


WEATHER



Max: 32.9°C
Min: 20.4°C
RH: 42%
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Partly cloudy sky. Misty morning. Max/Min temp. 33/20°C

ASTROGUIDE

Vikari: Uttarayana

Tithi: Magha Shuddha Chavithi 10.46 am

Star: Purvabhadra till 12.13 pm

Variyam: 11 pm to 12.48 am (Thursday)

Durmuhurtam: 12.06 pm to 12.51 pm

Rahukalam: 12 pm to 1.30 pm

HURI CALENDAR

Jumada al-Thani 5,1441 AH

PRAYERS

Fajar: 5.46 am

Zohar: 12.39 pm

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Isha: 7.25 pm

SUNSET TODAY 6.10 PM

SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.49 AM

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50% CASHBACK

on 1st Payment from your Bank A/c



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COUNTER POINT



No crowd... let's shift our meeting to a venue of anti-CAA rally!

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DC CORRESPONDENT
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ANIMAL | PLANET

SC allows Centre to ship African cheetah to India

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■ Page 3: SC move bold, says CCMB



Caste jobs

Minister V. Srinivas Goud says it is because of KCR that caste-based occupations have risen again, Congress rule had ruined them

IN BRIEF

UoH's unveils its new IoE logo

Hyderabad: The University of Hyderabad (UoH) unveiled the Institution of Eminence (IoE) logo at the Dr Zakir Husain Lecture Hall Complex on the campus on Tuesday. The logo was unveiled by university Vice Chancellor Prof. Appa Rao Podile in the presence of Prof. Graziano Kratli from Yale University who also delivered the first IoE lecture. Twenty-four entries were received for the logo design competition. Two designs were selected and the university persuaded the designers, Ms Anakha Ajith and Mr Aakash Dinkar, to collaborate and bring out a logo that aligned with the larger vision of the university as an Institution of Eminence. They came up with the logo that has been unveiled on Tuesday.

Meditation centre inaugurated

Hyderabad: The world's largest mediation centre was inaugurated in the city on Tuesday by yoga guru Baba Ramdev to mark the 75th anniversary of the formation of Shri Ram Chandra Mission and Heartfulness Institute. Built on 30 acres, the meditation centre will have a central hall and eight peripheral halls to accommodate 1 lakh meditation practitioners at a time. The centre was designed and built with expertise within the Heartfulness Institute and took three years to complete. President Ram Nath Kovind and activist Anna Hazare will address the practitioners on February 2 and February 8 respectively. Baba Ramdev will speak on Wednesday and several public figures are expected to attend the celebrations.

Doctors remove 9-kg tumor

Hyderabad: A massive tumor weighing 9 kilograms was removed from the abdomen of a 65-year-old woman, by the doctors of Continental Hospitals, on Tuesday. The patient, who is a resident of Visakhapatnam is a regular yoga practitioner. According to medical practitioners of the hospital, the patient was suffering from the problem for long, but the situation turned grave after her movement got restricted since November last year. Upon conducting an ultrasound scan it was revealed that there was a large tumor in the patient's abdomen approximately 30 cms in size. As part of the treatment, she was operated upon by Dr Srinivas Prasad and identified the tumour to be a massive lump weighing 9 kgs, an abnormality and dangerous in nature.

BIGGER ROLE SEEN FOR CYBERSECURITY

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

With India bracing for a digital revolution, experts agree that India needs to strengthen its capabilities in cybersecurity as bad actors like state-sponsored hackers will look to exploit any weakness to their advantage. Echoing similar views, a top government official on Tuesday said that cybersecurity will assume greater significance in the coming years.

After inaugurating the Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence (CCoE) here, secretary to Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Ajay Prakash Sawhney said, "Cybersecurity is going to be another huge dimension where we need to secure ourselves and then strengthen our capabilities so much that we are capable of providing services to others as well."

"Israel has shown us the way...but we need to set very high goals for ourselves. A centre of this kind makes enormous difference, he said."

Every sector would depend on technologies which have to be protected, he said.

Lieutenant General Rajesh Pant (national cybersecurity coordinator), NSCS, said cyber attacks would be increasing with the advent of 5G and IoT (Internet of Things) and hoped that other states would also follow the example of setting up cybersecurity centre of excellence.

City to start testing samples

Blood samples of all five admitted sent to Pune, Passengers from SE Asia to be screened

KANIZA GARARI | DC
HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

A total of five people have been admitted to the Fever Hospital in the city on Tuesday in relation to the ongoing coronavirus epidemic.

Three members of a family, who had visited China, have self-reported to the Fever Hospital as they had mild cough and were admitted to the hospital. A medical student from Wuhan, who has reported with symptoms of gastric problems, has also been admitted to the hospital and kept under observation.

Another person, who was in close proximity with an individual who had returned from China, has also self-reported to the hospital. The samples of all five have been taken and are being sent to Pune for testing.

Deccan Chronicle had reported on the bickerings within the health department over budgets on sending samples and it has been decided that samples would be sent by courier.

These are specialised companies that deal with safe transport of bio-medical material and have expertise for the same. The health officials clarified that presently budget for these expenses is being taken from the hospital development fund.

Meanwhile, the helpline number given by the ministry of health and family welfare department is buzzing as people are self-reporting their return from China. Scientists, software engineers, businessmen and professionals who have visited the country are worried and as a precautionary measure are voluntarily revealing details.

The flights from Malaysia, Hong Kong, Singapore, Vietnam and Thailand would also have their passengers screened as some of the people who have travelled to China are returning through these flights.

A scientist, who had returned on Sunday night, complained that there was no thermal checking for him at the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport and he had self-reported to Fever Hospital. The checks have now been extended and it has been decided to screen these passengers too.

While the ministry of health and family welfare has announced that the Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) centre in Hyderabad would also be used for tests, presently there is no official communication and it has not yet been started.

■ The helpline number given by the ministry of health and family welfare department is buzzing as people are self-reporting their return from China.

■ A scientist, who had returned on Sunday night, complained that there was no thermal checking for him at the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport and he had self-reported to Fever Hospital.



Above: A person is spotted wearing a mask as a precaution from Coronavirus at the airport.

Top: A doctor examines the devices that would be used for the isolation unit at Fever Hospital.

— P. SURENDRA

— S. SURENDER REDDY

Tour operators ask customers to stay away from China, HK

K.M.P. PATNAIK &
ADITYA CHUNDURU | DC
VISAKHAPATNAM,
HYDERABAD, JAN 28

Tour operators and travel agents from the city said there is very little interest among the public to go to Hong Kong and China. Over the past few days, bookings have gradually come down to almost nil. They said this could be because of the coronavirus scare that has affected parts of China and south-east Asia.

A nationwide international tours operator said packages to China (Shanghai and Shenzhen mostly) and Hong Kong were still available to customers but people are choosing to stay away.

"As of now, we are asking our customers to wait before making bookings to China," he said. He added that he could still suggest tour packages to Hong Kong.

A small-time operator from the city said, "There

SPREADS RAPIDLY VIA DROPLETS

From Page 1

The biggest concern is the rapid spread of the virus through droplets, which makes it a big cause of worry. Medical reports from China, which are being studied here, have shown that the infection spreads faster

hasn't really been a lot of interest in going to China. Bookings are never too many. But of late, they have dried up completely."

Another local operator had similar views, claiming that bookings to China were almost nil. "However, I am not sure this is because of the coronavirus scare. Many people don't even know about it," he said.

A report from Visakhapatnam said the threat of coronavirus had resulted in some people cancelling or postponing their tours to China and

in cases which are severe in nature. This means that there are more viruses shed in severe conditions. Patients with milder cases are found to recover and the virus load in them is not so high, according to initial reports that have been evaluated.

even Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Hong Kong and Macau.

This will come at a cost. Those who booked tickets on low-cost airlines will not get any refund. Tourists in the economy package tours mostly fly by low-cost airlines.

On Tuesday, four persons from Vizag cancelled their tickets to Singapore and Scoot Airlines refused to refund their fare. They lost ₹2 lakh.

People in AP mostly travel to Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand in this period which is considered the

peak season in Southeast Asia. "Chinese comprise 80 per cent of the travellers to these three countries in January. AP tourists fear that the Chinese tourists could spread the virus and as a precautionary measure cancelled their travel plan," said vice-president of Tours and Travels Association of Andhra Pradesh Dheeraj P.

He told this correspondent Tuesday that 10,000 to 12,000 people from AP travel to Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand every year and 20 to 30 per cent are traders.

Only 300 people mostly businessmen travel to China. All the tickets to China have been cancelled and no fresh itinerary has been made by the frequent travellers, said another operator. He said if the situation showed no improvement, the travellers from AP would also cancel their plans in summer. People from this region travel either during Sankranti holidays or during summer vacation.

He also asked the people not to panic, but seek medical help in case of need. Health department director Dr S. Aruna Kumari, AP Vydyha Vidhana Parishad commissioner Dr Ramakrishna and other officials participated in the review meeting.

PANIC SETS IN AMONG HYDERABADIS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

There is panic among families, whose near and dear visited China during the last one month. Doctors say they are being bombarded with inquiries whether these visitors should opt for a check-up.

The advice of doctors in such cases is that in case visitors to China are experiencing persistent symptoms of cough, cold, dry throat or fever, they must report to the Fever Hospital in the city. Otherwise, they can take it easy.

Dr Sanjiv Singh Yadav, secretary, Indian Medical Association (Telangana chapter), said, "It is important to practice hand washing and proper manners when coughing. People sneeze and cough into everyone around them. Prevention is the most important and this practice will go a long way in dealing with all types of viruses."

Individuals and families who have visited China are getting inquiries from their cousins, aunts, uncles and neighbours whether they have any symptoms. Everyone is being cautious in meeting or greeting a "China returnee". At the social level, no one wants to send out invites for dinners or parties to those who have just travelled to China.

■ People who visited China are getting inquiries from their relatives and neighbours if they developed any symptoms. At the social level, no one wants to send out invites for parties to those who have just travelled to China.

AP TO SET UP SPECIALS WARDS IN HOSPITALS

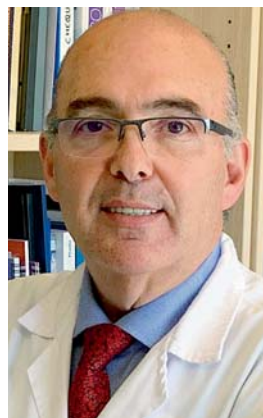
DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, JAN. 28

The Andhra Pradesh government has taken steps to face the coronavirus outbreak and will open special wards in government district and teaching hospitals.

Andhra Pradesh health minister Alla Kalikrishna Srinivas said that special wards with five beds would be started with a nodal officer. No case had been detected in AP but the government was taking precautionary measures.

Isolation wards with five beds will be started in all districts and teaching hospitals with ventilator facility. They will work round-the-clock and the officials were alerted.

He also asked the people not to panic, but seek medical help in case of need. Health department director Dr S. Aruna Kumari, AP Vydyha Vidhana Parishad commissioner Dr Ramakrishna and other officials participated in the review meeting.



Prof. Ignacio J. Ansotegui

DON'T BRUSH OFF ALLERGY, SAYS WAO CHIEF

T.S.S. SIDDHARTH | DC
HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

One in three Indians living in urban areas suffer from allergy. More often than not, they just brush it off as common cold or cough,

believes Professor Ignacio J. Ansotegui, chairman and president, World Allergy Organisation (WAO).

Speaking to Deccan Chronicle at length on Tuesday, he observed, "Hyderabad's air pollution might not be as high as that in New Delhi. But seeing things as they are, there are chances that pollution could increase. This pollution would increase pollen count in the air, which results in birth of an allergy," the WAO chief pointed out.

He said the Indian sub-continent has different climate zones, meaning they have different allergens. "Humidity plays a major role in instigating allergens. As humidity goes up, molds and dust mites become more potent."

Though Hyderabad is considerably hot during this time of the year, it has humidity, which enhances the pollens' ability to release allergens," Ansotegui remarked. For example, if someone is allergic to grass pollen, they exhibit allergy symptoms only when pollen is released.

"Usually people consider this to be common cold and ignore it. But this could be the first symptom of rhinitis or allergy. It is important to pay attention to all such symptoms," he underlined.

Speaking about climatic action of allergens, the WAO chief said humidity, primarily indoor humidity, is ideal for molds and mites to aggravate and infest as allergens.

"Another thing that people don't pay much attention to is indiscriminate use of cleaners, sprays and mosquito coils, which are harmful. These do no more than exacerbate the dormant allergens. Even ground-level ozone reacts in a similar way," he stated. While pollution-monitoring agencies are tapping particulate matter, they are not checking for particles finer than 2.5 microns, which could worsen the allergy, Ansotegui added.

■ Indian sub-continent has different climate zones, meaning they have different allergens

■ While pollution-monitoring agencies are tapping PM, they are not checking for particles finer than 2.5 microns, which could worsen the allergy. One in three Indians living in urban areas suffer from allergy.

NEW EXPECTATIONS

Private medical and dental colleges yet to increase seats to accommodate 10% EWS students

Students want EWS quota for engg, pharma, MBA too

RAJESWARI PARASA | DC
HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

Reservations for the economically weaker sections (EWS) in the state have been limited to medical and dental colleges through Government Order (GO) No. 47. Now the students from streams such as engineering, pharmacy and management studies are also demanding the EWS quota.

"Though the demand for

engineering courses has reduced, the demand for the top colleges has never ceased. There are several EWS category students who would like to grab a seat in these institutes.

The 10 per cent EWS quota, if implemented for other streams, would benefit several students," said Mr Sharan Raichur, president of the Telangana Engineering Students Joint Action Committee. In medical and dental

■ AN AMOUNT of ₹4,315.15 crore has been sanctioned by the Centre for the creation of an additional 2,14,766 seats throughout the country in 158 central educational institutions to create infrastructure for the EWS category students.

■ MANY STUDENTS have benefited from the EWS in medical and dental colleges.

colleges, though, the 10 per cent increase in seats to accommodate the EWS quota has been limited to government colleges, private colleges are yet to

increase the number of seats. "It might get implemented from the next academic year," said Dr Mahesh from the Health Care Doctors Reforms.

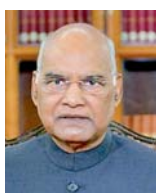
Hundreds of students have benefited from the EWS in medical and dental colleges.

One of them, Kalva Abhiram, who got admission through EWS in Gandhi Medical College, said, "I applied for Gandhi Medical College in the third round of counselling, which was when the EWS category seats were released. Twenty-five seats were allotted to EWS out of the 250 seats in the

college. The fee is nominal." All seats under the EWS quota have been taken, he said.

An amount of ₹4,315.15 crore has been sanctioned by the Centre for the creation of an additional 2,14,766 seats throughout the country in 158 central educational institutions to create infrastructure for the EWS category students. "If the EWS quota is extended to private engineering colleges, another

2,000 to 3,000 economically weaker students can pursue engineering courses in top colleges like CBIT, Vasavi and Vardhaman. The state government should issue a GO for the upcoming academic year so that all institutions can make provisions additional infrastructure for classrooms, hostels for the additional intake," said a senior professor from an engineering college, on condition of anonymity.



Prez for Hyd

President Kovind will arrive in Hyderabad on Feb. 1. to inaugurate the world mediation centre at Kanha on the city outskirts

City

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DECCAN CHRONICLE

WEDNESDAY | 29 JANUARY 2020 | HYDERABAD

POWER | SHUTDOWN

10 am to 3 pm: Gudimalkapur, VBG Garden, Sabernagar, Gollabasti.

10 am to 2 pm: Paramount Colony, Paper Board, Hakimpet, Hanuman Temple, Bowli PT, Ambedkar Community Hall, Baba Hotel, Kabrasthan 1&2 area; Moti Darwaza, Shangri La High School, Apsara Colony, Company Bagh, Ahmed Colony.

10 am to 5 pm: Samatha Colony, Jamalikunta, MD Lines, Shatamanager, Durganagar, Grammar Colony, Valley Colony, Nadeem Colony, Naya Khila, Jinsi Bazaar, Takath Bowli, Raghavamma Kanchara, Heera Khan 1&2, Moti Mahal, Khazi Galli, Banjari Darwaza, Attara Sedi, Golconda police station and quarters, Katora House, Galaxy theatre Area, Adms Colony, Rahul Colony, Moulagunj, Golconda Hospital, Aravindnagar, Samatha Colony, Aziz Bagh, Rainbow Apartments, Adithyanagar, Suryanagar, Shaikpet, nala area, kallu compound area, OU Colony, Vinobhanagar, Vinayaknagar, Datteryanagar, Dwarakanagar, Dream Valley, Marutnagar, Gulshan Colony, Narayana Engineering College, Laxmannagar, Dargah area, Laxminagar, Falcon Colony, Narayanamma College, Whisper Valley, Radhenagar, Leather Factory, OU Colony, Hussain Shali dargah.

FOLLOW RULES, ANJANI KUMAR TELLS DRIVERS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

Lorries, RTC buses and autorickshaws caused 79 deaths in road accidents last year, according to data with the Hyderabad traffic police. To educate the drivers as part of the 31st Road Safety Week, the Hyderabad police organised an awareness programme in the city on Tuesday, in which about 1,500 members including drivers of RTC buses, vehicles carrying school children, autorickshaws, water tankers and other transport and passenger vehicles were present.

Addressing the gathering, Hyderabad police commissioner Anjani Kumar explained the value of life and the necessity of the road safety. Mr Kumar explained the consequence of a fatal road accident and how it affects a victim's family and society.

The commissioner stressed on the need for following road safety rules. He said the best driver was one who would anticipate the traffic and avert road accidents. He also made the attendees take a pledge to ensure zero fatality as their goal. He felicitated drivers who were never penalised for any traffic violation.

Additional commissioner, traffic, Anil Kumar explained about occurrence of fatal road accidents in the city in the last three years and asked the drivers to ensure that they allow pedestrians to cross the road first and follow traffic discipline.

"Deaths in road accidents have reduced from 303 in 2018 to 271 last year, which is an 11 percent decrease. However RTC buses, lorries and autorickshaws were the reason for 79 deaths in 2019, which needs to be reduced to the minimum," Mr Anil Kumar told the audience.

According to the police, there were 33 accidents involving RTC buses in 2017 which claimed 33 lives, 24 accidents in 2018 that took 35 lives. Thirty people were killed in accidents involving RTC buses last year, according to data with the police.

Techie beaten by her cousin

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

A woman techie was attacked by her cousin who was harassing her to marry him. The accused, Sudheer (name changed) is absconding.

According to SR Nagar police, the victim, a divorcee, was living at a hostel in SR Nagar for the last two months and was working as a software engineer.

After her divorce, Sudheer, her maternal aunt's son, Sudheer, was reportedly harassing her to marry him. Sudheer

also blackmailed her saying he would commit suicide if she does not meet him.

On Monday, the duo met near a restaurant to talk, when Sudheer attacked her on the neck and stomach. When she attempted to call police, he broke her phone and fled from the spot.

The woman later lodged a complaint with the SR Nagar police, who registered a case against accused Sudheer.

SR Nagar additional inspector Ajay Kumar said that an investigation is underway to arrest Sudheer.

Get ready for an early summer

Mercury is already 3°C above normal

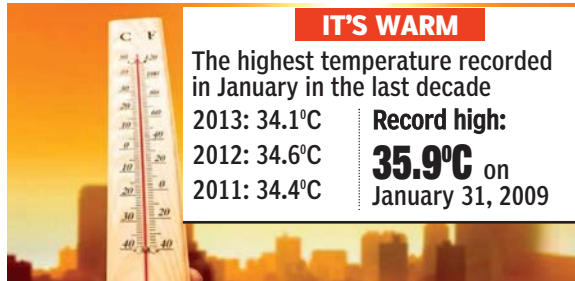
T.S.S. SIDDHARTH | DC
HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

The mercury crossed the 33° Celsius mark on Tuesday and the city, which had a mild winter, could be staring at an early summer that could very well begin in February.

According to officials at the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD), the city recorded maximum and minimum temperatures which are 3°C above normal.

"This year, there has been no proper flow of the cold northerly winds. Instead, we have been receiving humid winds from the coastal regions. These winds have obstructed the cold winds from coming the city's way," IMD-Hyderabad director K. Nagarathna, told Deccan Chronicle.

On Tuesday, the maximum temperature was



recorded at 33.5°C, 3°C above normal and the minimum at 20.4°C, 4°C above normal. This is the highest temperature registered in the city in January since 2016.

Experts from Skymet, a private weather forecasting agency, said that there were chances that the temperature could drop marginally after 48 hours.

"Due to consecutive disturbances in the atmosphere over the city, the northerly winds could not reach the state. There are chances that there might

be a lull in the circulation, leading to a marginal drop in the temperature. It wouldn't matter much as the temperatures would begin rising immediately," said Mr Mahesh Palawat, chief meteorologist, Skymet.

Nevertheless, the lack of a winter season has brought people on to social media websites, to rue the same. 'Dude wore a freaking jacket in this melting heat of Hyderabad and is sweating like crazy. (sic)' read a tweet.

SC nod a bold move: CCMB

From Page 1

LaCONES' senior principal scientist Vasudevan Karthikeyan said, "Our work will continue since it involves conservation of many species, not just the cheetah."

The scientist said that their work shouldn't be looked at as a failure. "Over the years, through our efforts on cheetah and other animals, we have accumulated a lot of knowledge and experience. In fact, people have lost their lives during this work," he said.

Dr Karthikeyan, however, added that the move to introduce a foreign animal was a "bold one" and needs to be done with caution.

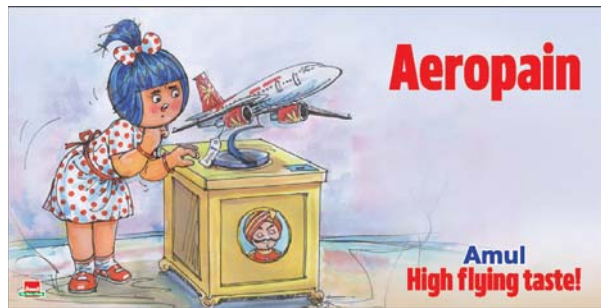
Meanwhile, Congress leader and former environment minister, Jairam Ramesh, tweeted in support to the Supreme Court's greenlight.

He recalled that he had proposed the initia-

■ VASUDEVAN KARTHIKEYAN, senior principal scientist at the Hyderabad-based LaCONES, said, "Our work will continue since it involves conservation of many species, not just the cheetah."

tive 10 years ago and urged the present government to implement it soon. His initiative had been stayed by the Supreme Court based on a petition by some environmentalists. "Delighted that the Supreme Court has just given OK to reintroducing cheetah from Namibia. This was something I had initiated 10 years ago. Cheetah which derives from the Sanskrit 'chitra' (speckled) is the only mammal hunted to extinction in modern India.

