area, who said he was from California but wanted to remain anonymous, said the potential legal issues are "kind of tough," but that he does not let them affect his work. "Canada has freedom of the press laws," he said, sitting in the driver's seat of a white SUV with his photography gear on the passenger's side. "From what I understand, as long as you are not following them, harassing them, breaking

the law, as long as it's a matter of public interest — and the monarchy always is — then the press is free to cover it."

Harry, 35, and 38-year-old Meghan are bowing out entirely from representing the monarchy, in a crisis that has shaken the centuries-old institution. Harry said Sunday that they did not want to quit their royal duties but reluctantly accepted there was "no other option" if they wanted to cut loose from public funding and seek their own income in pursuit of

a more independent life.

Under their new arrangement, the Sussexes are free to earn their own commercial income — though at a greater cost than they first envisaged.

They can no longer represent Harry's grandmother Queen Elizabeth II or be referred to as their royal highnesses, and must repay taxpayers' money spent on their UK home.

They will no longer receive public money — though 95 percent of their annual funding comes from his father Prince Charles, via the heir to the throne's hereditary land and property estate.

To what extent that will continue, and who will cover their security bill — currently met by the British police — remains to be seen. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Tuesday denied having spoken "directly" with Queen Elizabeth about the security costs, after British media reports that the country had offered to foot the bill.

"Discussions continue to be ongoing and I have no updates at this moment," Trudeau told a news conference.

—AFP

## Ahmadiyas in Pak facing persecution

**VINEETA PANDEY | DC NEW DELHI, JAN. 22**

Amid frequent incidents of persecution of minorities in Pakistan, a fresh case of alleged harassment of the Ahmadiya community has surfaced triggering sharp responses from its civil society that wants Prime Minister Imran Khan to first improve things in his own country before talking about rights of minorities in India.

The Sunni-dominated Islamabad Bar Association (IBA) had decided to prohibit Ahmadiyas from practicing the legal profession unless they file an affidavit swearing allegiance to Prophet Mohammad.

The mandatory affidavit declaration also needs lawyers to say that they do not belong to Ahmadi community as they express their Aqidah (faith) regarding Prophet Muhammad and say "Mirza Ghulam Ahmed Qadiani was an apostate, liar and hypocrite."

"Majoritarian fascism is on the rise in Pakistan. You have no place to complain against India on minority rights," wrote Neil Ahmad, who declares himself as an Ahmadi Muslim.

**MAJORITARIAN FASCISM is on the rise in Pakistan. You have no place to complain against India on minority rights**

**NEIL AHMAD, who declares himself as an Ahmadi Muslim**

Unlike Sunnis of Pakistan who consider Prophet Mohammad as the last messenger of God, though Ahmadiis claim to be Muslims in all ways, they consider Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, founder of the sect in 1889, as their messiah and believe he lived after Prophet Mohammad as the "subordinate prophet."

The Ahmadiyas have limited rights in Sunni dominated Pakistan, and to register themselves as voters they need to renounce their faith or accept their status as "non-Muslim." In its order on January 15, IBA has asked all members to file an affidavit of "Khatm-e-Nabuwat" which reads: "I, solemnly swear I believe in absolute and complete finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), the last of the Prophets..."

SECURITY | TALK

### Five tourists accused of damaging the iconic site were deported to Bolivia

## Peru to instal cameras at Machu Picchu after damage

**Peru, Jan.22:** Peru is installing security cameras at its world renowned Machu Picchu site after it was damaged earlier this month by foreign tourists, authorities said Tuesday.

"We are going to strengthen security at Machu Picchu by installing high-tech cameras," Jose Bastante, head of the archaeological park, told AFP.

Bastante said 18 cameras will be located at three strategic points of the citadel as well as access points from surrounding

**WE ARE going to strengthen security at Machu Picchu by installing high-tech cameras**

**JOSE BASTANTE, Head of the archeological park**

mountains.

"This will allow us to better control visitors and avoid any action or infraction to the regulations, also any type of risk," he



Machu Picchu site

said, adding that drones were also being used for security.

Five tourists accused of damaging the iconic site were deported to Bolivia

**18 CAMERAS will be located at three strategic points of the citadel**

last week and barred from returning to the country for 15 years.

A sixth, from Argentina, was fined \$360 and must pay \$1,500 to the culture ministry for repairs after he admitted to damaging the Temple of the Sun at the ancient Inca sanctuary.

The Argentine, 28-year-old Nahuel Gomez, also

received a suspended sentence of three years and four months, but can leave the country once the fines are paid.

Gomez admitted to causing a stone slab to fall from a temple wall. It was chipped when it fell, causing a crack in the floor.

"The damaged caused is significant. The integrity of Machu Picchu has been broken," Bastante said.

Members of the group were also suspected of defecating inside the 600-year-old temple. The Machu Picchu com-

plex — which includes three distinct areas for agriculture, housing and religious ceremonies — is the most iconic site from the Inca empire, which ruled over a large swath of western South America for 100 years before the Spanish conquest in the 16th century. Machu Picchu, which means "old mountain" in the Quechua language indigenous to the area, is at the top of a lush mountain and was built during the reign of the Inca emperor Pachacuti.

—AFP



quickBITES

INDICATORS

%

|                        |           |       |
|------------------------|-----------|-------|
| Sensex                 | 41,115.38 | -0.50 |
| Nifty 50               | 12,106.90 | -0.52 |
| S&P 500*               | 3,328.01  | 0.22  |
| Dollar (₹)             | 71.29     | 0.04  |
| Pound Sterling (₹)     | 93.55     | 0.18  |
| Euro (₹)               | 79.32     | -0.29 |
| Gold (10gm)* (₹)       | 40,688*51 | 0.12  |
| Brent crude (\$/bbl)*  | 63.12     | -1.47 |
| IN 10-Yr bond yield    | 6.635     | 0.001 |
| US 10-Yr T-bill yield* | 1.776     | 0.004 |

\* As of 9:30 pm IST

### Cigniti registers marginal decline in Q3 net profit

Cigniti Technologies on Wednesday said that its consolidated net profit has declined marginally to ₹28.11 crore during the third quarter compared to ₹28.79 crore in the yearago period. The company, which provides engineering and software testing services, posted a three per cent rise in revenue during the quarter to ₹216.75 crore.

