

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

CHENNAI | FRIDAY 21 | FEBRUARY 2020

## WEATHER



Max: 33°C  
Min: 24°C  
Rainfall: Nil

**Forecast:**  
Hazy sunshine; air quality will be unhealthy for sensitive groups

## ASTROGUIDE

**Vikari:** Masi 9  
**Tithi:** Trayodashi  
**Star:** Uthiradam  
**Rahukalam:**  
10.30 am to 12 noon  
**Yamagandam:**  
3.00 pm to 4.30 pm  
**PRAYERS**  
**Fajar:** 5.20 am  
**Zohar:** 12.28 pm  
**Asar:** 3.44 pm  
**Maghrib:** 6.15 pm  
**Isha:** 7.27 pm  
**SUNSET TODAY:** 6.16 PM  
**SUNRISE TOMORROW:** 6.29 AM  
**MOONRISE TODAY:** 4.47 AM  
**MOONSET TOMORROW:** 4.28 PM

## COUNTER POINT



**He is practising some Hindi words for Namaste Trump show!**

## TN fisherman injured in Lankan Navy firing

**Rameswaram:** A 52-year-old Tamil Nadu fisherman was injured when the Sri Lankan Navy allegedly opened fire at his boat while he was fishing with others off Katchatheevu in the island nation's waters. Sesu of Thangachimadam sustained injury after shards from the window hit by a rubber bullet pierced his eye.

## At least 9 killed in Germany shisha bar shootings

**Hanau:** At least nine people were killed in shootings targeting shisha bars in Germany that sparked a huge manhunt overnight before the suspected gunman was found dead in his home early Thursday. The attacks occurred at two bars in Hanau, about 20 kilometres (12 miles) from Frankfurt, where armed police quickly fanned out and police helicopters roamed the sky looking for those responsible for the bloodshed.

## China changes counting method in virus infected again

**Beijing:** China said Thursday it has again changed the method of counting patients with the novel coronavirus and will now include only those diagnosed by sophisticated laboratory testing. It is the second time in just eight days that the country has revised its criteria — a move that could muddle statistics and complicate efforts to track the spread of the illness. Chinese health officials last week said patients from Hubei province and its capital Wuhan — the epicentre of the outbreak — who had been diagnosed via clinical methods including lung imaging would be added to the count in addition to those confirmed by lab studies.

## No T-shirts, leggings at Kapali temple

**J. V. SIVA PRASANNA KUMAR**  
CHENNAI, FEB. 20

Devotees visiting the ancient Kapaleswarar temple at Mylapore here will have to follow a dress code to enter the sanctum of the temple.

The new rule is applicable to both men and women entering the temple for darshan. The dress code makes it mandatory for men to wear the Indian traditional dress like dhoti-shirt, full



**WORLD | 11**  
**Greta creates foundation with award money**



**SPORT | 14**  
**India women to take on Oz in world cup opener**

**TABLOID**  
**Kamal offers ₹1 cr to mishap victims' kin**



www.facebook.com/deccannews, www.twitter.com/deccanchronicle, www.deccanchronicle.com

Vol. 15 No. 325 Established 1938 | 32 PAGES | ₹ 3.00

## DEADLY COLLISION



Police inspect the mangled remains of ill-fated Ernakulam-bound Kerala Road Transport Corporation bus at Thirumurganpoondi in Tirupur district on Thursday. — PTI

## 19 killed in road mishap

**LAKSHMI L. LUND & S. KATHTHASAMI | DC**  
COIMBATORE, FEB. 20

As many as 19 passengers on board an Ernakulam-bound Kerala Road Transport Corporation bus died on the spot and another 25 were injured when the bus collided head-on with a speeding overloaded container lorry which was coming in the wrong lane in the opposite direction in the early hours of Thursday. The accident happened at Thirumurganpoondi in Tirupur district on the Avinashi-Salem bypass around 3: 25 am, according to police.

Among the dead are the KSRTC bus driver V. Grees (43) of Ernakulam and conductor R. Baiju of Veligandi in Kerala and five women. A. Hemaraj (38), from Ottapalam in Kerala, the lorry driver who fled the accident scene, was detained by Tirupur police. The post-mortem of the 19 deceased was carried out at the Government Hospital in Avinashi and bodies of

**PAGE 3**  
**7 Nepal pilgrims killed, 19 hurt in deadly road mishap**

the five female and 13 males were handed over to the families in the evening. Of the dead, Kirankumar (30) from Tumkur is from Karnataka, while others are from Kerala. Of the 25 injured passengers, those who suffered minor injuries were treated as outpatients while the ones who

suffered serious injuries are undergoing treatment at the GH and private hospitals in Avinashi, Tirupur and Coimbatore. Police said the bus number KL 15 A 282 Bengaluru-Ernakulam KSRTC bus left Bengaluru at 8.15 pm with 48 passengers on board. The reservation chart of the bus shows that a majority of 25 passengers were travelling to Ernakulam while 19 had booked tickets for Thirissur and another four had booked tickets for Palakkad. — P3

## Bill makes Cauvery delta protected zone

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
CHENNAI, FEB. 20

The Tamil Nadu Assembly passed a bill to prevent the setting up of hydrocarbon or similar projects in the Cauvery delta region. The Tamil Nadu Protected Agricultural Zone Development Act, 2020, piloted by Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami on Thursday seeks to protect agriculture lands in Cauvery delta region and "prohibits certain activities" in the region.

The Act, which comes into force "at once," also seeks to establish a high-powered authority to advise the government on various measures to protect and improve farming activities to increase farm production and productivity to serve the interests of the farmers.

The Act prohibits the establishment of new project or new activity specified in the second schedule in the protected agricultural zone. "Nothing contained in the sub-section 1 shall affect the activities or



Edappadi K. Palaniswami

**"Being a farmer (myself), I feel proud to introduce this historic bill in the Assembly"**

Parangipettai and Kumara-tchi blocks of Cuddalore district besides Aranthangi, Avudaiyarkoil, Manamelkudi, Thiruvarangulam and Karimbakudi blocks in Pudukkottai district.

Zinc smelter, iron ore process plant, integrated steel plant and sponge iron plant, copper smelter, bone meal, processing of animal horn, hoofs and other body parts, tannery, exploration, drilling and extraction of oil and natural gas including coal-bed methane, shale gas and other similar hydrocarbons and ship breaking industry, are among the projects prohibited as per second schedule of the Act. — P4

## CAA PROTESTER



**Girl screams Pakistan Zindabad, held**

**Bengaluru:** In a dramatic development, Bengaluru city cops have arrested Amulya L, an anti-CAA and NRC protester who shouted 'Pakistan Zindabad' while addressing a gathering at Freedom Park here on Thursday. — PAGE 6

## Trump visit: India, US to ink 5 pacts

**SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI | DC**  
NEW DELHI, FEB. 20



India on Thursday made it clear that the coming address by US President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi before a large crowd at Ahmedabad's massive Motera Cricket Stadium on February 24 is not designed to influence the American presidential elections or domestic politics there, adding that the "Namaste Trump" event was being organised by a private body called the "Donald Trump Nagrik Abhinandan Samiti" (Citizens Felicitation Committee). New Delhi is expected to ink five MoUs with the

US including in the fields of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), trade facilitation and homeland security. On the two nations not signing a trade deal anytime soon, New Delhi said that India "does not want to rush into a trade deal" and it also "does not want to create artificial deadlines" because the "issues involved are complicated, with many decisions potentially having real impact on people's lives and long-term economic consequences".

## China's objection to Amit Shah's visit to Arunachal Pradesh has no merit: India

**New Delhi, Feb. 20:** India on Thursday strongly rejected China's objection to Home Minister Amit Shah's visit to Arunachal Pradesh, saying any criticism of visits by Indian leaders to a state of the country does not stand to reason.

External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said Arunachal Pradesh is an

"integral and inalienable" part of India and Indian leaders routinely travel to the state as they do to any other state.

China, which claims Arunachal Pradesh as part of south Tibet, objected to Shah's visit to the state, saying it violated Beijing's "territorial sovereignty" over it. "Our position on Arunachal Pradesh is clear and consistent. Arunachal Pradesh is an integral and inalienable part of India," Kumar said at a media briefing. "Objecting to the visit of Indian leaders to a state of India does not stand to reason and understanding of the Indian people," he added.



In the Presence of **Adiyogi**  
The Source of Yoga  
Incredible India

# MahaShivaRatri

A Night with the Divine

**21 Feb 2020**  
6pm to 6am  
Isha Yoga Center,  
Coimbatore

Join the Webstream:  
isha.sadhguru.org/MSR

Nightlong Celebration with  
Musical Performances,  
Midnight Meditation and  
Discourse by Sadhguru

## Watch Live on:



# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

CHENNAI | FRIDAY 21 | FEBRUARY 2020

## WEATHER



Max: 33°C  
Min: 24°C  
Rainfall: Nil

**Forecast:**  
Hazy sunshine; air quality will be unhealthy for sensitive groups

## ASTROGUIDE

**Vikari:** Masi 9  
**Tithi:** Trayodashi  
**Star:** Uthiradam  
**Rahukalam:**  
10.30 am to 12 noon  
**Yamagandam:**  
3.00 pm to 4.30 pm  
**PRAYERS**  
**Fajar:** 5.20 am  
**Zohar:** 12.28 pm  
**Asar:** 3.44 pm  
**Maghrib:** 6.15 pm  
**Isha:** 7.27 pm  
**SUNSET TODAY:** 6.16 PM  
**SUNRISE TOMORROW:** 6.29 AM  
**MOONRISE TODAY:** 4.47 AM  
**MOONSET TOMORROW:** 4.28 PM

## COUNTER POINT



He is practising some Hindi words for Namaste Trump show!

## TN fisherman injured in Lankan Navy firing

**Rameswaram:** A 52-year-old Tamil Nadu fisherman was injured when the Sri Lankan Navy allegedly opened fire at his boat while he was fishing with others off Katchatheevu in the island nation's waters. Sesu of Thangachimadam sustained injury after shards from the window hit by a rubber bullet pierced his eye.

## At least 9 killed in Germany shisha bar shootings

**Hanau:** At least nine people were killed in shootings targeting shisha bars in Germany that sparked a huge manhunt overnight before the suspected gunman was found dead in his home early Thursday. The attacks occurred at two bars in Hanau, about 20 kilometres (12 miles) from Frankfurt, where armed police quickly fanned out and police helicopters roamed the sky looking for those responsible for the bloodshed.

## China changes counting method in virus infected again

**Beijing:** China said Thursday it has again changed the method of counting patients with the novel coronavirus and will now include only those diagnosed by sophisticated laboratory testing. It is the second time in just eight days that the country has revised its criteria — a move that could muddle statistics and complicate efforts to track the spread of the illness. Chinese health officials last week said patients from Hubei province and its capital Wuhan — the epicentre of the outbreak — who had been diagnosed via clinical methods including lung imaging would be added to the count in addition to those confirmed by lab studies.

## No T-shirts, leggings at Kapali temple

**J. V. SIVA PRASANNA KUMAR**  
CHENNAI, FEB. 20

Devotees visiting the ancient Kapaleswarar temple at Mylapore here will have to follow a dress code to enter the sanctum of the temple.

The new rule is applicable to both men and women entering the temple for darshan. The dress code makes it mandatory for men to wear the Indian traditional dress like dhoti-shirt, full



**WORLD | 11**  
**Greta creates foundation with award money**



**SPORT | 14**  
**India women to take on Oz in world cup opener**

**TABLOID**  
**Kamal offers ₹1 cr to mishap victims' kin**



www.facebook.com/deccannews, www.twitter.com/deccanchronicle, www.deccanchronicle.com

Vol. 15 No. 325 Established 1938 | 32 PAGES | ₹ 3.00

## DEADLY COLLISION



Police inspect the mangled remains of ill-fated Ernakulam-bound Kerala Road Transport Corporation bus at Thirumurganpoondi in Tirupur district on Thursday. — PTI

## 19 killed in road mishap

**LAKSHMI L. LUND & S. KATHTHASAMI | DC**  
COIMBATORE, FEB. 20

As many as 19 passengers on board an Ernakulam-bound Kerala Road Transport Corporation bus died on the spot and another 25 were injured when the bus collided head-on with a speeding overloaded container lorry which was coming in the wrong lane in the opposite direction in the early hours of Thursday. The accident happened at Thirumurganpoondi in Tirupur district on the Avinashi-Salem bypass around 3: 25 am, according to police.

Among the dead are the KSRTC bus driver V. Grees (43) of Ernakulam and conductor R. Baiju of Veligandi in Kerala and five women. A. Hemaraj (38), from Ottapalam in Kerala, the lorry driver who fled the accident scene, was detained by Tirupur police. The post-mortem of the 19 deceased was carried out at the Government Hospital in Avinashi and bodies of

## PAGE 3

### 7 Nepal pilgrims killed, 19 hurt in deadly road mishap

the five female and 13 males were handed over to the families in the evening. Of the dead, Kirankumar (30) from Tumkur is from Karnataka, while others are from Kerala. Of the 25 injured passengers, those who suffered minor injuries were treated as outpatients while the ones who

suffered serious injuries are undergoing treatment at the GH and private hospitals in Avinashi, Tirupur and Coimbatore.

Police said the bus number KL 15 A 282 Bengaluru-Ernakulam KSRTC bus left Bengaluru at 8.15 pm with 48 passengers on board. The reservation chart of the bus shows that a majority of 25 passengers were travelling to Ernakulam while 19 had booked tickets for Thirissur and another four had booked tickets for Palakkad. — P3

## Bill makes Cauvery delta protected zone

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
CHENNAI, FEB. 20

The Tamil Nadu Assembly passed a bill to prevent the setting up of hydrocarbon or similar projects in the Cauvery delta region. The Tamil Nadu Protected Agricultural Zone Development Act, 2020, piloted by Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami on Thursday seeks to protect agriculture lands in Cauvery delta region and "prohibits certain activities" in the region.

The Act, which comes into force "at once," also seeks to establish a high-powered authority to advise the government on various measures to protect and improve farming activities to increase farm production and productivity to serve the interests of the farmers.

The Act prohibits the establishment of new project or new activity specified in the second schedule in the protected agricultural zone. "Nothing contained in the sub-section 1 shall affect the activities or



Edappadi K. Palaniswami

**"Being a farmer (myself), I feel proud to introduce this historic bill in the Assembly"**

Parangipettai and Kumara-tchi blocks of Cuddalore district besides Aranthangi, Avudaiyarkoil, Manamelkudi, Thiruvarangulam and Karambakudi blocks in Pudukkottai district.

Zinc smelter, iron ore process plant, integrated steel plant and sponge iron plant, copper smelter, bone meal, processing of animal horn, hoofs and other body parts, tannery, exploration, drilling and extraction of oil and natural gas including coal-bed methane, shale gas and other similar hydrocarbons and ship breaking industry, are among the projects prohibited as per second schedule of the Act. — P4

## CAA PROTESTER



**Girl screams Pakistan Zindabad, held**

**Bengaluru:** In a dramatic development, Bengaluru city cops have arrested Amulya L., an anti-CAA and NRC protester who shouted 'Pakistan Zindabad' while addressing a gathering at Freedom Park here on Thursday. — PAGE 6

## Trump visit: India, US to ink 5 pacts

**SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI | DC**  
NEW DELHI, FEB. 20



India on Thursday made it clear that the coming address by US President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi before a large crowd at Ahmedabad's massive Motera Cricket Stadium on February 24 is not designed to influence the American presidential elections or domestic politics there, adding that the "Namaste Trump" event was being organised by a private body called the "Donald Trump Nagrik Abhinandan Samiti" (Citizens Felicitation Committee). New Delhi is expected to ink five MoUs with the

US including in the fields of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), trade facilitation and homeland security. On the two nations not signing a trade deal anytime soon, New Delhi said that India "does not want to rush into a trade deal" and it also "does not want to create artificial deadlines" because the "issues involved are complicated, with many decisions potentially having real impact on people's lives and long-term economic consequences".

## China's objection to Amit Shah's visit to Arunachal Pradesh has no merit: India

**New Delhi, Feb. 20:** India on Thursday strongly rejected China's objection to Home Minister Amit Shah's visit to Arunachal Pradesh, saying any criticism of visits by Indian leaders to a state of the country does not stand to reason.

External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said Arunachal Pradesh is an

"integral and inalienable" part of India and Indian leaders routinely travel to the state as they do to any other state.

China, which claims Arunachal Pradesh as part of south Tibet, objected to Shah's visit to the state, saying it violated Beijing's "territorial sovereignty" over it. "Our position on Arunachal Pradesh is clear and consistent. Arunachal Pradesh is an integral and inalienable part of India," Kumar said at a media briefing. "Objecting to the visit of Indian leaders to a state of India does not stand to reason and understanding of the Indian people," he added.



In the Presence of **Adiyogi**  
The Source of Yoga  
Incredible India

# MahaShivaRatri

A Night with the Divine

**21 Feb 2020**  
6pm to 6am  
Isha Yoga Center,  
Coimbatore

Join the Webstream:  
isha.sadhguru.org/MSR

Nightlong Celebration with  
Musical Performances,  
Midnight Meditation and  
Discourse by Sadhguru

## Watch Live on:



# CREDAI

## FAIRPRO 2020

நெனச்ச வீடு  
கிடைக்கும்.

21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> FEB

நிச்சயமா  
பிடிக்கும்.

CHENNAI TRADE CENTRE,  
NANDAMBAKKAM

LARGEST HOME BUYING FESTIVAL

### GRAND INAUGURATION TODAY AT 9.30 AM



### Thiru. O. Panneerselvam

Honourable Deputy Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu &  
Minister for Housing and Urban Development

has kindly consented to be the Chief Guest

#### Guests of Honour

**Thiru. Rajesh B Lakhoni IAS**  
Principal Secretary – Housing & Urban Development

**Dr. D. Karthikeyan IAS**  
Member Secretary, CMDA

**Thiru. Chandra Sekhar Sakhamuri IAS**  
Director, Town & Country Planning

Home Loan Powered by



CO-POWERED BY



Banking Partners



Sponsor



#### Participating Developers



[f](#) / credaichennai

[t](#) / credaichennai

[i](#) / credaichennai

[in](#) / Credai Chennai

GIVE A MISSED CALL  
FOR FREE VIP ENTRY PASS

# 82300 23456



SHORT TAKES

18 including 2 customs officers arrested

Chennai: At least 18 people including two Customs preventive officers were arrested by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) from the Chennai International Airport with at least 12.6 kg of gold worth ₹5.5 crore.

According to DRI officials, the smugglers were arrested following a raid carried out at the airport on Wednesday. Two preventive officers E.V. Rajan from Kerala and Vikas of Gujarat were arrested on charge of nexus with the smuggling mafia. The arrested arrived in the airport via various flights from Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Dubai. The inspection, which started in the morning, lasted till midnight. Meanwhile, the DRI team came under attack by a gang inside the campus during midnight while they were shifting the accused to the DRI office in Chengalpettai.

The gang managed to release four of the arrested from the DRI custody and escaped from the scene. Following this, Prithvi Raj, senior intelligence officer, DRI registered a complaint with the airport police. But none of the gang has been arrested. The investigation is underway, police said.

Meanwhile, in another incident, Customs officers arrested seven people with 5.30 kg of gold valued at ₹2.28 crore along with cigarettes, iphones and laptop worth ₹19.91 lakh.

According to the officials, the arrested were identified as Muhammad Azharudheen, 23, John Muhammad, 29, Jalaudeen, 40, all from Tiruchy and Muhammad, 60 of Chennai. They arrived from Dubai. Aslam Bihas, 22, hailing from Sivaganga, arrived from Kuala Lumpur. On search, 10 bundles containing gold in paste form were unearthed from their rectum. One gold cut bit weighing 48grams valued ₹21lakh was also recovered from the pocket of Jalaudeen. In another search on the same day, three people identified as Sickander, 26 of Chennai, Muhammad Asmathulah Khan, 31, and Obeyes Muhamad, 24, both hailing from Ramanathapuram, were arrested with 1.8 kg of gold valued ₹76.37lakh. They arrived from Dubai. On search, six bundles containing gold worth ₹76.37 lakh in paste form were recovered from their rectum. Two gold rings and one gold chain weighing 160 grams worth ₹6.86lakh were also recovered them. They brought in cigarettes, iphones and laptops in commercial quantity in checked in luggage. It valued ₹17.91lakh. A bundle of gold weighing 358grams in paste form was also recovered from the garbage bin in toilet near the VIP lounge on the same day. It is valued ₹15.36 lakh, said officials.

Survivors shell-shocked

The accident left the survivors shell-shocked. Karishma, on her way to Ernakulam, said she was seated on the left side of the bus and was sleeping at the time of the mishap. "When I woke up suddenly, I saw many people running around and the injured being taken in ambulances," the woman told the media.

Another passenger identified only as Alan said he was still finding it difficult to overcome the shock. "I have sustained a minor injury on my leg. But my friend is injured on the nose and I am taking him to hospital," he said. Jemin George said he suffered a cut on his lips and an injury to his forehead that required 10 stitches. "I do not know what exactly happened. I was sleeping," he said, adding, he was referred to a hospital in Coimbatore. A weeping woman passenger alleged the container lorry was overloaded and there were not many vehicles on the road. She said the right side of the bus was completely damaged.

Kerala offers ₹10L solatium

Fatal collision: Bus crew kin granted ₹30 lakh each

DC CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, FEB 20

The Kerala government announced ₹10 lakh each to the families of the persons who died in accident near Coimbatore Thursday.

Transport minister A. K. Saseendran said of the ₹10 lakh, ₹2 lakh would be released as emergency assistance. The families of KSRTC employees Baiju and Girish would be granted compensation of ₹30 lakh each. The amount is being granted under KSRTC insurance cover.

Earlier, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan directed the officials to provide immediate medical help to the injured. On his instructions agriculture minister V. S. Sunil Kumar and transport minister A. K. Saseendran rushed to the spot in Coimbatore to oversee the rescue and relief operations.

The health department rushed ambulances to bring the bodies of the victims to Kerala. Of the 19 persons who died in the KSRTC bus and container lorry collision, 18 persons are from Kerala. One person belongs to Karnataka.



Rescue workers pull out injured passengers from the ill fated KSRTC bus near Tirupur on Thursday. —PTI

Tragic end for good Samaritan KSRTC staff

DC CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, FEB 20

For Dr Kavitha Warrrier, KSRTC bus driver and conductor Baiju and Girish who died in the accident near Tiruppur in the wee hours of Thursday, were no less than God.