It is said that the African and Indian cheetahs branched out as separate species about 60,000 years ago.



FLASH PROTEST AT MEHDIPATNAM

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

On Monday at around 11:30 pm, two women started a protest against the CAA, NRC and the NPR, at Mehdipatnam crossroads. One of the protesters was holding a placard.

Passersby gathered at the spot and some of them sup-

ported the protesters. The Humayunnagar police was informed, and they came to the spot and persuaded the passersby to leave.

However, one of the protesters was not willing to cooperate with the police, and it took a while for the police to calm the woman down and persuade her to end her protest.

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Overloaded auto



An autorickshaw is overloaded with school students at Badangpet on the city outskirts on Tuesday. Autorickshaws in the outlying areas routinely take more children than is permitted but the traffic police does not monitor them as strictly as is done in Hyderabad.

— P. SURENDRA

Army steals a march over GHMC, digs roads

MADDY DEEKSHITH | DC
HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

The tussle between GHMC and defence officials over digging up city roads to lay a hotline has reached the next level. The GHMC had not given permission to the defence officials to dig the roads, but they went ahead and dug up roads in Prakashnagar to lay a dedicated hotline under the Network for Defence Services Optical Fibre Cable (NDFS OFC) project.

It turns out that the defence officials without the knowledge of the GHMC took permission from the Hyderabad Road Development Corporation Limited (HRDCL), which was created as a special purpose vehicle (SPV) to fund road repair works.

According to GHMC sources, defence officials had sought permission to dig 56 km of roads to lay cables and paid the fee two years ago. The corporation

■ THE GHMC was delaying permission to the Army to dig up city roads for its hotline, as Army officials were driving a hard bargain to give up land for developmental projects. The Army then moved the HRDCL.

delayed permission citing different reasons, including a ban on digging during the monsoon, Assembly elections and now, road repairs.

Sources said that the corporation had received instructions from higher authorities to delay permission as the defence ministry had not cooperated in giving defence land at Mehdipatnam, Bolarum, Owaisi Junction at Banjara Hills Road No 12, where a 150 sq m of land was needed to take up developmental activities.

Without informing the GHMC, the BSNL began digging roads at Prakashnagar. A procedure called horizontal

directional drills (HDD) trenching from Malkajgiri up to Paradise junction has been taken up. When corporation officials rushed to the spot, they were shocked to learn that permission had been secured from the HRDCL.

The stretch which was trenched had been handed over to the HRDCL by the GHMC. The trenching works has been handed over L&T on December 17 last year. Facing a severe fund crunch, the HRDCL handed the roads back to the GHMC. However, the HRDCL still give permission to the defence ministry to dig the roads.

A senior GHMC official said that the corporation would verify the permission pertaining to trenching with Army officials to take a further decision. He said that for the remaining work, the GHMC would deny road digging permission the defence lands were handed over to the corporation.

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INVEST KARNATAKA 2020 GLOBAL INVESTORS MEET

Commerce and Industries Department Karnataka Udyoga Mitra

Sri B.S. Yediyurappa Hon'ble Chief Minister Government of Karnataka

Hon'ble Union Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Coal and Mines, Sri Pralhad Joshi and Hon'ble Minister for Large & Medium Scale Industries Sri Jagadish Shettar participated in the Investors interaction Meet held at Hubballi recently.

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Divine wrath

Komatireddy Venkat Reddy says God will not spare TRS for what it did during municipal polls, KCR and KTR's behaviour was very bad

DECCAN CHRONICLE

WEDNESDAY | 29 JANUARY 2020 | HYDERABAD

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IN BRIEF

School bus mishap: 3 injured

Hyderabad: Two students and a bus driver were injured when their school bus overturned near Nallavelli in Indalwai mandal on National Highway 44 on Tuesday. Four students were on the bus at the time of the accident. The bus driver, Bollam Srinivas, picked up D. Pranav Babu, a sixth standard student and N. Nikhil, a fifth standard student at Nallavelli village. Pranav's leg was stuck in the wreckage of the vehicle. Indalwai sub-inspector G. Shiva Prasad Reddy rushed to the spot and rescued the children with the help of a gas cutter. The victims immediately were moved to a private hospital in Nizamabad. "Rash and negligent driving has caused the accident," Mr Shiva Prasad Reddy told Deccan Chronicle. The driver has been booked.

Drunk man, who burnt 4 bikes, held

Hyderabad: A drunk who set ablaze four parked bikes at Balanagar about two weeks ago was arrested by the police on Tuesday. According to Balanagar police, on January 15, the residents of Shapur Nagar lodged a complaint stating that the bikes parked in front of the houses were set ablaze. A case was registered and during the probe, the footage from CCTV cameras was analysed and the accused was identified as Parashuram, 21, a painter. Parashuram, a resident of Vivekanandanagar, on January 14, consumed liquor and while going home took petrol from the parked bikes spilled it on them and set them ablaze. The police said that the accused was earlier involved in similar cases. He was arrested and produced before the court for judicial custody.

TWO ARRESTED FOR RAPING MINOR GIRL

DC CORRESPONDENT
NELLORE, JAN. 28

The Ongole police arrested a youth and a minor on Tuesday for the kidnap and rape of a 15-year-old girl in Prakasam district. The incident was reported on the night of January 23 night. The youth identified as Nataraju Venkateswarlu, 28, along with his friend, a 17-year-old boy, developed friendship with the victim, who was working in a coldrink shop, during their visits to their relatives at Kothapatnam.

They kidnapped the girl late on January 23 from the shop and took her to the outskirts of Valasapalem in Kothapatnam mandal where they raped her. They also took her to another location near near Surareddypalem gate where they raped her.

They next took her to Venkateswarlu's house in Ongole where they raped her again. Based on a complaint from the girl, the police booked a case on January 25 and launched a search for the accused. The police apprehended them near a vegetable godown at Ongole on Tuesday. The police booked a case for kidnap and rape as well as under the SC/ST Atrocities Prevention Act since the girl belonged to an SC community.

■ They youths kidnapped the girl on January 23 from the shop and took her to the outskirts of Valasapalem in Kothapatnam mandal.

80-year-old woman killed, gold stolen

Victim, Balamani, a widow, was living alone

JAYENDRA
CHAITHANYA T. I DC
HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

An 80-year-old woman was found dead with multiple injuries on a road in front of her house at Nednūr in Kandukur on Tuesday morning. The police suspects that the woman could have been murdered in the house and her body dragged out by the killers.

The victim was identified as S. Balamani, 80. Her husband Bal Reddy had died of ill-health in 2006 and she was living alone in a house at Nednūr under the Rachakonda police commissionerate limits. Their five children including two sons live separately. Balamani's

■ **BALAMANI'S ELDER** daughter M. Kalamma and her husband Anji Reddy live in Nednūr and she used to take care of her elderly mother.

■ **HER ELDER** son S. Venkat Reddy, a realtor, lives at Champapet and used to visit her every fortnight. He said her two gold chains weighing five tolas, gold ear tops weighing one tola and silver bangles were missing.

elder daughter M. Kalamma and her husband Anji Reddy live in Nednūr and she used to take care of her elderly mother. Her elder son S. Venkat Reddy, a realtor, lives at Champapet and used to visit her every fortnight.

At around 4.30 am on Tuesday, Anji Reddy found his mother-in-law lying unconscious on the road in front of her

house. He and his wife along with the locals checked and found Balamani dead. He immediately alerted Venkat Reddy, who on reaching the spot found that her gold and silver ornaments were stolen. They called the police.

Kandukur inspector E. Jangaiah said that on inspecting the scene of offence it was evident that the woman was

throttled to death. Balamani's body had been dragged on to the road. "Balamani had bleeding injuries to both her wrists, which suggests that her bangles were taken forcibly. An injury was found on her right ear," he said.

Balamani's son said her two gold chains weighing five tolas, gold ear tops weighing one tola and silver bangles weighing 10 tolas were missing. The last time anyone saw Balamani alive was when she was sitting outside a neighbour's house. After that, she was found dead early on Tuesday, said the inspector. A case of murder has been registered and special teams have been formed to investigate the case.



Sai Deepika Reddy

RASH RTC DRIVER MOWS DOWN YOUNG WOMAN

GEETA VALABOJU | DC
HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

A young woman died on the spot after being hit by an RTC bus near Yousufguda at about 9 am on Tuesday. Locals alleged the accident occurred due to the negligence of the bus driver. The victim was identified as L. Sai Deepika Reddy.

She was heading towards Yousufguda from Punjagutta on her two-wheeler at the time of the accident. The RTC bus hit her two-wheeler near Andhra Bank and she died on the spot. Police said Deepika was working as a sales executive in Jubilee Hills. After being informed, the police reached the spot and sent the body to Gandhi Hospital for the post-mortem examination. A case has been registered against the bus driver.

COUPLE HELD FOR ROBBERY WOMAN

DC CORRESPONDENT
NIZAMABAD, JAN. 28

A couple that allegedly robbed a woman at Chengicherla was arrested by the Medipally police on Tuesday. The police recovered a stolen gold chain weighing 30 gm and a bike from the duo and remanded them.

According to the police, on December 19, accused P. Bhanu Vikas, 23, and S. Manasa, 22, went the house of the victim A. Balamani at Kanakadurga Colony in Chengicherla and asked her for water to a house located

When Balamani went inside to get water, Vikas and Manasa followed her. They sprayed an unidentified liquid on her face, snatched her gold chain and fled on a bike. Following the complaint, the accused were traced and nabbed on Tuesday.

During questioning, the police found that Vikas, who did engineering from a private college in Yammapet, has been working as a delivery executive with an app-based food delivery service. Manasa is unemployed. Police said the couple conducted a ruse at Chengicherla and targeted the victim who was alone at the house.

■ **WHEN HOUSE** owner Balamani went inside to get water, Vikas and Manasa followed her. They sprayed an unidentified liquid on her face, snatched her gold chain.

Safety awareness



Swati Lakra, IG (law and order) and in-charge women safety wing, B. Sumathi, SP women safety, Dr Nagamani, incharge principal, Gandhi Medical college, during an awareness programme on women safety and launch of Telangana SHE Teams WhatsApp number at Gandhi hospital on Tuesday.

— S. SURENDER REDDY

NREGS STAFF HELD TAKING ₹10,000 BRIBE

DC CORRESPONDENT
NIZAMABAD, JAN. 28

Rajender, an assistant project officer with the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) was caught red-handed by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) officials in Machareddy mandal of Kamareddy district on Tuesday while accepting a bribe of ₹10,000 bribe from a contractor.

According to sources, Chitukula Narsa Reddy of Bhavanipet constructed a Vaikunta Dhamam in the village costing ₹6.3 lakh. Of this, ₹3.95 lakh had been released to him. To clear the remaining amount, Rajender allegedly demanded a bribe of ₹50,000.

Criminal stabs friend in fight over phone

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

A dispute over a phone between two youngsters, both habitual offenders, resulted in one stabbing the other with a knife in Banjara Hills area on Tuesday. The injured has been admitted to a private hospital.

Police said long-time friends Ravinder, 22, and Irshad, 22, residents of a basthi in Banjara Hills, habitually stole bikes and mobile phones under the limits of Hyderabad and Cyberabad police commissionerates.

■ **POLICE SAID** long-time friends Ravinder, 22, and Irshad, 22, residents of a basthi in Banjara Hills, habitually stole bikes and mobile phones under the limits of Hyderabad and Cyberabad police commissionerates.

was clicking pictures on a mobile phone, which, incidentally, was a stolen one. Irshad turned up and he too took some pictures on Ravinder's phone but took it away with him to tease his friend. On Monday, Ravinder

went to Irshad's house and collected the phone from the latter's mother. When the duo met later in the day, they ended up quarrelling over the phone and Ravinder hit Irshad. On Tuesday, Irshad accosted Ravinder on Tuesday at a hotel in Filmnagar and stabbed him on the cheek and neck. Locals alerted police, who rushed to the spot and shifted Ravinder to a private hospital for treatment. Irshad has been into custody for questioning. Banjara Hills inspector R. Kalinga Rao said, "The dispute was not over the stolen phone, but because Irshad had taken away Ravinder's phone".

ANDHRA PRADESH

MURDER | CASE

Why is CM Jagan not seeking CBI probe now, questions Dr N. Suneetha Reddy

Daughter raises doubts in Viveka's murder case

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, JAN. 28

The murder case of former minister Y.S. Vivekananda Reddy, uncle of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy took a serious turn on Tuesday, with the deceased's daughter raising suspicion over conduct of Kadapa MP Y.S. Avinash Reddy and his father Y.S. Bhaskar Reddy at the crime scene.

Dr N. Suneetha Reddy, daughter of the deceased former minister and MP, and N. Rajasekhara Reddy, her husband, filed a writ petition in the AP High Court seeking a Central Bureau of Investigation

(CBI) probe into the killing recently. The petitioners questioned the wisdom of Chief Minister Mr Reddy in not handing over the case to the CBI despite his earlier acts of open appeal, including petitioning the Governor and filing of a writ petition in the high court seeking a CBI probe.

Even eight months after becoming Chief Minister, Mr Reddy didn't refer the case to the CBI and had instead constituted yet another Special Investigation Team (SIT), which has no justification, she contented in her petition.

The SIT has actually ended up interrupting

investigation and gave rise to several doubts about the "intentions of the state police" in implicating innocent people in the case, so as to allow the real culprits go scot free, the petitioners opined.

The petitioners said in their writ petition that Y.S. Avinash Reddy was the one of the first family members who arrived at the crime scene at about 6.30 am on March 15, and its cleaning up was taken up even while he was present.

She said that she believed that Mr Avinash Reddy was "protecting Shankar Reddy for personal reasons".

The petitioning couple claimed that D. Siva Sankar Reddy was the YSRC party

state general secretary and was close to both Mr Bhaskar Reddy and Mr Avinash Reddy. They claimed that Siva Sankar Reddy was a person with known criminal activities in the past, adding that her father had expressed anger against him on several occasions.

She also said that Siva Sankar was instrumental for her father loss in the MLC elections in 2016.

With regard to YS Bhaskar Reddy, she said that he was YSR Congress party in-charge for Pulivendula and a close associate of Siva Sankar Reddy.

The petitioners listed names of 15 persons, stat-

ing that they are having suspicion about their conduct as they were present at the crime scene based on personal inquiries after the murder and made it clear that they were not making any specific allegations or accusations against any of them.

The list includes: Rangaiah alias Ranganna (watchman), Yerra Gangi Reddy, Uday Kumar Reddy, D. Siva Sankar Reddy, Parameswar Reddy, late Srinivasa Reddy (Kasunuru village), Y.S. Bhaskar Reddy, Y.S. Manohar Reddy, Y.S. Avinash Reddy, Sankaraiiah (CD), Ramakrishna Reddy (ASI), E.C. Surendranath Reddy, Adinarayana Reddy

(former minister), Mareddy Ravindranath Reddy alias B. Tech Ravi and Surendar Reddy.

The AP High Court held the hearing in the case on Tuesday and listed the next hearing in the case on February 6.

On the other hand, slain leader Y.S. Vivekananda Reddy's family members did not attend the family Christmas held at the CSI Church at Pulivendula and skipped the death anniversary of Y.S. Jayamma, mother of late Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy at the YS Raja Reddy and Jayamma Park at Pulivendula, for which all family members used to take part regularly.

Stepson beats woman to death

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

The wife of a retired railway employee was chased and beaten to death by her stepson at Neredmet on Tuesday evening. Financial issues are suspected to be a reason behind the offence, an official of the Neredmet police said. The official said that, Yadagiri, the pensioner, had married Lalitha, 44, after his first wife died about two years ago. Since then, he was living separately with her at a flat in RK Enclave in Deendayalnagar.


About a month ago, Yadagiri received money as part of his retirement benefits. Since then, there have been issues between him and his two sons from the first marriage.

The police said at around 5.20 pm on Tuesday, when

■ **WHEN VICTIM** Lalitha was alone in her house, her step-son Krishna went there carrying a stick and started beating her.

Lalitha was alone in her house, her step-son Krishna went there carrying a stick and started beating her.

"When Krishna was beating Lalitha, she started shouting for help and ran to a nearby apartment. He chased her there and beat her to death," said Neredmet inspector A. Narsimha Swamy. "Krishna was apprehensive that Yadagiri may give the money to Lalitha and killed her," he said. Krishna escaped after the murder. A murder case was filed and the body of Lalitha was shifted to Gandhi Hospital mortuary for the autopsy.



13th DAY CEREMONY OF
Prof. Dr. A.K. MEENA
DOB: 01-01-1962 DOD: 17-01-2020
Parayanam: 9 am to 10 am
Lunch follows.
Venue: House No. 33-17, Officers Colony, Ramakrishnapuram, Secunderabad-56
From: **ALL FAMILY MEMBERS RELATIVES & FRIENDS**
Cell: 9700477923 / 9441514816

(S/1920/D01743)

OBITUARY


Mrs. RAZIA SULTANA SHARIEF
W/o Mr. Nusrat Ullah Shariff
(Former Principal of Sultan-Ul-Uloom Public School)
We regret to inform sad demise of her on 28 Jan, 2020. Funeral on 29 Jan, 2020 at 1 PM i.e. Zohar Prayers at New Bowenpally.
Deeply Mourned by: Family Members
Phone: 9704250040

(S/1920/D01741)

BHOG / ANTIM ARDAS


Mata JOGINDER KAUR MALHOTRA
w/o Late. S. JAGDISH SINGH MALHOTRA
Shall be held on 29th Jan 2020 from 12 noon - 1 pm at Sri Agrasen Bhawan, Secunderabad.
Followed by Guru Ka Langar. (Lunch)
MALHOTRA PARIWAR
THE NAMDHARI BUSINESS GROUP
9885272829, 9866104616

11th Day Ceremony


SHRI DULALA DHANARAJ
Retd. DGM, ONGC
The Ceremony will be held On 30th January 2020
Lunch Follows 12 Noon Onwards at :
Blue Fox Restaurant Lounge, The Cedar Banquets, R.K. Cineplex (FVR) Banjara Hills, Road No.2, Opp: LV Prasad Eye Hospital, Hyderabad.
Deeply Mourned by:
Wife : ALIMELU DHANARAJ
Brother: DULALA GIRIRAJ
DULALA FAMILY & SUATHA LAKSHMI, Dr.SUDHA and Dr.RENUKA
Ph: 9686910619 / 9704814442

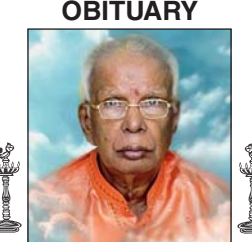
CALLED TO GLORY
Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints. (Psalm 116:15)


Rev. B.D. SAMUEL
W/o B. SUBHASHINI SAMUEL
Slept in the Lord on 28.01.2020
Funeral Service at Bethlehem M.B. Church, Malakpet on 29.01.2020 at 2:00 PM and there after Burial at Hayathnagar Christian Cemetery at 4:00pm
Further Details Contact : 900017007, 9949370520

11th DEATH ANNIVERSARY



SARDARNI KIRPAL KAUR
W/o Late Mohinder Singh Gupta
DOB: 19.10.1936 DOD: 29.1.2009
Your fond memories are still green in our hearts with fragrance of roses. Wherever you are, your blessings are on us.
Inserted by:
Satpal Singh, Varinder Pal Singh, Sainder Pal Singh, Daughters-in-law, Grand & Great Grand Children.

(S/1920/D01748)

OBITUARY


Shri C. SUNDER RAJ
D.O.B: 19.09.1942 D.O.D: 20.01.2020
10th Day Ceremony Nadupu 29.01.2020 Wednesday 6 pm onwards.
11th Day Ceremony Karyam 30.01.2020 Thursday 9.00 am onwards.
H.No. 10-104/94 Peerzaidiguda, Uppal, Hyd.
Inserted by: Wife, Son, Daughter-in-law, Daughters, Son-in-law, Grand Sons & Grand Daughters.
Ph: 9849196573

(S/1920/D01749)

11th DAY CEREMONY


VALLAMKONDA SRI HARI
DOD: 20.01.2020
Ceremony will be held on: 30-01-2020 @ Address: 301-Light, HB Colony, Moulaali, Secunderabad.
Inserted by:
Vallamkonda Ravi (Son)
K. Srinivas (Son-in-law)
M. Bhadrachal (Son-in-law)
B. Srinivas (Son-in-law)

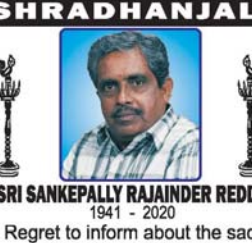
(S/1920/D01739)

BHOG / ANTIM ARDAS


Mata JOGINDER KAUR MALHOTRA
w/o Late. S. JAGDISH SINGH MALHOTRA
Shall be held on 29th Jan 2020 from 12 noon - 1 pm at Sri Agrasen Bhawan, Secunderabad.
Followed by Guru Ka Langar. (Lunch)
Inserted by
NAMDHARI SANGAT HYDERABAD

OBITUARY


Smt. DASIKA VIDYULLATHA
D.O.B: 16-08-1935 D.O.D: 19-01-2020
"We miss you forever"
Inserted by: Son: Dasika Ravi Shankar
Daughter-in-Law: Anisha Manasa
Grandson: Nirekh Shankar
Daughter: Malladi Anitha Rao
Son-in-Law: Malladi Seshagiri Rao
Grandson: Ravanth Shankar

SHRADHANJALI


SRI SANKEPPALLY RAJINDER REDDY
1941 - 2020
Regret to inform about the sad demise of our father in Virginia U S A on 25th January 2019.
May his Soul rest in peace.
Bereaved
Wife: Uma Sankeppally
Yugadhar Sankeppally - Veda
Chakradhar Sankeppally - Divya
Grand Sons & Grand Daughter
Ph: (USA) 001 552 600 283.
Ph: 9989765893, 9346110246



Bitter attack

K.V.P. Ramachander Rao says he has the right to vote in TS polls as he is an MP from the state, doesn't need anyone's generosity

IN BRIEF

Rally against TRS, man thrashed

Mancherial: A man who had supported an independent against the local TRS candidate in the civic election at Bellampalli alleged that he and his family had been assaulted by the police. Mr Pilli Anand and his family alleged that police officer of One Town police station had held them by the collar, hit them with shoes and pushed them into a police jeep. Mr Anand said the incident took place when he and his family were staging a protest against the police for not providing them security though they faced a threat from the local TRS leader who was defeated at the hands of the independent candidate they had supported.