India keen on importing more oil from Brazil



India expressed interest in raising crude oil import from Brazil as it is looking at diversifying the import basket beyond the Middle East. Oil minister Dharmendra Pradhan met visiting Brazilian minister for mines and energy Bento Albuquerque to review bilateral ties. "Our oil companies have expressed interest in sourcing more crude from Brazil," Pradhan tweeted.

### Desert locust invasion spares India a big hit

India has brought swarms of desert locusts under control in two key oilseed producing states of Gujarat and Rajasthan and authorities are now trying to assess crop damage, officials said. Several timely measures and a change in wind direction have prevented a spread and large-scale damage to the rapeseed and cumin seed crops. The outbreak began late last year.

### ITI sets FPO floor price at ₹72-77 a share

ITI announced a price band of Rs 72-77 for its follow-on public offering. The issue, which opens on Jan. 24 and closes on Jan. 28, is expected to raise Rs 1,386 crore at the upper price band of Rs 77 and an additional Rs 13.86 crore from the portion reserved for employees; taking the total size to Rs 1,399.86 crore. The PSU will use the proceeds for paying debt and meeting working capital needs.

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## ■ Nearly 25 PSUs closed or verge of shutting down Cabinet okays closure of Hindustan Fluorocarbons

SANGEETHA G  
CHENNAI, JAN. 22


The Cabinet has approved the closure of public sector company Hindustan Fluorocarbons. With this, around 25 public sector companies have either been closed in recent years or are in the verge of closure.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved HFL's closure as the company has been making losses since 2013-14 and has negative net worth. In FY19, it had accumulated losses of Rs 62.81 crore and negative net worth of Rs.43.20 crore.

The PSU was also registered with the erstwhile Board for Industrial and Financial Construction (BIFR) as a sick company. The cabinet has granted interest-free loan of Rs 77.20 crore from the part of government to HFL for expenditure exclusively on closure. This includes implementation of Voluntary Retirement Scheme or Voluntary Separation Scheme, payment of outstanding salary and statutory dues etc. HFL has only one plant located at Rudraram in Sangareddy district of Telangana.

With this, around 25 public sector companies have either been closed in the past few years or are in the process of closure. As per government data, most of these companies had received their approval of closure after 2015. These include Hindustan Cables, Hindustan Papers, Hindustan Photo Films and Manufacturing, HMT Bearings, HMT Chinarr Watches, HMT Watches, Birds Jute and Exports, Andaman and Nicobar Island Forest and Plant Development Corporation, Tunga-bhadra Steel Products, Central Inland Water Transport, Creda HPCL and Indian Oil Creda Biofuel.

CURTAINS, AT LAST



- ▶ Cabinet grants interest-free loan of ₹77.20 cr to HFL for expenditure exclusively on closure
- ▶ This includes implementation of VRS, payment of outstanding salary and statutory dues
- ▶ Govt has been looking at divesting in PSUs whose operations have an impact on their sectors

The government had talked about its plans to revive some of the plants of the Fertilizer Corporation of India and leasing out premises and forming a joint venture of Hoogly Dock and Port

Engineers. In 2016, the government had identified around 18 loss-making public sector companies under the Department of Heavy Industry. The Department of Disinvestment was not

## Blue-chip CPSEs tumble ahead of mega fund offer

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD  
MUMBAI, JAN. 22

The CPSE Index stocks fell sharply in the range of 3 to 6 per cent and the index comprising 10 government-owned companies itself fell 3.56 per cent, with market participants expecting further dilution in the government stake in the index constituents through a further fund offer (FFO) for the CPSE Exchange Traded Fund.

Market is expecting a CPSE ETF FFO towards the end of January, offering units worth Rs 10,000 crore at the base size of the FFO and a green shoe option of about Rs 8,000 crore, which would take

the total issue size to Rs 18,000 crore. "Things are under process, but government communication is yet to come on the proposed further fund offer," said a source.

The further fund offer of CPSE ETF managed by Nippon India Mutual Fund is likely to open on January 30 for the anchor investors and on January 31 for non-anchor investors. Nippon India CPSE ETF has assets under management of Rs 10,459.53 crore.

The NSE CPSE Index fell 3.56 at the market closing, led by sharp declines in Coal India (-5.24 per cent), ONGC (-5.25 per cent), Oil India (-5.55 per

cent), NTPC (-3.97 per cent), NLC India (-6.23 per cent) and Bharat Electronics (-4.14 per cent).

A revision in the Nifty CPSE Index has been scheduled from January 24. Indian Oil Corporation and Power Finance Corporation are being replaced by four PSUs—NHPC, NMDCL, Power Grid and Cochin Shipyard. The revamped CPSE ETF will have 12 stocks going forward.

The CPSE ETF has given an absolute return of 29.17 per cent since its inception on March 28, 2014, with annualised return of 4.49 per cent but its last one year return has been a negative 5.22 per cent.

## Three dates set for GSTR-3B filing

New Delhi, Jan. 22: The finance ministry on Wednesday staggered last dates of filing GSTR-3B, a monthly return form, and has provided three dates for different categories of taxpayers, to de-stress the system.

Currently, the last date for filing GSTR-3B is the 20th of every month.

From now on, there will be three dates—20th, 22nd and 24th—of every month for different categories of taxpayers.

"From now on, the last date for filing of GSTR-3B for the taxpayers having annual turnover of Rs 5 crore and above in the previous financial year would be 20th of the month. Thus, around 8 lakh regular taxpayers would have the last date of GSTR-3B filing as 20th of every month without late fees," the ministry said.

The taxpayers having annual turnover below Rs 5 crore in previous financial year will be divided further in two categories.

The tax filers from 15 states/UTs—Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Daman and Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Goa, Lakshadweep, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh—will now be having the last date of filing GSTR-3B returns as 22nd of the month without late fees.

This category would have around 49 lakh GSTR-3B filers.

For the remaining 46 lakh taxpayers from the 22 states/UTs—of J&K, Ladakh, HP, Punjab, Chandigarh, Uttarakhand, Haryana, Delhi, Rajasthan, UP, Bihar, all North-eastern states, West Bengal, Jharkhand and Odisha—the last date for filing return will be 24th.

—PTI

## India not the only nation facing stagflation threat

SRINIVASAN SIVABALAN  
JAN. 21

India may be experiencing the most glaring setback among emerging economies, but its double pain of slowing growth and surging inflation is spreading far and wide.

While a debate rages over whether the latest data from India points to "stagflation," a sixth successive quarter of economic deceleration and fifth consecutive jump in price growth are threatening "buy India," one of the most popular emerging-market trades of the last decade.