On June 3, 2018, while travelling to Bengaluru, Kavitha became very ill. She lost consciousness and collapsed in the bus. At that time the bus had just passed Hosur.

The duo didn't think for a minute and decided to return to Hosur. They rushed Kavitha to a private hospital and got her admitted there. The condition of the patient was serious so the doctors advised that someone stay back to take care of her.

Baiju decided to stay back in hospital. As the remaining passengers had to reach their respective destination, Girish drove the bus to Bengaluru.

Baiju took very good care of Kavitha in hospital till



The mangled remains of the lorry and the bus after the tragic accident at Thirumurganpundi in Tirupur district on Avinashi- Salem bypass on Thursday. —DC

her relatives turned up. The then KSRTC managing director Tomin J Thachankary felicitated the two staff members and handed commendation certificate for exemplary work.

Kavitha is yet to come to terms with tragedy.

"I can't still believe that they are no more. It was their presence of mind that saved my life on that day. They were very good to passengers and ensured that each and everyone on the vehicle was comfortable. Being regulars on this route, they knew the frequent travelers," she said.

Worst mishap in recent times

THE ACCIDENT which happened on a day that marked the 82nd anniversary of the founding of the Kerala's State Motor Service was described as the worst in Tamil Nadu in recent times. "It was a high speed collision. The container lorry went out of control," said Palakkad Superintendent of Police Siva Vikram.

Expedite relief work: CM

TN CM PALANISWAMI said he has asked the Tirupur administration to coordinate with their Palakkad counterparts, to expedite relief works including sending the bodies of the deceased to the neighbouring state. "I have directed the Tirupur collector and police officials there to set up a help centre to assist the relatives of the victims and also expedite the process of sending the bodies of the deceased by contacting Kerala officials," he said.

Kerala to bear treatment expenses

KERALA CHIEF MINISTER PINARAYI VIJAYAN said the state will bear the treatment expenses of the injured.



Mishap cause probed

THE CAUSE of the accident is being probed by the police. Preliminary investigation brings to light that either the driver of the overloaded container lorry could have dozed off while at the wheel. Another narrative also points out that a tyre burst could have caused the container lorry driver to have lost control of the vehicle leading it to ram the centre median on the road before colliding head-on with the bus.



Extremely anguished: PM

"EXTREMELY ANGUISHED by the bus accident...In this hour of grief, my thoughts and prayers are with the bereaved families. I hope those who are injured recover at the earliest," the PM's Office said in a tweet quoting Modi.

7 Nepal pilgrims killed, 19 hurt in road mishap

ZAKEER HUSSAIN| DC SALEM, FEB. 20

Tragedy struck a 34-member pilgrims party from Nepal as seven of them including two women were crushed to death and 19 others critically injured in a van-omnibus head-on collision near Omalur near Salem in the wee hours of Thursday.



The Omnibus that collided with the tourist van near Salem on Thursday. —DC

In one of the worst road accidents in the district in recent months on the four-lane Salem-Bengaluru national highway (NH), which begins from Kanyakumari and goes up to Benaras, the van carrying the Nepali pilgrims was massively impacted upon by an omnibus proceeding from Bengaluru to Kerala when the van driver negotiated a 'u' turn near Sikkampatti village, police said.

The pilgrims from Nepal, who came to India on February 6 and had been visiting various temples and sacred places, were proceeding towards Bengaluru after visiting Kanyakumari, Rameswaram and Madurai in Tamil Nadu.

On sighting a roadside Durga temple (Kaliamma Kovil as it is known in Tamil) with an adjoining 'mandapam (hall)', the Nepali pilgrims felt they could rest there for the night and leave today morning, police said.

Even as local villagers hearing the loud noise alerted the Omalur police, who rushed to the spot and began retrieving the victims from the mangled vehicle along with the locals, three of the Nepali pilgrims were found killed at the spot - Tikaram, 55, Ms Bulhari Chowdhry and Birbahadur, 58.

Another pilgrim, Gopal Taman, 56, died on the way when the injured were being rushed to the Salem government hospital and three others - Vishnu Thangal, 60, Rishil Chowdhary, 65 and Ms. Bulsari Chowdhary, 55, succumbed to their injuries later at the hospital. As many as 19 other pilgrims are under treatment at the GH.

Salem district SP, Ms. Deepa Kanikar, DSP Bhaskaran and other top officials supervised the rescue operations at the accident site. The district collector, Mr. C. A. Raman, who visited the investigations said.

They detained two persons including the omnibus driver Murugeswaran, 42, of Srivaikuntam in Thoothukudi district and are inquiring.

15 sovereign gold stolen from locked house

Chennai: Fifteen sovereigns of gold were stolen from a locked house at Pulipakkom in Chengalpettai district on Thursday. According to Chengalpettai police, the gold ornament was stolen from the house of Kala Victoria, 41, in Pulipakkom village. Kala, who is running a cell phone shop at Chengalpettai, was living with her mother Prabha. The incident came to the light after Kala reached home from the shop by evening. Her mother too was not present in the house as she went to her son's house in Manimagalam village. Following the complaint registered by Kala, Chengalpettai police has launched an investigation into the incident. As per the complaint, apart from gold, 500gram silver and ₹30,000 in cash were looted from the house, said the police.

Lorry capsizes, hits GST road traffic

Chennai: Traffic was disrupted for at least three hours on GST road after a lorry skidded and turned upside down on Thursday. The driver, Ashok Kumar, 33, escaped unhurt. According to police, the incident occurred at 7am when the sand-laden lorry, which was heading to Chennai from Kanchipuram, skidded near Vadalur. As result, the vehicle turned upside down in the centre of road, blocking the traffic on the arterial stretch.

**FDI FOOTWEAR DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE**  
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY, GOVT. OF INDIA

AN INSTITUTION OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE UNDER FDI ACT 2017

**ADMISSIONS 2020**

**ONLINE REGISTRATION OPEN**

<b>BACHELOR OF DESIGN (B.DES.) - 4 YRS</b>	<b>MASTER OF DESIGN (M.DES.) - 2 YRS</b>
> Footwear Design & Production > Leather Goods & Accessories Design > Fashion Design	> Footwear Design & Production
<b>BACHELOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (BBA) - 3 YRS</b>	<b>MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (MBA) - 2 Yrs</b>
> Retail & Fashion Merchandise	> Retail & Fashion Merchandise

Prominent recruiters: Zara, Marks & Spencer, Nike, Adidas, Decathlon, Puma, Uniqlo, Shopper Stop, ITC Wills Lifestyle, Tommy Hilfifer, Future Group, Beta India, Aditya Birla Group, Reliance Luxury Brands, Sabiyasachi, TATA International

For details, visit <https://www.fddiindia.com/placement.php>

Refer to FDDI website for detailed information and apply online at <https://applyadmission.net/fddi2020>

CAMPUSES: Noida | Rohtak | Kolkata | Chennai | Fursatganj (Near Lucknow) | Jodhpur | Guna | Chhindwara | Anklshwar (Gujarat) | Hyderabad | Chandigarh | Patna

**Sleepwell**

**INDIA'S HEALTHIEST Offer**

ஆரோக்கியமும், சுகாதாரமும் இதை விட விரிதரக் இருக்க முடியாது. இப்பொழுது ஒவ்வொரு ஸ்லீப்பெல் மெத்தைகளிடம் பல ஆதாயங்களைப் பெறுங்கள்.

இலவசம்\* MY PILLOW கொடு.

இலவசம்\* பிரீமியம் பெட்டித் ஆவர்து மென்மையான துள்குகள்

neem fresche Health & Hygiene inspired by Nature and Science

A Sheela Foam Product

www.mysleepwell.com • Toll Free: 1800 103 6664

For Institutional Enquiries (Hotel, Hostel & Hospital), please contact - 9319239995 (Timing - 10 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday)

TO GET A CALL FROM OUR NEAREST DEALER GIVE A MISSED CALL ON 79981 79981

Exclusive Outlets: Kolathur/Perambur: 9840012199, Chennai: Royapettah Pycrofts Road: 9840012199, Royapettah High Road: 044-42662413, Mogappair West: 9444386786, Adyar: 7299400600, OMR Thoripakkam: 9841222530, Tambaram West: 9498091818, Tambaram East: 944058484, Kalpakkam: 9894447132, Velachery: 044- 48507773, Valasaravakkam: 044-24762179, Kely: 994017866, OMR Padur: 9443025588, 9444225588, Thiruvallur: 9840012199, Kanchipuram (Karukinil Amarthaval Kovil Street): 9787127799, Chennai: Ponneri: 9443483601, Thiruvottiyur: 9488477862, 9442740826, Anna Nagar: 9840231868, 9962233633, West Marambal: 9894020200, Teynampet: 9841517000, Poonamallee: 9840967738, Avadi: 9094031704, 9840261503, Madhavaram: 9600839491, Virugambakkam: 9840036215, Porur: 24768898, 9444485670, Sembakkam: 9840025099, Kanchipuram (Gandhi Road): 9751551021, 9994843009, Chennai: Choolaimedu: 9444120686, Adyar: 9381292038, Vettuvankeni: 9380292038, Nanganallur: 9445000004, Adambakkam: 9840933994, 9884071547, Arumbakkam: 9884199144, Aminjikarai: 9840041644, Paravallur: 9445699786, Keelkattalai: 9841423890, Ullagaram: 9841605052, T. Nagar: 9870813380, Broadway: 984116784, Parrys: 9884197925, Kodungaiyur: 9840189599, Villivakkam: 9444002329, Royapettah: 9840054760, 9444281850, Vadapalani: 9381031788, Vadapalani: 9962594111, Madambakkam: 9841549306, Porur: 8124368385, Ayapakkam: 9381833779, Saligramam: 9445056987, Selayur: 9444301832, Gowrvakkam: 9444053496, Ambattur: 9150733096, 9444178896, Red Hills: 9442422260, Royapuram: 9444031944, Pallavaram: 967710114, Tambaram West: Rajaji Road: 9884847475, Shanmugam Road: 9884848486, Guduvanchery: 9003131319, Karaiyanchavadi: 9500595002, Kolathur (Lakshimpuram): 8939749933, Ashok Pillar: 9380490903, Maraimalai Nagar: 9841005056, SP Kovil: 9894520276, Chengalpattu: 9444854445, Thirunindravur: 979322349, Sriperumbudur: 9443073199, Kanchipuram: 9500837455, 9842323744, Uttiramerur: 9655414955, Alwarpet: 9003085480, Pallipet: 443484999, Kanchipuram: 9443180011.

IN BRIEF

**Proud to introduce this bill in Assembly: CM**  
From P1

"Being a farmer (myself), I feel proud to introduce this historic Act in the Assembly. I construe it as an opportunity bestowed upon me by Paratchi Thalaivi Amma (late CM J. Jayalalithaa)... I seek (the Chair's permission) to introduce the Tamil Nadu Protected Agricultural Zone Development Act, 2020, to the Assembly House," Palaniswami said while moving the bill. The Treasury Benches responded with loud thumping of tables. The Cauvery Delta region, considered as the rice bowl of Tamil Nadu, accounts for a large part of production of food grains and other agricultural produce in the State. "It has been noticed that certain non-farming activities are adversely affecting agriculture in the region threatening the State food security. In order to protect the agriculture in this region, it is proposed to prohibit certain activities in the region," Mr. Palaniswami said while introducing the Act. Mr. Palaniswami will be the chairperson of the Tamil Nadu Protected Agricultural Zone Authority, which also comprises Deputy CM O. Panneerselvam, who holds the finance portfolio, law, agriculture, environment, rural development & local administration, industries, rural industries, animal husbandry and fisheries ministers and officials are members. The Act has penal provisions, which includes imprisonment up to five years but not less than six months and a fine, which may extend to ₹50 lakh but shall not be less than ₹10 lakh, for any contravention.

**Pondy govt seeks TN's help to tackle milk crisis**

**Puducherry:** Puducherry minister M Kandasamy called on Tamil Nadu Dairy Development minister K T Rajenthra Balaji at Chennai on Thursday seeking supply of milk to the union territory to tackle its current milk crisis. A release said Kandasamy, who is welfare minister, urged the Tamil Nadu minister to supply 55,000 litres of milk daily to Puducherry which has been facing a shortfall to meet demands of various categories of consumers. According to the release, Rajenthra Balaji told Kandasamy that he would consider the plea. Official sources said Pondicherry needs more than a lakh litre of milk every day and production has come down necessitating the territorial administration to approach the neighbouring State to get 55,000 litre milk every day. With the fall in size of lands under cultivation because of virtually fast conversion of agricultural land into residential plots and industrial zones the availability of fodder has declined, a spokesman of Dairy Farmers Association said. —PTI

**Deputy CM says state's overall fiscal deficit will be contained**

**TN to set up expert panel to hike own tax revenues**

**D. SEKAR | DC CHENNAI, FEB. 20**



O. Panneerselvam

The Tamil Nadu government will set up an expert committee to study and suggest measures to improve the state's own tax revenues (SOTR), the Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister, O. Panneerselvam announced. Accepting the suggestion made by the DMK member Mr. Pazhanivel Thyagarajan, to constitute such an experts committee to help reverse the declining trend of SOTR over the years as a percentage of the State Gross Domestic Product (SGDP), Mr. Panneerselvam said the government was happy to appoint such a panel. Replying to the general discussion on the State Budget for 2020-21 in the Legislative Assembly on Thursday, Mr. Panneerselvam said the trend of declining SOTR in proportion to SGDP was not peculiar to Tamil Nadu. For example, even States like Maharashtra and Karnataka have seen falls in SOTR share, he pointed out. In Karnataka for example, between 2014-15 & 2016-17, SOTR share dropped from an average of 10-20 per cent to 7.22 per cent, the Finance minister stressed.

Mr. Panneerselvam, however, said the SOTR share had gone down even during the previous DMK regime 2006-11, from nine per cent to 8.20 per cent. The subsequent AIADMK government had during 2011-13, "due to the steps taken by our government the SOTR share had gone up to 9.60 per cent," he countered. Though Tamil Nadu's share of SOTR had subsequently dropped to 6.88 per cent of its SGDP, Mr. Panneerselvam said this was a problem faced by almost all States, "if you compare the (interim) recommendations of the 15th Finance Commission with the details (of devolution) provided in the 14th Finance Commission." It was the recommendations of the 14th Finance Commission which was largely responsible for

this declining trend in SOTR, explained the Finance minister. Mr. Panneerselvam said despite the difficult fiscal situation, Tamil Nadu keeping its overall fiscal deficit within the norms set by the Tamil Nadu Fiscal Responsibility Act "is something that needs to be appreciated." Even the State's net debt and the debt to GDP ratio was well within the norm of 25 per cent, the minister added. Assuring the members that the State's overall fiscal deficit will be contained, Mr. Panneerselvam said notwithstanding the tight situation, the government had not reduced allocations to various departments. Including School Education, which has been given the highest of ₹34,182 crore for the year 2020-21, "we have in fact hiked the allocations for all the departments," the Finance minister said. Responding to Opposition DMK deputy leader Mr. Durai Murugan's charge that ₹2,000 crore allocated for The Tamil Nadu Infrastructure Development Fund (TNIDF), had been returned "unspent", Mr. Panneerselvam said the allegation was based on a misunder-

standing. Explaining how the TNIDF was set up in 2011 and the methods mandated for to finance infrastructure projects, either through the private-public-partnership (PPP) mode or through 'viability gap funding' for new projects, Mr. Panneerselvam said that under the "Tamil Nadu Vision 2023" programme, implementation of 137 of the 217 infrastructure projects in the State have already commenced. However, with the global economy slowing down and project funding through the private sector or through the PPP mode not fructifying in the wake of a cash-strapped private sector, Mr. Panneerselvam said these infrastructure projects were now being implemented by the State government itself with funds from either international development agencies, or national financial development institutions. It was for this reason that funds from TNIDF was not drawn, Mr. Panneerselvam clarified in response to Mr. Durai Murugan's charge. "We have also allocated substantial funds for a major flood prevention project for Greater Chennai," the Finance minister added.

**NPR echoes in Assembly, DMK stages walkout**

**DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, FEB. 20**



**DMK president M. K. Stalin said the new enumeration form of the population drive sought information like place of birth of parents and date of birth. "If there are no proper certificates, the festival time of the people concerned are asked. In the list, Islamic festivals do not find a place. This by itself has exposed a religious divide," he claimed**

The opposition DMK, which sought to pin down the government on the NPR exercise demanding the government to assure that it would not be undertaken in the State, ended up staging a walk out from the Assembly House, after the AIADMK Ministers accused it of pursuing "vote bank" politics. Raising the issue, leader of Opposition in the Assembly and DMK president M. K. Stalin said the new enumeration form of the population drive sought information like place of birth of parents and date of birth. "If there are no proper certificates, the festival time of the people concerned are asked. In the list, Islamic festivals do not find a place. This by itself has exposed a religious divide," he claimed. While Deputy Chief Minister O. Panneerselvam said, "we celebrate all festivals - Ramzan, Bakrid, Pongal and Deepavali, and

assured that the government "is committed to the welfare of the minorities," revenue minister R. B. Udhayakumar insisted that the NPR form had nothing to do with festivals. He accused the Opposition of making claims for "vote bank" politics which led to an apprehension that such a stand may lead to an unresolvable issue. Only some features like Aadhaar information were new in the NPR form and the state government has sought clarification from the Centre over such aspects but it was yet to get a reply. "Islamic festivals do not find place in the NPR manual released in 2010 too. All the festi-

vals that found a place in the 2010 NPR manual are featured in the 2020 manual also," Udayakumar added. Also, there is a table in the handbook to compute Islamic year by comparing it with the Gregorian (English) calendar, he said. The minister pointed out that in villages, some people may not know their date of birth and if they remembered the festival time during which they were born, the month of birth can be arrived at and the NPR handbook has guidelines for it.

**Munsif courts for Pallavaram, Maduravoyal soon**

**DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, FEB. 20**

Pallavaram and Maduravoyal, coming under the extended areas in the metro, will soon get district munsif courts, State Law Minister C. Ve. Shanmugam has said. Responding to a question in the Assembly on Thursday, Mr. Shanmugam said these courts would be opened this year. The move followed a decision to establish courts in all the taluks. The Minister further said the location of the integrated court complex for Ariyalur has been identified and the construction work would commence soon. Steps will be taken to set up an integrated labour court in Krishnagiri this year, he said.

**India, Sri Lanka to ink MoU to develop Palaly airport**

**Colombo:** India will ink an agreement with Sri Lanka to develop the Jaffna Palaly airport in the Tamil-dominated Northern province, an official statement said on Thursday. The decision comes a day after the Sri Lankan Cabinet approved a proposal for the MoU with India for the project, which would include terminal modification and electricity supplies among others. "India has already agreed to provide Sri Lanka with a grant of 300 million Sri Lankan rupees (₹11.83 cr) for the development of the airport which started its international flights last year," statement said. Under the proposed work on the MoU, the facilities at the airport such as terminal modification, electricity supplies, utility services and transit facilities are to be improved. India's Alliance Air became the first airline last November to operate flights to and from Palaly when they commenced a service to Chennai. It was only this month that a civilian flight service was started to Palaly from capital Colombo which is meant as a feeder to Chennai-Jaffna flights. The airport would add to the socio-economic welfare of the Tamil dominated Northern province, whose capital Jaffna was the base from where the LTTE ran their military campaign for a separate Tamil homeland for nearly 30 years. —PTI

**DOCTORATE TO MAESTRO**



Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami presents doctorate certificate to mridangam maestro Dr Umayalpuram Sivaraman during the first convocation of Dr J. Jayalalithaa music and fine arts university on Thursday. —DC

**CM slams DMK walkout, says PAZ Act will help ryots**

**DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, FEB. 20:**

Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami slammed the opposition DMK for staging a walkout from the Assembly over the Tamil Nadu Protected Agricultural Zone Development Act, 2020, and said its conduct in the House only exposed its double speak on the issue. Maintaining that his government wasted no time in enacting a legislation to protect the farm lands in the Cauvery delta region, Palaniswami regretted that despite his government's efforts, the DMK attempted to find fault and staged a walk out (from the Assembly House) due to political vendetta. "Unlike others, we don't harbour something in our minds but utter something else....apprehensive that the AIADMK will earn a good name for bringing this Act, they (DMK) want to create disturbance and staged a walk out hoping to send a wrong signal (to

the people)," he said. Since the days of former Chief Minister M. G. Ramachandran, the AIADMK has been proving that it is a friend of the farmers and by bringing this Tamil Nadu PAZD Act, now too his government has shown that it is pro farmers, he said. Leader of Opposition in the Assembly and DMK president M. K. Stalin wanted the Act to be referred to a Select Committee for complete success of the initiative, and sought to know why Tiruchirappalli and Karur districts were excluded. He said the Bill does not appear to be drafted following consultation with experts. Responding, Palaniswami said the two districts were not included in the protected zone as they have heavy concentration of industries. The Chief Minister cited a letter from the Centre, following his request, saying the state government was empowered to take appropriate action on declaring

the Cauvery delta region a protected agricultural zone. "Any project proponent will, in the present scheme of things, have to apply to State Environmental Impact Assessment Authority, which is an organ of the State Government and SEIAA will take a final call in the matter. Therefore, the final decision as to whether to allow any particular project in any particular region would continue to vest with the State Government," the letter addressed to him, had stated, Palaniswami said. The passage of the Act follows Mr. Palaniswami's announcement on Feb. 9 that Cauvery delta districts would be categorised as a special protected agricultural zone and had assured that permission would not be given for hydrocarbon projects. He followed it up by consulting experts on the issue and on Thursday he tabled it and the Act was passed with majority in the Assembly.

**Jayaraman hails CM for agri protection bill**

**R. VALAYAPATHY | DC MAYILADUTHURAI, FEB. 20**

Prof. Jayaraman, Chief Coordinator of the Anti-Methane project Federation thanked the Tamil Nadu Government, especially Chief Minister Thiru Eddapadi K. Palaniswami for declaring the Cauvery Delta region as protected agriculture zone, and for adopting a bill in this regard on the floor of the State Assembly on Thursday. In a release here, he said once the Act came into force, Cauvery delta will develop further agriculturally. The quantity of oil and natural gas extracted through oil wells will be more than offset by the amount of bio-diesel that could be produced through various farming activities including producing ethanol through sugarcane extract, he said. Besides this, through the other subsistent activities linked to agriculture like cattle breeding, export of meat etc, "we can earn an annual income of at least ₹two lakh crore, which will boost the State's economy," he added.