HC committee gets new prez

Hyderabad: Syed Multani Pasha Quadri has been elected as the President of the Telangana High Court service employees association. Mr E. Prashanth Reddy and E. Nishanth Reddy were elected as the vice president and secretary respectively. The election to elect the new committee to the Association was conducted within the High Court premises. Mr B.Ramasura Reddy has been selected as the organizing secretary

Victory rally clash between fans

Adilabad: Groups owing allegiance to the MIM and the TRS clashed during a victory rally in Khanapur Colony in Adilabad by the TRS on Tuesday. Police rushed to the spot and dispersed both the groups. The issue cropped up when the TRS activists burst crackers in front of the house of a defeated MIM woman candidate. It is learnt that some local residents, supporters of the MIM, threw chilli power and footwear at the TRS leaders and activists and chased them away. Local women alleged that the TRS leaders and activists had misbehaved with some women. The TRS leaders alleged that MIM supporters and the defeated candidate's family attacked them. The groups lodged a complaint with the One Town police against each other.

JAGAN DENIED RELIEF FROM CBI HEARING

From Page 1

Senior counsel Niranjan Reddy sought an exemption for his client Mr Jagan Mohan Reddy from personal appearance for hearing at the CBI special court scheduled on January 31. As the High Court posted the case to February, the counsel sought interim relief from the Chief Minister till the day of next hearing. However, Justice Sri devi, refused to provide any such interim relief and told the counsel that they could seek exemption before the CBI special court by informing it of having filed criminal petitions before the High Court.

Uttam attacks KTR over polls

TPCC chief accuses SEC of not conducting municipal elections in fair manner

IREDDY SRINIVAS REDDY | DC HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee president N. Uttam Kumar Reddy on Tuesday accused TRS working president and minister K.T. Rama Rao of spearheading largescale irregularities in the just-concluded municipal elections.

Addressing a press conference at Gandhi Bhavan on Tuesday, Mr Reddy alleged that Telangana state was humiliated by the manner in which the elections were conducted.

He announced that he would raise the issue of how the judiciary was behaving in Telangana state in Parliament and that he had sought permission from the Lok Sabha Speaker.

He said that the Congress would take up the matter with the President and with the Chief Justice of India.

Mr Reddy said, "Despite the Congress having a majority in the Nereducharla municipality, the TRS and the State Election Commission brazenly misused and abused power and manipulated the election of the chairperson and the vice-chairperson."

He said that the Congress had eight seats at Nereducharla and the TRS seven. When the name of Congress Rajya Sabha MP Dr K.V.P. Ramachandra Rao was included as ex-officio member, TRS members stalled the election process after two members were sworn in as their defeat was imminent. The election was postponed to Wednesday.

He alleged that after postponing of the election, Mr Rama Rao pressurised the SEC and the director of municipal administration to add TRS MLC Subhash Reddy to the voters list in the morning although the deadline to include ex-officio members had ended at midnight on January 25.

"How shameless of



TPCC chief N. Uttam Kumar Reddy being arrested and taken away in a police van in Nereducharla on Tuesday.

— P. ANIL KUMAR

■ **UTTAM REDDY** alleged that Telangana state was humiliated by the manner in which the elections were conducted

KTR," Mr Reddy said and added that the Nereducharla municipal election symbolised the manner in which the municipal elections were held. The TPCC president said that instead of mocking the election process, the TRS should have prepared the list of municipalities at Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao's farm house and announced its victory.

Mr Reddy said that the municipal elections were not conducted in a fair manner and the role played by the SEC was highly objectionable.

"The results of municipal elections could not be called a people's mandate," he added.

TRS bags two more municipalities

S.A. ISHAQUI | DC HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

The TRS bagged the Nereducharla and Medchal municipalities in the elections held on Tuesday. With this, the TRS tally reached 114 municipalities out of 120.

The State Election Commission had postponed the elections to Tuesday at Nereducharla of Suryapet district in view of the controversy over the collector not allowing Rajya Sabha member Dr K.V.P. Ramachandra Rao to vote as ex-officio member in the election to elect the chairperson and vice chairperson on Monday. The Congress leaders

■ **FOLLOWING THE** inclusion of the MLC in voters list, Congress leaders including Mr Uttam Kumar Reddy and Dr Ramachandra Rao boycotted the elections and staged a protest in Nereducharla

approached the State Election Commissioner challenging the order of the collector. The SEC set aside the order of the collector and permitted Dr Ramachandra Rao to vote in the council election on Tuesday in view of the bulletin released by Parliament earlier recognising Dr Ramachandra Rao as Rajya Sabha member from

Telangana state.

The controversy ultimately led to the transfer of collector Amoy Kumar as he was alleged to have not responded to the request of TPCC chief N. Uttam Kumar Reddy to rectify the anomaly during a dharna on Sunday night.

Despite the Congress success in enlisting Dr Ramachandra Rao as ex-officio member, the party could not win the election. The TRS got the chairperson and vice-chairperson posts with the vote of MLC Subhash Reddy as he was included in the voter list as ex-officio members.

Following the inclusion of the MLC in voters list, Congress leaders including Mr Uttam Kumar

Reddy and Dr Ramachandra Rao boycotted the elections and staged a protest in Nereducharla. The police took them to custody and shifted them to Miryalguda. They were released after some time.

There was mild tension in the town due to the protest of the Congress leaders. Dr Ramachandra Rao speaking to reporters alleged that the TRS had completely polluted the political atmosphere and murdered democracy in broad daylight.

He alleged that the SEC was dancing on the tunes of the ruling party.

Elsewhere, the TRS won the Medchal municipality where it had 14 wards out of 24.

TS wants ₹12,000 cr for Mission Bhagiratha

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

Finance minister T. Harish Rao on Tuesday requested that the 15th Finance Commission recommend to the Centre to grant ₹12,000 crore towards maintenance of Mission Bhagiratha, the scheme to provide drinking water to all households.

The minister, accompanied by principal secretary (finance) K. Ramakrishna Rao, met 15th Finance Commission chairman Nand Kishore Singh in New Delhi on Tuesday. The delegation handed over to him a letter from Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao seeking Central funds for development works undertaken by the state government as well as financial assistance for maintenance of

Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Scheme (KLIS) and Mission Bhagiratha.

According to a press statement from the state government, the state's representatives sought more funds for infrastructure development and enhancement of credit limit to Telangana state.

Mr Harish Rao said, "The Finance Commission chairman lauded KLIS and Mission Bhagiratha as among the best projects in the country. Since the chairman will be submitting his report soon, I requested him to allocate funds for maintenance of these two projects."

Reminding that the Niti Aayog had recommended that the Centre grant ₹19,000 crore for Mission Bhagiratha, the minister also sought ₹ 12,000 crore for maintenance of the

scheme for the next five years. He explained to the chairman that water was being pumped to a minimum height of 80 metres and maximum of 600 metres through Kaleshwaram project, costing a huge amount on maintenance of the lift irrigation system.

Mr Harish Rao further said, "The formation of Telangana state itself was based on the need to ensure fair share in river waters." He sought ₹5,000 crore for the speedy completion of Kalwakurthy and Nettempadu projects.

With regard to Mission Bhagiratha, he told the commission chairman that the project was in line with the central government's proposed potable tapped water to every household in the country.

KTR: Raise voice against lack of funds by Centre

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

TRS working president K.T. Rama Rao on Tuesday asked party MPs to voice the state's concerns and raise issues pertaining to the State in the ensuing Budget session of Parliament.

Addressing the TRS Parliamentary Party (TRSP) meeting at Telangana Bhavan here, Mr Rama Rao asked the MPs to bring to the notice of the Union government issues pertaining to Central funds, projects and the negative impact of the ongoing recession on a progressive state like Telangana.

After the meeting, TRSP leader Dr K. Kesava Rao and TRS leader in the Lok Sabha Nana Nagaswara Rao told reporters that Mr Rama Rao had

called upon the MPs to raise the issue of pending GST share of the state from the Centre.

They said that Mr Rama Rao pointed out that despite several recommendations by Niti Aayog to help the state through special funds for its novel projects, the Centre had not done so. They said he had instructed the MPs from both Houses to speak about schemes such as Rythu Bandhu, Rythu Bhima and others.

"We have to register our displeasure by explaining that for the past six years, all that Telangana state has got is accolades and not a single paisa as encouragement for the good work it has done," Mr Rama Rao told the meeting, they said.

They said that the TRSP had decided to

impress upon the NDA government to focus on the immediate and more pertinent problems faced by the people rather than raking up issues such as CAA, NPR and NRC. It was also decided that the party MPs will follow the stand adopted by Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao with regard to CAA, NPR and NRC.

They said the Chief Minister had already made it clear that TRS opposes the CAA and will pass a resolution in the Assembly. Mr Rama Rao asked the MPs to speak on the meaningless decisions of the Union government and its impact on the economy.

The TRSP passed a resolution thanking Mr Chandrasekhar Rao for giving an opportunity to weaker sections in a big way in the civic polls.

BJP ACCUSES KCR, KTR OF MOCKING DEMOCRACY

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

State BJP president Dr K. Laxman on Tuesday alleged that Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao and his minister son K.T. Rama Rao had made mockery of democracy by grabbing coveted posts in the municipalities and corporations in an undemocratic manner.

Addressing a press conference at the state party office here, Dr Laxman alleged that the ruling party leaders had adopted undemocratic and unconstitutional methods to grab the posts in the civic bodies where the BJP had a majority.

He said 2020 would be the "agitation year" for the party against the "anti-people policies" of the TRS. The GHMC elections would be the semi-final for the party and the final would be the Assembly elections in 2023.

Terming Mr Chandrasekhar Rao and Mr Rama Rao as "political opportunists", Dr Laxman said the TRS had indulged in various tactics to win the elections including violation of norms, distribution of money to lure voters and misusing official machinery. He said the performance of the BJP was very encouraging as it had contested these elections without an alliance for the first time. Dr Laxman said the party had increased its vote percentage and number of seats.

Referring to the Thukkuguda municipality, where the TRS grabbed the council with ex-officio votes, he said the name of TRS Rajya Sabha member Dr K. Kesava Rao was originally listed for the Badangpet municipality. At the last minute, officials under pressure from the TRS changed it and allotted the vote to Thukkuguda.

Dr Laxman questioned how Dr Kesava Rao could vote as an ex-officio member in Telangana state when he was allotted Andhra Pradesh as per the Parliament bulletin.

He said that the party had lodged a complaint with the State Election Commission and would lodge a complaint with President Ram Nath Kovind and Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu, who is also Rajya Sabha Chairman. He demanded the cancellation of the election of the chairman and vice-chairman posts of Thukkuguda municipality.

Dr Laxman said that the party would continue its fight against the dictatorial, corrupt and family rule of Mr Chandrasekhar Rao.

He alleged that the TRS usurped the Nizamabad Municipal Corporation mayor's post by using the votes of ex-officio members and the MIM though the BJP was the single largest party with 28 seats.

BOT | WAR

Researcher worked with 1.7 billion tweets and wrote algorithm to filter through spam by spotting source of trend

BJP's Twitter network decentralised, Cong's unstructured

ADITYA CHUNDURU | DC HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

An independent researcher recently conducted an intensive study on Twitter posts over the past couple of months in an attempt to understand how the BJP and Congress, the two largest political parties in the country, spread information, or misinformation, on Twitter.

The most interesting inference is that the Twitter networks of both parties is very dissimilar: The BJP's network is very decentralised while the Congress' is unstructured. However, the scale of both networks is quite large, and comparable. A few weeks ago, the researcher, who asked to be identified only as Kumar, had conducted a study on

the most active Twitter accounts that posted political content. He found that 85 per cent of followers of the most popular accounts were bots — pre-programmed accounts which work without manual intervention. His latest study is a continuation of the earlier one.

Kumar worked with a database of over 1.7 billion tweets, which contained spam propaganda content pertaining to all political parties in the country, made by bot accounts since the beginning of November. Through an automated algorithm, he had identified them by parsing through the most popular political accounts on Twitter.

For this study, Kumar wrote an algorithm to filter through the spam by identifying the source of a particu-

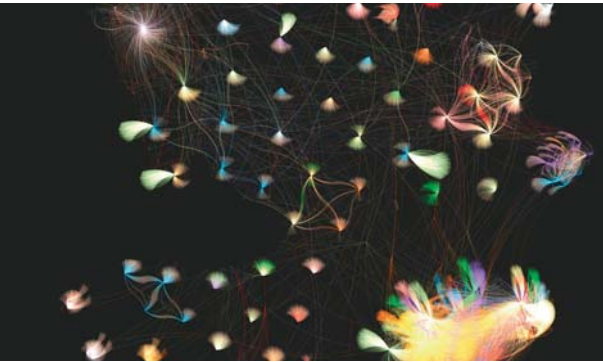


Network graphs of the Congress (left) and the BJP (right) Twitter bot network.

lar trend. He called these accounts "seeds". Another category of accounts he identified were those which tweeted at abnormally high intervals; for instance, accounts which tweeted over eight lakh times in seven years.

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, Kumar said he wished to understand how propaganda and misinformation is spread on the internet.

"My study identified political content by most parties in the country. However, in



Source: Kumar (name withheld)

terms of scale, the Congress and the BJP have the biggest. Both parties' Twitter networks work very differently," he said.

His algorithm identified over 2.7 lakh accounts which tweeted BJP content. As many as 7 per cent

accounts were seeds. He also prepared a network map using this data. "The BJP's network maps shows a very methodical approach. It has individual clusters which are almost islands of misinformation. Each cluster has a seed

which tweets the source material while the other accounts retweet it. There is very little communication between the clusters," Kumar said.

On the other hand, a lack of structure in Congress's network of over 1.2 lakh accounts was evident from its network map. Of these accounts, only 0.1 per cent were seeds. The map shows a blob of activity, with seed and other accounts jumbled in between.

"The Congress, it seems, is still at the stage of taking baby steps. It does not have the BJP's structure," Kumar said.

Another way both networks differ greatly is the manner in which seed accounts are dealt with. In case of the BJP, when a seed account gets deactivated,

another account in the same cluster is "promoted" to seed status. "In the Congress' network, when a seed account gets deactivated, the accounts dependent on it become inactive," he added.

One of the most important findings of the study was that the accounts of Congress office-bearers such as Rahul Gandhi never followed the party's seed accounts. On the other hand, all seed accounts of the BJP were followed by the BJP office-bearers, including ministers.

Also, the Congress' bot accounts did not tweet abusive content, unlike those of the BJP's. Kumar said that the BJP was normalising hate and abuse through its leaders following such accounts.



Chief concern

Gujarat CM Vijay Rupani says at least 100 students from the state staying in China expressed their desire to return and some of them are coming back

DECCAN CHRONICLE

WEDNESDAY | 29 JANUARY 2020 | HYDERABAD

SHORT TAKES

PREZ GIVEN LIMITED DOCUMENTS

From Page 1

Senior counsel Anjana Prakash told the court that the Tihar jail authorities enclosed only his medical report, trial court judgment and the details of the punishment along with the mercy petition.

Ms Prakash contended that there was non-application of mind by the President.

Solicitor general Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, disputed that only limited records relating to the case were sent to the President for deciding the mercy petition by Mukesh.

He handed over to the court two files — one containing notes and the other correspondences relating to the case.

A curative petition by Mukesh and Vinay Sharma was rejected on January 14, 2020.

Contending that “justice hurried is justice buried,” Ms Prakash told the court that Mukesh was subjected to indignities during his incarceration in Tihar jail, including alleged forcible sex with Akshay Kumar and assaults on him requiring his treatment at hospitals.

The court was told that he was put in solitary confinement — a ground for the commutation of the death sentence — and the details of the same were not put before the President while deciding the mercy petition.

Mr Mehta said that the alleged indignities, claimed to have been heaped on Mukesh, could not be a ground for commutation of death sentence. He disputed that Mukesh was kept in solitary confinement.

Mr Mehta said that solitary confinement in itself was not a ground for the commutation of death sentence and that any delay in deciding the mercy petition is dehumanising to the death row convict.

He described it as a mandate of Article 21 of the Constitution.

The solicitor general also told the court that it was not a case that Mukesh was confined to a room with no ventilation and cut-off from the rest of the world as happens in case of solitary confinement.

However, Ms Prakash, referring to an earlier judgment to the top court, said that solitary confinement cumulatively with other factors can be a ground for commutation.

AI, INDIGO SUSPEND COMEDIAN

New Delhi, Jan. 28: Stand-up comedian Kunal Kamra was suspended from flying by IndiGo and Air India on Tuesday after he allegedly heckled journalist Arnab Goswami aboard a Mumbai-Lucknow plane of the private airline. While IndiGo suspended Kamra from flying with it for a period of six months, Air India banned him until further notice.

Aviation minister Hardeep Singh Puri took notice of the incident and “advised” other airlines in India to impose similar restrictions on Kamra, stating “offensive behaviour designed to provoke and create disturbance inside an aircraft is absolutely unacceptable and endangers safety of air travellers.”

India should give refuge to oppressed: Modi

From Page 1

“This was Gandhiji’s wish and also the intention behind the Nehru-Liaquat Pact,” Mr Modi said.

He said that it is India’s responsibility to give refuge to those people who have been oppressed due to their faith. Mr Modi said that these people have faced historical injustice and to stop this and fulfil old promises, government brought the CAA.

“Our government brought in the CAA to give citizenship to such people but some political parties are in competition to do vote bank politics. For whose interest are they working? Why can’t they see atrocities faced by these people in Pakistan,” said the Prime Minister.

He said that many who are oppressed in these countries are Dalits. The Prime Minister pointed out



Prime Minister Narendra Modi presents a trophy to the winner during the Annual PM's National Cadet Corps (NCC) Rally 2020, in New Delhi on Tuesday. — PTI

that recently the Pakistan army had brought out an advertisement for sanita-

tion jobs open only for non-Muslims. The Prime Minister said

that many people left India at the time of Partition but asserted their rights over

■ STATING THAT many who are oppressed in the neighbouring countries are Dalits, the Prime Minister pointed out that recently the Pakistan army gave an advertisement for sanitation jobs open only for non-Muslims.

the properties here. Despite the right of India on these assets worth millions of crores, enemy property was kept in abeyance for decades, he added.

The Prime Minister said that those who opposed the enemy property law are the same people who have now come out to oppose the CAA.

He said that these people through their friends in international media are carrying out propaganda that due to decisions taken by the government, Modi’s image has been hit.



Tourists wear protective face masks in the wake of the coronavirus, at Taj Mahal, in Agra, on Tuesday. — PTI

China returnees to be in 14-day quarantine

Embassy sends fresh message to stranded Indians

Beijing, Jan. 28: Over 250 Indians, mostly students, stuck in Hubei province, the epicentre of the deadly coronavirus, will have to undergo a mandatory 14-day quarantine on their arrival in India, the Indian Embassy said on Tuesday as it started preparations to evacuate them.

The Indian nationals, mostly students, research scholars and professionals are working in Indian and international companies in central China’s Hubei province for which Wuhan is the capital.

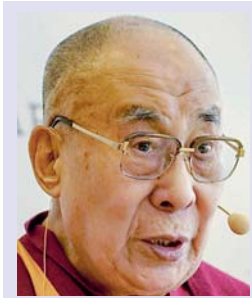
China has reported 24 more deaths from coronavirus epidemic, taking the number of fatalities to 106 as the confirmed cases of pneumonia caused by the outbreak stand at 4,515, the health authorities announced.

In a fresh communication to the stranded Indians, the Indian Embassy said, the Indian government has begun the process to prepare for evacuation of Indian nationals affected by the situation arising out of Corona-2019 virus outbreak in Hubei Province, China. Please be informed that those availing of this option will have to undergo a mandatory 14 days’ quarantine on arrival in India, it said.

Many of the stranded Indians have been representing to the Indian government to evacuate them at the earliest.

The Indian Embassy has opened three hotlines to help them and collect the details of the Indian nationals.

External affairs minister S. Jaishankar on Tuesday said the government is planning to send



Chant the ‘Tara Mantra’ to maintain peace of mind and remain free from worries. It would be beneficial for effectively containing the spread of the virus

— THE DALAI LAMA spiritual leader, in a message to his followers suffering from the disease

More people put under scrutiny

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs MUMBAI, JAN. 28

A man was hospitalised in Pune on suspicion of possible exposure to the novel coronavirus (nCoV) during his recent visit to China, taking the total number of such admissions in Maharashtra to six so far.

The man was admitted in the isolation ward of the Naidu Hospital on Monday night for the symptoms similar to the nCoV infection. Officials said no case of coronavirus infection has been found in Maharashtra yet.

Meanwhile, three Delhi-NCR residents with a travel history to China have been kept under observation in an

isolation ward at RML Hospital for possible exposure to the deadly nCoV, officials said.

Two people in Haryana and another in Punjab with travel history to China have been kept under observation after they showed novel coronavirus-like symptoms, officials said.

In Madhya Pradesh’s Ujjain, a woman and her son who recently returned from Wuhan were hospitalised for possible exposure to the nCoV, prompting the state government to step up vigil, while in Goa, a man has been admitted in the isolation ward of a hospital as a precautionary measure for possible exposure to the virus during his recent visit to China, a senior official said.

ly held up in the province. Chinese officials on Monday held talks with diplomats of India and other countries to discuss the evacuation arrangements. China has already permitted to evacuate US and various other countries which had

633 UNDER CLOSE WATCH IN KERALA

Thiruvananthapuram, Jan. 28: A total of 633 people, who returned to Kerala from China in recent days, are under observation for possible exposure to the novel coronavirus (nCoV), state health minister K.K. Shylaja said on Tuesday. Of the 633, seven are under observation in isolation wards at different hospitals, according to officials. The situation was under control but the state needs to be vigilant, the minister said.

Meanwhile, eight persons who arrived in Coimbatore from China on Monday evening have shown no symptoms of the deadly virus. They have, however, been advised against mingling with the public for another 28 days, officials said on Tuesday.

The eight persons were subjected to medical checkup for coronavirus.

None of them have symptoms but they will be closely monitored for the next four weeks. They were sent to their respective places, but all were asked not to mingle with people, attend public functions. — PTI

Consulates in Wuhan.

Overseas confirmed cases have been reported in Thailand (7), Japan (3), South Korea (3), the United States (3), Vietnam (2), Singapore (4), Malaysia (3), Nepal (1), France (3), Australia (4) and Sri Lanka (1).

— PTI

S-G told to finalise legal questions raised by lawyers

From Page 1

Solicitor general Tushar Mehta said that in pursuance of the court’s earlier direction, a meeting of lawyers took place but it could not finalise the common legal questions for consideration of the nine-judge bench.

“We could not finalise common questions for consideration of my lords. The Supreme Court can consider framing the questions,” the law officer said.

The bench then asked Mehta to furnish issues dealt by lawyers in the meeting. The court will

consider issues related to entry of Muslim women into mosques, female genital mutilation in the Dawoodi Bohra Muslim community and barring of Parsi women, married to non-Parsi men, from the holy fire place at Agary.