They're also emblematic of how developing nations, as a whole, may be losing steam.

An analysis of 30 major emerging economies, based on public data and Bloomberg surveys, shows half of them slowing or stagnating in 2020. Two-thirds are set to experience a simultaneous acceleration in inflation. That's a potent source of mini-economic crises across the group. (see tables)

The diverging rates of growth and inflation point to the impact US-China trade tensions have had on emerging markets. Most of the countries on a "stagflationary" path are in Asia.

India, however, is not a victim of trade wars. Its slowdown is self-inflicted, caused by the evaporation of consumer demand, proliferation of bad loans and erosion in business confidence. The Reserve Bank of India's interest-rate cuts have failed to boost the economy, while the government has been distracted by social strife and its fiscal measures so far haven't done much to spur demand.

At the other end of the spectrum, Turkey is projected to post the biggest improvement in growth as private consumption and investment pick up. Yet the growth won't be strong enough to drive up inflation, which is expected to fall back below 10 per cent.

Russia has been a haven amid the trade war and it doesn't look like it will lose that status this year;

### In the same boat

| Country  | Inflation rate change 2020 Vs. 2019 (ppt) | GDP (PPP) |
|--|---|-----------|
| India  | 0.3                                       | -1.7      |
| Poland   | 0.5                                       | -0.9      |
| Pakistan                                       | 3.4                                       | -0.6      |
| Croatia  | 0.6                                       | -0.4      |
| Taiwan   | 0.4                                       | -0.4      |
| Malaysia                                       | 1.2                                       | -0.2      |
| China  | 0.2                                       | -0.2      |
| Four economies may manage to control inflation |   |           |
| Hungary  | -0.2                                      | -1.6      |
| Romania  | -0.7                                      | -0.7      |
| Czech Republic                                 | -0.3                                      | -0.3      |
| Vietnam  | -1.7                                      | -0.2      |

Four may maintain their GDP expansion, but inflation will erode their purchasing power

|           |     |   |
|-----------|-----|---|
| Colombia  | 0.1 | 0 |
| Indonesia | 0.5 | 0 |
| Israel    | 0.2 | 0 |
| Nigeria   | 0.1 | 0 |

Seven economies may see growth accelerate, but also higher rates of inflation

|              |     |     |
|--------------|-----|-----|
| South Korea  | 0.7 | 0.2 |
| Philippines  | 0.5 | 0.3 |
| Chile        | 0.3 | 0.3 |
| Thailand     | 0.3 | 0.4 |
| South Africa | 0.5 | 0.6 |
| UAE          | 2.7 | 0.9 |
| Saudi Arabia | 2.6 | 1.7 |

But eight emerging markets will see lower or stable inflation and faster growth

|           |      |     |
|-----------|------|-----|
| Egypt     | -6.5 | 0.2 |
| Russia    | -1.2 | 0.5 |
| Peru      | 0    | 0.7 |
| Kuwait    | 0    | 0.9 |
| Argentina | -8.9 | 1   |
| Brazil    | 0    | 1.1 |
| Mexico    | -0.3 | 1.1 |
| Turkey    | -4.3 | 2.6 |

Source: Bloomberg

even with Vladimir Putin overhauling his government. Add to that its famed twin surplus-on the fiscal and current accounts - and the nation looks well poised. Any increase in oil prices will be a further boost.

Volatile Argentina will make progress bringing down inflation. Mexico, whose local bonds offer real yields of around 4 per cent, will see its economy return to growth in 2019.

The bottom line is that each country has its own demons to slay and trouble in its backyard that has nothing to do with tensions between Beijing and Washington.

That calls for a dose of caution after a stock, bond and currency rally since August that's been driven by optimism over the phase-one trade deal.

—Bloomberg

## L&T consolidated net up 15% in Q3

FC BUREAU  
NEW DELHI, JAN. 22

Larsen & Toubro (L&T) on Wednesday posted a 15 per cent rise in its consolidated net profit at Rs 2,560.32 crore for the December quarter, helped by higher income.

The engineering and construction company had clocked a consolidated net profit after tax of Rs 2,218.68 crore in the year-ago period, the company said in a regulatory filing to the BSE.

Its consolidated total income during October-December increased to Rs 36,717.60 crore, against Rs

## Axis Bank profit up 4.5%

Mumbai, Jan. 22: Axis Bank on Wednesday reported a 4.5 per cent jump in net profit at Rs 1,757 crore for the December quarter from Rs 1,680.85 crore in the year-ago quarter. Net interest income grew 15 per cent to Rs 6,453 crore in the third quarter this fiscal, the bank said.

Total income rose to Rs 19,494.87 crore against Rs 18,130.42 crore in the year-ago period.

Net non-performing assets stood at 2.09 per cent of the net advances as on Dec. 31, 2019, down from 2.36 per cent a year ago. Gross NPAs also improved to 5 per cent of gross advances from 5.75 per cent. —FC Bureau

34,823.08 crore in the year-ago period, the filing said.

Total expenses increased to Rs 33,494.37 crore from

Rs 31,421.86 crore in the year-ago quarter.

"The company successfully won new orders worth Rs 41,579 crore at the group level during the quarter ended December 31, 2019, amid subdued business environment. International orders during the quarter at Rs 17,901 crore increased to 43 per cent of the total order inflow," the company said.

The consolidated order book of the group stood at Rs 3,06,280 crore as on December 31, 2019, registering a reasonably high growth of 5 per cent over March 2019.

## How airlines & airports are dealing with China virus

WILL DAVIES, SYBILLA GROSS & KYUNGHEE PARK  
JAN. 22

Airports and airlines are taking steps to protect staff and passengers amid heightened concern over the outbreak of a new virus originating from the Chinese city of Wuhan. At least 17 people have died and hundreds more have been infected, including a confirmed case in the US.

The level of alarm is rising as the coronavirus spreads. China said it will conduct nationwide screening and improve monitoring of transportation links for the Lunar New Year holidays, which start at the end of this week. That complicates efforts to contain the virus as hundreds of millions of people travel during the period, the biggest annual migration of humans on the

planet. People found to have symptoms such as fever at travel checkpoints are being stopped from boarding planes.