**Opposition misleading people on CAA: Vasan**

**M. ARULOLI | DC THOOTHUKUDI, FEB. 20**



Accusing the opposition parties of "adding fuel to the fears of the Islamic community" about the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) by spreading rumours, Tamil Nadu Congress (TMC) president, G K Vasana however, wanted the Union government to take more steps to ally the fears of Muslims about the CAA. Responding to the ongoing nationwide protests by the Muslims against the CAA, NPR and NRC, G K Vasana, speaking to media in Thoothukudi on Thursday said, it was not democratically wrong to protest in public. "Moreover, their fears about CAA too is understandable but the opposition parties instead of clarifying their genuine doubts, are fueling the fear by spreading rumours and false information for political mileage," accused Mr. Vasana. Stating that Indian Muslims are as much a part of this country and they will not be affected by the CAA, Mr. Vasana, however, urged the Central government to take many more pains to

allay their fears. "This country cannot develop without the participation of its Muslim populace and nobody in the ruling party either at the Centre or at the State has the intention to sideline the Muslims of our nation," reiterated the TMC chief. To a query, Mr. Vasana also welcomed the state government approving the proposal of an oil refinery company to set up its unit in Thoothukudi district with an investment of Rs 40,000 crore. "This will ensure more job opportunities for the youth in the region," said Vasana, adding, that the Indian Space Research Organisation planning to set up its rocket launch pad at Kulasekarapattinam in Thoothukudi would also ensure more jobs for the local youth.

**Muslim couple gets married at Kovai's Shaheen Bagh**

**LAKSHMI L LUND | DC COIMBATORE, FEB. 20**

S Abdul Kalam (24) exchanged marriage vows with his bride Reshma Shrini (20) under a canopy at Athipalayam here on Thursday. The couple's marriage was fixed about three months ago. They were scheduled to get married in a wedding hall. However, they put off their wedding plans and chose to solemnize their marriage amid people at a protest venue. After exchanging marriage vows, the newlywed shouted slogans against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), the proposed National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the National Population Register (NPR). The businessman and homemaker, husband-wife duo, calling their marriage revolutionary, have expressed that they will stand in solidarity with the Kovai protesters in the days to come. Around 2,000 Muslims including thousands of women gathered outside the mosque at Athipalayam to protest against the implementation of CAA, NPR and NRC in the state. The protesters gathered at the venue late on Wednesday night, calling it the Shaheen Bagh of the textile city.



Thousands of Muslim protesters including women are on an indefinite peaceful sit-in against the CAA at Coimbatore. The protest began on Wednesday night. —DC

**12,000 PEOPLE BOOKED FOR ANTI-CAA PROTESTS**

**DC CORRESPONDENT TIRUNELVELI, FEB. 20**

Cases were registered against 12,000 people for participating in the anti-CAA rally on Wednesday in Tirunelveli city. According to police, under Sections 143 (unlawful assembly) and 341 (wrongful restraint) of Indian Penal

Code, the Palayamkottai police in the city booked 12,000 persons including 25 named persons for attempting to lay siege to the Tirunelveli district collector's office to demonstrate their resentment against the CAA (Citizenship Amendment Act), NPR (National Population Register) and NRC (National Registry of

Citizens). Among the 12,000 unnamed accused persons, 5,000 are women. The Thoothukudi police too have registered cases against 15 named persons and 2,000 unnamed people for taking out a rally to lay siege to the district collector's office despite the Madras High court refusing permission for the protest.



CPI(M) leader Brinda Karat addressing anti-CAA protesters in North Chennai on Thursday. —DC

SHORT TAKES

**Pondy Raj Nivas to be thrown open to tourists**

**Puducherry:** Raj Nivas, the official residence of the Puducherry Lt Governor would be thrown open to tourists during mornings also. Kiran Bedi made the announcement on Thursday, while addressing a team of French tourists visiting the 18th century building housing office cum residence of the Lt Governor. She noted that tourists including foreigners visited the Union Territory mostly in the mornings. Bedi told the tourists after registering their views on the Union Territory that in addition to the time allotted for them to visit the imposing and palatial premises during mid day now the building maintained as a heritage structure would be open to visitors in the mornings also. "The security personnel at the entrance to the Raj Nivas would also facilitate the tourists to get into the premises in the mornings also," the former IPS officer said in a whatsapp message. Tourists and school children from outside Puducherry make a beeline to Raj Nivas, earlier called "Palais du Gouverneur", every day to have a glimpse of the historic structure. According to official records, the foundation of Raj Nivas was laid by the then French Governor Dumas in 1735. —PTI

**Job Mela at Kotagiri on Saturday**

**Ooty:** The Nilgiris chapter of the TN state rural and urban livelihood mission joining hands with the district employment office here will organize a mega job-mela at Kotagiri near here on February 22. Stating this in a release, Ms.J.Innocent Divya, the Collector of Nilgiris, said that as many as 30 frontline companies/industrial units will take part in the job-mela to select candidates for recruitment. This job-mela is being arranged with a aim to provide the platform for the job-seekers in the hills to gain access to the employment opportunity process, she said and added that the job-mela will be held at the flood shelter hall at Kotagiri h between 10 am and 4 pm, on February 22. The unemployed youth and the job-seekers in Nilgiris are requested to attend the job-mela to utilize this opportunity to find jobs in the private sector, she added.



Innocent Divya, collector of Ooty.

**IIT-M tech on 2-way ballot to help service voters**

**T. SUDHEESH | DC CHENNAI, FEB. 20**

The IIT-Madras's under-construction technology on two-way ballot transmission system has turned out to be a solution to the long-standing concern of service voters over exercising their democratic rights.

The other day the Election Commission of India (ECI) had accepted the proposed concept of Aadhaar-linked technology that enables service voters to exercise their franchise online. The technology, once in place, will end the major hurdle of physical presence of the service voter in the constituency and they would be able to cast their vote

from anywhere in India or abroad.

The ECI has flagged green signal to the IIT-Madras-initiated technology after it introduced 'one-way' Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System (ETPBS) for service voters for the first time in the last general election.

The proposed two-way technology was accepted, according to ECI, as it is way ahead of ETPBS. As of now ECI has classified the service voters as those who are basically the personnel who are working in armed forces as well as in embassies in other nations. Under ETPBS, the ECI sends the blank ballot sheets electronically to the service voters.

The voters are required to download the ballot, exercise vote and then send the ballot by normal post. As per the proposed system, once the service voter receives the ballot electronically from EC, he should authenticate his identity through Aadhaar. Once the vote is cast, the ballot can be transferred to EC electronically.

An official of IIT-M, when contacted, refused to provide the nitty-gritty by saying that they were not allowed to provide details of the technology in public since it was still under construction. The technology is expected to be in place by next general election.

According to the ECI, a total of 16,62,993 service

personnel were enrolled as service electors in the country during 2019 general election. It's a significant jump from 2014 general election number of 13,27,627.

Shibin Thomas, a BSF Jawan who used the ETPBS facility in the last general election to cast his vote, feels happy about the introduction of the technology because it will help to make the procedure easier and cost effective. 'In the present system, we have to go out and send the ballot manually to the EC. So, many service voters would not be interested in exercising their franchise. This technology once it comes into effect will improve service voter turnout', he observed.



TN commando force performing mock drill session to demonstrate hostage rescue mission inside Rajiv Gandhi govt general hospital in Chennai on Thursday. — DC

**HC reserves orders on Nalini's release**

**DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, FEB 20**

The Madras high court has reserved orders on a petition filed by S.Nalini, serving life sentence in Vellore prison for her involvement in Rajiv Gandhi assassination case, which sought to produce her before the court and set her at liberty.

A division bench comprising Justices R.Subbiah and R.Pongaiappan reserved orders on the Habeas corpus petition filed by S.Nalini.

When the petition came up for hearing on Thursday, state public prosecutor A.Natarajan submitted that in this case some of the offences committed by the accused come under the Central Act and therefore, for the purpose of commutation or remission, the state government has to get consent from the central government.

The council of ministers passed a resolution requesting the governor to release all the seven life convicts including Nalini. The state government can

only recommend or request the Governor to consider their release. It cannot demand or ask the Governor to release them. It is for the Governor to decide. Nobody has power to demand or ask the Governor as to what happened to the resolution passed by the council of ministers.

Unless any order is passed, there is no question of illegal detention, he added. Natarajan further submitted that it is not an illegal detention because in this case, the death sentence was commuted to life sentence and it was confirmed by the Supreme Court.

Therefore, it is a legal detention and hence HCP will not lie, he added. Additional solicitor general G.Rajagopalan submitted that unless there was an order in the name of the Governor, it was not an illegal detention.

The council of ministers has passed a resolution and sent it to the Governor. The question was whether the resolution was an order or not, he added.

Citing a judgment of the Supreme Court, he said the resolution passed by the Council of Ministers was not an order. Unless the Governor passes an order, it is not an illegal detention.

In Union of India Vs Sriharan's case, the question raised was whether the state government has the power to release these convicts without the consent or consultation of the Central Government. The Supreme Court said the central government's consent or concurrence was necessary because the case was investigated by the CBI.

The resolution has no effect. Already the central government refused to release these convicts. Supreme court says life means life (till the last breath). The Central government has passed an order not to release these convicts. Therefore the effect of the resolution passed by the council of ministers was 'Zero', he added.

Reacting to this, SPP Natarajan said the intention of the government was to release these con-

victs but it has no power to do so. It has recommended to the Governor. Only the Governor has to decide their release.

M.Radhakrishnan, counsel for Nalini submitted that the resolution passed by the Council of Ministers was binding on the Governor.

Nalini has been under unlawful and unjustified detention of the state. Since the Council of Ministers of the state of Tamil Nadu had advised the Governor of Tamil Nadu as early as on September 9, 2018 to release the petitioner under Article 161 of the Constitution of India, the petitioner ought to have been released on September 10, 2018 itself by the state of Tamil Nadu. As per the ruling of the Supreme Court in Maru Ram's case, the Governor's signature was not necessary for the purpose of releasing the petitioner. Since the petitioner has not been released from prison, she has been under illegal detention of the state of Tamil Nadu every day since September 10, 2018, he added.

**CELEBRATING TAMIL**



Around 1000 students from Valiamal College for Women stand in the formation of Tamil letter on the occasion of World Mother Tongue Day. — DC

**TNUSRB: Interim stay on recruitments**

**DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, FEB. 20**

The Madras high court has directed the state government and the Tamil Nadu Uniformed Services Recruitment Board (TNUSRB), to keep it in abeyance, the selection process for the post of Grade-II PC (AR & TSP), Jail warden and Firemen, 2019.

Justice N.Anand Venkatesh also ordered notice, returnable by March 5, to the state government and TNUSRB on a petition filed by R.Anbarasan and 14 others, which sought a court-monitored CBI probe into the entire selection process for the post of Grade-II PC (AR & TSP), Jail Warden and Firemen, 2019 pursuant to the notification issued by the TNUSRB dated March 6, 2019.

According to petitioners, pursuant to a notification, calling for application to fill up 8888 posts of Grade-II Police Constables (AR & TSP) Men and Women, Jail Warders and Firemen, they participated in the written examination conducted on August 25, 2019 and they became successful but their marks were not informed to them. In November 2019, physical measurement and endurance tests were conducted and they became successful. At this stage also, their marks were not disclosed. However, they were shocked to notice that in the provisional selection list, their names

were missing. Subsequently, they came to know there was large scale malpractice and the mandatory norms were not followed. Hence, they filed the present petition.

They said in Vellore district alone more than 1019 candidates have been declared selected and their cut off mark was also unknown whereas even in the biggest city of Chennai, nearly 500 candidates alone have been selected and in other districts it would not cross 300 candidates. They were given to understand that most of those Vellore district candidates have undergone coaching at one institute known as "Sigaram Tuition Centre" and registration/enrolment numbers of those candidates were seen sequentially. Likewise, in Villupuram district alone, more than 763 candidates have been selected and it was due to the result of several "rewarding coaching centres" operating in that district. It was reported that highest number of coaching centres were available only in Villupuram district under the guise of "geographical conditions". Thus, they pray the court to order for CBI enquiry by making it a "Court-Monitored" enquiry as the enquiry by CBCID will not be without impartiality while investigating into the affairs of its own department, also due to the fact that TNUSRB was headed by an IPS officer at the rank of DGP/ADGP, they added.

**Pondy SEC appointment: HC reserves order**

**DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, FEB. 20**

The Madras high court has reserved orders on a petition, which sought to declare as unconstitutional, the scheme of selection process for State Election Commissioner and emanating from the communication of the Union government culminating in to the impugned order of the administrator nullifying the appointment of T.M.Balakrishnan as SEC followed by the advertisement calling for application for the appointment of SEC.

A division bench comprising Justices M.Sathyanarayanan and R.Hemalatha reserved orders on a petition filed by A.Namasivayam, minister of department of local administration, government of Puducherry, after hearing elaborate arguments from Senior Counsel Satish Parasaran, appearing for the petitioner, additional solicitor general G.Rajagopalan, V.Chandrasekaran, counsel for the Governor Kiran Bedi, N.Mala, government pleader (Puducherry).

In his miscellaneous petition, he also sought to stay the operation of the order of the Administrator, Puducherry dated December 20, 2019, nullifying the appointment of T.M.Balakrishnan as SEC by declaring the GO dated July 23, 2019, as null and void and void ab-initio and further direct the Chief Secretary to be the head of the Selection Committee and to proceed with and conclude the process of selection of SEC, culminating in the advertisement, calling for application for appointment of SEC.



Greater Chennai Corporation renovated a community well in Anna Nagar. —DC

**Will Namma Chennai sport a cleaner look?**

**B.Vijayalakshmi Viewpoint**

Graffiti on public walls and buildings is a common sight in the city with entities, political parties and individuals violating the law. Despite Madras high court's order, defacement of public property continues unabated. This week the Nilgiris collector warned offenders of severe action for defacing public property. She said cases will be booked and fine imposed on violators. A few years ago, the Madras high court had said those defacing public property would face contempt charge. It had also warned of action against those involved in writing graffiti and defacing natural resources, government walls, buildings and bridges. Following the high court directive, the state government then had removed over 20,000 defacements from public buildings and natural resources.

Last year the apex court, while hearing a special leave petition filed by an activist, said hills, hillocks, and medians of highways should not be defaced with political messages. The petitioner wanted the court to pass orders to disqualify poll candidates who don't remove political ads from hills/mountains. The SC bench had said it would not allow defacement of public places with advertisements and slogans of political parties even while asking the TN government about measures taken to stop defacement.

Years ago, the Chennai corporation had drawn murals on public walls thus preventing defacement by miscreants. However, the walls have been whitewashed and used for drawing graffiti, writing messages and sticking posters hailing political party leaders. Besides walls are used for pasting advertisements. With no Chennai corporation, which plays a pivotal role in reining in such violators, in place, defacement continues in places like metro and MRTS pillars, gov-



A woman engrossed in painting the wall on Luz Avenue fifth street. —DC

ernment buildings and flyovers. The authorities must ensure offenders are booked and imposed a penalty under Section 4(2) of the Tamil Nadu Open Places Prevention of Disfigurement Act, 1959. Also, as

suggested by the Madras high court, the guilty must pay the cost for removing the defacement on public property.

On the positive side, the number of responsible citizen groups who paint public walls with

social messages and meaningful slogans, both in English and Tamil, is on the rise. Such growing awareness among people along with authorities' efforts to stop defacement will make Chennai look better.

**CENTRAL TOOL ROOM, LUDHIANA**  
Govt. of India Society, Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME)  
**ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM ON ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) CHARGING STATION INFRASTRUCTURE & TECHNOLOGY**  
VENUE : Sterling Institute of Skill Development, PLN Complex, 2nd Floor, Old No. 30/2, New No. 18/2, Conran Smith Road, Gopalapuram, Chennai - 86  
Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2020 (2 Days) | Time: 10 am to 5.00 pm.  
Fee: Rs. 5,500 + 18% GST (includes Course Fee, Govt. Certificate, Soft Study Material, Lunch & Travel)  
Course Content: EV Charging Stations & Technologies, Types of Charging Stations, Implementation Mechanism, Tariff rate for Supply Electricity to EV PCS, Solar-Powered EV Charging stations, Technology, ROI Calculation, Business Opportunities/Rate Contract/ Land Leasing, Govt. Scheme, More.  
Cont.: 08800609856 / 08800306998 / 08595257827  
Certificate will be awarded | www.ctriludhiana.com

**Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (A Statutory Body of Government of India) NOTICE**  
Applications are invited for filling up 08 (Eight) posts of Chief General Manager (CGM)/General Manager (GM) and 04 (Four) posts of Deputy General Manager (DGM)/Assistant General Manager (AGM) on deputation basis. The detailed vacancy may be seen at [www.ibbi.gov.in](http://www.ibbi.gov.in)  
davp 07121/11/0011/1920

**AUSPICIOUS NOTE**



A clay artist gives finishing touches to an idol of Lord Shiva ahead of 'Maha Shivratri', in Kolkata, on Thursday.

- PTI

## Shah's pro-CAA rally in Hyd on March 15

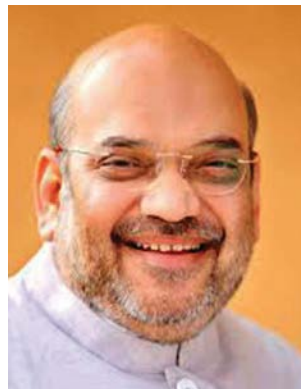
DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, FEB 20

Union Home Minister Amit Shah's pro-CAA rally will take place on March 15 in Fateh Maidan in Hyderabad. His is one of the rallies for which the Telangana police have granted permission, while denying permission to a host of peaceful anti-CAA protests, raising questions.

Shah will be in Hyderabad for two days from March 14. His party's state unit has been trying to convince supporters in the minority community about CAA but without success.

Shah's visit thus aims to bring to the fore those Muslim leaders that are a part of the BJP and who have been supporting the CAA. Sources say there will be many people from the districts, especially Karimnagar, that will be brought for the rally.

The announcement on social media of his visit has



upset anti-CAA protesters who question how the TS police granted permission. "On what basis are the police granting permission to those who are 'politically affiliated'?" they ask. The peaceful 'common protestors' are not being allowed, creating anger and acrimony. Some are contemplating observing March 15 as a "black day" while others are contemplating a bandh.

The city's women's groups

are also contemplating an anti-CAA rally the same day. A senior protestor said: "We are going to submit a representation to the police for a protest on the same day. We want to see if the police will give us permission."

Joint Action Committee against CAA convener Mushtaq Malik said: "It is not understood on what basis the police is giving permission. They are not allowing peaceful protestors who are common people. But allowing all those who are 'high and mighty'? How can the law be used in this fashion?"

Protestors who are switching off their lights every evening for the past ten days, from 7 pm to 7.15 pm, were warned by the Mir Chowk police that their power connections would be disrupted. Malik said: "We had to tell the police that shutting down of power voluntarily is not a law and order issue. This is the way it tries to crush a peaceful protest."

## Muslim man chosen Lingayat mutt pontiff

Bengaluru, Feb 20: A Lingayat seminary in Gadag district of northern Karnataka is all set to get a Muslim man as its pontiff.

Diwan Sharief, in his early 30s, would be anointed as the pontiff of the Murugarajendra Koraneshwara Shantidhama mutt in Asuti village on February 26, mutt sources said.

The Lingayat community, which owes allegiance to the 12th century "social reform movement" initiated by Basaveshwara, is open to people of all caste and religion.

Sharief and his father were said to be influenced by the teachings of Basaveshwara and had donated land to the mutt.

Sharief, who has three daughters and a son, had taken Linga deeksha and has undergone training about the mutt traditions, they added.

● **Diwan Sharief, in his early 30s, would be anointed as the pontiff of the Murugarajendra Koraneshwara Shantidhama mutt in Asuti village on February 26, mutt sources said.**

The mutt is reportedly associated with Sri Jagadguru Murugarajendra mutt of Chitrudurga and Koraneshwara Sansthan mutt in Khajuri village in Kalaburagi.

Sri Murugarajendra Koraneshwara Shivayogi, the seer of Koraneshwara Sansthan mutt, has decided to make Sharief as the pontiff, sources said. -PTI

## Vigilance raids Congress MLA's house in Kerala

DC CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, FEB. 20

The sleuths of Vigilance and Anti Corruption bureau on Thursday conduct raids at the residence of Congress MLA and former Kerala health minister V S Sivakumar in connection with a disproportionate assets case.

The vigilance carried out the raids a day after registering an FIR against Mr Sivakumar and arraigning him as the first

accused in a case related to disproportionate assets in which some of his personal staff members are also involved. The former minister's close aides M Rajendran, Shajuharan and N Harikumar have also been arraigned as accused in the FIR.

The main allegation against Sivakumar is that he had amassed wealth disproportionate to his known sources of income under the names of his personal staff.

## Woman raises pro-Pak slogan at anti-CAA stir

M.K. ASHOKA | DC BENGALURU, FEB 20

In a dramatic development, Bengaluru city cops have arrested Amulya L, an anti-CAA and NRC protestor who shouted 'Pakistan Zindabad' while addressing a gathering at Freedom Park here on Thursday. AMIM President Asaduddin Owaisi who was on the stage, was literally stunned and rushed to snatch the mike from the student activist. The organizers were also taken aback by the sudden development with the police swooping down on Amulya to take her into custody.

Amulya has been campaigning against the ruling BJP and is known for her strident attacks on the CAA and NRC.

Soumendu Mukherji, Additional Commissioner of Police (West) said that she is being investigated and legal action will be taken against her.

Owaisi who spoke later, condemned the student activist for praising an enemy country. "We are Indians and we are only connected to India. The organizers did not inform me about what this girl was about to speak. I wouldn't have attended the function in the first place if I had expected this," he maintained.

Amulya is a student of NMKRJ college in the city and hails from Koppa in Chikkamagalur district. The police have kept her in an unknown place and are investigating.

## Naidu's net assets worth ₹3.87 crore

Amaravati, Feb 20: Telugu Desam Party chief N Chandrababu Naidu grew richer by about Rs 87 lakh as his net assets touched Rs 3.87 crore but his liabilities stood at Rs 5.13 crore on account of a housing loan.

His wife Bhuvaneshwari, who heads the family's Heritage business, saw an increase of over Rs 8 crore in her fortune with the net assets being Rs 39.58 crore. Their son and MLC Nara Lokesh on Thursday declared the family's assets and liabilities, which has become an annual practice for the last nine years. Interestingly, Lokesh said he became poorer by Rs 2 crore compared to last year as the value of his net assets shrunk to Rs 19 crore. He had liabilities to the tune of Rs 5.70 crore. His son Devansh is now richer than Lokesh with net assets of Rs 19.42 crore

without any liabilities. Lokesh's wife Brahmani, who holds an executive position in Heritage, too became richer by over Rs 4.5 crore since last year, with net assets of Rs 11.51 crore. "The value of these assets is disclosed at the rate at which they were bought and not the current market price as the present value could rise or fall based on several socio-economic factors," Lokesh said.