The court had on January 13 asked four senior lawyers to convene a meeting to decide on the issues to be deliberated by it in the matter. While referring the matter to a larger bench, the five-judge bench had said the debate about the constitutional validity of religious practices like bar on entry of women and

girls into a place of worship was not limited to the Sabarimala case.

It had said such restrictions are there with regard to entry of Muslim women into mosques and ‘dargahs’ and Parsi women, married to non-Parsi men, being barred from the holy fire place of an Agary.

It set out seven questions of law to be examined by the larger bench. They include interplay between freedom of religion under Articles 25 and 26 of the Constitution and need to delineate the expression ‘constitutional morality’.

— PTI

NORTHERN RAILWAY
No: 117/S/Auction Programme/Sale/2019-20 Date: 27/01/2020
Corrigendum in Auction Program of Northern Railway
Following amended dates of the auction program for the month of Feb., 2020 will be as under:

S. No.	Depots / Divisions	Existing	Amended/Extra date for e-auction
1.	Sr.DMM/LKO	09.02.2020	10.02.2020
2.	Sr.DMM/UMB	09.02.2020	10.02.2020

All other auction dates advised earlier will remain same. For further details regarding e-auction please visit Railway website www.ireps.gov.in. 281/2020
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

CENTRAL RAILWAY
Division: Nagpur ■ Department: Commercial
MECHANIZED CLEANING, RAG PICKING AND GARBAGE DISPOSAL CONTRACT
E-Tender Notice No.: NGP-C572-MCLEAN-BPG-2020. Name of work: Mechanized Cleaning, Rag picking and garbage disposal contract at Ballarshah Railway Station for 4 (Four) years. Approximate value: ₹ 4,08,36,162.63 (₹ Four Crore Eight Lakhs Thirty-six Thousand One Hundred Sixty-two and Sixty-three paise only). Tender Closing Date and Time: 20.02.2020 at 12.00 Hrs. Other details on Website: www.ireps.gov.in.
IP/20 **DRM(Commercial), Nagpur.**
All India Security Helpline 182

PARADIP PORT TRUST
SHORT e-TENDER CALL NOTICE
No.TOT/GEN-225 (Vol-II)/19/16 dt. 27.01.2020
Name of the work: “Allotment of 05 (Five) Nos. of Manual Iron Ore/ Iron Ore Pellet Plots”.
License Fees : ₹ 2,29,31,766/-, Wharfage Fees : ₹ 6,02,276/-, Last date & time of submission of bid : 02.02.2020 upto 15:00 Hrs. Date and time of Opening (Technical Bid) : 03.02.2020 upto 16:00 Hrs., Refer our website for details : <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>.
Traffic Manager
PPT/PR/630/19-20 Dt.28.01.2020

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY
Corrigendum No.1
e-Tender No. 2019/WP/BN/DM/ENG/NT-12/2020
Name of the work with its location : Composite works (Civil, Electrical and Mechanical) involving construction of Industrial Shops with Pre-Engineered Building (PEB), Extension of RCC Box bridge and other ancillary buildings, water supply system, drainage system, track works, road works, Electrification and illumination works, associated telecom works and Supplying & commissioning of specified Mechanical Machineries (EOT cranes etc) in connection with Detachment free rake examination facilities at Exchange Yard of Bondamunda, South Eastern Railway.
Description : Date & Time for closing of e-tender: As published earlier : 14.02.2020 at 13.00 Hrs. As revised : 14.02.2020 at 13.00 Hrs. Other terms and conditions will remain unchanged. Corrigendum can be seen on IREPS Website : www.ireps.gov.in
CAO/WP
Chamber Bhawan, J.C.Road, Patna
PR/02115/WP/ENG/C/19-20/32

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice
E-Tender Notice No. SPJW-180BOXNHL-BODY-2020, The Chief Workshop Manager, E. C. Railway, Samastipur for and on behalf of the President of India invites Open tender from experienced and financially capable tenderers for the following works in E-tendering mode of IREPS web portal of Indian Railways: **SI.No. 01. Name of work:** Fabrication of Side Wall, End Wall and their fitment to underframe of 180 BOXNHL-MBS wagon at Mechanical Workshop, E.C. Railway, Samastipur **SI.No. 02 Approx. Cost of the work:** ₹ 9,55,80,000.00 **SI.No. 03 Earnest Money to be deposited:** ₹ 6,27,900.00 **SI.No. 04 Date and Time of Tender Closing:** 14/02/2020 at 16:00 Hrs. **SI.No. 05 Website Particulars, where complete details can be seen at:** www.ireps.gov.in. Location on website: IREPS Home → E-Tender → Works → View Tenders → By Organisation → IR-Mechanical → EAST CENTRAL RLY / WAGON-SHOP-MECH-SPJ
Chief Workshop Manager, E.C. Rly/ Samastipur
PR/2113/SPJ/MECH/T/19-20/36

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice
E-Tender Notice No: CWMPD-11-2019-20, Date :24.01.2020, On line (through e-tendering) for the following works is invited by Chief Workshop Manager, Bridge Workshop, East Central Railway, Plant Depot, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyay for and on behalf of the President of India, from reputed Firms. E-Tender Closing Date : 24.02.2020 **SI.No. 1. Name of the work with its Location:** Marking, Punching, Cutting, Cleaning of cutting edge and Co2 Welding of different Structural Steel members for different types of Bridge Girders in Structural Yard at Engineering Workshop, E.C. Railway, Plant Depot, Mughalsarai. Document Cost = Rs.5000/- **SI.No. 2. Approx. cost of the work:** Rs. 1,41,63,749.14/- **SI.No. 3. Earnest Money:** Rs. 2,20,800.00/- **SI.No. 3. Date and time for Closing of e-tender:** 24.02.2020 at 15:00 Hrs. **SI.No. 5. Website particulars of e-tendering:** www.ireps.gov.in.
Executive Engineer (PD)
Plant Depot, E. C. Railway D.D.U
PR/2112/PDM/ENG/GT/19-20/36

संचालनालय चिकित्सा शिक्षा
पुराना नर्सिंग हॉस्टल, डी.के.एस. भवन परिसर
रायपुर, छत्तीसगढ़
फ़ोन: 0771-2234451, 2222212 ई-मेल: cgdme@rediffmail.com
क्र० 818/सचिशि/क्रप/2020 रायपुर दिनांक 25.01.2020

:-: Maniquins एवं Instruments का क्रय :-:
सिस्टम टेण्डर क्रमांक- 60251 :-:
संचालनालय चिकित्सा शिक्षा, रायपुर के अधीनस्थ नर्सिंग संस्थानों के उपयोग हेतु वर्ष 2019-20 में Maniquins एवं Instruments के क्रय हेतु ऑन-लाइन निविदा दिनांक 27.01.2020 से आमंत्रित की गई है, जिसमें निविदा निविदा भरने की अंतिम तिथि 18.02.2020 निर्धारित की गई है। इसका विस्तृत विवरण वेबसाइट <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in> पर सिस्टम टेण्डर क्रमांक-60251 में देखा जा सकता है। निविदाकारों को अपनी निविदा ऑन लाईन उपरोक्त वेबसाइट पर ही देनी होगी। इच्छुक निविदाकार अपने पंजीयन हेतु हमारे सर्विस प्रोवाइडर- एम-जंक्शन सर्विसेस लिमिटेड, 202 अंजनी टावर, होटल लाल बाग इन के पास, तेलीबाधा, रायपुर 492001 अथवा ई-मेल: contactus@junction.in, Helpline No.- 1800 419 9140 पर सम्पर्क कर सकते हैं। निविदा डाउनलोड करने हेतु वेबसाइट में पंजीयन एवं ऑनलाइन निविदा को हस्ताक्षरित तथा जमा करने हेतु डिजिटल सर्टिफिकेट प्राप्त करना अनिवार्य है।
संचालक चिकित्सा शिक्षा
छत्तीसगढ़
G-7637/1

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF PUNJAB
RECRUITMENT NOTICE
Adv. No. CUPB/19-20/013 Date: 27.01.2020
Applications are invited from eligible candidates for various non-teaching positions on regular/tenure/deputation basis. Last date to apply online: 26.02.2020 Last date for submission of hard copy: 04.03.2020
For details, visit websites www.cup.edu.in REGISTRAR
City Campus, Mansa Road, Bathinda-151001, Email: recruitment@cup.edu.in; Tele: 0164-2644116
विज्ञापन का हिंदी रुपान्तर विश्वविद्यालय की वेबसाइट पर उपलब्ध है।

PARLIAMENT OF INDIA
LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI
PRESS COMMUNIQUE
DEPARTMENTALLY RELATED STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (Amendment) Bill, 2019 as introduced in Lok Sabha, has been referred by the Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha to the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment headed by **Smt. Rama Devi, MP** for examination and report. The Committee have decided to invite memoranda containing suggestions/comments/views from the public in general and individuals/NGOs/Experts/ Stakeholders and Institutions, in particular.
2. Procedure for the same can be seen at our website <https://www.loksabha.nic.in> under the link 'Committee'- Press Release. davg 31201/11/0020/1920

NORTHERN RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE
Chief Engineer/TMC, Northern Railway, Headquarters office, Baroda House, New Delhi-110001, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites tenders through E-Procurement system for supply of the following items.

S No	E-Tender No	Description of Item	Qty	Due date Time
1	A47P90TMC	RAIL CLAMP DISC AND TAMPING ARM	02 Items	20.02.2020 at 11:30 hours.
2	A49P90TMC	VERTICAL CYLINDER (HYDRAULIC CYLINDER)	03 Nos.	20.02.2020 at 11:30 hours.
3.	A50P90TMC	WEAR PLATE (METAL WEARING PLATE) PLASSER	2 No.	20.02.2020 at 11:30 hours.
4.	A49P90TMC	HYDRAULIC PUMPS AND MOTORS	14 Items	04.03.2020 at 11:30 hours.
5.	A26P90USFD	DIGITAL ULTRASONIC TESTING EQUIPMENT	07 Nos.	04.03.2020 at 11:30 hours.
6.	A27P90USFD	SPARE PARTS FOR USFD MACHINE	05 Items	04.03.2020 at 11:30 hours.

Note:- 1. The complete information of above E-Procurement tenders is available on website www.ireps.gov.in. The firms, who desire to participate against E-Tenders, are advised to electronically register themselves on the above website for which they would be required to have a class-III digital certificate from certifying agencies authorized under IT Act 2000, by Govt. of India, manual offers against E-Tenders will not be accepted.
Notice No. 219-S/1/TMC/09/2019-20 Dated: 27.01.2020 285/2020
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE



Coordination vital

MP Chief Minister Kamal Nath says confrontations between the centre and state governments not good for country

SHORT TAKES

ED CALLS PFI, REHAB OFFICERS

New Delhi, Jan. 28: The Enforcement Directorate has summoned seven office-bearers of PFI and an NGO linked to it in connection with a money laundering probe against them, officials said on Tuesday.

They said the office-bearers of the Kerala-based Popular Front of India (PFI) and those from Rehab India Foundation have been asked to depose before the investigating officer of the case here on Wednesday. According to official sources, the summonses issued under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) come against the backdrop of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) finding that the recent violent protests in Uttar Pradesh and other parts of the country against the Citizenship Amendment Act had an alleged "financial link" with PFI but the Kerala-based organisation has termed this as "baseless." The case under the PMLA against the PFI was filed by the ED in 2018. The ED is also probing the remittances and withdrawal of funds from nine bank accounts of Rehab India, officials said.

BJP MLA IN MP TERMS CAA DIVISIVE

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, JAN. 28

Bharatiya Janata Party MLA from Maihar in Madhya Pradesh Narayan Tripathy on Tuesday came out openly against Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), causing a ripple in his party. Tripathy, who had literally raised a banner of revolt by voting for a Bill moved by the treasurer bench in the state Assembly around three months ago, sparked unease in BJP by opposing CAA.

"CAA is a divisive law. It is a threat to unity and integrity of India. Our Constitution makers wanted India to be secular, but CAA goes against the spirit of the Constitution. We now have to decide if we should honour our constitution or tear it apart against the backdrop of passage of CAA in the parliament. CAA has caused distrust among different communities. Muslims in villages who earlier used to attend Hindu functions are now turning their faces away," Tripathy told reporters.

A video showing him making the statement has gone viral in social media, causing huge embarrassment to the BJP. However, the BJP sought to play down the issue.

"Tripathy is in BJP and will remain in BJP. He may seek clarification from the party leadership if he has any doubt on CAA," BJP spokesman Rajneesh Agrawal told this newspaper.

AWARENESS ON STATUTE LITERACY

AKSHEEV THAKUR | DC BENGALURU, JAN. 28

As India celebrated its 71st Republic Day recently, a school teacher from Kerala is on a mission to spread constitutional literacy across the country.

Binu P.G., a teacher who undertakes trips for academic purposes, is keen to see academic institutions come up with Constitution Clubs.

"Constitutional literacy is the need of the hour. I tried forwarding the suggestion to start constitution clubs in all schools and colleges. Hope the government of India will fulfil our dream and soon all academic institutions will have such clubs," he said.

Binu believes that Constitutional literacy will bring honesty not only among legislators but also citizens. "Our Constitution is like a chain of pearls. Its light should reach every nook and corner of India. We successfully completed 70 years of journey of democracy. Indian Parliament is the supreme law-making body of the country. We should realise the soul of Indian Constitution, especially lawmakers. Then we can expect sincere and honest lawmaking, and it will touch every Indian citizen's heart," he added.

Didi's art of protest



West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, along with other artists including Jogen Chowdhury and Subhaprasanna, took to the brush on Tuesday and created paintings to express dissent against the CAA and proposed NRC exercise. According to a Trinamul leader, the paintings will be exhibited in various galleries of the country. Mamata has so far led 11 protest marches and seven rallies in various parts of the state against the CAA and the NRC.

Use old NPR format, urges Nitish Kumar

NAYEAR AZAD | DC PATNA, JAN. 28

Bihar Chief Nitish Kumar on Tuesday said that the Central government should continue with the old format of the NPR that was used in 2011 to avoid confusion among the people.

Nitish Kumar who is the JD(U)'s national president and had been running a coalition government with the BJP said that his party would request the government to consider dropping fresh columns seeking birth details of parents.

"The NPR has been there since 2011 but all of us believe that adding questions about parents' birth details is likely to create confusion. Several people in our country are not aware of their parents' birth details. The government should consider using the old format," Chief Minister Nitish Kumar said. He was talking to reporters at his official residence here after presiding over a meeting of JD(U) parliamentarians, legislators and office-bearers of the party's Bihar unit, even though disgruntled top leaders like national vice-president Prashant Kishor and national general secretary Pavan Varma remained conspicuous by their absence.

Political parties, who have dubbed the NPR as the first step towards NRC, have been of the view that the government may use it in the future while implementing pan-India NRC.

Last month while speaking in the state Assembly he had opposed NRC and said that the "exercise will not be implemented in Bihar. Prime Minister has also clarified about the issue".

His categorical statement on the issue of NRC



Nitish Kumar

had caused unease among few BJP leaders who have been urging the Centre to implement the exercise across the country including Bihar and Jharkhand.

On Tuesday, he also expressed concerns over the ongoing nationwide protests on the issue of Citizenship Amendment Act and said that the matter is in the Supreme Court and "people who have doubts should wait for the court to hear the petition and then decide".

He gave the statement on the sidelines of his party's meeting which was organised to discuss strategies for the Assembly elections scheduled to be held later this year.

JD(U) which supported the CAB in the Parliament has been worried after political leaders including several from his party opposed the CAA and NRC. Two prominent JD(U) leaders Prashant Kishor and Pavan Varma have been urging the Chief Minister not to implement the exercise in Bihar.

According to political analysts here, the Opposition parties especially the RJD and the Left have been talking about using the issue against Nitish Kumar and his party during the Assembly polls which is scheduled to be held by the end of this year.

Sharjeel Imam arrested in Bihar

He will be handed over to Delhi Police

NAYEAR AZAD | DC with agency inputs PATNA, JAN. 28

After evading arrest for almost a week, activist and JNU student Sharjeel Imam was arrested from Bihar's Jehanabad on Tuesday. The Delhi Police had earlier detained his younger brother Muzammil and three of his associates for questioning. Sources, however, said that Sharjeel Imam was picked up from Kako locality in Jehanabad during a raid on Tuesday.

A joint police team from Delhi and Uttar Pradesh with logistic support from Bihar police had earlier conducted multiple raids across the state including his ancestral home at Kako in Jehanabad and Patna to trace his whereabouts.

"Bihar police provided all kind of support to Delhi Police team which had arrived here to arrest Sharjeel Imam. After all legal formalities he will be handed over to Delhi Police team and they can take him to Delhi for further investigation," ADG-headquarters Jitendra Kumar told reporters.

Reacting on Sharjeel Imam's arrest, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar told reporters in Patna that, "nobody should be allowed to speak or do anything against the interest of our country. The matter is being investigated by the police and the court will decide on the issue."

Sharjeel Imam, a post-graduate in computer science from IIT Mumbai is currently doing research in Modern India history at JNU. A day earlier his mother and uncle had



Sharjeel Imam

■ JNU STUDENT Sharjeel Imam is slapped with charges of sedition and inciting enmity between communities

called him "innocent" and claimed that cases registered against him were "politically motivated".

His father who passed away a few years ago was associated with JD(U) and had also unsuccessfully contested 2005 Assembly polls from Jehanabad against the RJD.

"He was concerned about CAA and NRC but I don't think he gave the speech to provoke people. Our family believes in the Constitution and has full faith in the law of the land. His speeches have been twisted for political gains," Sharjeel Imam's uncle had said after police raided his ancestral house on Monday.

Sharjeel Imam was slapped with charges of sedition and inciting enmity between communities under section 124A, 153A and 505 of the IPC.

The Delhi and UP police had booked him after his alleged speech went viral on the social media recently. The JNU scholar was wanted by police of several states, including Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Delhi.

He was slapped with a sedition case after a video of his purported speech went viral on social media where he was heard speaking about "cutting off" Assam and the north-east from the rest of India.

"If five lakh people are organised, we can cut off the North-East from India permanently. If not, at least for a month or half a month. Throw as much *muwad* (variously described as pus or rubbish) on rail tracks and roads that it takes the Air Force one month to clear it. Cutting off Assam (from India) is our responsibility, only then they (the government) will listen to us. We know the condition of Muslims in Assam...they are being put into detention camps," he was seen in the video as saying.

Meanwhile, the lawyer of Sharjeel Imam claimed that the anti-CAA activist had "surrendered" before the police.

Adv. Mishika Singh told reporters that Imam was willing to cooperate in the investigation. Whereas, on his Twitter account, Imam said, "I have surrendered to the Delhi Police on 28. 1. 2020 at 3 PM. I am ready and willing to operate with the investigation. I have full faith in due process of law. My safety and security are now in the hand of Delhi Police. Let peace prevail."

BJP MP: Shaheen Bagh protesters can rape, kill

SHASHI BHUSHAN | DC NEW DELHI, JAN. 28

As the BJP decided to make anti-CAA protests in Delhi's Shaheen Bagh its main plank for the Assembly polls in the national capital, incendiary and hate speeches seemed to be growing with furious intensity.

On Tuesday, BJP MP Parvesh Verma came up with a fresh hate rant. "Lakhs of people gather there (Shaheen Bagh). People of Delhi will have to think and take a decision."

Raising the alarm, Verma launched into a bitter verbal attack against the minorities, and he said: "They will enter your houses, rape your sisters and daughters, kill them... There is time today, Modi and Amit Shah won't come to save you tomorrow."

On Monday, anti-minority slogans like *goli maaro saalo ko* (sic) were raised by the public at a rally addressed by Union minister Anurag Thakur.

The Election Commission issued a showcause notice to Thakur on Tuesday after Delhi's chief electoral officer submitted a report to the EC on the "provocative" language used by the minister while canvassing for his party candidate in Rithala.

He has been given time till 12 noon on Thursday, January 30, to respond to the notice.

The Delhi CEO also submitted its report in connection with Verma's comments against the Shaheen Bagh protesters and his tweet on religious places.

Verma, who is the party's MP from West Delhi, said what happened in Kashmir with Kashmiri Pandits could happen in the national capital too, warning that lakhs of anti-CAA protesters in Shaheen Bagh could enter homes to kill and rape women.

"What happened in Kashmir with Kashmiri Pandits could happen in Delhi also. Lakhs of people gather at Shaheen Bagh, they could enter houses, rape and kill your sisters and daughters. The people need to decide now," Verma said.



Protesters will enter your houses, rape your sisters and daughters, kill them... There is time today, Modi and Amit Shah won't come to save you tomorrow

— PARVESH VERMA BJP MP

Verma said the people of the country felt safe because of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, but he might not be able to save them if a situation like this arises.

"Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his deputy Manish Sisodia have supported Shaheen Bagh protesters and now it is time for the people of the national capital to decide who they want to vote for in the polls," Verma added.

Speaking at an election meeting in Janakpuri, in the presence of Union home minister Amit Shah on Monday, Verma had said that if the BJP formed a government in Delhi, the Shaheen Bagh protest site would be vacated on the night of February 11 itself.

Verma also said there were 40 mosques, graveyards and mazars illegally constructed on government land in his West Delhi constituency, and if the BJP won the elections, the land would be vacated within a month.

At a public rally in Rithala, Thakur shouted *desh ke gaddaron ko, to which the crowd responded goli maaro saalo ko* (sic) (shoot down the traitors). He raised the pitch of nationalism as he linked the Opposition parties with the anti-CAA protests at Shaheen Bagh and with alleged anti-India slogans, and then asked the crowd to raise the controversial slogan. He was also heard telling the crowd to raise the slogan in such a high pitch that Giriraj Singh, a fire-brand Hindutva leader and a Union minister, could hear it.

Pak envoy summoned, served demarche

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JAN. 28

India on Tuesday summoned a senior official from the Pakistan High Commission and issued a "strong demarche against abduction of a Hindu girl from her marriage ceremony on January 25, with the help of local police in Hala city of Sindh province," Indian government sources said on Tuesday.

India also issued a "demarche regarding the desecration of the Mata Rani Bhatiyani Temple in Tharparkar Sindh province on January 26," sources added.

Sources further said, "India asked the government of Pakistan to investigate and take urgent action for protecting and promoting the security, safety and welfare of its citizens including the minority Hindu community in Pakistan and take immediate measures to expeditiously bring the perpetrators of such despicable and heinous acts to justice."

Under fire due to the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and proposed NRC agitation, the government has repeatedly drawn attention to the atrocities on Hindus in Pakistan.

BAD | CHAPTER

Angry students shout 'Go Back' slogans, show black flags to Dhankhar over CAA

Students force WB Governor to leave CU convocation

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, JAN. 28

A fierce protest by a group of students forced West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar on Tuesday to skip the Calcutta University (CU) annual convocation at the event. Dhankhar blamed the Mamata Banerjee government for the "obstruction."