Here's a look at how airports and airlines around the world are reacting:

### ASIA

**Hong Kong:** The city's Airport Authority said planes arriving from Wuhan—roughly a two-hour flight away—will be parked at a designated area and that a cleaning contractor will disinfect the terminal where passengers are arriving from the city. Cleaning and disinfection in the airport will also be stepped up as a whole, it said. Flag carrier Cathay Pacific Airways Ltd on Wednesday said flights could wear protective face masks on flights to China if they wanted.

**South Korea:** Korean Air



Lines Co is providing hazardous-materials suits for crew on planes and plans to disinfect aircraft flying to Wuhan daily, as opposed to monthly. The country confirmed its first infection on Monday.

**Singapore:** Changi Airport is increasing surveillance on all passengers from China, rather than just those arriving from Wuhan. Disinfectants, hand san-

itizers and surgical masks are being supplied on all China flights. Low-cost Scoot said it has an aircraft disinfection protocol in place for flights where suspected cases have been reported.

**Japan:** Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said the country will step up quarantine and testing, while health minister Katsunobu Kato said on Tuesday that health questionnaires would be given to passengers arriving from Wuhan by plane and that people should inform authorities if they're not feeling well on arrival.

**India:** Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport has increased surveillance measures. Delhi Airport staff is checking inbound passengers from affected areas, it said in a statement.

**Australia:** Health authorities will help staff monitor travellers returning from Wuhan.

**Indonesia:** Airports and airlines have been asked to take precautionary measures such as screening international passengers with thermal scanners.

### EUROPE

**UK:** Heathrow spokesman Weston Macklem said the airport was awaiting instructions from public health authorities. British Airways said it's monitoring the situation closely.

Italy: The health ministry said procedures are in force at Rome Fiumicino airport, which has direct flights to Wuhan, to check for symptomatic cases on flights arriving from the Chinese city. Surveillance of passengers is being strengthened and arrivals will be subject to body tempera-

ture checks at the airport.

### AFRICA

**Nigeria:** The country's center for disease control advised travellers coming from Wuhan to report to a medical facility if they feel ill and said that surveillance has been intensified at all points of entry.

**South Africa:** The National Institute for Communicable Diseases recommended testing anyone who has recently visited Wuhan.

### AMERICA

**US:** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention implemented health screening for arrivals at airports in San Francisco, New York and Los Angeles on Jan. 17, and is expanding that to Atlanta and Chicago this week. —Bloomberg





Not sure!

Pakistan allrounder Shoaib Malik said his previous announcement of quitting international cricket after this Year's T20 World Cup is not cast in stone and he might continue if his body permits

SHORT TAKES



Rohit Sharma

### Rohit wants colts to retain Worlds

**Auckland:** Senior opener Rohit Sharma on Wednesday hoped the Indian team retains the U-19 World Cup trophy having started its title defence in style. Defending champions India are already through to the quarter-finals of the mega-event with convincing wins over Sri Lanka and Japan in their first two outings. "Best wishes to the under-19 cricket team in South Africa. They are already off to a great start, hope they can defend the title and bring it back," Rohit tweeted after arriving here for a gruelling six-week tour of New Zealand. Led by Priyam Garg, India qualified for the U-19 World Cup Super League quarter-finals after a 10-wicket victory over Japan in Bloemfontein on Tuesday. The four-time champions will next take on New Zealand on Friday. India won the last U-19 World Cup in 2018 under the captaincy of Prithvi Shaw, who has already represented the senior team in Test cricket. — PTI

### Sarfaraz slams triple century

**Mumbai, Jan. 22:** Staying true to his words, young Sarfaraz Khan stuck his maiden triple hundred to single-handedly give Mumbai the crucial first-innings lead and grab three points on the last day of their Elite Group 'B' Ranji Trophy match against Uttar Pradesh here on Wednesday. Uttar Pradesh had posted a humongous 625/8 declared in their first-essay courtesy wicket-keeper Upendra Yadav's unbeaten maiden double-ton. But Sarfaraz's (301 not out off 391 balls; 30x4; 8x6) herculean task overshadowed Yadav's double-ton on a flat track, which had absolutely nothing for the bowlers even Day Five. Right-handed Sarfaraz was the cynosure of all eyes at the Wankhede Stadium, as he battled for as long as 633 minutes and hammered 30 fours and eight sixes. What is more special about his knock is that the pint-sized batsman was suffering from fever two nights ago, but he came out to bat and did the job for his team. Sarfaraz, who had played for Uttar Pradesh and returned to Mumbai, had all shots in the book. But more importantly, contrary to his style, he showed restraint and respected the good balls. — PTI

**BRIEF SCORES**  
■ **AT MUMBAI:** Uttar Pradesh 625/8 decl. drew with Mumbai 688/7 (Sarfaraz Khan 301 not out; Siddesh Lad 98; Ankit Rajpoot 3-133).  
■ **AT DELHI:** Vidarbha 179 & 330/4 decl. lost to Delhi 163 and 348/4 (Nitish Rana 105, Kunal Chandel 75, Hiten Dalal 82).

### SHAW AT IT AGAIN FOR INDIA 'A'

**Lincoln (New Zealand):** The informal Prithvi Shaw flourished yet again as India A notched up a convincing five-wicket victory over New Zealand A in the first unofficial ODI on Wednesday. A day after being picked as the injured Shikhar Dhawan's replacement in India's ODI squad for the assignment against New Zealand's senior team, the 20-year-old Shaw smashed 48 off 35 balls to lay the foundation for the visiting team's chase. Wicketkeeper Sanju Samson, who replaced Dhawan in India's T20 squad, blazed away to a 21-ball 39, while Suryakumar Yadav hammered 35 off a mere 19 deliveries. Chasing 231 after opting to field, India completed the task with more than 20 overs to spare at the Bert Sutcliffe Oval. With the ball, Mohammed Siraj was the most successful bowler for India A, picking up three wickets for 33 runs in 6.3 overs, while there were two wickets apiece for Khaleel Ahmed and Axar Patel. Their efforts helped India A bowl out New Zealand A for 230 with nine balls to spare in the 50-over match. Quite a few home team players got off the blocks easily but could not go on to make substantial contributions. — PTI

# Mission T20

Shastri says winning a world title is an obsession now

**New Delhi, Jan. 22:** Winning a World title is an "obsession" for India coach Ravi Shastri, who says the upcoming six ODIs against New Zealand and South Africa could be used as a platform for his team's preparations for the global T20 championship in Australia this October. The head coach spoke on a range of issues including the legacy he wants to create, preparations for the marquee meet, team culture and unfortunate injuries to his players. "That toss will be taken out of the equation, we will play well irrespective of conditions, of opponents and in every country of the world. That's what our aim is and that is what we are chasing. Yes, the World Cup remains an obsession and we will do all to fulfil that ambition," Shastri said ahead of the start of India's tour of New Zealand. India will play five T20