Nirvana Holdings, the family's investment company, too, saw an increase in its net assets from Rs 6.8 crore to Rs 9 crore but its liabilities stood at Rs 34.85 crore, according to Lokesh. Lokesh also said none of the allegations of disproportionate assets against his family were proved. We challenge anyone to prove if the Nara family had even one rupee more than its declared assets, he added. -PTI

**PARADIP PORT TRUST**  
E-TENDER CALL NOTICE

Name of the work: "Allotment of 08 (Eight) nos. of Manual Iron Ore/Iron Ore Pellet PLOTS". License Fees : Rs 2,29,66,812/-, Wharfage Fees : Rs. 6,02,276/-, Last date & time submission of bid : 06.03.2020 upto 15:00 Hrs. Date and time of opening (technical bid): 09.03.2020 upto 16:00 Hrs. Refer our website for details <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>. Traffic Manager PPT/PR/678/19-20 Date : 20.02.2020

**GREATER CHENNAI CORPORATION**  
Mechanical Engineering Department

M.E.D.C.No.M1/2563C & 2563D/2019

Re E-Tender Notice

Re E-Tender is invited for the following work as per tender condition.

Ref. No.	Name of Work	EMD	Last date and time of submission
M1/2563C/2019	Purchase of 3 Nos. of LMV Water Tanker with Pump with 3 years O & M.	Rs.1,21,000/-	10.03.2020 @ 03.00 P.M.
M1/2563D/2019	Purchase of 3 Nos. of LMV Sewage Sucker with 3 years O & M.	Rs.1,26,500/-	

For Tender details: <http://tntenders.gov.in>  
DIPR/1007/Tender/2020 Superintending Engineer (Mech)

**S. E. RAILWAY - TENDER**

e-Tenders are invited by Divisional Railway Manager (Engg), S.E. Railway, Chakradharpur for & on behalf of the President of India against open tender for the following works. Manual offers are not allowed against these tenders and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. SI. No., Tender Notice No. & Name of Work: (1) CKP-SOUTH-19-20-63, dated 17.02.2020. Provision of new building for OHE depot at Chakradharpur, Chaibasa, Dangoaposi and Raingangpur in CKP Division. (2) CKP-PRIDGE-19-20-11, dated 17.02.2020. Provision of shed over approach/adjacent road of LHS at LK.No. KS 2 at Km 399/S27-S29 between KNC-SNY along with provision of sump well under the jurisdiction of ADENI/TATA. (6) CKP-EAST-19-20-62, dated 17.02.2020. Rebuilding of stone bridge by RCC box by pushing method in Tananagar-Rajkharwan, Gamtharia-Kandra & Sini-Chandil section (16 nos. bridges). Tender Value : ₹ 1,53,47,517/- for sl. no. 1, ₹ 3,28,14,235.19 for sl. no. 2, ₹ 1,28,32,244.30 for sl. no. 3, ₹ 2,38,95,629.90 for sl. no. 4, ₹ 73,65,164.37 for sl. no. 5 and ₹ 10,45,55,960.74 for sl. no. 6. EMD : ₹ 2,26,700/- for sl. no. 1, ₹ 3,14,100/- for sl. no. 2, ₹ 2,14,200/- for sl. no. 3, ₹ 2,69,500/- for sl. no. 4, ₹ 1,47,300/- for sl. no. 5 and ₹ 6,72,800/- for sl. no. 6. Cost of Tender Form : ₹ 5,000/- for sl. nos. 1, 3 & 5 and ₹ 10,000/- for sl. nos. 2, 4 & 6. Date of Opening : 09.03.2020 for sl. no. 1 and 16.03.2020 for sl. nos. 2 to 6. The tender can be viewed at website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>. The tenders/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate & must be registered under IREPS portal. Only registered tender/bidder can participate on e-tendering. All relevant paper must be uploaded at the time of participating in e-tendering. (PR-1382)

**PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited**  
Regd. Office: PSEB, Head Office, The Mall, Patiala-147001  
Corporate Identity Number : U40109PB2010SGC033813  
Website: [www.pspcl.in](http://www.pspcl.in)

E-Tender Enquiry No. 263/P-3/EMP-W 11692 dt. 18.02.2020 & ID: 2020\_POWER\_4472\_1

Scope of Work: Breakdown/ Preventive Mtc. of TG Equipments & Overhauling of Associated Auxiliaries of 4x210 MW 'KVVU' Design BHEL Make TG Units at GGSSTP, Rupnagar.

Time period: One year EMD: Rs. 3.70 Lac.

Date & time up to which tender shall be received : 20.03.2020 & 11:00 AM

Date & time of opening of tender : 27.03.2020 & 11:30 AM

Tender specification can only be downloaded from PSPCL website <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> & no hard copy of the same will be issued by this office.

Note:  
1) In case any difficulty regarding uploading of the tender the prospective bidders are requested to get clarification from this office and/or procurement system Government of Punjab, Contact No. +91-(172)-2970263/284. It is also requested to get their digital signature well in time so as to submit tenders through e-tendering only.  
2) It is informed that in case tender process is not completed due to any reason, no corrigendum will be published in newspapers. Details regarding corrigendum may be seen on website. [www.punjab.gov.in](http://www.punjab.gov.in)

RTP-09/2020 RO : C-9118  
Dy. CE/Monitoring, GGSSTP, Rupnagar

**Government of India Ministry of Textiles**  
Office of the Development Commissioner for Handlooms Udyog Bhavan, New Delhi.

No. 3/4/2019-DCH/P&E Dated: 21 February, 2020

**CORRIGENDUM**

Subject: Extension of last date for submission of applications for handloom awards for the year 2018

Please refer this Office advertisement No. davn 041102/11/0049/19-20 which was published in India on 03.01.2020 in various National/Regional newspapers wherein applications are invited for various categories of Handloom awards (Sant Kabir Awards, National Awards & National Merit Certificate including Kamala Devi Chattopadhyay award) with the last date of submission of application was 20.02.2020. It is notified that the last date for submission of applications for the above handloom awards for the year 2018 is extended upto 21.03.2020. All other terms and conditions will remain same. For details information please visit the website: [www.handlooms.nic.in](http://www.handlooms.nic.in) & [www.mygov.in](http://www.mygov.in)

Development Commissioner for Handlooms, Udyog Bhavan, New Delhi.

davn 41102/11/0062/1920

**punjab national bank** No.3, RH Road, Bhanu Nagar, Ambattur Branch, Ambattur-600053 Tel: 044-26864211

"In terms of proviso to Rules 3 (1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, the service is effected of the below mentioned demand notice dated, the contents of which is hereunder published."

**DEMAND NOTICE**

Notice U/S 13(2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002

You, the undermentioned borrower is hereby informed that the Bank has initiated proceedings against you under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and that the notice under 13 (2) of the Act sent to you by Registered Post Ack. Due has been returned undelivered. Hence you are hereby called upon to take notice and pay the outstanding loan amount mentioned against the said account with interest accrued therefrom within 60 days from the date of this publication, failing which the Bank will proceed against you by exercising its right under Sub-Sec. (4) of Section 13 of the Act by enforcing the below mentioned security to realize its dues with interests and costs. It is needless to mention that this notice is addressed to you without prejudice to any other remedy available to the Bank. Your attention is hereby drawn invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act in respect of time available to you to redeem the secured assets.

**Borrower:** M/s. Barakath Steel Traders, 2/4, Kamarajar Salai, Near MGR Nagar, Manali, Chennai-600 068, Borrower/Mortgagor: Mr.S.Nizamudeen, Sole Proprietor: M/s. Barakath Steel Traders, No.34, 3rd Cross Street, Ravi Garden, Kodungaiyur, Chennai-600 118, Guarantor for Term Loan: Mrs.N.Fathima, W/o.Mr.S.Nizamudeen, Plot No.34, Ravi Garden 3rd Cross Street, Kodungaiyur, Chennai 600 118. (A/c No.302900ND00000042 and 302909300008136)  
**Demand Notice Date:** 16.11.2019; **NPA Date:** 30.06.2019; **Facility:** Term Loan - **Rs.11,14,674/-**; **Overdraft:** Rs.4,79,735.20; **Outstanding Amount:** Rs.15,94,409.20 as on 31.10.2019 with further interest and charges w.e.f.01.06.2019 until payment in full.

**Description of the Property:** Property belonging to Mr.S. Nizamudeen: All that piece and parcel of land measuring about 1800 sq.ft. and building thereon bearing Survey Nos.40/1 and 40/2 bearing Plot No.34, forming part of layout in "Ravi Garden" 3rd Street, in T.S.No.86, Block No.7, Jambuli Village, Tondiarpet Taluk, Chennai 600 118 and bounded on the North by: Plot No.27, South by: 24 Feet Road, East by: Plot No.35 and West by: Plot No.33, Lying within the Sub Registration District of Semburam and Registration District of North Chennai.

Date : 16.11.2019 Authorised Officer Punjab National Bank  
Place: Chennai

**CENTRAL ORGANISATION FOR RAILWAY ELECTRIFICATION**  
1, NAWAB YUSUF ROAD, CIVIL LINES/ALLAHABAD-211001 FAX No.: 0532-2407797

Tender No. ELCORE-OHE-TSS-GR-337 E-Tender Notice Closing Date/Time: 18.03.2020, 15:00

CAO/IRE acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders against Tender No. ELCORE-OHE-TSS-GR-337 Closing Date 18.03.2020, 15:00. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids upto closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.

Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender document cost and earnest money only through online payment modes available on IREPS portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand Draft, Banker's cheque, Deposit receipts, FDR etc, are not allowed.

1. NIT HEADER

**Name of work:-** Design, Supply, Erection, Testing & Commissioning of 25 kV, 50 Hz, Single Phase, A.C. Electrification Works including OHE & TSS as Composite Electrical work "in Hanumanagar-Sriganganagar-Suratgarh(Excl.)-Anoopgarh Section, Group-337 of Bikaner Division of North Western Railway under RE Project Ambala, Total 261 RKM/328 TKM.

Bidding Type	Two Stage Reverse Auction
Tender Type	Open Bidding System
Tender Closing Date/Time	18.03.2020 15:00
Pre-Bid Required	No
Advertised Value (₹)	790312923.82
Bidding Style	Single Rate for Each Schedule Item
Earnest Money (₹)	4101600.00
Tender Doc. Cost (₹)	25000.00
Contract Type	Works
Bidding Start Date	04.03.2020
Ranking Order For Bids	Lowest to Highest
Auto Elimination rules applicable	Yes
Initial Cooling Off Period (HH:MM)	04:00
Subsequent Cooling Off Period (HH:MM)	00:20
Minimum Decrement (%)	0.20

PR/240/2020 Adk "Serving Customers with a Smile" [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

**TENDERS / NOTICES**

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU  
**RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND PANCHAYAT RAJ DEPARTMENT**, Theni District  
RE-TENDER NOTICE No. 2365 / 2019 / 05 Dated : 20.02.2020  
State Finance Commission Devolution Grant 2019 - 20  
Installation of Reverse Osmosis (RO) Plants in Rural areas during 2019-20 and Supply of Steel Doors, Steel Windows and Steel Ventilators for the year 2019-20  
**FORM OF CONTRACT : ITEM RATE TWO COVER SYSTEM (SHORT TIME TENDER)**

1. The e-bid documents can also be downloaded free of cost from [www.tenders.gov.in](http://www.tenders.gov.in) from 21.02.2020 to 02.03.2020  
2. Important dates

S.No.	Description	Date
1	Last date and time for downloading of bid documents	02.03.2020 - up to 3.00 P.M.
2	Last Date and time for online submission of bid documents	02.03.2020 - up to 4.00 P.M.
3	Date and Time for online opening of bid documents	02.03.2020 - 4.00 PM

3. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents.  
DIPR/1012/TENDER/2020 Project Director, DRDA - Theni

**NORTHERN RAILWAY**  
**Invitation of Tenders through E-Procurement System**

Principal Chief materials Manager, Northern Railway, New Delhi-110001, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites e-tenders through e-procurement system for supply of the following items:-

S.No.	Tender No.	Brief Description	Qty.	Closing Date
1	18201117	RESERVATION/ CANCELLATION FORM	25000 Nos.	06.03.2020
2	07191006	DUPLEX CHECK VALVE	566 Nos.	18.03.2020
3	15195014A	LIGHT WEIGHT TOWING TROLLEY SET	06 Nos.	20.03.2020
4	07191554A	PACKING RING-22 MM THICK, FOR WHEEL TREAD WEAR	19132 Nos.	23.03.2020
5	07191152A	HEAD STOCK COMPLETE	102 Nos.	27.03.2020
6	07191161	INJECTION MOULDED SILENT BLOCK	1308 Nos.	31.03.2020
7	19190625	SET OF GEAR CASE BEARING FOR WAP-5 LOCS	70 Set	01.04.2020
8	01200231	AXLE BEARING FOR TM	155 Nos.	08.04.2020
9	07191069	ALUMINIUM AXLE BOX FRONT COVER	2775 Nos.	04.05.2020

Note: 1. Vendors may visit the IREPS website i.e. [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) for details.  
2. No tender will be entertained after 06.03.2020  
Tender Notice No. : 39/2019-2020 Dated 19.02.2020 538/20  
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

**Government of Tamil Nadu**  
**Public Works Department - Building Organisation - Form of Contract : Lumpsum Short Time Tender Notice No.21/VLR-CLE/2019-20 / Dated 19.02.2020**

For and on behalf of Governor of Tamil Nadu, Sealed Tenders are invited by the Special Chief Engineer, PWD, Buildings (Construction and Maintenance) Circle, Vellore-1 for the following works from the eligible Contractors registered in Public Works Department of Government of Tamil Nadu: upto 3:00 pm as per office clock on 06.03.2020. The tenders will be opened on 06.03.2020 at 3:30 PM by the Special Chief Engineer in presence of the Tenderers or their authorised agents.

(1) Construction of Sub Registrar Office building at Nemil in Ranipet District. Construction of Sub Registrar Office building at (2) Kadali, (3) Mangalam in Thiruvananthapuram District, (4) Construction of Sub Registrar Office building at Sathyamangalam in Villupuram District, (5) Providing Cement Concrete floor for Tamil Nadu Transport Corporation, Thiruvananthapuram - Depot-3 (SIDCO), (6) Providing Roof arrangements for Centralised RO plant shed, LPG Cylinder storage shed and other works in Yathri Nivas building to the Pilgrims and Tourists of Arulmigu Arunachaleswara Temple at Thiruvananthapuram in Thiruvananthapuram District, (7) Provision of Ductable AC Unit arrangements to Auditorium block and Seminar Hall in New Govt. Law College Building at Villupuram in Villupuram District.

The E.M.D, remittance and other details can also be available from the Govt. designated website (<http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in>) and Office of the Superintending Engineer, PWD, Buildings (C&M) Circle, Vellore - 632 001. The tender schedule can be downloaded at free of cost from the above website, upto 05.03.2020 - 5.45 pm.  
Special Chief Engineer, PWD, Buildings (C&M) Circle, Vellore-1.  
DIPR/1010/Tender/2020

**TAMILNAD MERCANTILE BANK LTD**  
(Regd. Office at 57, V.E.Road, Thoothukudi)  
**SENNEERKUPPAM BRANCH**  
2/52, Avadi High Road, Thiruvallur District, Senneerkuppam, Chennai - 600 056.

**SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES**

Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets mortgaged/ charged to the Bank under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 6 (b) and 9 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower **Mrs.S.Thennmozhi (W/o.Mr.V.C.Sekar)**, Proprietrix : **M/s.Prasath Agency**, D.No.36, Sakkalingam Street, Rajiv Nagar, Vanagaram, Chennai - 600 077 and Guarantor **Mr.V.C.Sekar (S/o.Mr.Chandranth), D.No.36, Sakkalingam Street, Rajiv Nagar, Vanagaram, Chennai - 600 077** that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Limited, Senneerkuppam Branch will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever the state is" on 12.03.2020 for recovery of Rs.20,97,357.46 (Rupees Twenty Lakhs Ninety Seven Thousand Three Hundred Fifty Seven and paise Fourty Six Only) as on 31.01.2020 due to the Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Limited, Senneerkuppam Branch with subsequent interest and expenses.

The Reserve Price will be Item Rs.7,40,000/- (Rupees Seven Lakh Forty Thousand Only) and the Earnest Money deposit will be Rs.74,000/- (Rupees Seventy Four Thousand Only).

Place of Submission of EMD and Auction	TAMILNAD MERCANTILE BANK LTD, Senneerkuppam Branch, 2/52, Avadi High Road, Thiruvallur District, Senneerkuppam, Chennai - 600 056.
Date and Time of Auction Sale	12.03.2020 at 12:00 pm
Upset Price	Rs.7,40,000/- (Rupees Seven Lakh Forty Thousand Only)
<b>Description of the Property:</b> Vacant land to the extent of 3111 Sq.ft situated at S.No.5/3 & 5/5, as per patta S.No.2/2A, Plot Shop.No.III, Rajalakshmi Nagar, (Lubav Approval No.LP/DTCP No.184/2001) Vellanthangal Village (Thandalam) near Injalattukottai, Sripurambudur, Kanchipuram District - 602 117, standing in the name of Mr.V.C.Sekar. BOUNDARIES : North By : 40 Feet Road, South By : Vacant Land, East By : Plot Nos.176 and 177, West By : Shop No.III	
<b>Terms &amp; Conditions</b>	
1. The intending bidders should pay 10% of the reserve price of the property as Earnest Money Deposit(EMD) by means of a "Demand Draft" drawn in favor of "Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Ltd" on or before 12.03.2020 within 12.00 pm	
2. The intending bidders may inspect and satisfy themselves about the property/properties and may approach the Branch Manager to inspect the property documents related to the property between 10.00 A.M., and 4.00 P.M., before the auction date (Phone No.9750310888, 044-26801162)	
3. The successful bidder shall have to deposit 25% of the Bid Amount (less EMD) on the same day or the next working day without fail and EMD shall be adjusted towards 25% of the bid amount immediately, on the sale being knocked down in his favour. In case of default in deposit of 25% of the bid amount as stated above, the EMD will be forfeited and the property shall be sold again by public auction.	
4. The successful bidder shall deposit the balance 75% of the bid amount within 15 days of the sale or such extended period as agreed upon in writing by the Authorized Officer/Secured Creditor at his discretion. In case of any default in depositing the amount within the stipulated period, the deposit will be forfeited as per sub Rule (5) of Rule (9) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 and the property shall be resold and the defaulting purchaser will forfeit all his/her claims to the property or to any part of the sum for which it may be subsequently sold.	
5. No interest shall be payable on any amount deposited for participation in the bid under the SARFAESI Act.	
6. To the best of knowledge and belief of the Authorised Officer, the property/properties are not subject to any encumbrance. The Authorised Officer will not be held responsible for any charge, lien, encumbrances, property tax or any other dues to the Government or anybody in respect of the property/ies under sale.	
7. The successful bidder should bear the charges/fee payable for conveyance such as registration fee, stamp duty etc., as applicable as per Law.	
8. The Authorized Officer has absolute right to accept/reject/postpone or cancel the sale without assigning any reason, whatsoever.	
9. The property/properties will not be sold below the reserve price fixed above.	
10. The intending bidders should bring any one of the proof of identity, i.e. Aarhar card Passport, Driving license, Ration Card, Voter ID, PAN Card etc., at the time of participating the bid.	
11. The sale certificate shall be issued in the name of the purchaser/bidder and will not be issued in the any other name. The purchaser shall bear the stamp duty, registration charges and all other connected fees, duties, taxes etc. in relation to the execution of the sale certificate.	
12. The sale notice is also uploaded/published on website( <a href="http://www.tmb.in">www.tmb.in</a> ).	
Place : Chennai Date : 18.02.2020	Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Ltd (For Senneerkuppam Branch) (Cell: 9750310888 / 9976344444)

## SHORT TAKES

### RAJAMATA STARTS RENOVATION OF MYSURU PALACE

SHILPA P. | DC  
MYSURU, FEB. 20

The historic Mysuru palace, a must on the itinerary of any visitor to Karnataka's Heritage City, is getting a facelift with the royal family taking up restoration work in one of the oldest portions of the palace — the 218-year-old 'Gandada thotti' (pavilion) — which served as the residential wing of late Maharaja Nalwadi Krishnaraja Wadiyar. Rajamata Pramodadevi Wadiyar of the royal family said, "This is the first full fledged conservation work in Mysuru palace." According to heritage expert Echanur Kumar, a wooden palace existed at the same site before it caught fire in late 1896 following which the new palace was built between 1897-1912. A certain portion of the wooden palace at the back side, however, was not gutted and this is now getting a facelift.

The conservation work was taken up with funds from Srikanthadatta Narasimharaja Wadiyar foundation. A team led by conservation architects Ms Varsha A. Rajanahalli and Sarath Chandra, have restored a wooden pillar, four beams, 26 rafters and walls using lime mortar, the same material which was used for building the old structure. Ms Varsha said, "It is eight months since the work began and it will be completed in a few months."

Ms Wadiyar felt that the whole of Mysuru Palace needs conservation work. "We have proposed to the government that the conservation work of the entire palace be assigned to us so that we can take it up with the help of our experts."

## VERDICT IN UNNAO MURDER CASE ON FEB. 29

New Delhi: A Delhi court will pronounce judgement on February 29 in a case of alleged murder of the father of a woman who was raped by expelled BJP MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar in Unnao in 2017.

The rape survivor's father died on April 9, 2018 in judicial custody. During in-chamber proceedings, district judge Dharmesh Sharma has reserved the judgement after conclusion of final arguments by the prosecution and the defence, said a lawyer privy to the matter.

Counsel for the CBI examined 55 witnesses in support of the case and the defence examined nine witnesses, said advocate Dharmendra Mishra, counsel for the rape survivor and her family. The court recorded the statements of the rape survivor's uncle, mother, sister and one of her father's colleagues who claimed to be the eye witnesses.

## NIRBHAYA CONVICT BANGS HIS HEAD, HURT

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, FEB. 20

Vinay Sharma, one of the four death-row prisoners in Nirbhaya case, on Thursday, approached a Delhi court with a fresh request to be treated at East Delhi's Institute of Human Behaviour and Allied Sciences for mental illness, insanity, and schizophrenia.