This was perhaps the first time in the CU's history founded in 1857 when the Governor being the Chancellor also was stopped from presiding over its annual convocation. It was also the second time in a month when Dhankhar was prevented by agitating students from attending a varsity convocation. He was stopped from entering the Jadavpur University campus to attend the convocation on December 24.

Calling Dhankhar a 'BJP agent' over the Citizenship Amendment Act, National Register of Citizens and National Population Register, the CU students demanded that their vice-chancellor Sonali Chakravarti Banerjee should hand over the D.Litt to the Nobel Laureate. In the afternoon Dhankhar reached the venue, Nazrul Mancha in south Kolkata in his convoy.

Angry students shouted 'Go Back' slogans and showed black flags to him. Outnumbering the Governor's security personnel including a team CRPF commandos, they gheraoed his sedan and even hit its bonnet. Dhankhar remained stranded inside his car till the demonstrators were dispersed by his security personnel. Walking into the auditorium's green room he congratulated Prof



Students of various colleges and universities stage a protest in front of West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar (CL) on his arrival at the Calcutta University in Kolkata on Tuesday.

Banerjee and signed the D.Litt. Dhankhar, however, could not go to the dais as the students shifted their agitation in front of it. The CU V-C announced of accepting the students' demand after failing to pacify them.

Dhankhar left the venue. The students' agitation also ended. The CU V-C conferred the D.Litt on Prof Banerjee on the dais later.

Dhankhar vented his anger and anguish in a series of

tweets. He tweeted, "The uppermost thought in mind while leaving Calcutta University without attending the Convocation is to ensure there is no compromise of the immense respect we have for Nobel laureate Abhijit Vinayak Banerjee on whom we are conferring honorary D Litt (honoris causa). I have signed the D.Litt (honoris causa) in the presence of Abhijet Bannerjee, VC and others."

Describing Prof Banerjee as "A man of sterling qualities and disarming grace", the Governor underlined that he was "Greatly touched by his modest approach and depth."

He, however noted, "Those who compromised culture and decorum need to be in reflective mode. Had some memorable moments with Nobel laureate Abhijit Vinayak Banerjee and

his mother after wearing the robe for Convocation."

Dhankhar observed, "The actions of those who created or stage managed unseemly spectacle would resonate for long in the ears of cultured people of WB. VC sought permission from me as Chancellor to proceed with the Convocation. In view of the enormous respect I have for Abhijit Bannerjee and mindful of the reputation of the iconic Calcutta University, I accorded the same."

He added, "Convocation of Calcutta University was at Nazrul Mancha auditorium and not on the campus of Calcutta University. There was total failure of the state machinery to maintain law and order. The obstruction was stage managed. This happens to constitutional head. Where are we heading!"

MIND

VICTOR HUGO

One sees qualities at a distance
and defects at close range

POWER

FRANZ KAFKA

Idleness is the beginning of all
vice, the crown of all virtues

Edit

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DECCAN CHRONICLE

WEDNESDAY | 29 JANUARY 2020 | HYDERABAD

DECCAN
Chronicle

29 JANUARY 2020

Will Centre succeed in
selling Air India now?

The government's announcement that it was ready to sell its entire stake in Air India effectively adds another airline to the failures' list. It means that the government cannot bring the Maharaja back from the ICU despite all its might. Since private airlines were allowed in Indian skies, 13 airlines have been shut, and this will rise to 14 with Air India's sale.

While today's generation may see the national carrier as a symbol of inefficiency and a drag on government finances, older people have fond memories. Air India was the real Maharaja of India's skies since its earlier avatar Tata Airlines was nationalised by Jawaharlal Nehru's government in 1953 to create Air India. The airline's troubles began ever since it was exposed to competition in the early 1990s.

Chronic mismanagement by Air India officials and missteps by successive governments bled the national carrier. The airline's fall into the abyss gathered pace over the past decade as it took on higher levels of debt to purchase over 100 aircraft, slashed fares below the budget airline prices and continued to retain excessive and inefficient employees. The result is that it is now sitting on a mountain of ₹60,000-crore debt. All attempts to revive the airline proved futile, forcing the government to put Air India on the block in 2018. But that offer found no takers as the government wanted to retain a 25 per cent stake with itself and wanted the buyer to take over around ₹33,000 crores in debt.

Under the current sale offer, the buyer must take over at least ₹23,000 crores debt to acquire the national carrier. Compared to this, IndiGo, the only profitable Indian airline, has a debt of ₹17,337 crores. Some analysts claim the prospective buyer can recover the acquisition cost by adopting the sale-and-leaseback method for Air India's 121 aircraft. But the situation doesn't seem quite that rosy. One of the major red flags for any buyer is the employee cost of Air India. The airline has around 9,400 permanent employees and 3,600 fixed-term contract staff, including 1,850 pilots and 4,600 cabin crew, who enjoy benefits such as discounted air tickets and pensions.

The bid document doesn't make the government's stand clear on the treatment of employees and pension liabilities. Some analysts claim Air India would be a good buy due to its international routes, but a report by the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India claimed all its international routes were loss-making. One can't really be sure whether Air India would find any buyers this time too.

Air India took advantage of the protective cover offered by government ownership to undercut fares to a level below budget carriers' costs. This aggressive pricing had pushed the entire aviation sector into a crisis. If the government finally succeeds in selling its airline, it would be good for the aviation sector as a whole. Let there be no Maharaja in this era of democratisation.

Why abolish AP Council?

There is nothing to suggest that Andhra Pradesh's decision to abolish the state's Legislative Council on Monday was taken after examining the issue properly. United Andhra Pradesh gave itself the legislative upper chamber in 1958, but it was scrapped in 1985 by then chief minister and TD founder N.T. Rama Rao. He felt, like incumbent CM Jagan Mohan Reddy, that his opponents, who dominated the Upper House, were being needlessly obstructive over legislation. But it was revived in 2007 by then CM Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy, the present CM's father. This should have given Mr Reddy pause. Reflection away from the rough and tumble of day-to-day politics was in order.

It is not compulsory for states to have an Upper House, and most don't. We have taken the idea of a bicameral legislature from Britain. The House of Lords, in principle, is meant to be a deliberative body away from the everyday push and pull of politics. In Britain's special circumstances, the hereditary peers had to be given a place in lawmaking even as democracy had taken full charge. Nevertheless, from time to time demands are made to abolish the Lords completely, though its powers are already truncated.

In India, the Upper House is meant to allow those of eminence and substance, who aren't politicians, to weigh in on the legislative process, cutting out partisan politics.

This worked to an extent in the early years of the republic. Then even senior politicians, no longer active, who came to the Rajya Sabha appeared more thoughtful and contemplative.

This alas seems to be less so today. Nevertheless, the second chamber at the Centre and in states has sometimes enriched debate and produced thoughtfulness. A state may have good reasons to discard it. But political hubris is best avoided in such decisions. Opponents in the Upper House also represent an important constituency.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

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Subhani

GOVT TO SELL
100% STAKE IN
AIR INDIAREADY
TO GIVE
HIM UP

Sanjeev Ahluwalia

The sad truth is that global economic stability and growth, including for India, now depend on the unstable predilections of a global party-pooper, who is the President of the United States till at least the third quarter of FY 2021. The International Monetary Fund has said as much, albeit in "diplomatese" — not surprising as the United States remains its major shareholder.

This is not to say we have not had problems at home since the end of FY 2018. First the illness and then the tragic demise of one of the BJP's tallest economic assets — the suave, Lutyens-friendly Arun Jaitley — hit the government hard as officialdom quickly disintegrated into chaos in the absence of skilled political economic leadership.

The government has been firefighting since FY 2019 using mostly Band-Aids of the cheapest kinds. This is fine for temporary spells of uncertainty or instability. But to reverse a three-year-long slowdown requires something more than big ideas unsupported by implementation capacity and undermined by worsened political adventurism in the garb of economic policy.

So what must the Union Cabinet ponder on and resolve?

First, a finance minister simply cannot function with less operational freedom and discretion than that of any of our six Army commanders. Make no mistake. We have been in a losing economic war since FY 2018.

When desk-bound New Delhi-based generals have not listened to Army commanders in the past, the results have been dire, like our rout in 1962 after a short skirmish with China. Diffident decentralisation of authority partly explains our recent inability to respond

appropriately to the economic stress we have been exposed to.

The political-economy instincts of Piyush Goyal are sound and becoming better by the day. He had no option but to present the FY 2020 Budget proposals in February last, appropriately retaining the "virtual slippers" of the absent Arun Jaitley on the FM's chair, as Bharat did during the absence of Lord Ram.

Similarly, Nirmala Sitharaman, who followed Piyush Goyal, has the makings of a fine FM. But being junior in the BJP hierarchy, she is constrained from charting an independent, cohesive path for growth with stability.

The result is that "brave" targets — think a \$5 trillion economy by

BUDGET 2020-21

2024 or doubling of farmers' incomes; systematically important schemes — think PM Kisan Samman for transfer of direct benefits, "More crop per drop" or "liberalising agriculture" from domestic market and export restraints, have failed to take root.

Rectitude, fiscal or otherwise, is a good thing. But even the most prudent athlete takes permissible performance enhancing drugs if he/she is feeling down. The ongoing demand recession is an outcome of the slowdown caused by the big disruption by ex-RBI governor Raghuram Rajan in the chumny way business was done, leading the switch

from the existing 42 per cent to 32 per cent is retrogressive.

A continued allegiance to "fetishes" like fiscal deficit being reduced to two per cent of GDP as a performance metric from the Jaitley years reflects moribund reflexes.

Rectitude, fiscal or otherwise, is a good thing. But even the most prudent athlete takes permissible performance enhancing drugs if he/she is feeling down. The ongoing demand recession is an outcome of the slowdown caused by the big disruption by ex-RBI governor Raghuram Rajan in the chumny way business was done, leading the switch

Transferring money directly to the poor will be more sustainable, more efficient and carbon footprint sensitive because it will decrease fertiliser, water and electricity consumption

to responsible bank lending, uniform norms for recognition of financial stress and recovery of bank funds through foreclosure of debt-ridden corporations.

Fiscal loosening is necessary to transfer income to the common man to substitute for lost income, lost jobs or lower business returns. Unlike the rich who tend to save during windfalls — the richest expatriate these to safe havens overseas — the poor consume windfall income thereby aiding in reviving demand.

The fiscal cost can be reduced by combining it with ending the direct subsidy to the fertiliser industry, ending subsidy on cooking gas and the wasteful food procurement and supply programme — which cost around ₹3 trillion, or 1.5 per cent of the GDP. Cost-based tariffs for irrigation and electricity supply can recover another 0.5 per cent of GDP wasted by state governments on subsidising these production inputs.

Organised industry and big farmers — the major recipients of direct and indirect subsidies — have grown fat at the expense of the government treasury in the name of the poor. Transferring money directly to the poor will be more sustainable, more efficient and carbon footprint sensitive because it will decrease fertiliser, water and electricity consumption without loss of productivity due to the price incentive to conserve.

The government must become a transparently, financially prudent investor and junk infrastructure projects with low social returns. Are social returns even calculated today? And if so, by whom? And why is this data not available to the public?

Winning an economic war is all about operational smarts and not high intellect. But just good intentions are never enough. Without any demonstrated commitment to allocate public capital in an economically moral manner, dwindling political gains can be expected.

The writer is adviser, Observer Research Foundation

LETTERS

CORONAVIRUS

The death toll has globally risen over the past couple of days due to the coronavirus. The virus is rapidly disseminating and is presently one of the biggest global concerns. Highly populated countries could suffer the worst consequences if more substantial measures are not be taken by governments.

Rudra Krishna
Hyderabad

AIR INDIA

It is sad that the government has decided to hand over Air India to the private sector (*Centre offers to sell Air India, DC, Jan. 28*). Air India is not just an airline. It represents the ethos of the people of India. The flamboyant Maharajah has carried the people of not only India but the world in style. The government must not look into the loss factor of the national carrier which caters not only to the general public but also the government needs.

Varghese George
Secunderabad

BANK STRIKE

It is very unfortunate that bank employees and officers are once again going on strike (*Bank unions threaten strike from Jan. 31, DC, Jan. 28*). I do not understand why the Indian Banking Association and the Centre are not making sincere efforts to settle the issue since more than two years wherein series of strikes have been undertaken by the bank personnel. When the Central government employees and pensioners have already been given revised pay and emoluments as per the pay commission reports, why not the bank employees issues be settled pending since year 2017?

Katuru Durga Prasad Rao
Hyderabad

Public sector
outlay may rise

NEW DELHI, January 28. A full meeting of the Planning Commission will be held on Friday, to discuss the broad dimensions and the general policy of the draft Fourth Plan (1969-74).

The meeting which will be presided over by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, Chairman of the Planning Commission, is expected to finalise the draft document. The meeting will be attended by the Deputy Chairman D.R. Gadgil and members of the Commission.

The final document will be placed before the Union Cabinet after which it will be discussed.

50 YEARS AGO IN
DECCAN
ChronicleKurt Jacobsen and
Sayeed Hasan KhanThe only way
to get rid of
Trump is to
vote him out

Donald Trump's rancid reputation will flourish long after he slinks away, ranked somewhere between historical Caligula and fictional Voldemort. He will relish infamy so long as he retains the blind adoration of 40 per cent or so of US voters who cling to his pricey garments. This tinsel messiah's only creed is personal gain. Knowing nothing else, he treats government like a big-business enterprise, i.e. as a tinpot tyranny, and is running the shambles into the ground, like his earlier bankrupt enterprises.

Yet, for all his flaws, in one crucial respect Trump is a rational and shrewd operator. He scrupulously confers on the American upper class whatever they desire — tax cuts, military toys, anti-labour measures, environmental disregard, welfare cuts, deregulation

and every advantage short of reinstating slavery. From force of habit Trump cheerily adds misogyny, racism and bigotry to the mix. If you're a tycoon, what's not to like? Less financially fortunate Republicans hail the orange-haired chief despite, or more likely because of his mean bluster. His impulsive foreign policy acts do dismay some supporters, but plenty of Ivy League professionals and pundits applaud his audacity.

Presidents may be impeached for "treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanours". An inept or appalling performance does not count. The problem for impeachment-obsessed Democrats was finding a charge against Trump that did not apply to most or all prior Presidents. They flubbed it. This impeachment is little more than a show trial mounted by establishment Democrats to dis-

tract attention from their unwillingness to offer working Americans anything they need. Even "progressive reformer" Elizabeth Warren has backed off a promise for universal healthcare (and cost her popular support). Rival Bernie Sanders, still staunchly progressive, is being pelted with baseless accusations of anti-Semitism (a tactic that worked against Jeremy Corbyn) and sexism to divide supporters and thus boost conservative candidates. The impeachment process is predicated on the belief that it would inhibit Trump, but it only goaded him into wag-the-dog manoeuvres. All that it will accomplish is to ensure that every future US administration facing an Opposition majority in Congress will be impeached for whatever reason.

Trump's alleged offence was to strong-arm the Ukraine regime to

dig up dirt on Joe Biden's son, who in 2014 landed a \$50,000-a-month post with Ukrainian natural gas consortium, Burisma. Was it because of daddy's connections? You be the judge. Like it or not, every presidential candidate plays dirty with opponents; how else did the titillating Steele dossier wind up in the possession of Clinton's camp? Every President since the FBI was formed in 1908 utilised it and other agencies to surveil opponents.

In 1968, LBJ learned that Richard Nixon interfered with Vietnam negotiations in order to prevent a deal before the election. The irony is that he could not disclose the Republican candidate's treachery without admitting he spied on him. Nixon then spied on anyone he fancied a foe. Gerald Ford pardoned Nixon, thereby condoning his activities.

After presiding over the colossal security failure of 9/11, George W. Bush signed the Patriot Act that placed virtually all presidential or security agency activity beyond public scrutiny.

It's not just his aggrieved acolytes who ask what's so different about Trump. The anticlimactic end of the tedious circus this month hopelessly permits a turn of critical attention to policy issues. If impeachment follows strict and scripted partisan lines, as it does, it is self-invalidating so far as outsiders can see. Abuse of power? How do you know you have power unless you abuse it? That's the whole point of exercising power to most of those who seek it. The only way to get rid of Trump is to vote him out, and this distraction has not helped.

By arrangement with Dawn



Atari Interactive thinks it has an idea to rekindle interest in the gaming brand: It wants to build Atari-themed hotels.

SHORT TAKES



FOODTECH INDUSTRY TO GROW AT 25%

New Delhi, Jan. 28: Rising internet penetration, increasing ordering frequency and favourable consumer disposition are some of the factors driving growth in the Indian food-tech industry that is poised to grow at a compound annual growth rate of 25-30 per cent to \$8 billion by the end of 2022, a report by Google and Boston Consulting Group (BCG) said on Tuesday.

“Riding on the wave of higher consumption in a growing market and maturing dynamics on the supply side, we expect the industry to grow from \$4 billion to \$8 billion in the next three years, a massive 25 per cent growth rate,” the report titled ‘Demystifying the Online Food Consumer’ said.

It added that funding in the food-tech space has grown by 35 times in the past five years.

Macro trends such as rising internet penetration, increasing ordering frequency, favourable consumer disposition, expanding reach in smaller tiers and expanding network of restaurants on food-tech platforms pan-India continue to drive momentum in the industry, the report said.

As a consequence, reach of food-tech aggregators has grown six times from 2017 to 2019. At the same time, consumers are spending more than double the time to explore and order online -- from 32 minutes per month in 2017 to 72 minutes per month in 2019.

The study cited peer or network advocacy (52 per cent) plays a critical role in drawing people to try online food ordering for the first time. This was followed by advertisements (19 per cent) that emerged to be a strong driver in metros and among the higher income groups across the country.

“The food tech industry is nascent but one of the fastest growing in the country.. Food tech has now made its presence in greater than 500 cities in India and with consumer confidence growing, there are new opportunities for the players to ‘win with the consumer’ in an evolving market,” Google Director (Travel, BFSI, Classifieds, Gaming, Telco and Payments) Roma Datta Chobey said. Overall, online spending in India is expected to grow at 25 per cent over the next five years to cross \$130 billion.

The report also flagged the impediments that hinder adoption by consumers.

A fifth of the respondents stated a lack of trust in the app as the main barrier to usage — they believe that the role and control of the aggregators in the actual food preparation is low.

— PTI

Avast is selling your internet habits

Jumpshot counts MNCs such as Google, Microsoft, Pepsi, McKinsey and Home Depot as its clients

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

Popular free antivirus program Avast, which is used by hundreds of millions of people around the world, is selling highly sensitive web browsing data to many of world’s biggest companies, a joint investigation by *Motherboard* and *PCMag* revealed.

The report adds to a *Forbes* report, which first

revealed the existence of the subsidiary, Jumpshot.

According to the report, which managed to get hold of leaked documents, the sale of this data is both highly sensitive and is in many cases supposed to remain confidential between the firm selling the data and the clients purchasing it.

The documents not only throw new light on the secretive sale and supply chain of people’s internet

browsing histories, it also revealed that the antivirus program collects user data.

Jumpshot then repackages the data into different products to sell them to some of the largest firms in the world. Some past, present, and potential clients include Google, Yelp, Microsoft, McKinsey, Pepsi, Sephora, Home Depot, Condé Nast, Intuit, and many others. Some clients paid millions of dollars for products that include a so-

called ‘All Clicks Feed’, which can track user behaviour, clicks, and movement across websites in highly precise detail.

Avast, which also owns the AVG antivirus, claims to have more than 435 million active users per month, and Jumpshot says it has data from 100 million devices.

The company said the data is collected from users that opt-in and there is ‘no privacy scandal’.

Multiple Avast users told they were not aware Avast sold browsing data, raising questions about how informed that consent is.

The leaked data includes Google searches, lookups of locations and GPS coordinates on Google Maps, people visiting companies’ LinkedIn pages, particular YouTube videos, and people visiting porn websites.

It is possible to determine from the collected data what date and time the

anonymised user visited YouPorn and PornHub, and in some cases what search term they entered into the porn site and which specific video they watched.

Although the data does not include personal information such as users’ names, it still contains a wealth of specific browsing data, and experts say it could be possible to deanonymise certain users.

In a release from July, Jumpshot claims to be “the

only company that unlocks walled garden data” and seeks to “provide marketers with deeper visibility into the entire online customer journey.”

In October, AdBlock Plus creator Wladimir Palant published a blog post showing that Avast harvest user data with that plugin. Shortly after, Mozilla, Opera, and Google removed Avast’s and AVG’s extensions from their respective browser extension stores.

PHILIPS PLANS TO SELL HOME APPLIANCE BIZ

The Hague, Jan. 28: Dutch giant Philips said Tuesday that 2019 net profit rose seven percent and it planned to sell or hive-off its home appliances unit in order to concentrate on the health sector.

The appliances business, which includes kitchen robots, coffee machines and garden tools, had sales of 2.3 billion euros (\$2.5 billion) last year.

The sale will take place after a corporate restructuring exercise expected to take 12-18 months to complete, it said. “We will look for ways to sell or make it independent,” CEO Frans van Houten said.

“The idea is that Philips will no longer be the owner of that business and that we then use the proceeds to reinvest in the company,” van Houten said. “We think that it’s a valuable business that will gather a lot of interest,” he added.

On the Amsterdam stock exchange mid-morning, Philip shares were down nearly two percent in a flat overall market.

Philips said its health business, now its main activity, chalked up sales of 5.85 billion euros last year. The company, once a major lighting and electronics player, said total 2019 net profit hit 1.17 billion euros on sales up 7.5 percent from 2018 to 19.48 billion euros.

Van Houten said the results were “satisfactory,” noting that US-China trade tensions had impacted activity.

There continues to be geopolitical risk this year, he said, putting sales growth at 4.0-6.0 per cent.

— AFP



INTEL IS PATCHING ITS ZOMBIELOAD CPU SECURITY FLAW FOR THE THIRD TIME

■ OVER THE last two years, security researchers have dug up one technique after another that lets a hacker trick Intel’s microprocessors into spilling a computer’s deepest secrets.

■ AS THOSE flaws have been exposed, chipmakers have scrambled to patch them. But for one serious form of those attacks, it turns out that Intel still hasn’t successfully patched the underlying problem despite 18 months of warnings — and not one but two failed attempts to do so.

■ A SUPERGROUP of researchers from nearly a dozen universities and security firms brought the MDS attack to light last May after warning Intel nearly a year earlier and holding their findings in secret at Intel’s request. Like the notorious Spectre and Meltdown attacks that surfaced in early 2018, it takes advantage of a feature of Intel’s processors known as speculative execution.

■ ON MONDAY, the company said it will issue a software update “in the coming weeks” that will fix two more microarchitectural data sampling (MDS) or ZombieLoad flaws.