Internationals, three ODIs and two Test matches starting with the shortest format on January 24. The ODI series against South Africa is to be held in March. The hallmark of this team is enjoying each others' success, said Shastri. "The word 'I' is not there in our dictionary. It's 'we'. That's what this team stands for. It celebrates each other's achievements because it's the team that wins," he added. So, is there a possibility that the ODIs held this year will be an extension of T20s, the former India captain replied: "Yes, I believe it's very much possible." The 2-1 series win against a full-strength Australian side was a reflection of the Indian team's "mental strength", which came back strongly after being outplayed in the opening game. "The Australia series was proof of the mental strength and the ability to play under pressure. After the hammering at

the Wankhede, to come back and play like the way we did, merits a lot of credit and praise. "It showed courage and as Virat used the word brave, it showed we are unafraid to play brave cricket and with intent," said Shastri. While no one can deny that Shastri is pleased as Punch with the series win against the mighty Australians, the 57-year-old now wants to only think about the new series. "This team lives in the present. Whatever has happened in the past is history. We look to do what we did well in the past, in future also. Skipper Virat Kohli has already said that KL Rahul keeping wickets is an option and Shastri seconded the view, saying he is happy that the team has got a multipurpose player of Rahul's quality. "We love options," he said. The only thing that makes him "sad" is Shikhar Dhawan, who has been ruled out of the

New Zealand assignment due to shoulder dislocation. "Very sad because he (Dhawan) is a senior player. He is a match-winner. When someone suffers an injury of that sort, everyone is hurt in the team," he said. Known for his plain speak, Shastri rejected rumours that Kedar Jadhav has outlived his utility as an ODI player even though he is bowling rarely in international games. "Kedar is an integral part of the ODI team that will play in New Zealand. He will be treated like every other player." It's been quite a while since Kuldeep Yadav and Yuzvendra Chahal featured together in the playing XI in white ball games. Will they be seen together? "That's a call we will take. We play 'Horses for Courses'. We will judge it in that direction." — PTI



The word 'I' is not there in our dictionary. It's 'we'. That's what this team stands for. It celebrates each other's achievements because it's the team that wins. — RAVI SHASTRI, India coach



Tim Southee

saying by stuffco.nz.

### Southee ready to move on from Sydney snub

**Auckland, Jan. 22:** New Zealand's veteran seamer Tim Southee is "looking forward" to the India challenge, leaving behind the disappointment of being dropped for the final Test of Australia series earlier this month. After playing in the first four Tests of the summer — two against England at home and two in Australia — he was dropped for the New Year's match in Sydney, replaced by Matt Henry in the playing XI. "It's about making that adjustment. What's gone is gone and it was very disappointing, the guys would have learnt from it, and now we've got to look forward to the Indian series," Southee was quoted as saying by stuffco.nz.

Then, coach Gary Stead had said it was felt Henry would offer more pace than Southee. But the 31-year-old is expected to lead the New Zealand attack when the five-match Twenty20 series against India starts at Eden Park on Friday. He admitted he was disappointed not to have played in Sydney but said he has moved on. "It's disappointing. You're gutted every time you're left out. It's an absolute dream to play for NZ and every time you do miss out it hurts, but you've got to respect the decisions and try to help out and give back to the team, even when you're not playing." Southee was one of four players to play in all 12 of New Zealand's T20I matches last year and captained the side in nine of them, with Kane Williamson rested for one. — PTI



## Can't ask for equal pay: Smriti

**Mumbai, Jan. 22:** Star Indian woman cricketer Smriti Mandhana is not bothered by a pay cheque lower than her male counterparts as she understands that the "revenue which we get is through men's cricket". Mandhana, the ICC's woman cricketer of the year, touched on the contentious issue of pay parity at the unveiling of Bata's new range of shoes here on Wednesday. "We need to understand that the revenue which we get is through men's cricket. The day women's cricket starts getting revenue, I will be the first person to say that we need the same thing. But right now, we can't say that," she said. The male cricketers in the top bracket on BCCI central contracts list are entitled to an annual remuneration of ₹7 crore, while a female cricketer in the highest category gets ₹50 lakh for the same period. "I don't think any of the teammates is thinking about this gap because the only focus right now is to win matches for India, get the revenue. That is the thing which we are aiming for and if that happens all other things are going to fall in place," she said. "And for that, we need to perform. It is unfair on our part to say that we need same pay. It is not right. So I don't think I want to comment on that gap," she added. India will play a tri-series before the World T20 begins in Australia and Mandhana feels that the tournament is important to finalise the team composition right for



Smriti Mandhana at a promotional event in Mumbai on Wednesday. — PTI

the big event next month. "Most of them have played in Australia, so I think with India A touring Australia last month, that is also going to be a big help (as) four-five players were part of that team as well. "But the tri-series is going to be a really important tournament, thinking about the team composition," Mandhana said. Mandhana said the team has been planning for the World T20 in the last one year. "...it is quite exciting. Looking forward to playing this World Cup with this team as it is new team with mixture of experienced and new players," she said. There was a phase in Mandhana's career when she was unable to convert starts and she said she has

worked on her shot-selection for better results. "Knowing that you can play your cover drive, on-drive, play over covers... those things used to always be like, should I hit it here or there...I had to limit my shots in the ODI format and understand what the team needs," she said. "One thing he (coach W V Raman) told first try and play 30 overs in ODIs and 12 overs in T20 and you will end up getting a big score. But to get a big score, you need to be there (at the crease)...it is helpful to work with Raman Sir" she elaborated. Mandhana also said that she idolises Sri Lankan batting great Kumar Sangakkara and Virat Kohli. — PTI

### JEMIMAH WANTS TO IMPROVE HER WILLOW SPEED

**Dubai, Jan. 22:** To make up for "lack of strength", India opener Jemimah Rodrigues is working on increasing her bat speed, which, she hopes, will aid in hitting big shots in the upcoming Women's T20 World Cup. The lively 19-year-old is also striving to hone her backfoot skills ahead of the marquee event, starting in Australia next month. "I'm working more on my back foot, developing my back foot more and trying to increase my bat speed. Because looking at my size, you can make out I don't have that much strength to hit the sixes ... but I've been working on that for quite some time," said Jemimah. Since making her international debut in 2018, she has consistently put in commendable performances to establish herself as a key member of the team. India take on defending champions Australia in the opening game of the tournament in Sydney on February 21, and the youngster believes her side will have to be mentally strong against the hosts. "I think when it comes to Australia, you got to be the best or you can't play. That's the kind of team they are. My favourite team to play against is also Australia. It's more of a mind game than just skills (when you play them on the field)," Jemimah said. — PTI

### Rakshann bowls Hyderabad U-19 to victory

**Rakshann** Readdi snared five wickets to bowl Hyderabad to a first innings lead over Rajasthan in their Col. C. K. Nayudu Trophy Under 19 cricket match at the Gymkhana ground on Wednesday. Rakshann took 5 for 61 as the visitors, chasing Hyderabad's 241, were all out for 231 on the second day.