The Delhi court sought response from Tihar jail authorities. Additional session judge Dharmender Rana directed the prison authorities to file its reply on the plea by Vinay Kumar Sharma on Saturday.

Earlier, Vinay had injured himself by banging his head against a wall of his cell in Tihar jail. According to prison officials, the incident took place in jail number 3 on Sunday afternoon and he got some minor injuries and was treated inside the prison premises.

According to prison officials, Vinay had briefly stopped eating. "He is irritable in nature and acts different from the other three convicts. His nature is different from the other three," they said.

"Sharma got hurt inside his cell after he banged his head against a wall on Sunday afternoon. While he was at it, security personnel saw him, stopped him immediately, and called the doctors," a senior jail official said. A Delhi court, on Monday, ordered that Mukesh Kumar Singh (32), Pawan Gupta (25), Vinay Kumar Sharma (26), and Akshay Kumar (31), the four convicts in the Nirbhaya gang-rape and murder case, be hanged at 6.00 am on March 3.



Artists performs as Union home minister Amit Shah arrives to attend the 34th Statehood Day of Arunachal Pradesh, in Lakhimpur Kheri district on Thursday.

# Art. 371 here to stay, Shah tells NE states

'Misinformation campaign after abrogation of Article 370'

MANOJ ANAND | DC  
GUWAHATI, FEB. 20

Union home minister Amit Shah on Thursday asserted that Article 371 will remain intact and it has no connection to abrogation of Article 370. Mr Shah dismissed as "misinformation" the talk of repeal of Article 371 and reaffirmed the government's commitment to protecting the unique culture of the Northeast.

Addressing a gathering to mark the 34th foundation day of Arunachal Pradesh, Mr Shah said the Northeast was only geographically united

with the rest of India before 2014 when Narendra Modi assumed office of the prime minister. "The real emotional integration of the region with the rest of the country happened only under the Modi government," he said.

"Misinformation was spread after abrogation of Article 370, which gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir, that Article 371 will also be scrapped. It will never happen. Nobody has any such intention," he said.

Most states that have special provisions under Article 371 are in the Northeast. These provi-

sions are aimed at preserving their cultural heritage and customary laws.

Referring to the problems of militancy and inter-state boundary disputes in the region, the home minister said the Modi government was committed to their resolution. "The government has already started negotiations with various militant organisations to restore peace in the region. It recently inked the Bodo Peace Accord, besides resolving the Bru-Reang issue and ending the indefinite blockade in Manipur. When we come to seek your votes in 2024, the Northeast will have

been free from problems like militancy and inter-state strife," he said.

Underlining the prime minister's commitment to the development of the Northeast, the minister said, Narendra Modi visited the region 30 times in five years, six times a year. He said while only Rs 89,168 crore was allocated to the region by the 13th Finance Commission when the UPA was in power, it shot up to Rs 3,13,374 lakh crore under the 14th Finance Commission after the NDA assumed office. A total of 474 new projects have been sanctioned for the region, he said.

## 'Roadmap to implement SC fiat is ready'

DC CORRESPONDENT  
with agency inputs  
NEW DELHI, FEB. 20

Army Chief Gen. M.M. Naravane said on Thursday that letters were being sent to all women officers asking whether they would prefer permanent commissions. He said that the Army had prepared a roadmap for granting permanent commission to women officers. The Army Chief said the process will be the same for men and women officers.

Gen. Naravane claimed the force was championing gender equality and the Supreme Court order granting permanent commission to women officers will give it a lot of clarity, moving forward.

The Supreme Court on Monday directed that women officers in the Army be granted permanent commissions and command posts. "The Indian Army does not discriminate against any soldier based on religion, caste, creed, or even gender. The outlook has been throughout like this and that is why we started inducting women officers as early as in 1993," he said.

# 7 arrested for thrashing Dalits in Raj; protests on

Jaipur, Feb. 20: Seven people were arrested for beating and torturing two Dalit men in Rajasthan's Nagaur district, an incident that triggered protests in the state assembly and condemnation by political leaders on Thursday. Apart from the seven arrested, seven others have been detained in this connection, police said.

DGP Bhubendra Singh said the Heinous Crime Monitoring Unit (HCMU) will monitor the case and it will be taken up under the case officer scheme for speedy investigation. The police said IG

(human rights) Bipin Kumar Panday has been sent to Nagaur for a detailed investigation into the incident.

"Seven people have been arrested after registering a case against them under various sections of IPC and the SC/ST Act. A cross FIR has also been registered for stealing money," DSP Nagaur Mukul Sharma said. The police said section 308 of IPC (attempt to commit culpable homicide) has also been added in the FIR. The arrested accused have been identified as Bhim Singh, Imaan Singh, Hanuman Singh,

Raghuvir Singh, Chhail Singh, Chhatar Singh and Rehmatullah.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi earlier in the day termed the torture of the Dalits as "horrific and sickening" and asked his party government in the state to take immediate action to bring the perpetrators to book. "The recent video of two young Dalit men being brutally tortured in Nagaur, Rajasthan is horrific and sickening. I urge the state government to take immediate action to bring the perpetrators of this shocking crime to justice," he tweeted.

## INDIA RANKS 77TH ON SUSTAINABILITY, 131st IN CHILD FLOURISHING INDEX RANKINGS: UN REPORT

United Nations, Feb. 20: India ranked 77th on a sustainability index that takes into account per capita carbon emissions and ability of children in a nation to live healthy lives and secures 131st spot on a flourishing ranking that measures the best chance at survival and well-being for children, according to a UN-backed report.

The report was released on Wednesday by a commission of over 40 child and adolescent health experts from around the world. It was commissioned by the World Health Organization (WHO), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and The Lancet medical journal.

In the report assessing the capacity of 180 coun-

tries to ensure that their youngsters can survive and thrive, India ranks 77th on the Sustainability Index and 131 on the Flourishing Index, it said. Flourishing is the geometric mean of Surviving and Thriving. For Surviving, the authors selected, among others, maternal survival.

# Call for party overhaul gains traction in Cong

DC CORRESPONDENTS  
NEW DELHI, FEB. 20

After the party's pathetic performance in the Delhi elections, tremors are being felt within the Congress with several leaders raising questions and demanding a complete overhaul of the leadership.

Senior Congress leader and Kerala MP Shashi Tharoor on Thursday urged the Congress Working Committee to hold leadership elections to "energise workers and inspire voters". Dr Tharoor's appeal came in support of his party colleague and former MP Sandeep Dikshit's remarks that the biggest challenge the party faces was the "leadership question".

Joining hands with Mr Dikshit, Dr Tharoor tweeted: "What Sandeep Dikshit said openly is what dozens of party leaders from across the country are saying privately, including many with responsible positions in the party." He further added: "Some have asked who should vote and for what. I was referring to my earlier call eight months ago for elections among the 10,000 party

**VOICE FOR CHANGE:** What Sandeep Dikshit said openly is what dozens of party leaders from across the country are saying privately, including many with responsible positions in the party, tweeted Dr Tharoor

workers who constitute the AICC plus PCC delegates' list. These should be for the elected seats in the CWC as well as for the party presidency."

The utterances of Mr Dikshit did not go down well with some leaders. Reacting sharply, party communications chief Randeep Surjewala said: "If (what) Sandeep is putting on Twitter, if he puts even a fraction in his work, he will transform Delhi. Instead of giving gyaan (lecture), concentrate on doing good work." The outburst by senior leaders comes amid the buzz that Rahul Gandhi will once again become Congress president. Several other senior leaders like Manish Tewari and Jairam Ramesh have also mooted various reforms in the party. But as uncertainty over the leadership prevails, several leaders suggested that

Mrs Sonia Gandhi continues as the party chief.

However, Gandhi loyalist Sanjay Nirupam attacked Mr Tharoor, and said that "only Rahul Gandhi can save the party", and that everything else was "inane discussion". He added: "No one from outside the (Gandhi) family can lead the Congress at this juncture," he tweeted. "Other leaders are just group leaders and such leaders at the helm will encourage more groupism. Period!" Mr Nirupam had been sulking during the Maharashtra Assembly elections in October last year as his supporters did not get party tickets. Also, he refused to campaign for the party during the polls.

After the debacle in the Delhi elections, it is open season in the party. Former Delhi in-charge PC Chacko had blamed late chief minister Sheila Dikshit for the fall in the party's vote share, reacting to which Milind Deora had said it was unfortunate to see her being blamed after her death. There is now a wide chasm in the party between those who want Rahul Gandhi to return as party chief and those who want the status quo to continue.

## 'NATIONALISM' MEANS FASCISM FOR SOME: RSS

Ranchi, Feb. 20: The word "nationalism" can lend itself to different interpretations and could be equated with "Nazism and Fascism" by some, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat said on Thursday.

Mr Bhagwat's remark came amid continued protests in several towns and cities of the country against the new citizenship law and probable pan-India NRC, moves branded by those opposing them as a reflection of 'Hindutva nationalism' that is detrimental to Muslims.

Addressing an RSS event in Jharkhand capital, Mr Bhagwat recalled how a Sangh volunteer advised him against using the word during a visit to the UK. "I was on a visit to the UK. A *karyakarta* advised me not to use the word nationalism as English is not our language and it could have a different meaning in England. It's okay to say nation, national and nationality but not nationalism. Because it means (alludes to) Hitler; Nazism and Fascism (in England)," he said.

Mr Bhagwat also said problems like radicalism and climate change were disturbing world peace and only India, with its ethos of thinking holistically, can offer a solution. "Problems of radicalism, environment and the belief that one is right while the rest are wrong are the basic issues disturbing world peace," he said. Only India has got the experience to think holistically to find solutions to these problems, Bhagwat added. "And the world waits for India, so India has to become a great nation."

# Protestors air fears before SC interlocutors

DC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, FEB. 20

The Supreme Court-appointed interlocutors met the protesters at Shaheen Bagh for the second day Thursday, on their second visit to the site where people have been on a sit-in for the past two months against the amended citizenship law.

Advocates Sanjay Hedge and Sadhana Ramachandran, the interlocutors, were not willing to start a discussion in the media's presence. The protesters tried to convince them that they wanted to represent their issues before the media, but the journalists were later asked to leave.

Ms Ramachandran, addressing the protesters, began by saying: "*Aapne bulaya, hum chale aaye*" (You called us, and we are here).

On Monday, the Supreme Court had said the blockade of the road at Shaheen Bagh was "troubling", and suggested the protesters go to another site, where no public place would be blocked, but upheld their right to protest.

The court also asked Mr Hedge to "play a constructive role as an interlocutor" to persuade the protesters to shift to an alternative site. It said the interlocutors can seek former bureaucrat Wajahat Habibullah's assistance. Mr Hedge said the

Supreme Court has recognised their right to protest. "When Shaheen Bagh has become an example of protests in India, let us set an example of a protest that does not disturb anybody. You all must rest assured that we are here to fight for you. Don't think if you change your spot, your fight will die down," Mr Hedge told the protesters.

The senior lawyer said: "We have seen many Prime Ministers come and go. Whoever comes to power and runs the country, sometimes some could be right and some could be wrong. Whatever you are saying... the whole country is listening, and also the PM."

The protesters are demanding repeal of the Citizenship Amendment Act.

Ms Ramachandran said she was "really waiting" for that day when the "country's atmosphere will change".

An elderly man expressed his fear about his children's security. "I am very scared... I am very scared for my children. Madam, save me," he said. When Ms Ramachandran asked him more about his fears, the man replied: "I am a single father. I will die and go, but my children should get to live here with authority. My girls go to school where they are being told that you will go out of the country."

# Fadnavis appears in court, granted bail

Nagpur, Feb. 20: Former Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis appeared before a Nagpur court on Thursday in connection with a complaint seeking criminal proceedings against him for non-disclosure of criminal cases in his 2014 election affidavit.

Chief metropolitan magistrate P.S. Ingle recorded the BJP leader's appearance before the court and granted him bail on a personal bond of Rs 15,000. The magistrate had given the last chance to Mr Fadnavis to appear before the court on Thursday. "The presence of the accused (Fadnavis) is secured. The offences are bailable. There is no apprehension of him absconding. Hence, bail is granted," magistrate Ingle said. The court was hearing an application



Devendra Fadnavis

filed by advocate Satish Uke, seeking criminal proceedings to be initiated against Mr Fadnavis for alleged non-disclosure of criminal cases registered against him in his election affidavit in 2014. He was granted exemption from appearance on four earlier occasions since November 2019. The court has now posted the matter for further hearing on March 30. Later, Mr Fadnavis told reporters outside the court premises that his poll affidavit was filed by his advocate.

## FOR GODS' SAKE National Museum says sentiments have to be respected

# Non-veg barred in Indian culinary fair

New Delhi, Feb. 20: Non-vegetarian food has been dropped from the menu of the National Museum's week-long exhibition-cum-event on India's culinary history. Historical Gastronomia, due to an "unwritten policy" based on "sentiments", a senior official of the museum said on Thursday.

The organisers came under fire after the event's menu comprising non-vegetarian dishes was put up on the museum's website. Shortly afterwards, it was decided that only vegetarian food would be served at the exhibition which will be on till February 25.

The food event is being organised jointly by the



National Museum, the Ministry of Culture and One Station Million Stories (OSMS), a private firm.

The additional director general of themuseum Subrata Nath said OSMS did not discuss in detail the non-vegetarian part of the menu with the museum

**UNWRITTEN RULE:** The organisers came under fire after the event's menu comprising non-vegetarian dishes was put up on the museum's website. Shortly afterwards, it was decided that only vegetarian food would be served.

officials. "They (OSMS) got our approval but the non-vegetarian part of the menu was not discussed with us. We assumed that they would know that we do not serve non-veg food here given the policy of the institution. Just 10 days back we had a Guru Nanak festival and we never had

this controversy," Mr Nath said. "It (non-veg food items) was on the site for a day and we withdrew it as soon as we realised the issue," he added. Mr Nath, however, said that the "policy" of not serving non-vegetarian dishes was not a written one, but a "sentimental one". "The museum is full of idols of several gods and goddesses, we have to respect the sentiments of the people who visit us. We cannot serve non-vegetarian food here. It is an unwritten policy based on sentiments which we thought they (OSMS) knew," he said.

When asked if this was straying from the culinary history of ancient India

where non-vegetarian dishes were common, Mr Nath said that visitors will just not be served the food, but will be briefed on them. "We are not serving the non-vegetarian food, but we will brief visitors on the historical dietary practices of ancient India, so it is wrong to say that we are not giving a true picture of the food in ancient times," he said. Some of the non-vegetarian dishes on offer were fish in turmeric stew, quail/fowl/country chicken roasted in Saal leaf, offal's pot, bati with dry fish, meat fat soup, lamb liver with chick-pea, dried fish and Mahua oil chutney.



## DECCAN Chronicle

21 FEBRUARY 2020

### Bhagwat's sermon: Our girls don't deserve this

Following the Supreme Court's historic judgment mandating equal work, tenure and benefits for women in the Army, the conversation on women's role in Indian society has acquired a sharper focus — that of the family.

Last week, a matrimonial ad in the newspapers seeking a bride for an unemployed dentist caused much amusement when it went viral on digital media. When a brahmin looks for a trophy wife, she must be a paragon of virtue and domesticity. While that no doubt puts on full glorious display the man's ambition and feeling of entitlement, it also, between the lines, betrays the compulsion for the woman to put chores over her public responsibilities. Now, what example would she thereby be setting before her child with such misplaced priorities?

For long, the absurd has been seen as the ideal for the women of our country.

On the day that the Supreme Court passed its momentous verdict, four employees, including the principal, of a college run by the powerful Swaminarayan Temple Trust in Bhuj in Gujarat's Kutch district were arrested for subjecting 68 college students to a menstruation check involving a strip search so they could be quarantined in separate quarters inside their hostel. The college authorities had sought to defend their actions citing the girls' consent to the regulations of the college hostel which authorises their isolation.

Though himself a bachelor, Mohan Bhagwat, head of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, the ideological parent of the ruling government, one day earlier, found it appropriate to expatiate on the secrets of successful married life — he claimed that it is education and affluence that drive families (read women) to divorce because they purportedly lead to arrogance in them. So now they have the additional obligation of pretending modesty, itself an overrated merit. What about forced marriages, marriages of coercion, marriages in which husbands pour acid on sleeping wives and daughters on grounds of not being gifted with dowry or a son, marriages that should have been annulled in the first place? Curiously, Mr Bhagwat is silent on all of those subjects.

What would happen to the Narendra Modi government's *beti bachao, beti padhao* (might one add, *beti khelao*, seeing the hordes of "patriotic" Hindutva champions at sports events sometimes startling our sportswomen into playing wrong shots with their mistimed cheers) agenda if it were to listen to its master's voice bellowing?

The "anti-intellectual" Mr Bhagwat, himself, is a votary of the "social contract" in which the husband is the protector and the provider and the wife the domestic nurturer. As long ago as in the late 1980s, sociologist Warren Farrell had critiqued the state of human civilisation with his thesis on how men were being forced to become "success objects" and women "sex objects" due to this bias inherent in patriarchy. When Rammohun Roy got the British government to abolish sati, Indians learnt to separate custom from tradition, realities from fact and the letter of ancient scriptures (even *Manusmriti*) from their context, meaning and spirit. Will Hindutva roll back the Indian renaissance? When will our influencers learn to assimilate, not amalgamate, ideals; go all out to banish bigotry and dogma, and injustice, rather than strengthen their albeit-loosening hold on our collective psyche?

### Collegium needs transparency

The Constitution's framers dreaded the idea of vesting the power of appointing judges in the higher judiciary to judges; Dr B.R. Ambedkar, during a discussion in the Constituent Assembly, called it a "dangerous proposition". However, the Supreme Court has over time re-interpreted the meaning of the constitutional mandate to "consult the Chief Justice of India" while making appointments, and taken over the burden with the collegium system, which finds no mention in the Constitution. It even struck down a Constitution amendment which tried to restore the executive's say in such appointments. The clear aim was to insulate the judiciary from the temptations of politicking.

The sad part is that this has not delivered. The collegium's recommendations are more often questioned than not. The transfer of the Madras high court chief justice to Meghalaya last year kicked up a storm, but the collegium gave no reason why a judge who presided over a chartered high court was shifted to a tiny one. The latest recommendation, to transfer a Delhi high court judge to the Punjab and Haryana high court, has been called a "rarest of rare case", whatever that means, by the Delhi High Court Bar Association. "The majesty of our revered institution is at stake," it said.

There has been demand for transparency in the way the collegium system works. The government, which is answerable to the legislature and to the people, has opened itself through the Right to Information Act, and forced transparency on itself. Governments have more secrets to keep and there are reasons too; but the judiciary should have none. It must be the most transparent institution, but opacity has come to be a hallmark of it, as former Supreme Court judge said. That is not the great legacy the Indian judiciary should be leaving for itself.

DECCAN CHRONICLE  
ADITYA SINHA Editor  
T. VENKATESWARULU Printer & Publisher  
R. MOHAN Resident Editor  
DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:  
Chennai: SP 3 Developed Plot, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai 600032. Phones: (044) 22254747, 22254748  
Coimbatore: 77 Vivekananda Road, Ramnagar, Coimbatore 641009. Phone: (0422) 2231255, 2231256  
Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad 500 003. Phone: (040) 27803930-4. Fax: (040) 27805256  
Bengaluru: 5th Floor, BMTC Commercial Complex, 80 Ft. Road, Koramangala, Bangalore-560095. Ph: 08043460500, Fax: 080-22960551/52/55  
Visakhapatnam: Survey No. 1/3A Beach Road, Near Kailasagiri Ropeway, Sector-9 MVP Colony, Visakhapatnam - 530 017. Phones: (0891) 2552333/2552334, Fax: (0891) 2755285  
Vijayawada: No. C-3 & 4, Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.). Phones: (0866) 255284/255287, Fax: (0866) 255234  
Rajahmundry: Vemagiri, Dhawleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry 533125. Phones: (0883) 2417208, 2417618  
Anantapur: Thapovan Colony, Bangalore Bye-Pass Road, Anantapur 515004. Phones: (08554) 276903, 276904  
Nellore: Survey No. 527/2, Burranpur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chemudugunta Panchayat, Nellore. Phone: (0861) 2348581/82, Telefax: (0861) 2348580  
Karimnagar: Survey No. 1341, Vavilalapally Colony, Jagtilya Road, Karimnagar 505 001. Phone: (0878) 2228908; Telefax: (0878) 2220433  
Kochi: No. 3-B, 3rd Floor, DD TRADE TOWER, Kaloor-Kadavanthara Road, Ernakulam, Ph: 0484-4039408  
Kozhikode: No 6/1002 E, First Floor City Mall, Opp. YMCA Kannur Road, Kozhikode - 673 001  
Thiruvananthapuram: St Joseph Press Thycud post, Cotton Hills, Thiruvananthapuram-14, Ph: 0471-275105/6/7, Fax: 0471-4016112 Gram: CHRONICLE Postal registration no. No. HSD-348-2006-088s

Subhani



## Health security must be on the policy high table

Patralekha Chatterjee  
Dev 360

Few in India connect healthcare with national security. Health experts and security experts typically don't talk to each other regularly. But the coronavirus outbreak in China reminds us once again that in today's interconnected world, an outbreak anywhere has a ripple-effect everywhere, including countries whose citizens may not have contracted the virus in large numbers. Globally, the novel coronavirus has now killed more than 2,000 people.

Disruption of production in China, the world's second largest economy, is creating havoc in many businesses worldwide — airlines, automobiles, luxury goods and so on. What is of great concern to India is the impact of coronavirus (called Covid 19 by scientists) on the pharmaceutical sector.

India is the fabled pharmacy of the world. India's low-cost generic drug makers cater to domestic and international needs. But here is the catch. Most of the Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API) or bulk drugs necessary to produce these medicines come from just one country — China. APIs are what give a medicine its therapeutic effect.

About 75 per cent of the APIs used in the formulations of India's National List of Essential Medicines are sourced from China because it is cheaper to do so. Most of India's API production units are not running at optimal capacity now. India's over-dependence on China for APIs is not an issue that has popped up just now. It has been an area of concern for a long time.

There have been numerous alerts, taskforces, warnings over the years about the over-dependence of the Indian pharma industry on raw materials from China and its implications on

ries are the only direct suppliers to international clients... Wuhan Shiji Pharmaceutical, a company specialising in the production of APIs for pro-choactive drugs, told Global Times that half of its production was for export, but now all orders are suspended due to the coronavirus outbreak. API producers in eastern China's Zhejiang province, an API production hub with an annual output of 247,000 tons in 2018, won't resume work until the end of February, an industry insider told Global Times," the report said.