■ THE SECURITY advisory Intel released today gives the L1DES attack a severity rating of 6.5 out of 10. But the University of Michigan’s Daniel Genkin points out that Intel gave similarly low scores to other serious vulnerabilities in recent years, including Meltdown and Spectre.



■ THIS LATEST update comes after the company released two separate patches in May and November of last year.

■ COMPARED TO the MDS flaws Intel addressed in those two previous patches, these latest ones have a couple of limitations. To start, one of the vulnerabilities, L1DES, doesn’t work on Intel’s more recent chips.

■ MOREOVER, A hacker can’t execute the attack using a web browser.

■ BUT THE fact that Intel has left variants of MDS unpatched for more than 18 months, in fact, raises the question of whether sophisticated hackers may have already used them on real targets, says Vrije Universiteit researcher Herbert Bos. Intel however says it’s “not aware” of anyone taking advantage of the flaws outside of the lab.

Huawei escapes 5G ban in Europe, UK

Brussels/London, Jan. 28:

The EU will not ban Chinese telecom giant Huawei or any other company

Huawei in Europe, a top official said on Tuesday, despite intense pressure from Washington to shun the firm over spying fears.

The European Commission, the EU’s executive arm, will officially unveil recommendations to member states on Wednesday, but commissioner Thierry Breton told MEPs that Brussels will choose tight scrutiny over any blanket ban. “It is not a question of discrimination, it is a question of laying down rules. They will be strict,

they will be demanding and of course we will welcome in Europe all operators who are willing to apply them,” he said.

The EU, while never explicitly naming the Chinese giant, is struggling to find a middle way to balance Huawei’s huge dominance in the 5G sector with security concerns pressed by Washington.

The proposal is part of a so-called “toolbox” of recommendations that will guide the EU’s 27 post-Brexit member states as they build crucial 5G networks.

Meanwhile, Britain decided on Tuesday to

allow Huawei to build aspects of its new high-speed mobile network — but will exclude it from “core” parts of the new network. It’s a pivotal decision with implications for Britain’s diplomatic relations with the US and China. The infrastructure program is seen as being critical to Britain’s economic future as the country leaves the EU.

The government said Tuesday after a meeting of its National Security Council that it is taking some steps that will allow it “to mitigate the potential risk posed by the supply chain and to combat the

range of threats, whether cyber criminals, or state sponsored attacks.”

The US is “disappointed” by London’s decision to approve plans to use technology from Huawei in the country’s 5G cellular network, a US official said Tuesday. “There is no safe option for untrusted vendors to control any part of a 5G network,” a senior administration official said.

“The United States is disappointed by the UK’s decision,” Washington has banned Huawei from the rollout of the next generation mobile network that offers almost instantaneous data transfer

because of concerns that the firm could be under the control of Beijing, an allegation it strongly denies.

London’s decision after a meeting of the National Security Council chaired by Prime Minister Boris Johnson came shortly after Brussels said it would allow Huawei a limited 5G role in the European Union. “High risk vendors never have been and never will be in our most sensitive networks,” Britain’s Digital Secretary Nicky Morgan said, and such vendors will be excluded from sensitive locations, such as nuclear sites and military bases.

— Agencies

Facebook, HSBC curb travel to China as warnings grow

Shanghai/Seoul/Hong Kong, Jan. 28:

Facebook and other global companies including LG Electronics and HSBC are restricting travel to China, as the death toll from a flu-like virus rose above 100 on Tuesday.

Airlines are also cancelling flights and adjusting schedules as a growing number of countries raise travel warnings to not just Hubei province where the new coronavirus broke out, but also to the rest of mainland China.

The US warned on Monday that Americans should “reconsider” visiting all of China, while South Korea elevated its travel warning on Tuesday, advising its citizens to stay away.

Europe’s biggest bank, HSBC, banned all staff travel to Chinese-ruled Hong Kong for two weeks and to mainland China until further notice, according to an internal memo seen by *Reuters*. The British-based lender, which has the largest presence among foreign banks in China, also asked staff who have recently visited the country

to undergo a self-imposed quarantine.

“We are asking those who have travelled to mainland China or been in contact with anyone who has travelled to or through Hubei province in the last 14 days to stay home for a period of 14 calendar days,” a spokeswoman for the bank said.

US rival Goldman Sachs imposed similar measures, according to a memo seen by *Reuters*.

Facebook became the first major US company to announce a travel suspension after the US government’s warning.

The US social media company asked employees to halt non-essential travel to mainland China and told employees who had travelled there to work from home, a spokesman said on Tuesday. “Out of an abundance of caution, we have taken steps to protect the health and safety of our employees,” the spokesman told *Reuters*.

South Korean home appliances maker LG has put a complete ban on travel to China and has advised employees on business trips

Coronavirus outbreak may disrupt Apple’s iPhone plan

Bengaluru, Jan. 28: Apple’s plan to ramp up iPhone production by 10 per cent in the first half of this year may hit a roadblock as the coronavirus outbreak spreads across China, the *Nikkei Asian Review* reported on Tuesday.

The company has asked its suppliers, many of whom have manufacturing centers in China, to make up to 80 million iPhones in the first half of 2020, the *Nikkei* reported, citing people familiar with the company’s plans.

Apple has booked orders for up to 65 million of its older iPhones and up to 15 million units of a new cut-

price model that it plans to unveil in March, according to the report. However, the mass production which is due to start in the third week of February might be delayed due to the virus outbreak, the *Nikkei* reported.

The coronavirus outbreak has so far killed more than 100 people and infected over 4,500 in China, stranded tens of millions during the Lunar New Year holiday and rattled global markets.

Apple’s shares rose about 86 per cent in 2019, outperforming a 29 per cent rise in the S&P 500 index. The stock closed down nearly 3 per cent at \$308.95 on Monday as coronavirus

fears dragged down high-flying US chip and technology stocks.

Cupertino, California-based Apple, which raked in more than \$142 billion in iPhone sales in fiscal 2019, has introduced lower priced smartphone variants to woo budget conscious shoppers and check declining sales of its biggest product category.

Last October, *Nikkei* reported that Apple asked its suppliers to increase production of iPhone 11 models by up to 8 million units, or about 10 per cent, hinting that demand for the recently launched versions of its flagship phone was picking up.

— Reuters

while banking group Standard Chartered restricted travel to both mainland China and Hong Kong.

In Germany, auto supplier Webasto, which has 11 sites in China, including in Wuhan, the capital of Hubei, has halted all corporate travel to and from China following the virus and the infection of an employee.

Japan’s Honda Motor said it recommended employees avoid travel to China, while Nissan Motor said it plans to evacuate its Japanese staff and their families in Wuhan via a government-chartered flight.

As companies reassessed the risk of travel to China, some airlines said demand for flights was falling and they were adjusting schedules.

South Korean budget carrier Air Seoul said it will halt all flights to China, while Taiwan’s China Airlines announced a further rescheduling of its flights to China from Friday to Feb. 10, cancelling five flights and rearranging the schedules of others.

Taiwan’s Eva Airways also said some flights to China may be cancelled.

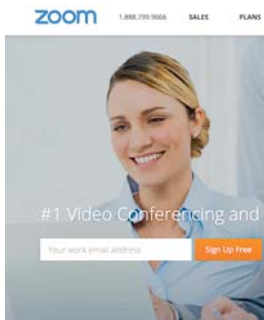
Germany’s Lufthansa said on Monday bookings for its

flights to and from China were slightly subdued due to the coronavirus outbreak.

Hong Kong’s Cathay Pacific Airways Ltd said it was reducing overnight layovers for crew at all points in mainland China as much as possible, resulting in some changes to its flight schedule.

International SOS, a medical and travel security services firm that advises companies on travel, said its guidance for now was that business travel to China outside Hubei could continue. But this could be updated if there were major flight cancellations throughout China and more disruptions to ground transport, including rail, International SOS Regional Security Director James Robertson said. “Many of our clients have chosen to defer or cancel upcoming travel based on their own individual assessments,” Robertson said. “If people do choose to travel they need flexible itineraries accounting for extra time for temperature and health screenings.”

— Reuters



ZOOM FIXES FLAW TO STOP EAVESDROPPING

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

With hackers being in the hunt for trade secrets and patents, companies can breathe easy after videoconferencing platform Zoom rolled out an update that prevented hackers from eavesdropping on calls, cybersecurity research firm CheckPoint said on Tuesday.

Zoom, which is used by over 60 per cent of Fortune 500 companies, is used as a means to conduct remote meetings, complete with live audio and video feeds, as well as screen sharing and file transfers.

On Tuesday, CheckPoint Research, in its report, said that it had found security flaws in the platform that would have allowed a potential hacker to join a video meeting uninvited and listen in, potentially accessing any files or information shared during the meeting.

While the company has addressed the issue, the report raises deeper concerns about the safety of videoconferencing apps. CheckPoint researchers found a way to predict which were valid meetings about 4 per cent of the time, and it was able to join some, says Yaniv Balmas, CheckPoint’s head of cyber research.



Election call
New Zealand PM
Ardern calls
September election

IN BRIEF

Taliban attack
Afghan police base

Kabul: Taliban militants attacked a police base in northern Afghanistan, killing 11, possibly with help from at least one of the policemen inside, local government officials said Tuesday. The insurgents first overran a check-point near the base late Monday, and were apparently able to breach the compound with ease because a sympathetic policeman opened a door for them. These details were provided by Mabobullah Ghafari, a provincial councilman in Baghlan province where the attack took place. A local police official, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not allowed to brief reporters about the attack, also gave the same account. Insider attacks have been steady throughout Afghanistan's 18-year conflict, with U.S. and NATO troops most often targeted. But when Afghan security forces are targeted, the casualty rate is often much higher.

Pak doesn't want
conflict with India

Islamabad: Pakistan president Arif Alvi on Tuesday said Pakistan does not want conflict with India. He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to peace and stability in the region to cope with multiple challenges including those of poverty and ignorance. He pointed out that Prime Minister Imran Khan made his utmost efforts to talk peace with India. He said the objective is to avoid any conflict with the neighbour. He, however, said the other side was also required to reciprocate to "our peace gestures." The President was speaking at a ceremony after taking oath as the Chief Scout. It was held in Islamabad. The President regretted that conflict and problems are being imposed on Pakistan from the Indian side.

Court against Mush
trial in absentia

Lahore: A Pakistani court has ruled that the concept of trial in absentia is against the golden principles of natural justice as well as Islamic justice as it issued a detailed judgement on self-exiled former dictator Pervez Musharraf's petition challenging his death sentence on charges of high treason. A special court in Islamabad on December 17 last year handed down the death penalty to the 74-year-old retired general, now based in Dubai, after six years of hearing the high-profile treason case against him. His trial was declared as "unconstitutional" by the Lahore High Court (LHC) through a short order on January 13, leading to the annulment of the death sentence against the ex-Pakistan Army chief.

50 KILLED IN
MILITIA CLASHES
IN C. AFRICA

Bangui (Central African Republic), Jan. 28: Clashes between rival armed groups in Bria, a strategic town in eastern Central African Republic, have left dozens dead, a senior official said on Tuesday. "There are about 50 dead. Some bodies were immediately buried by relatives, so it is difficult to give a precise figure," said the prefect of Haute-Kotto department, Evariste Binguindji. After mediation with UN peacekeeping forces sent to the area, "the town is calm. The armed groups have withdrawn their men from the town centre and displaced people have started to return," he said. The clashes are the latest test to a nearly year-old agreement aimed at bringing peace to the CAR. Deeply impoverished despite its mineral wealth, the CAR has been in the grip of militia violence since 2013. More than two-thirds of the former French colony lies in the hands of armed groups, who typically claim ethnic or religious affiliations and often fight over mineral resources. Bria is the main town in a diamond-rich region. Violence erupted there at the weekend between "ethnic groups", the spokesman for the UN peacekeeping force in CAR, Vladimir Monteiro said on Sunday. It followed a local split several months ago within a militia called the Popular Front for the Rebirth of the Central African Republic (FPRC), several sources in Bria said.

WH can't stop impeachment

Trump's legal team brushes aside allegations in Bolton book

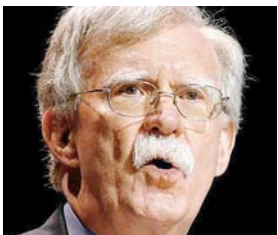


House Intelligence Committee Chairman and impeachment manager Adam Schiff speaks to reporters during a break in the impeachment trial of President Donald Trump at the Capitol in Washington on Monday.

— AP

Flame-throwing aide threatens Donald

Washington, Jan. 28: John Bolton has long been known as the bomb-thrower of US diplomacy, but the former White House national security advisor now threatens to blow a hole in President Donald Trump's impeachment defence. Fired last September, Bolton's coming tell-all book about his 17 months in the Trump administration could contain the strongest evidence yet for charges that the president illicitly held up military aid to Ukraine to help his own reelection campaign. A draft of "The Room Where it Happened", scheduled for publication in March, reportedly says Trump told Bolton last August the money — almost \$400 million —



John Bolton

would remain frozen until Kiev announced an investigation into Trump's potential election rival, Democrat Joe Biden. That alleged "quid pro quo" is at the heart of the impeachment charge of abuse of power that has Trump on trial in the Senate, facing possible removal from office. Until The New York Times

report Sunday of the book's claim, Democrats had faced accusations that they had only indirect evidence of a link between Trump withholding support to Ukraine and pressing the US ally to announce a Biden probe. It had appeared certain that the Republican-dominated Senate would vote easily to acquit Trump. But the leak of the manuscript now challenges the senators to call Bolton to testify against the president — with unpredictable consequences. Faced with the prospect of a Bolton appearance, Trump has made his position clear: "I don't know if we left on the best of terms," he admitted candidly last week. "I would say probably not,

you know. And so, you don't like people testifying when they didn't leave on good terms." The diplomatic world has long been accustomed to Bolton's incendiary presence and his trademark bushy moustache. An unabashed hawk, he served in the Justice and State Departments of three Republican administrations, starting with Ronald Reagan's in the 1980s, before joining Trump as national security advisor in April 2018. In the 2000s he made his mark on the world stage as US ambassador to the United Nations, where he openly disdained the institution and unapologetically heralded US global projections of its power. — AFP

Brexit abandons EU
citizens living in the UK

London, Jan. 28: Anxious, angry, abandoned. Brexit elicits strong emotions, and as Britain's departure from the European Union approaches, more than three million UK residents who are citizens of EU countries are feeling the impending separation more strongly than most. Brexit is a huge economic and social experiment, and the UK's European residents are among the guinea pigs. The UK government says they can stay and carry on with their lives as long as they apply for confirmation of their "settled status." For some, that process is easy, or mildly annoying. For others, it's deeply alienating. Tanja Bueltmann, a Northumbria University history professor who has studied the experiences of EU citizens in Britain as they grapple with Brexit, said many felt the country's decision to leave the EU as a "real rupture."

"People were promised that nothing would change for them. Yet for a good number, even the process already changes everything," she said. Free movement for people among the EU's member states is a core EU principle and Britain's 2016 vote to leave the bloc was, in part, a reaction to high levels of immigration from other EU nations. More than one million EU citizens moved to the UK after eight formerly Communist eastern European countries joined the bloc in 2004. Britain's departure from the EU on Friday night will end the rights of citizens from the 27 remaining EU nations to settle in Britain, and of Britons to automatically live elsewhere in the bloc. To prevent people having

■ BRITAIN'S DEPARTURE from the EU on Friday night will end the rights of citizens from the 27 remaining EU nations to settle in Britain, and of Britons to automatically live elsewhere in the bloc.

to uproot their lives and their families, the UK government says EU citizens already in the country will be given "settled status," protecting their right to live, work, study and receive benefits. Other EU countries have made similar arrangements for the estimated one million UK nationals who reside there. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has said that EU citizens are welcome and valued, but many say they resent being forced to prove their right to remain in a country they call home. "I feel strange, really unsettled," said 78-year-old Elly Wright, a Dutch citizen who moved to the UK with her late husband in 1969. "It has moved me to the core. What has been happening with Brexit and the fact that someone like me, who has lived here for over 50 years, that my status here has to be secured when it always was secure — it makes you feel confused and angry, and also infinitely sad at times. — AP

Trump unveils Middle East peace plan

Washington, Jan. 28: U.S. President Donald Trump on Tuesday proposed creation of a Palestinian state with a capital in East Jerusalem, dependent on Palestinians taking steps to become self-governing, in an attempt to achieve a peace breakthrough in their decades of conflict with Israel. Senior administration officials, briefing Reuters

on the details of a plan the president was due to announce at the White House at mid-day, said that under Trump's proposed Middle East peace plan the United States will recognize Israeli settlements on the occupied West Bank. In exchange, Israel would agree to accept a four-year freeze on new settlement activity while Palestinian statehood is

negotiated, the officials said. Israeli-Palestinian talks broke down in 2014, and it was far from clear that the Trump plan will resuscitate them. U.S. officials said they were braced for initial Palestinian skepticism but hoped that over time they will agree to negotiate. The plan places high hurdles for the Palestinians to overcome

to reach their long-sought goal of a state. It remains to be seen also how Israel responds, given the pressures the right-wing Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, faces going into his third attempt at re-election in less than a year. The plan encompasses about 80 pages, with 50 of them on the political plan announced on Tuesday. — Reuters

Hamas to join Palestinians
against Donald's proposal

Ramallah, Jan. 28: Rival Palestinian factions Hamas and Fatah will join forces Tuesday in a rare meeting in Ramallah against US President Donald Trump's long-awaited peace plan, officials said. "We invited the Hamas movement to attend the emergency meeting of the leadership and they will take part," senior Palestinian official Azzam al-Ahmed said. Hamas official Nasser al-Din al-Shaar confirmed he would attend the meeting. — AFP



Palestinians burn a poster of US President Donald Trump as they protest the American peace plan in Bethlehem.

— AP

BIBI INDICTED
ON CORRUPTION
CHARGES

Jerusalem, Jan. 28: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was formally indicted on corruption charges on Tuesday, hours after he withdrew his request for parliamentary immunity in the three graft cases against him, becoming the first sitting premier to face criminal charges. Netanyahu, 70, has been charged with bribery and fraud and breach of trust in three separate corruption cases. — PTI

■ We don't want a lost generation of Rohingyas, says foreign minister A.K. Abdul Momen

Dhaka allows education for Rohingya children

Dhaka, Jan. 28: Rohingya children living in Bangladesh refugee camps will be allowed to receive a formal education after a change of heart by Dhaka in a move welcomed by right activists. Nearly one million Rohingyas, including more than half a million children, live in the squalid and crowded camps near the southeastern border with Myanmar, where many had fled from in 2017 after a brutal military crackdown. The children were previously barred from studying the curriculums used

in Bangladesh and Myanmar, and instead received primary education in temporary learning centres set up by the UN children's agency UNICEF. "We don't want a lost generation of Rohingyas. We want them to have education. They will follow Myanmar curricula," Foreign Minister A.K. Abdul Momen told AFP on Tuesday. The decision came after a meeting of a national taskforce set up by the government. Local media reported that a pilot programme involving more than 10,000 students would

■ LOCAL MEDIA reported that a pilot programme involving more than 10,000 students would be launched soon, with UNICEF and Dhaka jointly designing the curriculum.

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be launched soon, with UNICEF and Dhaka jointly designing the curriculum. The refugee children will be schooled in Myanmar

Q I can't express my joy with words ... generations of Rohingyas hardly had any education in their homeland in Myanmar as they were discriminated there and were robbed of their citizenship. The decision will minimise the chances for a Rohingya kid to get radicalised — **RAFIQUE BIN HABIB** ROHINGYA LEADER

history and culture up to age 14, and will also receive skills training so

they can take up jobs back in Myanmar when they return home, the foreign ministry said. "I can't express my joy with words ... generations of Rohingyas hardly had any education in their homeland in Myanmar as they were discriminated there and were robbed of their citizenship," Rohingya youth leader and human rights activist Rafique bin Habib said. "The decision will minimise the chances for a Rohingya kid to get radicalised (in the camps)," he added. UN representative in Bangladesh Mia Seppo

told AFP the move would "make it easier for them to go back home to Myanmar when the time is right for returns". Some Rohingya children have used fake Bangladeshi identity cards and hidden their ethnic identities to enrol in local schools. Authorities last year expelled scores of them from schools in a drive condemned by rights groups. Tens of thousands of other Rohingya Muslim children were also educated in madrassas set up by Islamic groups in the camps. — AFP



'Total' inaction

French towns, NGOs sue oil giant Total over climate 'inaction', says Patrick Jarry, mayor of Paris suburb of Nanterre

IN BRIEF

No trains to mainland China

Beijing: Hong Kong's leader has announced that all rail links to mainland China will be cut starting Friday as fears grow about the spread of a new virus. Chief Executive Carrie Lam said Tuesday that both the high-speed rail station and the regular train station would be closed. China's death toll from a new viral disease that is causing mounting global concern rose by 25 to at least 106 on Tuesday as the United States and other governments prepared to fly their citizens out of the locked-down city at center of the outbreak.

Hong Kong to shut football pitches

Hong Kong: Hong Kong said on Tuesday it was closing a range of public facilities from sports centres to campsites in a bid to curb the spread of a SARS-like virus that has left more than 100 dead across China. All recreational facilities will be temporarily shut from Wednesday to "avoid people gathering", authorities said. The financial hub has declared the novel coronavirus a public "emergency" and on Saturday announced ramped-up measures to reduce the risk of more infections. Eight people in Hong Kong are known to be suffering from the illness.

Chinese tourist in Lanka infected

Colombo: Sri Lankan health authorities said the country has its first confirmed case of a person infected with the new virus from China. The patient is a Chinese woman in her 40s who arrived in Sri Lanka last week as a tourist from China's Hubei province, said Dr Sudath Samaraweera, chief epidemiologist of the country's health ministry. The woman was suffering from a fever when she was admitted on Saturday to the island nation's Infectious Disease Hospital, a state-run facility that treats potentially deadly infectious diseases.

NASA's first peek at sun's poles

Washington: NASA, in collaboration with the European Space Agency (ESA), is launching a new spacecraft next month to snap the first pictures of the sun's north and south poles, the US space agency announced on Tuesday. The Solar Orbiter spacecraft will have its first opportunity to launch from Cape Canaveral in the US on February 7, 2020, NASA said in a statement.

GLOBAL RISK FROM VIRUS HIGH: WHO

From Page 1

A sense of disquiet prevailed in Beijing as officials announced the capital's first death from the deadly virus, a grim reminder that the epidemic has begun to take toll outside Hubei province.

The World Health Organisation admitted an error in its assessment of the global risk of a deadly virus in China, saying it was "high" and not "moderate", reports said.

The Geneva-based WHO in its latest situation report said the risk was "very high in China, high at the regional level and high at the global level".