Meanwhile, in the South Zone girls U-16 tourney, Hyderabad defeated Goa by 40 runs. Batting first, Hyderabad made 109 for 8 in 25 overs and then bowled out Goa for 69. **BRIEF SCORES** ■ **Col. C. K. Nayudu Trophy (Day-2):** Hyderabad 241 in 83.4 overs & 231/1 in 15 overs vs

Rajasthan 231 in 70.4 overs (Shiva Chauhan 52, S. A. Ahuja 56, A. B. Kookna 42, C. T. Rakshann Readdi 5 for 61 — 21.4-4-61-5, B. Rathana Teja 2/40) ■ **South Zone Girls U-16:** Hyderabad 109/8 in 25 overs (Ishati K 23, Taniya Pawar 3 for 13, Siddi S. 2/4) bt Goa 69 in 21.4 overs (Vrishti 3/6, K. Anika 2/12, Pujashree J. 2/1)

### Vasishta Tennis over the weekend

The Vasishta Tennis Academy is organising the Vasishta Open tennis tournament at Vasishta Tennis Academy in Tulasi Gardens, Sainikpuri, Secunderabad, on January 25 and 26 for boys, girls and men. The categories for the tournament are: U-8 (mixed), U-12, U-14, U-16 and men's Open singles. Entries close with referee Nandan on WhatsApp mobile No.9573883082, at 4 pm on Friday.

### Hyd beat Bihar by eight wickets



Action from the all-India Rajiv Gandhi under-19 Day and Night Twenty-20 cricket championship played at the Water Works Cricket Ground, Amberpet, Hyderabad, on Wednesday. Koushik Reddy's unbeaten 51 from 29 balls ensured the hosts chase down the target of 90 in just 10.3 overs. Koushik's knock consisted six fours and one sixer. Gaurav remained not out no 30.

**BRIEF SCORES:** Bihar 89/5 in 16 overs lost to Hyderabad 90/2 in 10.3 overs (Koushik Reddy 51 n.o., Gaurav 30 n.o., Apporva 23, Md. Saqlain 2/16; Andhra Pradesh 193/5 in 20 overs (Aryan 68, Shiva 34, Megavath Sidu Nayak 31 n.o.) bt Telangana 102/6 in 20 overs; Chennai 153/9 in 18 overs bt Vidarbha 60/8 in 18 overs (Dinesh H. 48, N. Eljah 31 n.o., Soyabhu S. 4/14).

### Football tourney at City College

The CCOB Football Club is organising an invitational cash prize football tournament in the memory of late Sujath Ahmed Khan from February 10 to 23 at Quli Qutub Shah Stadium in City College, Hyderabad. Last date for registration is February 6. For further details, contact tournament organiser Mohammed Moazzam (9505121000) or Naveed (9652264656).





Bale fit

Real Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane confirmed that Gareth Bale (in pic) is fit and ready to play their Copa del Rey fixture

SHORT TAKES  
Nick no more the bad boy of tennis

**Melbourne:** Nick Kyrgios Tuesday said Australia's bush-fire disaster had given him perspective and focus, making him realise there were more important things than getting mad on a tennis court. Long a polarising figure for his on-court antics, the enigmatic 24-year-old has won new fans for his efforts to mobilise support for victims of the deadly blazes, and he was welcomed at the Australian Open by huge roars. He thrived in the Melbourne Arena atmosphere, grinding down Italian Lorenzo Sonego 6-2, 7-6 (7/3), 7-6 (7/1) to book a second round berth. "I was just really excited to get out here. Obviously a pretty emotional couple of months for all of us, so I just wanted to come out and put on a good performance," said the Australian, who has never gone beyond the last eight at a Major. "This is my favourite court in the world. I feel super-comfortable. You guys are the best. I feel the support." Kyrgios said ahead of the tournament he was finding it hard to concentrate on his home Grand Slam after the emotions sparked by the fires that have devastated huge tracts of Australia. But he rose to the challenge and the 23rd seed did so in largely drama-free fashion. — AFP

What's the criteria, asks Manu's dad

New Delhi, Jan. 22: Shooting sensation Manu Bhaker's father Ramkishan on Wednesday questioned the selection criteria after the shooting ace was not considered for the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar Award. The 17-year-old has won a plethora of medals in top international competitions since starting out as a 16-year-old in the ISSF World Cup in Mexico in 2018. "If she is ignored like this after winning so many medals, then it is really disappointing. I would like to ask again what is the criteria behind selecting the award winners? Hasn't she done enough?" Ramkishan said. Ramkishan said he has repeatedly tried to contact the top officials of the Ministry of Women and Child Development but did not get any response. "We applied for it well before the deadline and since I came to know from someone that Manu's name is not going to be there this year also, I tried calling the secretary, joint secretary and assistant secretary, but none of them felt the need to respond," Ramkishan alleged. "Every time I called them, their personal assistants said they were busy. I have also written 25 mails to them but to no avail," he said. — PTI

CHENNAI ROCKET PAST MUMBAI

**Chennai:** Lakshya Sen put up a sterling show as Chennai Superstarz clashed with the Mumbai Rockets on the third day of the Premier Badminton League 2020 at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here on Wednesday. The Chennai shuttler, in a solid display that showed his maturity and fearlessness in oodles, Sen produced a brilliant array of smashes to take the first game away from the Korean. Having won a staggering five titles in 2019, Sen was in no mood to relent. The second game too went the same way with the Indian stamping his authority right from the start to secure a 15-12, 15-10 win for the Superstarz. Earlier, Dhruv Kapila and Jessica Pugh played an outstanding match to upset the much-fancied Mumbai Rockets pair of Pia Zebadiah and Kim Gi Jung 15-10, 15-14. The second game was a test of nerves for both but the Chennai duo emerged with flying colours. Meanwhile, Parupalli Kashyap, representing Mumbai, blew a one-game lead as he lost 15-14, 15-7, 15-10 to Chennai's Tommy Sugiarto. — Agencies