How do we plan to secure India's dominance in generic medicines with the formulation industry depending so heavily on Chinese APIs? What happens in the short term if Chinese API supplies remain disrupted?

In 2020, we are asking the same questions that some of us raised earlier about India's health security. It is worth remembering that even before the coronavirus struck, China was cracking down on polluting industries, including pharmaceutical and chemical units. This has led to a rise in the prices of APIs imported from China by 25-30 per cent, dented the margins of India's drug makers and made India more vulnerable.

India was not always so dependent on Chinese APIs. In 1991, Chinese ingredients accounted for only 0.3 per cent of bulk drug imports. By 2012 their share had gone up to 47.61 per cent. In recent decades, India's drug makers have moved onto formulations and preferred to import APIs from China where the cost of production is lower.

Industry sources that this columnist spoke to in recent days say that the big pharma companies in

**For many countries, including India, it has been tough to sell the idea of investing in strengthening preparedness for epidemics and other health security threats in face of more seemingly urgent priorities**

### LETTERS

**DRUG SHORTAGE**  
It is learnt that the Union Government is planning to take steps to combat the problem of drug shortage, thanks to its over-dependence on China for inputs that go into the production of drugs in the country. One hopes that it will execute its plan swiftly as it has been reported that if the coronavirus outbreak is not controlled in couple of months, India will not have even headache tablets. This is indeed dangerous. Foreign trade is undoubtedly a sine qua non for economic growth as no country is self-sufficient in all products. But heavily depending on any country will be detrimental to our growth.  
S. Ramakrishnasayee, Chennai

**POLICE ATROCITY**  
This refers to your timely editorial, *Jamia: Cops on backfoot*. The police appear to be extra faithful to the government in unleashing unprovoked attacks on students of Jamia Millia Islamia College when they were calmly reading in their library. This has been revealed in the visual evidence. This 'terror' attack had sparked off unprecedented protest against CAA spearheaded by students. You have rightly pointed out that the democratic right to dissent has not given liberty to police to douse it with violence as was done by them on CAA protesters of Washermenpet. It is bad that till the college authorities moved the Delhi HC, no FIR was filed by the police.  
Kallal ML.Raghavan, Chennai

**PSYCHOLOGICAL THREAT?**  
Apropos your report that New Zealand pace spearhead and fully fit Trent Boult is keen to target captain Kohli during the Test series. Though it is a psychological threat, still it is going to be a real acid test for our team led by Virat Kohli at Wellington. The absence of our recognised injured opener's Shikhar Dhawan and Rohit Sharma and the foolish dropping of KL Rahul from the Test squad could prove to be a real headache for our Coach and Captain to choose two young openers to face Boult & Company. No doubt Pujara and Rahane have some runs under their belt. But the declining form of our Captain Kohli is a real worry. In fact, it won't be a surprise even their spinner Patel could trouble our celebrity batsmen. Added to their woes is the shoddy fielding and catching. Keeping our fingers crossed!  
N. Mahadevan, Chennai

Mail your letters to editor@deccanmail.com

The writer focuses on development issues in India and emerging economies. She can be reached at patralekha.chatterjee@gmail.com



Mahir Ali

### China sneezes: How soon will the world catch a cold?

Beyond the inevitably immediate concerns about the steadily rising death toll from the Wuhan coronavirus infection and the prospects of a worldwide pandemic, crucial questions have arisen about its political and economic impact in China as well as internationally. Economically, whatever happens in China reverberates across the world. It is the global manufacturing hub. It provides both products and parts that keep the international economy humming. When factories cannot function and ships cannot sail, or shipments are quarantined, there are worldwide palpitations. Japan reportedly faces a recession as a consequence. Japan is also the harbour for the Diamond Princess, one of those massive cruise ships that appear to be the ideal incubators for viruses. The rate at which the coronavirus named Covid-19 has been spreading aboard the vessel bears out that assumption. More broadly, though, the thus far restricted level of international infections and fatalities suggests that

Chinese efforts to curb the spread of the virus have been broadly successful. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has praised China for both its efforts and its transparency. It has not, however, ruled out the risk of a pandemic. At the same time, the fact that the Chinese authorities have been somewhat less reticent in sharing their information and concerns than they were during the SARS emergency at the turn of the century is commendable — only up to a point. It is hard to ignore the fact that the initial response in Wuhan — the capital of Hubei province, and the epicentre of the outbreak — was to clamp down on information. At the beginning of last month, eight medical professionals were hauled up for spreading "rumours". Among them was Li Wenliang, a young doctor who apparently succumbed to the virus on Feb. 7, sparking nationwide grieving. Although China is undoubtedly better equipped than almost any other nation to put into place drastic restrictions on movement that stretch from extreme measures in

Wuhan to slightly less extreme ones in Beijing and Shanghai, there are obviously limits to its transparency. Sure, some newspapers and websites were able to get away with a little more questioning of the authorities than was normally permitted, but criticism of President Xi Jinping's leadership remains beyond the pale, as evidenced by the treatment of Xu Zhongrun, a professor who has been quarantined in more ways than one for daring to criticise Xi's leadership. Former lecturer in law Xu Zhiyong has been taken into custody on similar grounds. There are likely to be numerous others we will never hear about. So, sure, totalitarian control helps in locking down half of a more than billion-strong population, but the fear that Xi Jinping's crown as president-for-life might be tarnished is possibly more of a concern for the Communist Party hierarchy than the coronavirus. The president is yet to venture into Wuhan, where the bulk of around 1,800 deaths from the affliction have occurred. He sought to burnish his

image instead through a masked and well-publicised visit to a hospital in Beijing. Premier Li Keqiang, on the other hand, has visited Wuhan — and may well become a leading scapegoat if the epidemic gets any worse. If so, he would join the purged health officials and local party stalwarts in Wuhan, who have by and large paid the price for following the Beijing-ordained logic of downplaying any crises and disowning all concomitant errors. China's efforts in the context of Covid-19 are commendable at many levels, and it is hard not to be impressed by its capability of setting up huge hospitals within weeks. But it must at the same time be acknowledged that, despite all this, all too many patients in Wuhan remain unattended. In the past few days, Beijing has been keen to point to an apparent decrease in new infections, even as the death toll goes on rising. WHO has been less complacent, declaring that it is too soon to tell whether the threat of a global pandemic has been

averted. There have not been many deaths outside China, but the virulence of the disease continues to provide cause for concern. In some eyes, the global economic repercussions are a bigger worry, pointing to the extent to which the rest of the world relies on China as a manufacturing and trade hub. In that sense, the repercussions will play out both domestically and internationally over the coming months and perhaps even years. The architecture of globalisation means that when China sneezes, the rest of the world is not immune from catching a cold. Future historians may look upon Covid-19 as little more than a blip on the radar in the context of the international economy, but perhaps it will also be seen as the juncture at which the advent of Xi Jinping stopped being viewed as the second coming of Mao, and many Chinese suddenly developed an empathy towards the Uighurs subjected to mass and indefinite incarceration.

By arrangement with Dawn

# Battle of billionaires may be the nastiest race ever



Freddy Gray

There are two things that are important in politics," said Mark Hanna, the American senator, in 1895. "The first is money and I can't remember what the second one is." In 2020, Hanna's maxim could be updated: the second thing is being an old white guy from New York.

The presidential election is 36 weeks away and it looks as if the winner will be one of three men. There's the Manhattan billionaire incumbent, Donald Trump, 73, whose fortune is estimated at \$3 billion (he claims eight). There's the socialist outsider from Brooklyn, Bernie Sanders, who is 78 and worth \$2.5 million. And last but not least is 78-year-old mayor Mike Bloomberg, the richest fruit in the Big Apple, weighing in at a whopping \$64 billion.

Money, money, money. Bloomberg and Sanders are currently vying for the Democratic nomination. Thanks to his vast army of small-dollar donors, Sanders has a \$350 million war chest. Bloomberg, meanwhile, is dropping the cash equivalent of a nuclear bomb on the American democratic process. He has still not entered the primary race, and he's already spent \$400 million. He's said that he is willing to put up \$2 billion.

Neither Bloomberg nor Sanders were Democrats three years ago. Both are attempting a hostile takeover of the Democratic Party. Sanders wants to complete the left-wing revolution he started five years ago; Bloomberg's campaign is more like an aggressive corporate buyout. The Democratic machine isn't happy with either candidate, but can't seem to settle on a credible alternative — former

Vice President Joe Biden's terrible campaign has been a particularly cruel humiliation. Party bigwigs are therefore starting to warm to Mike and his billions.

Political operatives are thrilled at the incoming bonanza. Bloomberg has hired just about every Democratic consultant he can get his hands on. Bloomberg has also launched one of the biggest television and digital advertising campaigns in political history.

In recent years, Democrats have started to fear that the Republicans now have the edge in Internet politics. Trump's campaign manager is Brad Parscale, who was his digital media director in 2016. He has built a vast Trumpist online operation and is already spending huge sums. But the sheer weight of Bloomberg's spend will be hard to match. "Quantity takes on a quality all of its own," says Trump's former chief strategist, Steve Bannon.

Bloomberg has taken to calling himself the "un-Trump" — the sort of clunky political branding that only the most expensive consultants can create. But Bannon calls him a "Republican oligarch" — and you don't have to be a national populist to see his point. Like Trump, Bloomberg has been a

**Bloomberg would be more trusted than Sanders to keep the economic good times going. Democrats like the idea that, because Trump only respects money, Bloomberg is the only candidate rich enough to intimidate him.**

Republican, an Independent and a Democrat — depending on what was expedient to him at the time.

He's a short-tempered man who lacks charisma and charm. He tries to make up for those inadequacies by exhibiting an authoritarian tendency: he's a health fascist who as mayor of New York not only persecuted smokers but introduced official calorie counting and even tried to bring in a ridiculously un-American cap on sugary drinks. Bloomberg brought down crime by intensifying Rudy Giuliani's "stop and search" policies to such an extent that he is widely accused of racial profiling and harassing young black people on the streets. He has apologised for that, yet he's also been accused of hushing up other criticisms of his record.

For instance, in 2015 the Center For American Progress (CAP) allegedly cut a 4,000-word section of a report which detailed the treatment of Muslim residents in Bloomberg's New York. Was it mere coincidence that Bloomberg had given CAP almost \$2 million? And if you think Trump is kompromated by Russia, wait until you read about Bloomberg and Beijing.

In an age of popular distrust of elites, on left and right, Bloomberg seems an odd choice. He ticks many progressive boxes: anti-gun, pro-abortion, pro-same-sex marriage, committed to fighting climate change. His worldview is exactly what you hear at those international summits for the managerial elite. Perhaps that's because he speaks at and sponsors so many of them.

Let's not get ahead of ourselves. To take on Trump, Bloomberg must first knock out the other candidates in the so-called "moderate lane" — Pete Buttigieg, Amy Klobuchar and Joe Biden. Then, assuming Elizabeth Warren doesn't have a surprising revival on his left, he will have to defeat the formidable Bernie Sanders to win the nomination.

For now, things seem to be falling into place for Bloomberg. He's still a dreary

public speaker and his campaign team are desperately training him to be more exciting on the debate stage. But his unusual strategy of not entering the race until Super Tuesday — March 3, when 14 states vote — is starting to look like a clever waiting game. Thanks to his endless advertising, he has surged into third place in the national polls. Centrist Democrats still worry that the various moderates will cannibalise each other and thus gift the nomination to the insurgent Sanders — just as establishment Republicans did to Trump in 2016. But that fear could help Bloomberg. His campaign can say that Democrats and Independents must get behind Mike in order to save America from either Trumpist nationalism or dangerous radical socialism. The Sanders 2020 campaign is strong, but it lacks the enthusiasm it possessed four years ago: his voter turnout so far has been down. Experts say that, with a booming economy in America, Bernie's anti-capitalist crusade has lost its zing. He could begin to lose momentum as money-bags Bloomberg thunders in.

Bloomberg would be more trusted than Sanders to keep the economic good times going. He will focus on the President's

frivolous character. Democrats like the idea that, because Trump only respects money, Bloomberg is the only candidate rich enough to intimidate him.

Trump has already taken to teasing Bloomberg about his stature. He calls him a 5ft 4in "mass of dead energy". Anti-Trumpists interpret the President's trolling as a sign of fear. But then anti-Trump people love to say he is quaking when he isn't. There was much excitement in liberal circles last week after Bloomberg snapped back at Trump on Twitter: "We know many of the same people... Behind your back they laugh at you and call you a carnival barking clown." The pundits cheered: that's how you stand up to a bully like Trump, they said. On Monday, Bloomberg baited Trump by asking why he "wants to run against Bernie so badly". "Mini Mike," replied Trump, "No, I would rather run against you!" To which Bloomberg retorted: "See you in November."

Fight fight fight! Bloomberg vs Trump promises to be the nastiest election ever: two billionaire titans in a social-media death match. Are we not entertained?

By arrangement with the Spectator

# Supreme Court needs to look at human aspect of Shaheen Bagh



Anand K. Sahay

Far & Near

While providing its good offices to deal with the peaceful Shaheen Bagh protest — which has become politically complex on account of the Union government's obduracy — and naming three well-intentioned interlocutors, the Supreme Court has just been lazily liberal. Its attitude can only bring comfort to the ruling establishment, though this may not be by design.

An ineffective outcome seems to be written into the project because it glosses over the ground realities and betrays short-sightedness and ignorance of the political canvas on which the CAA law — in reaction to which Shaheen Bagh has sprung — has been inscribed.

The initiative of the highest court appears not to be aimed at bringing any comfort to the thousands of poor slum women who have set a record by being on a street protest for nearly 70 days now, right through the coldest winter New Delhi has known in 117 years, offering the world a striking example of a satyagraha of a truly Gandhian dimension in these toxic times characterised by poisonous policies calculated to foster hate.

The Supreme Court took it upon itself to reiterate what every child knows — that the right to protest peacefully without causing inconvenience to others is a given in a democracy. The learned judges pointed out that this right had to be upheld. If this is indeed the pedantic aspect of the judicial pronouncement, the want of sensitivity revealed in the judges' invitation to the protesters to go choose another site — and return the road they are occupying to the normal flow of traffic — is dismaying.

Once the traffic angle — the so-called "Shaheen Bagh effect" on road traffic in one of the more crowded parts of the national capital that connects to Noida in UP — is understood in the light of physical reality and topography, it is easy enough to see that it is sheer establishment propaganda disseminated through newspapers, television channels, the social media, and above all word of mouth, to such a degree that everyone — the Supreme Court not excluded — accepts it as true.

Before the Supreme Court felt compelled to ask the protesters to choose another site if they wished to continue protesting, it could have done itself no disservice if it had called for a report on the

**It is more than evident that the protesting women are at Shaheen Bagh because they live right there. Their protest was not possible anywhere else — even a place right next door.**

geography of Shaheen Bagh and adjoining areas and a before-and-after image of the vehicular flow. If it didn't do so, it could have at least asked the three interlocutors — two of them eminent lawyers and the third a retired civil servant who has also held a constitutional position — to acquaint themselves with the forensics, as it were, before they commenced to hold talks with the protesters.

Anyone who has visited the protest site at Shaheen Bagh can see that it is not the protesters who have blocked traffic, causing snarls all over southeast Delhi which links to UP as well as to Faridabad in Haryana, but the Delhi police, and in imitation of the Delhi police, the UP police. Indeed, the police in Noida (UP Police) were reported in the media as saying that they would lift their road barricade the minute the Delhi police did so on the Shaheen Bagh side.

It is pretty devious of the Union home ministry, which controls the Delhi police, that it kept mum about all this although Union home minister Amit Shah ran the

BJP's campaign in the recent election for New Delhi's Assembly in no small measure on the Shaheen Bagh issue, with his senior colleagues heaping calumny on the protesters. It is also surprising that the Aam Aadmi Party government in Delhi sat quiet about this aspect. None of this, of course, absolves the Supreme Court of its own responsibility to look at the facts with dispassion.

Other than the geography and traffic aspects, the class aspect of Shaheen Bagh also needs to be looked at before making observations of a seemingly liberal kind. The thousands of Muslim women who have sat at their protest site through day and night for over two months are from the poorest strata of society. They are not the kind who can afford bus or metro rail tickets on an everyday basis for weeks on end — and this is what they seem to wish to do — to go to another place to protest, and then return home, day after day. Even if that were somehow imaginable, the determined women would not be able to stay put at night at an alternative site. Toilet breaks are needed, which their homes offer.

Evidently, the learned judges overlooked these human aspects. It is more than evident that the protesting women are at Shaheen Bagh because they live right there. Their protest was not possible anywhere else — even a place right next door.

To ask them to move is to ask them to abandon their protest. In effect, such a stance disregards their right to protest peacefully. A show

of greater sensitivity towards the poorer sections of society, especially on a matter of basic rights, might have been expected from the judges. The interlocutors, who have apparently cast themselves in the part of dogooders, too appear not to have considered the human and class aspects.

In light of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent assertion that he had declined to succumb to pressures to go back on Article 370 (Kashmir's autonomy) and CAA (which brings in the religious dimension to the concept of Indian citizenship, and hence the concept of India), the women of Shaheen Bagh evidently have a long struggle ahead.

The Narendra Modi government is not known for its regard of democratic sensitivities. If it did, a law like CAA would not have been brought. Its clear aim is to discomfit India's Muslim community, make them feel less wanted, and sow communal discord — with a view to sending out the false message that so-called Hindu sentiments are being placed on a higher pedestal.

This is the dog-whistle of setting up a Hindu desh or country to prepare for the higher political goal of a Hindu Rashtra, an ideological category which will need a vastly different Constitution from the one that grew out of the freedom movement.

In this climate, no institution, not least the Supreme Court, should even indirectly curb the right to speak truth to power.

# Huawei's 5G trouble: A bitter pill that the world must swallow

Pradeep S. Mehta and Sidharth Narayan

Huawei, China's biggest tech firm, and one of the world's largest telecom equipment suppliers and phone manufacturers, seems to be breaking free from the shackles foisted on it by the United States. Its recent partial successes in India, the United Kingdom and the European Union are testament to this. However, the company is still not out of troubled waters, as it continues to pay the price for its perceived cosy relationship with the Chinese government and intelligence sharing laws in China. It suffered recent setbacks in Vietnam and Australia.

Huawei has seen many ups and downs in the last two years. From kicking off in 2018 with the FBI warning against buying its products, but becoming the number two phone seller, to ending the year with a feat of shipping over 200 million smartphones, but having its chief financial officer arrested in Canada in 2019 was not smooth for the company. One of its employees got arrested in Poland over allegations of spying, and the company also faced an effective ban on its products in the US, while being threatened of the same fate in countries allied to the United States. While some countries joined the US' chorus, others, compelled by Huawei's superior technology and cheaper prices, opened the doors for Chinese companies.

The year 2020 is not expected to be any different for the telecom goliath. The company welcomed this year with a partial win in India, as the country permitted it to participate in 5G trials. However, two noteworthy battles are yet to be fought by the company in India.

One, it needs to ensure that the country also grants it permission to participate in the final 5G deployment, and not restrict the permission to mere trials. Recent research by Oxford Economics, commissioned by Huawei, suggests that barring Huawei from participating in 5G rollout could result in a \$4.7 billion loss to India's GDP by 2035. A few other countries would also suffer greater losses.

Second, India's standard development body "TSDSI" (Telecommunications Standards Development Society, India) has been pushing for getting its regional 5G standard incorporated in global 5G standards, which may pose interoperability challenges for Huawei, and other global tech firms such as Qualcomm, MediaTek, etc. This battle has been underway on global platforms such as the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and 3rd Generation Partnership Project (3GPP).

More feathers got added in Huawei's cap recently, as the UK and the EU allowed the company to build their non-core 5G networks. However, the company is still barred from supplying its equipment for core parts of the 5G networks. The implementation of such a ban is estimated to cost as much as 200 million euros

and five years of hard work for telecom service providers like Vodafone. They will have to shed Huawei equipment from their core networks spanning across Europe and the UK.

Banking on the inroads made in the UK and the EU, Huawei must have been optimistic of tasting some success in Australia as well. However, the country refused to revisit the ban implemented on it and other Chinese vendors from supplying 5G equipment. Risks of transmission of sensitive information being carried through Chinese companies' telecom networks, to the Chinese government, was reiterated to Huawei. Such concerns of China's ability of carrying out surveillance, thereby exposing digital networks to security threats, does not seem to stop haunting the company.

Around the same time, Huawei suffered another blow. This one in Vietnam, where the local telecom service provider, Viettel (owned by Vietnam's defence ministry) has managed to develop its own 5G technology, allowing it to avoid Huawei equipment in its 5G network. Notably, the profitability of Viettel's 5G equipment business remains questionable. However, the efforts over being non-reliant on Chinese technology for 5G were motivated by Vietnam's territorial dispute with China, and not by economics. The silver lining for Huawei in Vietnam could be the royalties it will earn from Viettel, for using its patents.

Needless to say, Huawei's China tag has made governments of many countries wary of trusting it. However, it is not just governments which are divided over trusting the company, but consumers in UK are also divided over trusting Huawei. Two different surveys conducted in the country in the past few months have presented different results. While the first suggested that consumers trust Huawei more than Facebook on privacy issues, the second claimed that only one in 10 consumers trust Huawei, due to anti-China sentiments.

Huawei has nevertheless emerged as a global leader in the race to 5G technology. Barring it from participating in 5G deployment by countries may lead to higher prices and delays in rollout, which could impede the associated technological innovation.

Therefore, allowing Huawei to supply its equipment is largely becoming a bitter pill which must be swallowed by countries across the globe. With US presidential elections scheduled to take place later this year, and India yet to take a call on allowing Huawei to participate in the final 5G deployment in the country, coupled with the coronavirus mayhem in China, one waits to see just "how difficult 2020 will be for the company".

The writers work for CUTS International, a global public policy research and advocacy group

# Stress-free living with the help of meditation



Sant Rajinder Singh Ji

Our day-to-day existence is filled with problems. Every time we solve one, a new one springs up. The pressures of life are so great that they affect us physically and mentally. It's no wonder we find people undergoing tremendous stresses and strains. Is there any way to attain stress-free living?

We may be struggling financially, trying to make ends meet. A day finally comes when we get a raise, only to find our car has broken down, and the extra money must go for repairs or for new car payments. When we settle that problem, someone in our family

may fall ill. Along with that, we may find that we have a problem in our relationship with one of our co-workers. While that is being straightened out, our roof suddenly begins to leak and we need repairs.