The organisation attached to UN admitted that it had stated "incorrectly" in its previous reports that the global risk was "moderate".

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus is currently visiting Beijing to discuss how to contain the outbreak. He was quoted as saying on Thursday that "this is an emergency in China, but it has not yet become a global health emergency".

Meanwhile, the train and bus services between Beijing and neighbouring Tianjin have been suspended.

China has also extended the New Year Festival holidays till February 2 to prevent reverse migration of millions of migrants works to return to their work from holidays.

Universities, primary and middle schools and kindergartens across the country will postpone the opening of the spring semester until further notice. The government is focussing efforts to prevent mass gatherings and mass travel to ensure the virus is not spread fast. —PTI

Demon epidemic: Xi to WHO chief

Anger at local officials in Hubei as more than 4,500 cases reported in 24 hours

Wuhan, Jan. 28: President Xi Jinping said on Tuesday that China was in a struggle against a "demon" epidemic, as the death toll from the new SARS-like virus soared to 106 and the first cases of human-to-human contagion were detected abroad.

Xi made his remarks during talks with head of the World Health Organization in Beijing as a host of nations prepared to airlift their citizens from Wuhan, the epicentre of the outbreak. "Chinese people are currently engaged in a serious struggle against an epidemic of a new type of coronavirus infection," Xi told WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

"The epidemic is a demon, and we cannot let this demon hide," the Chinese leader said, pledging that the government would be transparent and release information on the virus in a "timely" manner.

His comments came after anger simmered on Chinese social media over the handling of the health emergency by local officials in central Hubei province, where the disease first emerged in December. Some experts have praised Beijing for being more reactive and open about this virus compared to its handling of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) epidemic of 2002-2003. But others say local cadres had earlier been more focused on projecting stability than responding to the outbreak when it began to spread earlier this month.

Since then, the number of cases has soared — doubling to more than 4,500 in the past 24 hours. WHO chief Tedros praised China's response to the crisis during a meeting with Foreign Minister Wang Yi, according to state news agency Xinhua.



Passengers wear protective face masks arrive at the high speed train station in Hong Kong on Tuesday. Hong Kong's leader has announced that all rail links to mainland China will be cut starting Friday as fears grow about the spread of a new virus.

—AP

■ WUHAN HAS been turned into a near ghost-town under a lockdown that has largely confined the industrial hub's 11 million people to their homes

driving two groups of tourists from the city earlier in January, the health ministry said. He was hospitalised with flu-like symptoms on Saturday. On the other side of the world, a 33-year-old German man caught the

disease off a Chinese colleague from Shanghai who visited Germany last week, according to health officials.

The development came after countries including Sri Lanka, Malaysia and the Philippines announced tighter visa restrictions for people coming from China. Experts believe the virus came from a wild animal market in Wuhan and then jumped to humans, with Chinese health officials saying on Tuesday that people infect each other through sneezing or coughing, and possibly

through contact.

Authorities initially sealed off Wuhan and other cities in Hubei province late last week, trapping more than 50 million people. China then halted international and domestic group tours.

It also imposed a wide range of travel restrictions inside China, suspending long-distance bus routes and more than 2,000 train services. But with the death toll climbing and more fatalities reported in Chinese cities far away from Wuhan, authorities on Tuesday

urged people to delay any foreign travel "to protect the health and safety of Chinese and foreign people", the National Immigration Administration said.

Wuhan, meanwhile, has been turned into a near ghost-town under a lockdown that has largely confined the industrial hub's 11 million people to their homes.

With a ban on car traffic, the streets were nearly deserted apart from the occasional ambulance — although the city's hospitals are overwhelmed. —AFP

1,000 Frenchmen to be evacuated

Paris, Jan. 28: France on Thursday will send a plane to start evacuating its citizens from Wuhan, the Chinese city at the centre of a coronavirus scare, in the first repatriations by a European country.

Some 500 to 1,000 French citizens are eligible for repatriation, Health Minister Agnes Buzyn told a press conference, though not all are keen to be pulled out from the zone as authorities said the virus has infected thousands and killed 106 so far. The first plane will likely return to France late Friday or early Saturday, Buzyn said. Those on it will be brought to a holding facility in Paris, where they will stay for 14 days — the estimated virus incubation period — to ensure they do not carry the virus and cannot pass it on to others.

Those displaying symptoms, which are similar to the flu and include a fever, will be hospitalised immediately. Deputy

transport minister Jean-Baptiste Djebbari told CNews television the flight would bring only passengers "who do not have any symptoms" of illness. A second plane to bring home "people who may be carrying the virus" is planned but no date has yet been set, he said. "Several planes will follow," added Buzyn, so as not to mix potentially infected people with healthy ones on the same flight. The Chinese government has sealed off Wuhan and neighbouring cities, effectively trapping tens of millions of people, including thousands of foreigners, in a bid to contain the spread of the virus. France was the first European country to report imported cases of the new coronavirus, in three people who had recently been in China, while a half-dozen suspected infections are being analysed. Buzyn said several European countries had asked France to bring their nationals home. —AFP



People work on a production line at a factory for medical masks in Hai'an in eastern China's Jiangsu Province on Tuesday.

—AP

Virus has not mutated

Washington, Jan.28: US health authorities said Monday they have sequenced the genome of the first two cases of the Chinese coronavirus reported in the country and confirmed the virus has not mutated since leaving China.

Nancy Messonnier, head of respiratory diseases at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

(CDC) said she was planning imminent changes on measures to control and track the deadly virus, beyond the current restrictions just on travelers arriving from the city Wuhan, which is at the epicenter of the outbreak.

"Right now, and based on CDC's analysis of the available data, it doesn't look like the (virus) has mutated," she said in a

telephone news conference. "All the sequences we've extracted are similar to the one that China initially posted a couple of weeks ago," she said. All passengers arriving from Wuhan are currently subject to testing in 20 US airports, but since China has suspended all flights out of the stricken city, there are fewer and fewer travelers. —AFP

HUMAN-TO-HUMAN INFECTION CONFIRMED IN EUROPE

Munich, Jan.28: Germany's first confirmed coronavirus patient caught the disease from a Chinese colleague who visited Germany last week, officials said on Tuesday, in the first human-to-human transmission on European soil, according to an AFP tally. The Chinese employee, a woman from

Shanghai, "started to feel sick on the flight home on January 23", Andreas Zapf, head of the Bavarian State Office for Health and Food Safety, said at a press conference. A 33-year-old German, with whom she had attended a meeting in Bavaria, tested positive for the virus on Monday evening. —AFP

Danish cartoon angers China

Copenhagen, Jan. 28: Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten refused to apologise to China on Tuesday over a satirical cartoon it ran about the deadly new coronavirus that stoked the ire of Beijing. The cartoon, published on Monday, depicted a Chinese flag with the yellow stars normally found in the upper left corner exchanged for drawings of the coronavirus. China's embassy in Denmark responded the same day and issued a statement calling the cartoon "an insult to China" that "hurts the feelings of the Chinese people".

The embassy said the cartoon crossed the "ethical boundary of free speech," and demanded that the paper and the cartoonist Niels Bo Bojesen "publicly apologise to the Chinese people." On Tuesday, Jyllands-Posten's chief editor Jacob Nybroe said they wouldn't "dream of" poking fun at the situation in China, but also refused to apologise. "We cannot apologise for something we don't think is wrong. We have no intention of being demeaning or to mock, nor do we think that the drawing does," Nybroe said. "As far as I can see, this here is about different forms of cultural understanding," Nybroe added. In 2005, it published cartoons depicting the Prophet Mohammed, sparking violent protests. —AFP



Cartoon in Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten

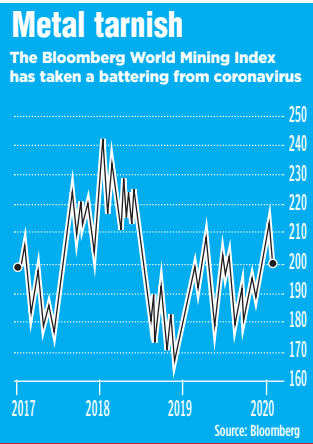
Evacuations not necessary: WHO

Beijing, Jan. 28: Evacuating foreign nationals from the epicentre of China's deadly virus outbreak is unnecessary, the World Health Organisation said Tuesday according to state media. The health body said it was still "waiting for clarification" about the comments of its chief Tedros Adhanom

Ghebreyesus, who met with Chinese officials in Beijing, including President Xi Jinping to discuss how to contain the infection.

The United States, Japan and several other countries are drawing up plans to safely evacuate their citizens from Wuhan. —AFP





SC asks SAT to dilute remarks against Sebi

The Supreme Court has directed the Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) to dilute "adverse observations" in a November 2019 order wherein it had cast aspersions on markets regulator Sebi. The tribunal's order, dated Nov. 14, 2019, had come in a case related to investor complaints that were not resolved. Sebi had moved the court against the order. "May be there was some remiss on the part of Sebi to act as a regulator, but casting aspersion was not warranted in the facts and circumstances of the case. As such, the adverse observations... are hereby diluted," the apex court said in its order dated Jan. 27.

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	40,966.86	-0.46
Nifty 50	12,055.80	-0.52
S&P 500*	3,278.22	1.07
Dollar (₹)	71.26	-0.05
Pound Sterling (₹)	93.18	-0.70
Euro (₹)	78.62	-0.18
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	41,294▼162	0.39
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	59.78	0.46
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.575	0.024
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.618	0.013

Govt may restore 2% incentive on phones export

The government is likely to restore 2 per cent additional duty incentive on mobile phones export with effect from January 1, a source said. This duty benefit, which will help boost exports, is expected to continue till March 31. A notification is likely to be issued soon. The DGFT on December 7 had reduced export incentive from 4% to 2%.

ITI trims FPO price band, extends issue



ITI Ltd reduced the price band for its ongoing follow-on public offer (FPO) and extended the issue period by three days till Jan. 31. The FPO, which opened on Friday, was scheduled to close on Tuesday. The PSU has cut the price band to Rs 71-77 from Rs 72-77 per share in the wake of lukewarm investor response. The issue was subscribed 49 per cent on Day 3.

Tanzania cuts cashew output forecast by 22%

Tanzania cut its cashew nuts output forecast for this year by 22 per cent after excessive rains pounded the East African country and destroyed some crop. "The quantity will drop to about 225,000 tonnes," agriculture minister J. Hasunga said. The cashew harvest had been projected to climb to 290,000 tonnes. The global cashew output was 3.3 million tonnes in 2017-18.

Kellogg to phase out glyphosate in oats, wheat

US cereal giant Kellogg has set a goal of phasing out the controversial weedkiller glyphosate from its oat and wheat supply chain by 2025, the firm said. Kellogg, which makes corn flakes, pop tarts and other breakfast products, does not own or operate farms but some suppliers have used the herbicide as a "drying agent a few weeks before harvest, particularly with wheat and oats," the firm said.

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Budget could increase spending to lift growth

MANOJ KUMAR & AFTAB AHMED
NEW DELHI, JAN. 28

The government is expected to raise spending on infrastructure and cut some personal tax in its 2020-21 budget, to spur consumer demand and investment, government sources and economists said.

Despite cuts in corporate taxes and monetary easing by the central bank, investments have failed to pick up.

Economists and investors say fiscal stimulus in the budget and an increase in spending on roads, railways and rural welfare could revive growth.

A weak economy and the wave of anti-government protests have increased the chances of a fiscal stimulus in the budget, said Shilan Shah, an economist at Capital Economics in Singapore.

"That would provide a small boost to growth over the coming quarters, at the cost of putting upward pressure on bond yields," he said in a note.

The central government



looks set to miss its deficit estimates for a third straight year after estimates show revenue will fall short by nearly Rs 3 lakh crore.

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who will present her second budget to Parliament, could defer the earlier target of cutting fiscal deficit to 3 per cent of gross domestic product in 2020-21 by at least two years, government sources told Reuters.

This will be on top of roughly \$28 billion of expenditure outlay from off-budget borrowings, as

she seeks to keep the deficit in check.

Economists in a Reuters poll predicted the government would set a fiscal deficit target of 3.6 per cent of GDP for 2020-21, up from 3.3 per cent targeted for the current year.

Sitharaman is expected to announce a plan in the budget to invest Rs 105 lakh crore (\$1.48 trillion) in infrastructure over the next five years. By then the government hopes to make India a \$5-trillion economy, compared with \$2.8 trillion now, government sources have said.

MFI loan defaults rise in Assam

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, JAN. 28

Protests against micro lenders in some districts of Assam have started affecting the asset quality of the entire state as the delinquencies have risen significantly.

In the last quarter, several micro finance borrowers in five-six districts of Assam had stopped repayment of their loans. The collection efficiency that stood at 98-99 per cent had dropped to 70 per cent. As the exposure per borrower went up, customers in some of the districts started defaulting and demanding waiver. They alleged that the micro-lenders were charging higher interest rates and were following tough recovery methods.

The districts of Sonitpur, Golaghat, Jarhat, Sivasagar, Dibrugarh and Tinsukia have been highly affected by the protests. These account for at least 15 to 20 per cent of the 27 lakh customer base of the state. These districts also account for 10 per cent of the state's total loan portfolio outstanding of Rs 12,500 crore, finds Micro Finance Institutions Network (MFIN).

According to rater Icr, the protests have affected the overall delinquency levels of the state. At an aggregate level, it was found that softer bucket delinquencies have risen substantially over the previous quarter.

Tata Motors, India's biggest automaker by revenue, has an ambitious plan to sell more electric cars for which it is preparing to make batteries, set up charging stations across cities and build a battery recycling plant.

Though the Union government is pushing automakers to shift to electric vehicles (EVs), some are resisting the move, saying the charging infrastructure needs to be set up first and battery costs are too high to make and sell affordable electric cars.

But six Tata companies—Tata Motors, Tata Chemicals, Tata Power, Tata Autocomp, TCS and

Tata Cromax—are pooling resources and expertise to build an electric vehicle ecosystem to make electric cars, officials told media in Mumbai on Tuesday.

"This is the launch of an ecosystem, which is the real need, not just another vehicle launch," Guenter Butschek, managing director at Tata Motors told reporters.

Tata Power, which has set up 100 charging stations in Mumbai, Delhi, Pune, Bangalore and Hyderabad, will add another 300 by the end of March 2020.

"By 2021, we plan to add 650 more charging stations in more than 20 major cities across the country to boost electric car sales," Shailesh Chandra, president - e-mobility business

& corporate strategy at Tata Motors told *Financial Chronicle*.

He said all stations will support fast charging and will be linked to a mobile application, which has been developed with Tata Consultancy Services for payments and to check the availability of chargers.

The auto major is also working with Tata Autocomp for the localisation of battery pack assembly and motor assembly.

Tata will also use its chain of Cromax stores to display digitally its EVs.

Tata Motors on Tuesday launched the Nexon EV, priced starting at Rs 13.99 lakh, which is one of four electric car models the firm plans to launch over the next two years.

FALAKNAAZ SYED
MUMBAI, JAN. 28

The insurance regulator on Tuesday issued guidelines to protect the interest of customers of merging public sector banks covered under group health policies.

The guidelines stated that the underlying group health insurance policies of customers of the merged banks will have to be serviced by the respective insurance companies which issued the policies till the end of policy period. It asked insurance companies to make suitable arrangements with the acquiring banks to this effect.

The regulator also said the arrangements of the merged banks can be continued with the respective insurance companies

for a period of 12 months from the date of merger, subject to the willingness of the acquiring bank to function as the corporate agent for the respective insurance companies.

"Consequent to the merger of few PSBs, in order to protect the interests of the group insurance policyholders of the merged banks, the following guidelines are issued," the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai) said.

A bank can continue to buy group insurance covers with any number of insurance companies for the insurance needs of

its customers. The norms also said that at the end of the current policy period of the group insurance policy of the merged bank, the acquiring bank at its option may continue with the same group insurance policy with the same insurance company, for the customers of the merged bank.

"The acquiring bank may simultaneously continue to have insurance coverage for its existing customers with its existing insurance company. The acquiring bank can also offer this insurance coverage to the customers of the merged bank with the consent of its insurer."

Sales in the domestic market stood at 413,698 units, up 2 per cent. Exports were at 23,663 units.

Realisations declined 5.7 per cent sequentially to Rs 4.7 lakh per unit during the December quarter.

On the operating front, earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (Ebitda) increased 8.9 per cent to Rs 2,102 crore and margin maintained at 10 per cent level, rising 30 basis point YoY to 10.1 per cent.

Overall, numbers missed analyst expectations.

As per an analyst poll, profit was estimated at Rs 1,676 crore on revenue of Rs 21,847 crore and Ebitda was seen at Rs 2,355 crore with margin at 10.7 per cent.

Revenue from operations grew by 5.3 per cent year-on-year to Rs 20,707 crore

in the quarter, with total vehicles sales growth at 2 per cent to 437,361 vehicles.

some of the other categories also have seen selective price cuts. In washing machines, the front-load category by two brands saw price cuts in January, with IFB taking the lead.

IFB cut prices to partially roll back the steep price increase it HAD made on new models. IFB has cut prices by 4 per cent as it was facing stiff competition, says Emkay. Voltas Beko has again cut the price of its 6kg SKU by 2 per cent month-on-month and its cumulative cut stands at 16 per cent from

as it makes a comeback. Dealers/distributors are low on inventory as they have been deferring their purchases in anticipation of lower prices. Blue Star, Lloyd and Hitachi have cut prices of their 1.5 tonne fixed-speed ACs by 6 per cent, 3 per cent and 3 per cent, respectively, in January. Pricing for the upcoming season will be dependent on Samsung's aggression on mass products and sustained competitive intensity, finds Emkay.

Apart from room ACs,

Govt to fill up over six lakh vacant posts

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, JAN. 28

If the government drive gathers pace, more than six lakh vacancies in different central government departments can get filled up in the next few months. While experts believe this would temper the job crisis in the country, they wonder why the government has been keeping such large number of posts vacant.

The Centre has asked all departments under it to fill up existing vacancies in a time-bound manner.

"... all the ministries/departments are requested to fill up the existing vacancies in the concerned ministries/departments, their attached and subordinate offices, in a time bound manner," the cabinet committee on investment and growth said in a directive issued to secretaries of all central government departments.

Over 6.83 lakh posts were lying vacant in different central government departments, according to a latest government data.

The personnel ministry has also sought a report on action being taken to fill up the existing vacancies on monthly basis.

—Reuters



The first such report should reach it by February 5.

"Filling up of vacant government jobs will provide some relief, though just six lakh jobs are not sufficient to ease the country's job problem. But we need to know why these posts have been lying vacant. What was stopping the government from filling them — was it intention or lack of required skill. If skill is the issue, how are they going to get it overnight?" asked Rituvarna Chakraborty, EVP and co-founder of TeamLease Services.

According to Aditya Narayan Misra, director and CEO of CIEL HR Services, probably the government would have been keeping the posts

vacant to keep the deficit under control or out of oversight.

"This would benefit in two ways. Out of the crores of aspirants who will be applying for the jobs at least six lakh will get employed. Government jobs are considered to be safe and secure from a socio-economic perspective and this will also boost the sentiments and consumption," he said.

Ministries/departments and their attached and subordinate offices are also asked to report vacancy position with respect to direct recruitment posts to Union Public Service Commission and Staff Selection Commission for filling up of such direct recruitment vacancies in a timely manner.

PSB merger: Insurers told to service all policies

FALAKNAAZ SYED
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Apart from room ACs,

Manappuram net up 63%

Mumbai, Jan. 28: Manappuram Finance on Tuesday reported a 63 per cent rise in consolidated net profit to Rs 397.84 crore for the December quarter from Rs 244.09 crore in the year-ago quarter. On a standalone basis, its net income stood at Rs 332.42 crore, up 57.7 per cent from the year-ago period.

—PTI

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Apart from room ACs,

the highs of September.

According to Kamal Nandi, president of Consumer Electronics and Appliances Manufacturers Association (Ceama) and business head and EVP, Godrej Appliances, the price cut is a brand-specific decision and not a sector-specific one. "Some of the brands with high levels of inventory have taken price cut. As far as the sector is concerned, commodity and ocean freight costs as well as the dollar movement are not favourable," he said.

Reacting to the company's denial, Modi, who is abroad, tweeted, "All I can say is they are blatant liars."

Sharing a letter he had sent to co-trustees of KK Modi Family trust ahead of a board of trustees meeting on November 30, 2019, in which he proposed selling of various assets including family-controlled businesses, Modi termed clarification by Godfrey Phillips as "a complete eye wash".

—PTI

Godfrey Philips denies promoters selling stake

New Delhi, Jan. 28: Cigarette maker Godfrey Phillips on Tuesday denied reports that its promoter KK Modi Group was planning to sell its stake in the company, evoking a strong rebuttal from Lalit Modi, who called the company "blatant liars".

In a regulatory filing, Godfrey Phillips clarified that it is neither engaged nor privy to any such discussions on "rumoured potential transaction by its promoters".

"The company has also received a clarification from its significant promoter that there has been no decision to put its assets on sale," it said.

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—PTI



Fined

England fast bowler Stuart Broad has been fined 15 per cent of his match fee for “use of an audible obscenity” during the fourth Test against South Africa

DECCAN CHRONICLE

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Games

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SHORT TAKES



Yuzvendra Chahal

No one sits in MSD seat: Chahal

Hamilton: No one sits on the seat that Mahendra Singh Dhoni made his own in the team bus, revealed India leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal, saying that the talismanic former skipper is missed by the side. In a video shot inside the team bus while it was on its way to Hamilton for the third T20 International against New Zealand, Chahal is seen talking to several members of the squad including Jasprit Bumrah, Rishabh Pant and K. L. Rahul. Towards the end of the video, he moved to the rear of the bus and pointed to an empty seat which, he said, was the former captain's preferred spot before he went on a sabbatical last year. “Yeh woh seat hai jahan ek legend baithtey the. Mahi bhai. Abhi bhi yaha koi nahi baithta. Hum unhe bohot miss karte hai (This is the seat that used to be occupied by a legend. M. S. Dhoni. No one sits here now. We miss him a lot),” Chahal said in the video posted on *bcci.tv*. Dhoni has not played a competitive game since the World Cup semifinal. — PTI



Misbah-ul-Haq

Hafeez, Malik part of WC plan: Misbah

Karachi: Pakistan head coach and chief selector Misbah-ul-Haq has clearly indicated that senior players Muhammad Hafeez and Shoaib Malik are part of the team's plans for the T20 World Cup in October-November. The two seniors, who were dropped following the team's exit from the 2019 ODI World Cup, were recalled for the T20 series at home against Bangladesh. “I think they have performed well and they still have something to contribute to Pakistan cricket. Age is not an issue as long as a player is fit and in form, he can contribute to his team,” Misbah said after the third T20 international was washed out due to rain in Lahore on Monday. “I think we require seniors like Hafeez (39) and Malik (37) and even captain, Babar Azam supported their selection,” he said. Misbah said after the T20 series at home against Sri Lanka and in Australia, he had realised that the team still needed the services of senior players. “We don't have much time before the World T20 so we will go along with our best players.” “I think we now have to start building our squad for the World Cup and that is why it was very important for us to win the series against Bangladesh.” — PTI

Core side for T20 WC set: Vikram

Hamilton: Batting coach Vikram Rathour on Tuesday called the new generation of Indian cricketers “incredible” and said the team management has already identified the core of players for the T20 World Cup in October-November. Rathour was speaking ahead of the third T20I between India and New Zealand at Seddon Park on Wednesday, with the Men in Blue leading the five-match series 2-0. “Adjustments will keep going on till the last minute. But as far as I am concerned and the team management is concerned, we have the core. We know what our team is going to be. Unless there is a case of injury or really bad loss in form, I don't see many changes happening,” said Rathour. With one eye on T20 World Cup in Australia, India have been on experimentation mode since the start of the home season in September last year, giving opportunities to host of a youngsters. “This new generation of cricketers is incredible. I find it amazing actually that they turn up and they are at their best straightaway across different format, different grounds and different countries actually. The amount of time they took to get settled (here in NZ)) was outstanding actually,” he said. — PTI

On the cusp of history



Washington Sundar (from left), Rohit Sharma and Ravindra Jadeja during a training session ahead of the third T20I against New Zealand at Hamilton on Tuesday.