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Coco's the flavour  
American rallies hard to advance at Oz Open

**Melbourne, Jan. 22:** Fifteen-year-old prodigy Coco Gauff set up an Australian Open blockbuster with defending champion Naomi Osaka on Wednesday, as a pumped-up Serena Williams took another step towards a record-equalling 24th Grand Slam title. On a day when men's seeds tumbled, Serbia's Novak Djokovic strode into the third round to be joined by Roger Federer, who dismissed Filip Krajinovic 6-1, 6-4, 6-1. American teenager Gauff, showing a tenacity which is becoming her trademark, clawed her way back from a set down to beat the experienced Sorana Cirstea 4-6, 6-3, 7-5. Gauff, who screamed and pumped her fists as she completed her victory, said her "will to win" had got her through the tough second-round match at a windswept Melbourne Park. Gauff also beat Williams on her Grand Slam debut last year at Wimbledon, and in another quirk, she faced Osaka in the US Open third round, going down meekly in straight sets. Japan's Osaka, 22, beat China's Zheng Saisai 6-2, 6-4 but briefly lost her cool mid-match, hurling and kicking her racquet when she gave up a break in the second set. Former world number one Wozniacki, playing her final tournament before retiring, came from behind in both sets for a 7-5, 7-5 win over Dayana Yastremska of Ukraine. Serena Williams shouted at the top of her voice during a testing second set against 70th-ranked Tamara Zidansek, before seeing off break points to win 6-2, 6-3. Earlier, Australia's world number one Ashleigh Barty raced through 6-1, 6-4 against Polona Hercog, buoying hopes of a first home winner since 1978. Djokovic also weathered the breeze — which followed heavy rain on Monday, and smog from bushfires last week — to beat wildcard Tatsuma Ito 6-1, 6-4, 6-2. — AFP



Coco Gauff celebrates after defeating Sorana Cirstea 4-6, 6-3, 7-5 in the second round of the women's singles at the Australian Open in Melbourne on Wednesday. — ROLAND GARROS

KEY RESULTS

**MEN'S SINGLES 2ND ROUND**  
Tennys Sandgren (USA) bt Matteo Berrettini (ITA) 7-6 (9/7), 6-4, 4-6, 2-6, 7-5; Sam Querrey (USA) bt Ricardas Berankis (LTU) 7-6 (7/2), 4-6, 6-4, 6-4; Guido Pella (ARG) bt Gregoire Barrere (FRA) 6-1, 6-4, 3-6, 6-3; Marton Fucsovics (HUN) bt Jannik Sinner (ITA) 6-4, 6-4, 6-3; Tommy Paul (USA) bt Grigor Dimitrov (BUL) 6-4, 7-6 (8/6), 3-6, 6-7 (3/7), 7-6 (10/3); John Millman (AUS) bt Hubert Hurkacz (POL) 6-4, 7-5, 6-3; Stefanos Tsitsipas (GRE) bt Philipp Kohlschreiber (GER) W/O; Milos Raonic (CAN) bt Cristian Garin (CHI) 6-3, 6-4, 6-2; Marin Cilic (CRO) bt Benoit Paire (FRA) 6-2, 6-7 (6/8), 3-6, 6-1, 7-6 (10/3); Diego Schwartzman (ARG) bt Alejandro Davidovich (ESP) 6-1, 6-4, 6-2; Dusan Lajovic (SRB) bt Marc Polmans (AUS) 6-2, 6-4, 6-3; Yoshihito Nishioka (JPN) bt Daniel Evans (GBR) 6-4, 6-3, 6-4; Novak Djokovic (SRB) bt Tatsuma Ito (JPN) 6-1, 6-4, 6-2; Roger Federer (SUI) bt Filip Krajinovic (CRO) 6-1, 6-4, 6-1; Fabio Fognini (ITA) bt Jordan Thompson (AUS) 7-6 (7/4), 6-1, 3-6, 4-6, 7-6 (10/4); Roberto Bautista Agut (ESP) bt Michael Mmoh (USA) 5-7, 6-2, 6-4, 6-1.

**WOMEN'S SINGLES 2ND ROUND**  
Ashleigh Barty (AUS) bt Polona Hercog (SLO) 6-1, 6-4; Elena Rybakina (KAZ) bt Greet Minnen (BEL) 6-3, 6-4; Alison Riske (USA) bt Lin Zhu (CHN) 6-3, 6-1; Julia Goerges (GER) bt Petra Martic (CRO) 4-6, 6-3, 7-5; Maria Sakkari (GRE) bt Nao Hibino (JPN) 7-6 (7/4), 6-4; Ekaterina Alexandrova (RUS) bt Barbora Krejickova (CZE) 6-1, 6-3; Petra Kvitova (CZE) bt Paula Badosa (ESP) 7-5, 7-5; Naomi Osaka (JPN) bt Saisai Zheng (CHN) 6-2, 6-4; Cori Gauff (USA) bt Sorana Cirstea (ROU) 4-6, 6-3, 7-5; Shuai Zhang (CHN) bt Caty McNally (USA) 6-2, 6-4; Sofia Kenin (USA) bt Ann Li (USA) 6-1, 6-3; Ons Jabeur (TUN) bt Caroline Garcia (FRA) 1-6, 6-2, 6-3; Caroline Wozniacki (DEN) bt Dayana Yastremska (UKR) 7-5, 7-5; Qiang Wang (CHN) bt Fiona Ferro (FRA) 6-1, 6-2; Serena Williams (USA) bt Tamara Zidansek (SLO) 6-2, 6-3; Madison Keys (USA) bt Arantxa Rus (NED) 7-6 (7/3), 6-2.