After a while, we begin to wonder if there will be a time in life when we can be free of problems. We may think we alone have been singled out for misfortune. But if we ask those around us, we find that everyone's life is also filled with difficulties. It seems there is no end to problems.

We find that people undergo anxiety, fear, depression and phobias. Offices of psy-

chiatrists, psychologists and therapists are filled with normal, everyday people who cannot cope with life's struggles. They are unable to deal with their problems. They live in fear of economic disaster. They are trying to handle broken marriages and broken homes. Others have anxiety about the loneliness that may come with the loss of a loved one. Some are so disappointed in life they see no hope for the future.

Stresses and tensions do not just affect our mind and emotions. Research has shown a connection between our mind and our body. Our mental state can cause stress-related illnesses. Studies have shown that when we are angry or emotionally upset, hormones are released in our body that prepare it for "fight or flight". Since the norms in our society dictate

that we deal with problems calmly and rationally, we tend not to "fight or take flight", but face the situation, keeping our feelings bottled up inside.

The result is that the hormones act on our physical body, causing stress-related diseases such as high blood pressure, heart disease, breathing problems, digestive disorders, headaches, muscle pain, skin rashes and other related problems. The solution is not necessarily to let out our anger in the form of fighting back or running away, for those reactions can create more problems for us in our relationships. We need to find some acceptable way to prevent the mental, emotional and physical effects of stress that are making us ill.

People are turning to meditation as a solution for the emotional and mental strains of life. Meditation

has numerous benefits for our physical and mental well-being. It is safe, effective, and does not cost anything. Once we learn how to meditate, we carry within us a ready remedy that we can use at any time and in any place.

The meditation process helps us on two levels. First, it helps us by bringing about physical relaxation. Second, it puts us in a state where we are absorbed in an enjoyable, blissful experience, and we become oblivious to the problems of the outer world.

Through meditation, we can learn the art of life which can help us overcome life's stresses and strains. We can discover a way to enjoy relaxation and tranquillity.

**Sant Rajinder Singh Ji, head of Sawan Kirpal Ruhani Mission, works towards promoting inner and outer peace. He can be contacted at [www.sos.org](http://www.sos.org)**



**IN BRIEF**

**Priti Patel in eye of storm**

**London:** The UK's Indian-origin home secretary Priti Patel was engulfed in a bullying row within her ministry after a media report claimed that she demanded the removal of her permanent secretary, prompting the Home Office to issue a categorical denial. Patel, an ally of Prime Minister Boris Johnson who has been in charge of the important ministry since July last year, is allegedly at war with her senior-most civil servant and has reportedly been accused of creating an "atmosphere of fear" within the Home Office. "We have not received any formal complaints and we take the welfare of our staff extremely seriously," said a UK Home Office spokesperson. "Multiple sources inside the department have accused the Home Secretary of bullying, belittling officials in meetings, making unreasonable demands and creating an atmosphere of fear," a newspaper report said.

**Japan firm lands Lanka contract**

**Colombo:** A Japanese firm was chosen by Colombo on Thursday to build a new \$570 million terminal for Sri Lanka's main airport, as Tokyo re-emerges as a key infrastructure backer amid a raft of Chinese projects. The cabinet announced the Taisei Corporation was picked to develop the Japanese-funded project, with the new terminal expected to double capacity at Bandaranaika International airport to around 20 million passengers a year. The decision follows the financing of Colombo's planned \$1.5-billion light rail system last year by Japan's overseas development agency — the biggest single foreign investment in the island nation.

**Bibi announces new settler homes**

**Jerusalem:** Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced plans on Thursday to build thousands of new homes for Jewish settlers in annexed east Jerusalem, a project unveiled less than two weeks before a general election. "I have huge news today — we're adding another 2,200 units to Har Homa," Netanyahu said in a video message posted by his office. The contentious Har Homa community was first built in 1997, during a previous Netanyahu government. The prime minister said he had approved that initial construction "despite objections from the entire world" and estimated that Har Homa's population would grow from 40,000 to 50,000 when the new units were completed. Netanyahu also announced approval to build a new settlement with several thousands homes in Givat Hamatos, next to the mainly Palestinian east Jerusalem neighbourhood of Beit Safafa.

**SOUTH SUDAN RIVALS AGREE TO FORM GOVT**

**Juba (South Sudan):** South Sudan's rival leaders on Thursday announced they have agreed to form a coalition government just two days before the latest deadline, a major step in the emergence from a five-year civil war that killed nearly 400,000 people and shattered life in the world's youngest nation. The rival leaders had twice missed deadlines in the past year to form the transitional government that is expected to lead to elections in three years' time, much to the impatience of the United States and others. Without that new government, many feared, South Sudan might slide into fighting again. Opposition leader Riek Machar told reporters in the capital Juba that he and President Salva Kiir agreed that after the government's formation they will resolve any outstanding issues laid out in a September 2018 peace deal. Machar said he is confident they will address them all. Kiir said the new government will be formed on Saturday and he will appoint Machar as his first vice-president, or top deputy, on Friday. That arrangement has twice led to conflict — once when the civil war erupted in late 2013 and again in mid-2016.

**Democrats bare fangs at Bloomberg**

**In fiery Nevada debate, former mayor tears into Trump, takes a shot at Bernie Sanders' electability**

**Las Vegas, Feb. 20:** From the opening bell, Democrats unleashed an aggressive verbal assault on New York billionaire Mike Bloomberg and raised new questions about Bernie Sanders' take-no-prisoners politics in a contentious debate on Wednesday night that threatened to scramble even further the party's urgent quest to defeat President Donald Trump.

The former New York City mayor was forced to defend his divisive record on race, gender and Wall Street in his debate-stage debut, while Sanders, appearing in his ninth of the 2020 primary season, tried to beat back pointed questions about his health and his embrace of democratic socialism.

Fierce exchanges throughout the two-hour affair marked the most aggressive sustained period of infighting in the Democrats' year-long search for a presidential nominee, reflecting rising urgency in a 2020 primary season that is already deep into its voting phase.

Nevada votes on Saturday. South Carolina the week after. And more than a dozen states host a series of Super Tuesday contests in less than two weeks. In a fight for her political life, Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren was a leading aggressor against Bloomberg. She was on the attack throughout the night following a sharp slide in the polls, calling Bloomberg "a billionaire who calls people fat broads

**I'M A New Yorker. I know how to take on an arrogant con man like Donald Trump, that comes from New York. I'm a mayor or was a mayor. I know how to run a complicated city, the biggest, most diverse city in this country.**

**MIKE BLOOMBERG, Ex-NYC mayor**

and horse-faced lesbians". She wasn't alone. Sanders lashed out at Bloomberg's policing policies as New York City mayor that he said targeted "African-American and Latinos in an outrageous way". And former vice president Joe Biden charged that Bloomberg's "stop-and-frisk" policy ended up "throwing 5 million black men up against the wall".

Bloomberg defended himself on all counts and took a shot at Sanders' electability: "I don't think there's any chance of the senator beating Donald Trump." He later seized on Sanders' rising wealth: "The best known Socialist in the country happens to be a millionaire with three houses!" Sanders defended owning multiple houses, noting he has one in Washington, where he works, and two in Vermont.

The debate also marked a major test for Sanders. — AP



Democratic presidential candidates Mike Bloomberg (from left), Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders participate in a Democratic presidential primary debate in Las Vegas on Wednesday. — AP

**Lawyer: Assange was offered pardon**

**London, Feb. 20:** WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange plans to claim during an extradition hearing that the Trump administration offered him a pardon if he agreed to say Russia was not involved in leaking Democratic National Committee emails during the 2016 US election campaign, a lawyer for Assange has said. Assange is being held at a British prison while fighting extradition to the United States on spying charges. His full court hearing is due to begin next week. At a preliminary hearing held on Wednesday in London, lawyer Edward Fitzgerald said that former Republican Congressman Dana Rohrabacher visited Assange at the Ecuadorian Embassy in London in August 2017. Responding to the lawyer's claims, White House press secretary Stephanie Grisham said, "This is absolutely and completely false." President Donald Trump "barely knows Dana Rohrabacher other than he's an ex-congressman. He's never spoken to him on this subject." — AP

**Latest purge: President ousts top official**

**Washington, Feb. 20:** President Donald Trump has ousted the Pentagon's top policy official who had certified last year that Ukraine had made enough anti-corruption progress to justify the Trump administration's release of congressionally authorised aid to Kiev in its conflict against Russian-backed separatists. The action in federal court comes amid Trump's unrelenting defense of his longtime confidante that has led to a mini revolt inside the Justice Department and allegations the president has interfered in the case. Trump took to Twitter to denounce as a "miscarriage of justice" the initial recommendation by Justice Department prosecutors that Stone receive at least seven years in prison. Attorney General William Barr then backed off that recommendation.

Senate vote, the White House reassigned an Army officer, Lt. Col. Alex Vindman, a key witness in the impeachment inquiry, from the National Security Council, and pushed his twin brother, an NSC lawyer, out with him. Gordon Sondland, Trump's ambassador to the European Union who also was a key witness before House investigators, was recalled. Trump tweeted that he wanted to "thank John Rood for his service to our Country, and wish him well in his future endeavors!" — AP



Police stand guard near the scene of a shooting in central Hanau, Germany, on Thursday. — AP

**Far-right gunman kills 10**

**Hanau (Germany), Feb. 20:** Chancellor Angela Merkel on Thursday condemned the "poison" of racism after a shooter with suspected far-right beliefs killed nine people at a shisha bar and a cafe in the German city of Hanau.

The suspect, identified as 43-year-old German Tobias R., was found dead at his home following an hours-long manhunt. The body of his 72-year-old mother was also found at the flat in what appeared to be a murder-suicide. Federal counter-terror prosecutors investigating

the case said they saw "a xenophobic motive" behind the shootings, the latest deadly attack blamed on the far right in Germany. "Racism is a poison, hatred is a poison and this poison exists in our society and it is already to blame for far too many crimes," Merkel said in Berlin. The suspect left behind online a "manifesto" and video material that suggested a terror attack motivated by "a hostile attitude to foreigners", said Peter Beuth, the interior minister of the state

of Hesse. Among the dead were "several victims of Kurdish origin", the KonMed association of Kurds in Germany said in a statement, adding that it was "furious" that authorities weren't doing more to combat rising extremism. The rampage started around 10:00 pm (9:00 pm GMT) on Wednesday at a shisha bar in the Heumarkt area of central Hanau, a city some 20 km (12 miles) east of Frankfurt. The gunman reportedly rang the doorbell and shot at people in the smoking section, mass-market daily *Bild*

said. He then fled the scene by car before opening fire at the Arena Bar & Cafe, with witnesses reporting hearing a dozen shots. Nine people were killed, police said. Several others were injured, including one who is in a serious condition. The bloodshed plunged Germany into mourning, and rallies are scheduled in Berlin, Hanau and other cities to honour the victims. Relatives and friends of the victims gathered at the Arena bar around midday, embracing one another in tears. — AFP

**US sanctions Iranians for barring poll candidates**

**Washington, Feb. 20:** The United States on Thursday slapped sanctions on five Iranian officials in charge of vetting candidates for Friday's parliamentary elections, in which thousands have been barred from running. The targeted officials include Ahmad Jannati, a powerful cleric accused of overseeing the disqualification of candidates as part of the Guardian Council. The ultra-conservative also plays a key role in a body that selects the

regime's supreme leader. "The Trump administration will not tolerate the manipulation of elections to favour the regime's malign agenda, and this action exposes those senior regime officials responsible for preventing the Iranian people from freely choosing their leaders," treasury secretary Steven Mnuchin said in a statement. Iranian voters will pick 290 parliamentarians in the country's first poll since the US pulled out of a landmark nuclear deal.

But critics complain that Iranian authorities have already orchestrated a conservative takeover of parliament by barring moderate candidates. Loss of reformists in the Iranian parliament will be a big setback not just to President Hassan Rouhani and Iran, but the global order as well. The killing of Gen. Qasem Soleimani has only complicated things further. It has strengthened the conservatives, and marginalised the reformists. — Agencies

**Committed to peace: Taliban**

**Kabul, Feb. 20:** The deputy leader of the Taliban and one of the world's most wanted militants has written an opinion piece for the *New York Times* in which he says the Afghan insurgents are "fully committed" to a deal with Washington. The article, headlined *What the Taliban Want*, represents the highest-level statement from the group on months of negotiations with the United States, and comes as they are believed to be days away from signing an agreement that would see America begin to withdraw troops from its longest war. It is also believed to be the first time that Sirajuddin Haqqani — who doubles as head of the Haqqani network, a US-designated terror

group that is one of the most dangerous factions fighting Afghan and US-led NATO forces in Afghanistan — has given such a lengthy statement in English. Previously he has communicated mainly through rare audio messages, usually in Pashto. In the article, Haqqani repeats many Taliban talking points from the negotiations, including how women would have rights "granted by Islam" — the problem being, as many observers have pointed out, the group's repressive interpretation of the faith. The leader of a group known for masterminding some of the most deadly attacks during the war and the frequent use of suicide bombers also says he is "convinced the killing and the maiming must stop". — AFP

**FOCUS ON IRAN, POMPEO MEETS SAUDI KING**

**Riyadh, Feb. 20:** US secretary of state Mike Pompeo met with Saudi Arabia's King Salman on Thursday in a visit focused primarily on discussing shared security concerns about regional rival Iran. Following his meeting at the royal palace with the king, Pompeo headed to a Saudi air base where some 2,500 US troops are stationed in response to threats from Iran. American troops were sent to Saudi Arabia last summer to beef up US presence in the Middle East in response to escalating tensions between Washington and Tehran. Pompeo said he'd also raise with the Saudis concerns about human rights, and the cases of dual Saudi-American citizens. — AP

**ROYAL | EXIT Couple set to break free of Royal family, will no longer have office at Buckingham Palace**

**Harry, Meghan to step down on March 31**

**London, Feb. 20:** Prince Harry and Meghan Markle have announced that they will formally exit as Britain's frontline royals on March 31 following discussions with Buckingham Palace on formalising their new financially independent roles. Harry and Meghan, the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, will no longer have an office at Buckingham Palace in London as they stop carry-

ing out formal royal duties for Queen Elizabeth II from April 1, with the formal arrangements of the split to be assessed after 12 months. "The Duke and Duchess of Sussex will formally step down as senior royals from March 31," a spokesperson for the couple said on Wednesday. Harry, 35, will retain his military ranks of Major, Lieutenant Commander and Squadron Leader and will not use his honorary

military positions or perform any official duties associated with these roles. The couple will retain their His and Her Royal Highness (HRH) titles but would not be permitted to use them. "The use of the word 'Royal' as part of their Sussex Royal brand is reportedly still under discussion with palace officials. The spokesperson for the couple, who are expected to settle down in Canada and spend some

time in the UK "regularly", said that they will unveil further details of their non-profit charitable foundation later in the year. Meanwhile, the duo will be back in the UK in the next few weeks to complete around six formal engagements, including Harry's attendance at an Invictus Games event with singer Jon Bon Jovi. Markle, 38, is set to attend an International Women's Day event in

early March, with the couple joining other senior royals for a Commonwealth Day Service at Westminster Abbey on March 9. Last month, in a royal family first, the couple had signed up to a formal exit deal, which saw them give up their UK taxpayer funding. The deal, which now comes into effect from April 1, means the couple will no longer be representing the Queen in an official capacity. — PTI



File photo of Prince Harry with Meghan Markle — PTI

IN BRIEF

Scores saved from Myanmar blaze

Yangon, Feb. 20: Scores of people were rescued from a blazing building in Myanmar's commercial hub Yangon early Thursday, many brought to safety with a cherry-picker crane from the highest floors. Around 60 fire trucks raced to the 12-storey apartment block as smoke and flames spread through the building. No deaths had been reported by mid-morning and the cause of the blaze had not been established. Nyl Nyl, 34, told AFP he ran out of his home to warn his elderly neighbours but was forced to retreat after nearly passing out. "I couldn't see anything as it was too dark with smoke," he said, adding firefighters arrived just in time. The fire service rescued people with a cherry-picker as smoke billowed out across the street, causing traffic to snarl up.

Videos may help birds' food picks

London: Some birds may have the natural ability to learn to avoid foods that taste disgusting and are potentially toxic by watching videos of each other eating, according to a new study. Seeing the 'disgust response' in others helped the blue tits and great tits, native to the European continent, recognise distasteful prey by their peculiar markings without having to taste them, the study, published in the Journal of Animal Ecology, noted. The researchers, including those from the University of Cambridge in the UK, said this trait can potentially increase both the birds' and their prey's survival rate. According to the study, blue tits (Cyanistes caeruleus) learned best by watching their own species, whereas great tits (Parus major) learned just as well from great tits and blue tits.

9 lakh pangolins pirated in SE Asia

Kuala Lumpur: Nearly 900,000 pangolins are believed to have been trafficked across Southeast Asia in the past two decades, a wildlife watchdog said Thursday, highlighting the challenge in tackling the illicit trade. As the world's most heavily trafficked mammal, the creatures are targeted for their body parts which are highly valued in traditional medicine in countries including China and Vietnam, and their meat is seen as a delicacy. Also known as the scaly anteater, the shy, primarily nocturnal animals have been heavily poached for years in biodiverse Southeast Asia and are being increasingly targeted in Africa. In a new report, watchdog TRAFFIC estimated about 895,000 pangolins had been smuggled between 2000 and 2019 in Southeast Asia.

Father sets family on fire, stabs self

Brisbane: Prime Minister Scott Morrison said Thursday that Australians across the country were "shocked, saddened and devastated" by the deaths of five people, including three children, after a car fire in an apparent domestic violence incident. Hannah Baxter, 31, and her children Aaliyah, 6, Lainah, 4, and Trey, 3, died after their car was set alight on a street in suburban Brisbane on Wednesday morning. Baxter's estranged husband and the children's father, Rowan Baxter, allegedly doused his family with gas before setting the car alight. The 42-year-old, a former player with the New Zealand Warriors in Australia's National Rugby League football competition, was found dead near the scene, reportedly after stabbing himself.

1st death in S Korea, 2.5m to stay home

Ninth fatality outside mainland China; total Korean tally at 104 with 22 additional cases reported

Seoul, Feb. 20: South Korea reported its first death from a new virus on Thursday while the mayor of a southeastern city urged his 2.5 million people to refrain from going outside as viral infections, linked to a church congregation, spiked. The death of a previously confirmed patient in South Korea marked the world's ninth virus fatality outside mainland China. Other deaths have occurred in Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan, the Philippines and France.

The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said the South Korean man, believed to be around 63 years old, died at a hospital on Wednesday and posthumously tested positive for the virus. It said authorities were investigating the exact cause of his death. The center confirmed 22 additional cases of the virus, raising the total in South Korea to 104. Earlier Thursday, the mayor of Daegu urged its 2.5 million people to stay home and wear masks even indoors if possible, after the southeastern city and its nearby towns reported 35 additional cases of infection with the new coronavirus. The 35

cases didn't include the additional 22 that were reported later Thursday. In a nationally televised news conference, Mayor Kwon Young-jin also expressed fears that the rising infections in the region will soon overwhelm the city's health infrastructure and called for urgent help from the central government in Seoul. National quarantine efforts that are currently focused on blocking the inflow of the virus (from China) and stemming its spread are inadequate for preventing the illness from circulating in local communities, Kwon said.

The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said 28 of those 35 new patients went to church services attended by a previously confirmed virus patient or contacted her at other places inside a Daegu church. That patient is a South Korean woman in her early 60s who has no recent record of overseas travel, according to center officials. She tested positive for the virus on Tuesday, becoming the 31st case in South Korea. On Wednesday morning, Daegu confirmed 13 cases

and 11 of them either went to the same church with the woman patient or contacted her at a hospital, according to the disease control center. The Shincheonji Church of Jesus, which claims it has about 200,000 followers in the country, said it has closed all of its 74 churches around the nation and told followers to instead watch its online worship services on YouTube. It said in a statement that health officials were disinfecting its church in Daegu, which the woman patient went to, while tracing her contacts. —AP

Toll at 2,118 as cases decline

Beijing, Feb. 20: The death toll from the coronavirus epidemic in China has climbed to 2,118 with the death of 114 more people, while the overall confirmed cases increased to 74,576, Chinese officials said on Thursday. China's National Health Commission (NHC) said the new confirmed cases declined to 394, registering the biggest drop since December when the first case was reported in Wuhan city in the central Hubei Province.

TWO JAPAN CRUISE SHIP PASSENGERS DIE

Tokyo, Feb. 20: Two former passengers of the coronavirus-wracked Diamond Princess have died, local media reported Thursday, as fears mount about those who have left the ship after testing negative for the virus. A man and a woman in their 80s who had been infected have died, public broadcaster NHK and others reported, which would be the first fatal cases among the more than 600 on board the cruise ship. —AFP

AFTER 2 DEATHS, IRAN DECLARES 3 FRESH CASES

Tehran, Feb. 20: Iran said on Thursday that three more people have been infected with the new coronavirus that originated in central China, following an announcement the day before that two people had died of the illness caused by the virus in the Iranian city of Qom. All schools and universities, including religious Shiite seminaries, were shut down in the holy city of Qom, according to the official IRNA news agency. —AP



South Korean health officials spray disinfectant in front of the Daegu branch of the Shincheonji Church of Jesus in the southeastern city of Daegu on Thursday as about 40 new cases of coronavirus were confirmed after they attended same church services. — AFP

Outbreak slashes China's carbon emissions

Beijing, Feb. 20: The coronavirus epidemic that has paralysed the Chinese economy may have a silver lining for the environment. China's carbon emissions have dropped by least 100 million metric tonnes over the past two weeks, according to a study published on Wednesday by the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) in Finland. That is nearly six percent of global emissions during the same period last year. The rapid spread of the novel coronavirus —

which has killed over 2,000 and infected more than 74,000 people across China — has led to a drop in demand for coal and oil, resulting in the emissions slump, the study published on the British-based Carbon Brief website said. Over the past two weeks, daily power generation at coal power plants was at a four-year low compared with the same period last year, while steel production has sunk to a five-year low, researchers found. China is the world's biggest importer and consu-

mer of oil, but production at refineries in Shandong province — the country's petroleum hub — fell to the lowest level since autumn 2015, the report said. Economic activity in China usually picks up after the Lunar New Year holiday, which began on January 25. But authorities extended the holidays this year — by a week in many parts of the country, including Shanghai — in an effort to contain the epidemic by keeping people at home. "Measures to contain coronavirus have resulted in reductions of 15 percent to 40 percent in output across key industrial sectors," the report said.