— BCCI

Advantage India in third game as Blues poised for first T20 series win in New Zealand

Hamilton, Jan. 28: A ruthless India are expected to seal their maiden T20 International series win in New Zealand and only a special comeback from the struggling hosts in the third game here on Wednesday can delay what seems inevitable. India won the twin T20 Internationals in Auckland by margins of six and seven wickets respectively to go 2-0 up in the five-match series. A third successive win at Seddon Park will give

them their first ever T20I series' win on New Zealand soil, a feat they were unable to achieve on two occasions previously. India lost 0-2 under Mahendra Singh Dhoni back in 2008-09, and last year, they went down 1-2. Overall, this Indian side has seen an uptick in fortunes and are unbeaten in five T20 series since the 2019 ODI World Cup, including the ongoing one against the Black Caps. The only contest they didn't win was against

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South Africa, when the three-match series ended 1-1 after one of the games was washed out. However, their current winning form in T20 cricket won't lead to any meaningful change in the ICC rankings. India are currently

placed fifth in the T20I rankings, and need to win the remaining three matches — this series 5-0 — to move up to fourth from their current fifth spot. New Zealand are currently placed sixth. Pakistan, Australia, England and South Africa, in that order, sit ahead in the rankings' table. The greater concern at present is building towards the T20 World Cup to be hosted in Australia later this year.

In that regard though, the team management is quietly confident that various pieces of the jigsaw puzzle are starting to fall into place, and at the right time. This is specifically boosted by the performances of K. L. Rahul and Shreyas Iyer over the recent months, particularly on tour thus far. As such, there are no changes to be expected in the Indian line-up for the third T20. On Tuesday, there was an optional practice session with skip-

per Virat Kohli, K. L. Rahul, Yuzvendra Chahal, Mohammed Shami and Jasprit Bumrah, the ones missing in action. The support staff worked closely with those players who haven't yet received a chance to play in the series yet. Ravi Shastri paid close attention to Washington Sundar, while batting coach Vikram Rathour was busy with Rishabh Pant. Both are expected to sit out again on Wednesday. — PTI



Kartik Tyagi (left) celebrates taking an Australian wicket with teammates during their Super League quarterfinal in ICC U-19 World Cup.

— ICC

Tyagi bowls India into U-19 World Cup semis

Portchefstroom (South Africa), Jan. 28: Pacer Kartik Tyagi blew away the Australian top-order with a sensational spell to power India into the semifinals of the ICC U-19 World Cup with a comfortable 74-run win here on Tuesday. Kartik's four wickets came after India recovered through Atharva Ankolekar's combative half-century to reach 233 for nine, a modest total which the holders defended in impressive fashion. Riding on Kartik's spell in which he swung the ball at a good speed, India bundled out Australia for 159 with 6.3 overs to spare in their Super League quarterfinal. Invited to bat, India lacked a substantial partnership until Atharva and Ravi Bishnoi joined forces to raise a fighting 61-run stand for the seventh wicket.

Atharva scored an unbeaten 55 off 54 balls with five fours and a six, while Bishnoi made 30 off 34 balls. Tyagi then produced a dream spell in which he removed Australian skipper Mackenzie Harvey and Lachlan Hearn in successive balls in his very first over. This was after Jake Fraser-McGurk had run himself out in the very first ball of their innings. He did not get a hat-trick but added the scalps of Oliver Davies and Patrick Rowe to take the life out of the Australian chase. India's modest total would have given the Australians hope but it became a herculean task after their top order was polished off. Opener Sam Fanning (75) kept fighting from one end but that only delayed the inevitable. He added 81 runs for the

sixth wicket with Liam Scott (35). When Australia required 85 runs off the last 10 overs, spinner Bishnoi broke the stand by getting rid of Scott, while left-arm pacer Akash Singh sent back Fanning. The writing was on the wall after that as Akash (3/30) wrapped up the match by adding the wickets of Todd Murphy and Matthew Willans to his tally. Earlier, only opener Yashasvi Jaiswal put up a semblance of resistance against the Australian attack, scoring an 82-ball 62 with the help of six fours and two sixes. — PTI
Brief scores: India 233/9 (Yashasvi Jaiswal 62, Atharva Ankolekar 55 not out; Todd Murphy 2/40, Corey Kelly 2/45) bt Australia 159 in 43.3 overs (Sam Fanning 75, Liam Scott 35; Kartik Tyagi 4/24, Akash Singh 3/30, Ravi Bishnoi 1/26).

Telangana men in quarters

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

Telangana men reached the quarterfinals of the UTT 81st Senior National & Inter-State Table Tennis Championships being held at the Saroornagar Indoor Stadium here, on Tuesday. They thereby qualified for the National Games. On the second day of the tournament, Telangana defeated Maharashtra 'B' quite comfortably with a 3-0 scoreline. SFR Snehit got the team off a good start as he won against Bhavesh Apte 3-1 (6-11, 11-2, 12-10, 15-3). Then, Aman Balgu defeated Ashwin Subramanian 3-1 (11-6, 11-4, 11-13, 11-9) before Mohammed Ali rounded it off by beating Jash Dalvi 3-2 (9-11, 11-9, 8-11, 11-5, 11-9). However, the women lost to Tamil Nadu 1-3. Varuni Jaiswal began well by blanking Shanmathi Sathyamoorthy 3-0 (11-7, 11-5, 11-7) but Monica Manohar went down to



Members of the Telangana team (from left) Mohammed Ali, Aman Ur Rehman, Saroj Siril, Somnath Ghosh (coach), SFR Snehit and Aman Balgu pose at the Saroornagar Stadium.

Selenadeepthi Selvakumar 2-3 (5-11, 11-4, 13-11, 11-13, 11-13). Pranitha Garlapati too could not pull off a win, and lost to Kowshika Venkatesan 2-3 (9-11, 11-3, 4-11, 11-9, 8-11) as Telangana slipped to 1-2. Varuni then lost to Selenadeepthi in the reverse singles 1-3 (7-11, 5-

11, 11-7, 8-11) to hand the tie to Tamil Nadu. Earlier in the day, the Telangana men and women's teams reached the main draw of the team event with ease. Having won two matches each on Day-1, the men and women defeated Himachal Pradesh

3-1 and 3-0 respectively to be group toppers. As the PSPB players, who had to come from Portugal after playing in Olympic team qualification, arrived in the evening, the pre-quarterfinals got delayed. Sathiyam and Sharat Kamal have now arrived.

YOUNG GUNS FIRE ARSENAL INTO FA CUP FIFTH ROUND

Bournemouth, Jan. 28: Mikel Arteta hailed Arsenal's “hungry” youngsters after Bukayo Saka and Eddie Nketiah fired their side into the FA Cup fifth round with a 2-1 win against Bournemouth on Monday. Arteta turned to youth at Dean Court and Saka, Nketiah and Joe Willock repaid the Arsenal manager's faith with influential displays that secured a trip to third-tier Portsmouth. Saka gave Arsenal an early lead. Nketiah got the second before the interval. Sam Surridge got one back for Bournemouth in the closing minutes, but it was too late. — AFP

Francis volleyball champs

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

St Francis Degree College won the Kasala Ramaswamy and Laxmi Devi Memorial one-day inter-college Republic Day volleyball tournament for women at Audiah Nagar Volleyball Play Ground in Secunderabad. Organised by the Audiah Volleyball Association, the four-team tournament was played on a round robin basis. St Francis finished on top followed by Villa Marie, Bhavans and St Anthony's. ■ **The Results:** St Francis Degree College bt Villa Marie Degree College 25-12, 25-19; St Francis bt Bhavans College 25-20, 25-20; St Francis bt St Anthony's 25-12, 25-22; Villa Marie bt Bhavans 25-19, 25-17; Villa Marie bt St Anthony's 25-20, 25-22; Bhavans bt St Anthony's 25-15, 25-13.



Members of the St Francis Degree College pose after winning the Republic Day one-day volleyball tournament.



New signing
Italian club Inter Milan rope in
midfielder Christian Eriksen
from Tottenham Hotspur

SHORT TAKES

Billiards National title for Advani

Pune: Ace Indian cueist Pankaj Advani on Tuesday claimed yet another Senior National Billiards Championship title with a 5-2 win over Sourav Kothari in a pulsating final here. After losing the first frame in the best-of-9 150-up tie, Advani bounced back with breaks of 95 and 151 to go 2-1 up. The fourth frame was snatched by Sourav with the aid of a 135 break to level the match 2-all as the players went into a mid-match interval. On return, Advani raised his game to the next level, winning the next three frames with breaks of 135, 94 and 109 to clinch the National billiards title. This is Advani's 33rd National title in total and 10th in the senior category. Earlier in the semifinal, Pankaj blanked Gujarat's Dhvaj Haria 5-0 with a supreme performance. "I'm glad to win this title despite an improved standard in our country's level of the 3-ball game," Advani said. — PTI

Hao halts Praggu's winning spree

Gibraltar: Indian Grandmaster R. Praggnanandhaa's five-match winning spree came to halt after the teenager went down to China's Wang Hao in the seventh round of the Masters category at the 18th Gibraltar Chess festival here. The 14-year-old Praggnanandhaa, who turned things around superbly and won five games on the trot after losing in the opening round, met his match in the experienced Hao on Monday. Praggnanandhaa went down to Hao in 56 moves. The Chinese Grandmaster now holds the joint lead with three others, including the Russian duo of Andrey Espipenko, David Paravyan and Parham Maghsodloo of Iran, with six points in the tournament. — PTI

HUNTERS EYE REBIRTH IN HYDERABAD

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JAN. 28

With only four points from two ties, Hyderabad Hunters look to change their fortunes as they being their home run against the North Eastern Warriors in the Premier Badminton League to be played at Gachibowli Indoor Stadium in the city from Wednesday. Hunters, who lost their opening tie to Chennai Superstarz (2-5) and edged past Awadhe Warriors (4-3), have their task cut out against the second-placed side in the league. "I agreed we have not had an ideal start to our season in the league but that does not mean that we are out of contention. We begin our home leg tomorrow (Wednesday) against the Warriors (North Eastern) and will look to take advantage in front of our home crowds," P. V. Sindhu, captain of the Hunters said. On being asked if she is happy with the team combination, the 24-year-old said, "I think we have the right set of players in our team. We have a good mix of both experienced and young players. Ivanov (Vladimir), Sikki (Reddy), Daren (Llew) and myself form the experienced bunch while the likes of Ruthvika (Shivani), Sourbah (Verma) and Priyanshu (Rajawat) are the younger players in the side. I am very happy with the team that we have. It's just a matter of all things coming together at the right time." "With the home leg starting, hopefully we can make amends and fight for a semifinal spot," the reigning world champion added. After their tie against North East Warriors, they will be taking on Bengaluru Raptors (January 31), Mumbai Rockets (February 2) and play their last league match against Pune 7Aces (February 5) at home. Both the semifinals of the league will also be played in the city on February 7 and 8 while the title clash will be held on February 9.

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Roger Federer returns to Tennys Sandgren during their quarterfinal match at the Australian Open tennis tournament in Melbourne on Tuesday. Federer won 6-3, 2-6, 2-6, 7-6 (10/8), 6-3 — AP

I don't deserve this one, but I'm standing here and obviously very happy. I just said (to myself while losing), I believe in miracles. I got incredibly lucky tonight, today — I don't even know what time it is.
— ROGER FEDERER after his quarterfinal win

Federer saves 7 match points to enter semis; Djokovic, Barty also through

Melbourne, Jan. 28: Swiss great Roger Federer said "I believe in miracles" after he saved seven match points in a five-set nail-biter against 100th-ranked Tennys Sandgren to go into an Australian Open semifinal with Novak Djokovic on Tuesday.

The six-time champion, struggling physically, saved three match points at 4-5 in the fourth set and four more in the tie-breaker to scrape through 6-3, 2-6, 2-6, 7-6 (10/8), 6-3.

Federer, 38, now goes into an unmissable semifinal with Djokovic, who blunted Milos Raonic's razor serve to win 6-4, 6-3, 7-6 (7/1) and move two wins from an eighth Melbourne title.

Djokovic, despite trouble with his contact lenses, ended Raonic's run of 63 straight games in the tournament without a break of serve and moves smoothly into the semis for the loss of just one set so far.

He paid tribute to the great escape by Federer, ahead of a semi-final that reprises his epic win over the Swiss in last year's Wimbledon decider. "What he did today was really amazing, to come back and save seven match points at his age," Djokovic said.

"He's still playing such a great tennis and proving that he deserves to be up there. He's a great fighter. Obviously I have lots of respect for him," he added.

Federer's match was incident-packed and he received a rare warning for an audible obscenity before going off-court for



Ashleigh Barty celebrates her quarterfinal win over Petra Kvitova at the Australian Open tennis tournament on Tuesday. Barty won 7-6 (8/6), 6-2. — AFP

his treatment on his groin injury.

Still hampered by the injury, he somehow forced a fifth set and began to regain control against the big-serving American.

"I believe in miracles," Federer said, revealing that he thought his groin strain had ended his chances. "There could be rain, there could be all kinds of stuff."

"(I thought) just let him finish me off in style, and he didn't do that. I'm incredibly lucky tonight,

today — I don't even know what time it is."

Sandgren, achingly close to becoming the lowest-ranked player to beat Federer at the Australian Open, can count himself unlucky especially after a ball girl accidentally collided with him during the pivotal tie-breaker, which he lost.

'QUIET LITTLE LIFE'

In the women's draw Australia's world number one Ashleigh Barty dismissed

Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova in impressive style to reach the semis for the first time.

The unflappable Barty beat the Czech 7-6 (8/6), 6-2 and will be favourite in her semi-final against America's Sofia Kenin — sending hopes soaring of a first home winner in 42 years.

The French Open champion, who once quit tennis to play cricket and has been steadily rising since her return, is the tournament's poster girl with her

image plastered all over Melbourne.

But she said: "I'd prefer to just be sitting at home just living my quiet little life."

Kenin, whose career is also on the up, made her first Grand Slam semifinal and with it will rise to at least 12 in the rankings — making her the second-highest American behind Serena Williams.

The feisty 21-year-old was a 6-4, 6-4 winner over Ons Jabeur, halting the Tunisian's historic run which made her the first Arab woman to reach a Major quarter-final.

"She's a really tough player, I knew she's going to come out playing strong," Kenin said. "She's had really good matches, good wins. It wasn't an easy battle — all respect to her."

Jabeur has ignited interest back home with her run to the last eight, even receiving a good-luck call from her president.

PAES BOWS OUT

Veteran Leander Paes' last Australian Open outing came to an end after he and partner Jelena Ostapenko were knocked out of the mixed doubles competition, going down in straight sets to Jamie Murray and Bethanie Mattek-Sands.

The 46-year-old Paes and Latvia's Ostapenko, the 2017 French Open champion, lost to the British-American pair 2-6, 5-7 in a second round match that lasted one hour and seven minutes. Paes had earlier announced that 2020 would be his final year on the Pro circuit. — AFP

THE RESULTS

MEN'S SINGLES QUARTERFINALS

Roger Federer (SUI x3) bt Tennys Sandgren (USA) 6-3, 2-6, 2-6, 7-6 (10/8), 6-3; Novak Djokovic (SRB x2) bt Milos Raonic (CAN x32) 6-4, 6-3, 7-6 (7/1).

WOMEN'S SINGLES QUARTERFINALS

Sofia Kenin (USA x14) bt Ons Jabeur (TUN) 6-4, 6-4; Ashleigh Barty (AUS x1) bt Petra Kvitova (CZE x7) 7-6 (8/6), 6-2.

McENROE, NAVRATILOVA 'BREACHED PROTOCOLS'

Melbourne, Jan. 28: Tennis greats Martina Navratilova and John McEnroe were rapped for breaking "protocols" at the Australian Open on Tuesday after they unfurled a protest banner demanding Margaret Court's name be stripped from a main arena over her controversial views.

The two legends had rounded on Court's "homophobic" opinions on Monday, when the 77-year-old Australian was honoured on the 50th anniversary of her 1970 calendar-year Grand Slam. And on Tuesday McEnroe, who had labelled Court a "crazy aunt", and fellow American Navratilova went a step further, according to Australian media.

After a veterans match, they were pictured walking on court with a sign saying, "Evonne Goolagong Arena", calling for Margaret Court Arena to be renamed after three-time Major-winner Evonne Goolagong. According to reports, the 63-year-old Navratilova climbed into the umpire's chair to make a speech, but the television feed was promptly cut.

"We embrace diversity, inclusion and the right for people to have a view, as well as their right to voice that view," a Tennis Australia statement said.

"But the Australian Open has regulations and protocols with respect to how any fan, player or guest can use our facility, the event and the global stage it provides. This is to ensure the integrity of our event. "Two high-profile guests have breached these protocols and we are working through this with them." Court is the all-time record-holder for Grand Slam titles with 24, and one of only five players to win all four Majors in the same year. — AFP

Djokovic in teary tribute to Bryant

Melbourne, Jan. 28: Serbian tennis great Novak Djokovic teared up on Tuesday as he paid tribute to late basketball star Kobe Bryant, describing him as a "mentor" and a "friend" for the past 10 years.

Djokovic, speaking after his Australian Open quarterfinal win against Milos Raonic, said it was "heart-breaking" to hear about Bryant, who died in a helicopter crash along with his daughter and seven others.

"He was one of the greatest athletes of all time, he inspired myself and many other people around the world," Djokovic said in an on-court interview, wearing a tracksuit with the initials KB, 8 and 24 — Bryant's jersey numbers at the Los Angeles Lakers.

"I had the fortune to have a personal relationship with him over the past 10 years. When I needed some advice and some support he was there for me. He was my mentor, my friend and it's just heartbreaking to see and to hear what has happened to him and his daughter," Djokovic said, before breaking off to compose himself. Meanwhile, NBA super-



Novak Djokovic breaks down while talking about his friend Kobe Bryant as he is interviewed on court after his win over Milos Raonic at the Australian Open tennis tournament in Melbourne on Tuesday. — AP

star LeBron James said on Monday he was "heartbroken and devastated" over the death of Kobe Bryant while vowing in an *Instagram* post to continue Bryant's championship legacy with the Lakers. "I'm heartbroken and devastated my brother.

Man I love you big bro. I promise you I'll continue your legacy man! You mean so much to us all here especially #LakerNation and it's my responsibility to put this on my back and keep it going!! Please give me the strength from the heavens

I'm heartbroken and devastated my brother. Man I love you big bro. I promise you I'll continue your legacy man! You mean so much to us all here especially #LakerNation and it's my responsibility to put this on my back and keep it going!! — LEBRON JAMES LA Lakers star

above and watch over me! I got US here!", James posted.

"Every time I try I begin crying again just thinking about you, niece Gigi and the friendship/bond/brotherhood we had! There's so much more I want to say but just can't right now because I can't get through it!" James added.

After a game in Oklahoma City, Gilgeous-Alexander of the Oklahoma City Thunder paid homage to the 41-year-old, saying, "I just wanted to pay homage to a guy I looked up to growing up. There's a lot of guys also in the league that look up to him. He's done wonderful things for this game." — AFP

Probe into Kobe helicopter crash

Los Angeles, Jan. 28: Friends, colleagues and fans mourned Kobe Bryant on Monday as federal investigators sifted through the wreckage of the helicopter crash that killed the basketball legend and eight other people, hoping to find clues to what caused the accident that stunned the world.

Bryant, 41, was traveling Sunday with his 13-year-old daughter Gianna and seven other passengers and crew when the Sikorsky S-76 slammed into a rugged hillside in thick fog in Calabasas, northwest of LA.

Jennifer Homendy, a member of the National Transportation Safety Board, told a press conference that investigators would remain at the site of the crash throughout the week to collect evidence. "It was a pretty devastating accident scene," she said, adding that the wreckage was strewn

across about 600 feet (180 metres). We will be here about five days on scene to collect perishable evidence. We are not here to determine the cause of the accident. We will not determine that on scene," Homendy added.

Homendy said the aircraft did not have a black box, which was not required on that type of helicopter. Los Angeles County Sheriff Alex Villanueva told reporters it would "take a while" to recover the remains of the victims because of the force of the crash and the rugged terrain.

LAKERS GAME PUT OFF

The NBA has postponed the Los Angeles Lakers' next game against the Clippers on Tuesday night. The league announced the decision in a statement Monday, saying it "was made out of respect for the Lakers organisation." — Agencies

MILAN PLAN TO HONOUR THEIR FAVOURITE FAN

Milan, Jan. 28: The AC Milan football team will wear black armbands and observe a minute's silence during an Italian Cup game on Tuesday in memory of devout fan Kobe Bryant.

The seven-time European champions host Torino in the quarterfinals at the San Siro.

Bryant grew up in Italy between the ages of 6 and 13 while his father, Joe Bryant, played basketball in the country.

Milan tweeted an interview with Bryant when he visited the club's training facility a few years ago.

"Watching (Ruud) Gullit, (Frank) Rijkaard, (Marco) Van Basten and (Paolo) Maldini was always a dream for me," Bryant said earlier, wearing a the home Milan jersey.

"It's always been my favorite squad. Back in Los Angeles I have an AC Milan shirt and scarf inside my locker and I see them every day."

Torino tweeted that it will "emotionally" stand by Milan's side during the tribute "in memory of this sports legend." — AP