Newcastle's Florian Lejeune (centre) shoots via a bicycle kick during their English Premier League match against Everton at the Goodison Park in Liverpool, north west England, on Tuesday. The match ended in a 2-2 draw. — NEWCASTLE UNITED

Lejeune turns the Toffees bitter

**London, Jan. 22:** Ten-man Arsenal slowed Chelsea's charge for a Champions League place on Tuesday as Manchester City kept up their distant pursuit of Liverpool with victory at Sheffield United on a dramatic evening of Premier League football. Newcastle improbably came back from 0-2 down to draw against Everton, with substitute Florian Lejeune netting twice in stoppage time, and Aston Villa found a last-gasp winner against in-form Watford. Elsewhere, Southampton climbed to ninth in the table with victory against Crystal Palace while Bournemouth gave themselves hope with a 3-1 win over Brighton.

Fourth-placed Chelsea twice took the lead against Arsenal, who were reduced to 10 men after former Blues defender David Luiz took out Tammy Abraham when he was through on goal. Jorginho put Chelsea 1-0 ahead from the penalty spot in the 28th minute but Gabriel Martinelli equalised for Arsenal in the second half. Cesar Azpilicueta put Chelsea 2-1 up with just six minutes remaining but Arsenal levelled only three minutes later through Hector Bellerin. The second-half substitute took advantage of poor defending by Everton to flick home an overhead kick in the fourth minute of stoppage time and then scramble in

| THE RESULTS                               |   |   |     |
|---|---|---|-----|
| Aston Villa (Luiz 68, Mings 90+5)         | 2 | (Lejeune 90+4, 90+5)                                  |     |
| Watford (Deeney 38)                       | 1 | Sheffield United Manchester City (Aguero 73)          | 0 1 |
| Chelsea (Jorginho 28-pen, Azpilicueta 84) | 2 | Bournemouth (H. Wilson 36, Gross 41-og, C. Wilson 74) | 3   |
| Arsenal (Martinelli 63, Bellerin 87)      | 2 | Brighton (Mooy 81)                                    | 1   |
| Everton 2 (Kean 30, Calvert-Lewin 54)     | 2 | Crystal Palace Southampton (Redmond 22, Armstrong 48) | 0 2 |
| Newcastle                                 | 2 |   |     |

an equalizer a minute later at Goodison Park. Everton looked to be cruising to victory after goals by strikers Moise Kean — his first for the club since his off-season

move from Juventus — and Dominic Calvert-Lewin. Newcastle had only had one shot on target before Lejeune's late intervention. It ruined what should

have been Kean's night after the Italy striker finally produced the performance Everton had been waiting for. Barely a month ago, Kean was taken off by caretaker manager Duncan Ferguson just 18 minutes after coming on as a second-half substitute at Manchester United in the lowest point of his short time in England. Meanwhile, Pep Guardiola's City, with defender Aymeric Laporte back in the side, looked as though they might rue Gabriel Jesus's squandered first-half penalty but their Argentine hitman Sergio Aguero came to the rescue. Despite the 1-0 win, City remain 13 points behind Liverpool. — Agencies

Esha shines bright



President Ram Nath Kovind presenting the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar award to Hyderabad shooter Esha Singh in the Sports category at the Rashtrapati Bhawan in New Delhi on Wednesday.

THAILAND | I MASTERS

Saina, Srikanth, Sameer bow out

**Bangkok, Jan. 22:** Top Indian shuttler Saina Nehwal suffered a second consecutive opening round defeat as she went down to Line Hojmark Kjaersfeldt of Denmark to bring curtains on the country's campaign in the Thailand Masters badminton tournament here on Wednesday. The fifth seeded Saina lost to unseeded Kjaersfeldt 13-21, 21-17, 15-21 in a hard fought 47-minute contest. World number 18 Saina had a 4-0 head-to-head record against the number 29 Dane before Wednesday's match. With Saina's defeat, India's campaign came to an end in the BWF World Tour Super 300 event. Saina had also lost in the opening round in the

Indonesia Masters last week after entering the quarterfinals in the Malaysia Masters (January 7-12). In the men's singles, the trio of Kidambi Srikanth, Sameer Verma and H. S. Prannoy, too, faltered in the first round. Verma lost to Lee Zii Jia 16-21, 15-21 in a 39-minute men's singles match. The story went on similar lines for the fifth seeded Srikanth, who went down to Shesher Hiren Rhusavito of Indonesia 21-12, 14-21, 12-21, in a match that lasted 48 minutes. This was Srikanth's third consecutive first-round exit this season. It was curtains for Prannoy too. He lost 17-21, 22-20, 19-21 to Malaysia's Liew Daren. — PTI

Rowing body in deep waters

**New Delhi, Jan. 22** Rowing Federation of India (RFI) was on Wednesday de-recognised by the Sports Ministry for violating the Sports Code of 2011 during its elections held in December. In the RFI elections held on December 6 in Hyderabad, Rajlaxmi Singh Deo and M. V. Sriram were elected as president and secretary-general respectively. But the Ministry, in a letter to the RFI president, said that the said elections were not in accordance with the Sports Code and hence the recognition of the national rowing body stands cancelled. The Ministry also wrote to the Indian Olympic Association to constitute an ad hoc committee to discharge the functions of the RFI. "Upon examination of the matter (from the reports of the Returning Officer and government observer), it has been found that the said elections of the RFI are not in accordance with the Model Elections Guidelines prescribed in the National Sports Development Code of India, 2011," the letter from the ministry said. "... it has been decided that the recognition of the RFI would cease w.e.f 01/02/2020 and not be renewed in view of the positions explained," it added. The ministry found violations of the Sports Code by

RFI in four areas. "As per the website of RFI, there are 21 state/UT units out of which only 18 participated in the election process. RFI does not fulfil the 2/3 state/UT affiliation criteria as it must have had at least 25 state/UT as its affiliated members. "M. V. Sriram had held the post of Secretary General for two terms till January 2016 and hence as per the cooling off provision of the NSDCI (Sports Code), 2011, he would have been eligible to contest elections only after 29.01.2020 (after the completion of cooling off period of four years)." The RFI elections allowed proxy voting while there was no such provision in the model election guidelines of the Sports Code. The RFI also allowed three votes per its affiliated unit while the Sports Code prescribes only two. RFI's de-recognition by the Sports Ministry comes after the IOA president Narinder Batra asked Rajlaxmi to review the decision to ban Dattu Bhokanal for two years for stopping a race midway during the 2018 Asian Games, saying it was a harsh punishment for a first time offence. Batra had asked RFI to furnish him the relevant rules of the national federation as well as those of the international body under which Bhokanal was banned for two years. — PTI