"This is likely to have wiped out a quarter or more of the country's carbon dioxide emissions over the past two weeks, the period when activity would normally have resumed after the Chinese New Year holiday." But environmentalists have warned that the reduction is temporary, and that a government stimulus — if directed at ramping up production among heavy polluters — could reverse the environmental gains. —AFP

VIRUS CONTROL EFFORTS 'ARE WORKING', SAYS CHINESE FM

Vientiane, Feb. 20: China's efforts to control the deadly outbreak of a new coronavirus "are working", Beijing's top diplomat said Thursday, attributing an easing in new cases to his country's "forceful action" against the illness. Speaking in Laos after talks with peers from

the 10 Southeast Asian (ASEAN) countries, Wang Yi said the outbreak was "controllable and curable" despite the global panic it has seeded. "China is not only protecting its own people but also the rest of the world," he told the summit in Vientiane. —AFP

70 hurt in snowy Montreal pile-up

Montreal, Feb. 20: Nearly 70 people have been injured in a pile-up involving about 200 vehicles on a busy highway in a suburb of Montreal. Two people were still trapped in their cars hours after the crash, which happened at 12.30 pm on Wednesday in La Prairie, Quebec, said Sgt Marie-Michelle Moore with the Surete du Quebec, the province's police force and highway patrol authority. Footage of the crash showed that vehicles involved in the crash included a school minibus, a tanker truck with a flammable materials sign, and others. No students were involved in the accident, officials said. "Pretty much everything with four wheels was

involved," said Moore. Luckily, there were no fires. Some of the vehicles were piled on top of each other, and others had been smashed beyond recognition. About 75 were in the process of being towed away, said Moore. Another 50, probably undamaged or lightly damaged, left on their accord, she said. Quebec's transport minister, Francois Bonnardel, said at a news conference that the chain reaction crash was probably caused by whiteout conditions on Highway 15, which had twice been snow-ploughed in the hour before the accident. "People were driving, there were strong winds ... and, suddenly, you couldn't see anything," Bonnardel said. —AP



Emergency personnel gather at the scene of a multi-vehicle crash on the south shore of Montreal. — AP

OZ PM LAUNCHES NATIONAL PROBE INTO BUSHFIRES

Sydney, Feb. 20: Australia set up a national inquiry Thursday into its month-long bushfire crisis that affected three in four Australians and prompted widespread criticism of the government for its sluggish response to the blazes. Prime Minister Scott Morrison said the vast scale of the fires — which killed more than 30 people and destroyed thousands of homes — required a new response from the bushfire-prone nation. The Royal Commission inquiry will be tasked with finding ways to improve Australia's preparedness, resilience and response to natural disasters, but has been criticised as an effort to put off tackling the problem. The opposition Labor party accused Morrison of trying to "shift attention to the things that he thinks are politically convenient to talk about" rather than "actually fixing climate change and getting emissions under control." Morrison said panel would be asked to consider establishing new powers for the federal government to declare a national state of emergency, which would allow a faster response to fires. The conservative leader has defended his actions by pointing to regulations requiring states to formally request federal assistance. —AFP

MONEY | MATTERS

Thunberg's organisation promotes ecological and social sustainability as well as mental health

Greta creates foundation with award money

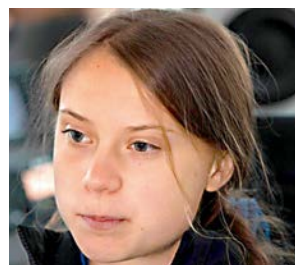
Copenhagen, Feb. 20: A Swedish organization that gave Greta Thunberg an award that is often described as an alternative Nobel Prize says the teenage climate activist is using her prize money to establish an eponymous foundation. The purpose of the nonprofit Greta Thunberg Foundation "is to promote ecological and social sustainability,

● THUNBERG WAS one of four recipients of the 2019 Right Livelihood Award, which was founded in 1980 to "honour and support courageous people solving global problems" as well as mental health," according to the Right Livelihood Foundation.

Thunberg, 17, was one of four recipients of the 2019 Right Livelihood Award, which was founded in 1980 to "honour and support courageous people solving global problems". The 1 million kronor (\$102,500) that came with the award was transferred to create Thunberg's foundation, the Right Livelihood organisation said. Capital is

required to set up a foundation in Sweden. Thunberg said in January that she had established a foundation to transparently handle the money she gets from such things as book royalties, donations and prizes. She first drew attention two years ago when she skipped school once a week to protest inaction to curb climate change by her country's lawmakers. Her activism inspired other students in Europe and grew into an international movement called Fridays for Future. Thunberg's parents have said she experienced severe depression as a pre-teen and that activism has been good for their daughter's mental health. She also has discussed being diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome.

Earlier this year, two Swedish lawmakers nominated Thunberg for the 2020 Nobel Peace Prize. She is among a growing list of people to dedicate funds to battling the impact of climate change. Amazon's Jeff Bezos this week pledged \$10 billion to fund scientists, activists, non-profits and other groups fighting to protect the environment. —Agencies



Greta Thunberg

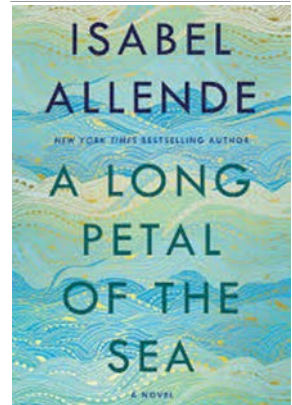


**INDIAN TOP 10 BESTSELLERS**

- NON-FICTION**
- 1 V.P. MENON - THE UNSUNG ARCHITECT OF MODERN INDIA**  
Narayani Basu, Simon & Schuster, ₹799
  - 2 INDIA'S FOUNDING MOMENT**  
Madhav Khosla, Harvard, ₹599
  - 3 THE ANARCHY**  
William Dalrymple, Bloomsbury, ₹699
  - 4 THE EMPEROR WHO NEVER WAS - DARA SHUKOH IN MUGHAL INDIA**  
Supriya Gandhi, Bellknap Harvard, ₹699
  - 5 2019 HOW MODI WON INDIA**  
Rajdeep Sardesai, Harper Collins, ₹699
  - 6 GANDHI'S HINDUISM: THE STRUGGLE AGAINST JINNAH'S ISLAM**  
M.J. Akbar, Bloomsbury, ₹699
  - 7 REMNANTS OF A SEPARATION**  
Aanchal Malhotra, HarperCollins, ₹599
  - 8 A CHEQUERED BRILLIANCE**  
Jairam Ramesh, Penguin Viking, ₹999
  - 9 THE NEW WORLD DISORDER AND THE INDIAN IMPERATIVE**  
Shashi Tharoor & Samir Saran, Aleph, ₹799
  - 10 SIXTEEN STORMY DAYS**  
Tripurdaman Singh, Penguin Vintage, ₹599

**FICTION**

- 1 A LONG PETAL OF THE SEA**  
Isabel Allende, Bloomsbury, ₹550
- 2 JAIPUR JOURNALS**  
Namita Gokhale, Penguin Viking, ₹499
- 3 THE TESTAMENTS (BOOKER PRIZE 2019 WINNER)**  
Margaret Atwood, Chatto & Windus, ₹799
- 4 THE FAR FIELD**  
Madhuri Vijay, 4th Estate, ₹599
- 5 GIRL, WOMAN, OTHER (BOOKER PRIZE 2019 WINNER)**  
Bernardine Evaristo, Hamish Hamilton, ₹799
- 6 AMERICAN DIRT**  
Jeanine Cummins, Tinder Press, ₹699
- 7 THE VAULT OF VISHNU**  
Ashwin Sanghi, Westland, ₹399
- 8 DJINN PATROL ON THE PURPLE LINE**  
Deepa Anappara, Penguin Hamish Hamilton, ₹499
- 9 HASSAN'S STATE OF AFFAIRS**  
Mirza Athar Baig, Translated by Haider Shahbaz, Harper Perennial, ₹699
- 10 RAAVANPUTR MEGHNAD - PRINCE OF LANKA**  
Kevin Missal, Simon & Schuster, ₹250



Bahrisons, New Delhi

# 'Your ikigai will change, but it is important to have one'



Neha Bhatt  
Q&A



Francesc Miralles  
views, we wrote *Ikigai*.

**S**elf-improvement books on Japanese concepts are having a bit of a moment and chief among them is the best-seller *Ikigai: The Japanese Secret to a Long and Happy Life*. Centering the book in Okinawa, Japan, authors Héctor García and Francesc Miralles focus on the ways of the residents of this island known for longevity, with more centenarians than anywhere in the world.

How do they live this long? The authors, who spent a few years examining the Okinawan lifestyle — including their diet and level of activity — argue one of the reasons is having a clearly defined ikigai, or “the happiness of always being busy”, of having a passionate life purpose. Originally written in Spanish, the book has been widely translated across the world, including into regional Indian languages. Before taking the stage at the Kerala Literature Festival in Calicut last weekend to discuss the book, FRANCESC MIRALLES sat down with me to talk about the ideas that drove ‘Ikigai’. Edited excerpts:

**What got you and Héctor García interested in writing *Ikigai*?**

I live in Barcelona, and Hector lives in Japan. I was going to Kyoto to find documentation for a novel I wrote. We met in Japan through a common friend and became friends. He is married to a woman from Okinawa, and her father told us that we should, being writers, go to a village in the north of Okinawa that has a Guinness World Record of Longevity and ask the residents why and how they manage to live so many years. So we started investigating the topic, reading medical reports of the residents, their nutrition, the climate, and then got the permission to interview the 100 eldest people in the village. After conducting the inter-

**Were they wary of being written about?**

They are very simple people. There are only 2,800 people in the village. They work in agriculture. They thought maybe we were going to write an article and didn't expect it would be a book and such a success. The secret of this book is that it gives a positive vision of being old, if you live with your purpose.

**You emphasise that one of the main reasons Okinawans live happy and long is their strong sense of community. How is their understanding of community different from other places in the world?**

What the people in Okinawa have is very different from even mainland Japan. They have very strong unions. Everybody knows what is going on with everyone else including problems. They are very open, social, joke a lot and have fre-

quent social gatherings and celebrations. They have a common moneybox to which they all contribute, for anyone who may need financial help for medical or any other reasons. A report in Spain says what makes old people grow older is being alone — it is as harmful as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. Being in a community can save your life because you feel connected to one another.

**Is the concept of *Ikigai* as simple as it sounds or is there more to it?**

It is both simple and complex. It can be defined in a simple way: Ikigai is having a purpose in life and making that purpose the centre of your existence. If we explore this topic further, we go to Viktor Frankl, an Austrian doctor who developed Logotherapy (a psychotherapeutic approach to the search for meaning). After the Second World War, he found that what the people who came to him for consultation were going

through was so traumatic, having lost loved ones, that psychoanalysis was not working anymore. What they needed was not an analysis of life, he found, but hope for tomorrow, so that when a person wakes up in the morning, he has at least one thing to do that is meaningful. It is a therapy based on purpose, which may be more effective to understand who we are. If we have a reason to live, you can resist any bad situation.

**Does one's ikigai change over time?**

Yes, your ikigai will change if you live many years. When I was 25, my ikigai was travelling. When I was 40, it was being a publisher. Now my ikigai is helping people discover their purpose in life. If you live a hundred years, you would have 4-5 passions. You may feel you have given everything to one passion and then something new opens up in your life. Look at the case of Leonard Cohen, the Canadian singer, who was working as a cook for 10 years in a monastery because he felt he had to live that life. Our lives are dynamic, we are not bound to always do the same thing.

**There seems to be growing interest in Japanese concepts of self-improvement. Why do you think it has become such a trend? Who is the target audience?**

There are different fashions. The western fascination for eastern philosophy started in the 60s in California, with the hippie movement. But nowadays, the fascination is not focused on a religious experience, but more on bringing it to common, everyday life. Books like *Ikigai* and other recent ones on emotional intelligence promote the idea that we don't need to be monks to live in a harmonious life. Women are the main consumers of these kind of books on self love because they are more interested in understanding and improving themselves and working with emotions. While there are men reading these books too, women have a deeper view of reality and relationships.

*Neha Bhatt is an independent journalist and book critic based in Delhi. She tweets @nehabhatt70 and @bookish-*

# It's easy to forget how many clever people embraced eugenics



Alan Judd  
review

**B**etween 1923 and 1931 the publisher Routledge produced “Today and Tomorrow”, a series of 110 short books by intellectual luminaries of the time who were asked to imagine the future 50 to 100 years hence. The writers included Bertrand Russell, his wife Dora, J.B.S. Haldane, C.E.M. Joad, Sylvia Pankhurst, Robert Graves, Winifred Holtby, Basil Liddell Hart and Vera Brittain. The titles ranged between *Science and the Future*, *Anatomy of Clothes*, *The Conquest of Cancer*, *Women and Knowledge*, *The Future of War*, *The Future of the Jews*, *The Future of Humour*, *The World, the Flesh and the Devil*, *The Problem of Race* and *The Price of Justice*. Those announced but never published included *The Future of Sex* by Rebecca West and *The Future of Traffic in Women* by H. Wilson Harris. Surprisingly, the series was reissued by Routledge in 2008, to little notice. Max Saunders's erudite and comprehensive account is the first serious study of the series as a whole, setting it in the intellectual context of its time and showing how futurology — regardless of the accuracy of

There is no single unifying theme, but there are trends and tendencies. Eugenics, for instance — essentially, the notion that by applying genetic knowledge to social engineering we take control of the natural selection process to produce more desirable, or fewer undesirable, humans — was much in vogue at the time and also much debated. Because of its later association with Nazi ideology it is easy for us to forget that many respectable and well-meaning people thought it a good way to improve the human lot.

These volumes reflect varying views of it, although tending towards the sceptical or critical; but the terms in which it is discussed — especially the more utopian — have particular relevance for us, now that modern genetics give us the potential to do precisely what our forefathers could only speculate about. We should attend to their arguments, Saunders argues, “rather than patronise them where their science is unscientific or their predictions wrong. It is exactly by studying where they go awry that we can learn most from them”.

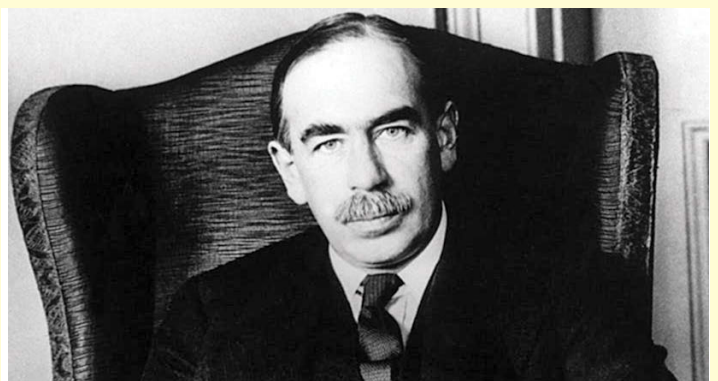
Harder to appreciate now is the enthusiasm for psychic research, also in vogue at the time. Several contributors envisage advances in the field, though one dismisses it as symptomatic of “a degeneration of old intellectual faculties in those who claim it”. Similarly, Bertrand Russell in the second of his two contributions, *What I Believe*, argues with customary clarity that all religious beliefs are unnecessary hypotheses. He has equally little time for “naïve humanism”, the assumption that human life has any cosmic significance: “All such philosophies spring from self-importance and are best corrected by a little astronomy.” His generally dystopian view of scientific progress, however, is aptly counterpointed by Haldane's scientific utopianism. Almost 100 years on we can reasonably say they were both half right and half wrong.



**IMAGINED FUTURES: WRITING, SCIENCE AND MODERNITY IN THE TODAY AND TOMORROW BOOK SERIES, 1923-31**  
By MAX SAUNDERS  
OUP  
pp.448; £60

the series but a commentary on it, and not one for the intellectually half-hearted. Saunders is an authority on the literary and cultural currents of the early 20th century, particularly modernism, and takes pains to show how this extraordinary sustained exercise in futurology emerges from that world and merges into our own. That is why this is an important book. OUP have done author and subject proud by producing a handsome volume — but in pricing it at £60 they have probably ensured, once again, that the general reader is not seen as part of the future.

*By arrangement with the Spectator*



The distinguished economist John Maynard Keynes was an ardent proponent of eugenics

# The printer and his devils



Sridhar Balan  
meanwhile

**T**he recent visit of family members and their friends to the erstwhile Danish colony of Tranquebar now known as Tharangambadi in Nagapattinam district of Tamilnadu has prompted me to speculate on the history of printing in India. The Danish colony in Tranquebar was the result of an initial expedition to Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) in 1618. In 1620, the Danes moved to Tranquebar where they managed to secure land from the king of Tanjore through a treaty. Though initially, the treaty limited the extent of land, the Danish community expanded and established a fort, which still stands, to secure their presence. Though the Danes held on to their colony in Tranquebar for over 200 years, their presence in India did not have any great political or military impact. The Danes ceded control of Tranquebar to the British in 1845.

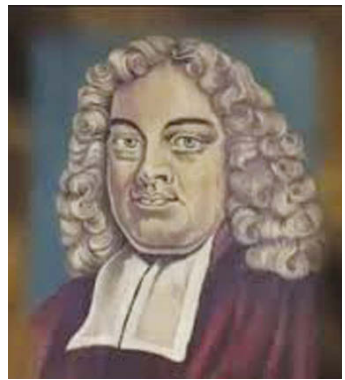
Today, Tranquebar, from which a publishing house has taken the name for one of its imprints, is known for the seminal contribution it made to printing. But it was not a Danish worthy who was responsible for this but a German Lutheran Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg (1682-1719). Ziegenbalg was born in Saxony in Germany in 1682 and had his education at the university of Halle where he showed an early aptitude for both music and divinity studies. His diligence and scholastic ability soon attracted the attention of his professor A.H. Francke. At the time, King Frederick of Denmark and Norway was keen to set up a Lutheran mission in Tranquebar and was looking for Protestant missionaries. Encouraged by Francke, Ziegenbalg though a German, responded to the king's call and in 1706, he and his colleague Heinrich Plutschau, set out for Tranquebar. The initial posting was to be for a period

between three and five years. In fact, Plutschau did go back after five years, though Ziegenbalg stayed on except for a brief period of furlough.

Ziegenbalg and Plutschau established what came to be known in history as the Danish-Halle Mission to spread the gospel among the natives and convert them to Protestantism. Proficiency in language was important and initially, Plutschau was to concentrate on Tamil and Ziegenbalg on Portuguese. But somehow, these roles got reversed. Ziegenbalg perhaps showed a greater aptitude for Tamil.

Whatever the reason, it was fortuitous, for it led to one of the greatest contributions to the Tamil language. It also led to the establishment of one of the earliest printing presses in India and in fact, the volume of work that emanated from the missionary printing press at Tranquebar led to the establishment of other printing presses in India, the most famous of which was the Baptist Mission Press, in Serampore by Carey.

But the Tranquebar press was not the first printing press in India. As Priya Joshi has noted in her book *In Another Country*, printing and India perhaps found each other serendipitously. In 1556, a Portuguese ship arrived in Goa, with a printing press and 14 Jesuit priests. The ship had stopped for provisions and the press was intended for the ruler of Abyssinia. It was later claimed that the ruler had cancelled the order for the press on account of the ship taking so long in its voyage, though what means of communication was used is not clear. What is clear is that there was close interaction between the Portuguese Jesuits on the ship and the local Jesuits on the shore in Goa. Among the former was Joao de Bustamante who had



Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg, the first Pietist missionary to India

more than a fair knowledge of printing. The close interaction resulted in the printing press being offloaded in Goa and Bustamante stayed behind to operate the press and set up the seminary of the College of St. Paul in Goa.

As Joshi has recorded, in the next two decades following the arrival of the printing press in Goa, some eight prayer books were printed in Portuguese, Latin, Ethiopian, Tamil and Konkani. We can assume that these were the languages the Jesuits were conversant with and the output was limited due to both the paucity of type and capacity of the machine.

Thus Ziegenbalg found evidence of printed books in Tamil and he read them as. He worked hard on his Tamil and wanted to extend his language expertise to acquire proficiency in writing his own texts.

He would practise Tamil with children in school by writing Tamil letters in the sand. There is now an account of a typical day in his life. From 7 to 8 a.m, he would repeat all the phrases and vocabulary he had learned the previous day. From 8 to 12 noon, he would read all Tamil books he had not read previously. Even during lunch, he would have someone read for him. From 3 to 5 p.m, he would read more books but now in the presence of a writer and a poet who would note down all new words and expressions and explain these to him. Again from 7 to 8 p.m, someone would read for him in order to avoid strain on his eyes. He preferred writers and authors whose

style he could imitate in his own writings.

But Ziegenbalg knew a printing press was critical both for his scholarship and for dissemination of literature among the Hindus. His appeal to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) in London finally bore fruit and in 1712, the printing press finally arrived in Tranquebar with type, paper, ink and a printer. As the veteran chronicler S. Muthiah has noted, ‘apart from the Tamil translations of well-known Christian works, he wrote several books and booklets that could be considered as indological in nature’. Perhaps the most famous of his translations was that of the New and Old Testament and among the more famous of the general works, the press at Tranquebar did was *A Guide to the English Tongue* by Thomas Dyche, the first book in English to be printed in Asia.

In spite of his scholarship, Ziegenbalg had his critics and these included both the Danish forces and the orthodox Hindus who threatened to kill him. He was arrested and imprisoned for four months by the commander of the Danish fort for intervening in a local dispute involving a native and a catholic.

His health continued to dog him throughout his life. A brief moment of happiness in his life was his marriage in 1716 to a German during his furlough in Europe. Of the two children he had, the younger one was fated to die early. He died on 23 February 1719 at Tranquebar at the age of 37. His last 13 years were spent in laying the foundations of German scholarship in Tamil, a legacy for which he has been honoured and remembered. Though constrained by the edicts of the Danish church Ziegenbalg's interest in music saw him compose Tamil lyrics set to Indian tunes but his lasting contribution was to the world of printing, a skill that continues to be taught, and the invention of the Halle typeface which he used in many of the printed works.

*The writer is a senior publishing industry professional who has worked with OUP and is now a senior consultant with Ratna Sagar Books*

# WHAT MAKES DOGS SO SPECIAL? SCIENCE SAYS IT'S JUST LOVE

**Washington:** The idea that animals can experience love was once anathema to the psychologists who studied them, seen as a case of putting sentimentality before scientific rigour.

But a new book argues that, when it comes to dogs, the word is necessary to understanding what has made the relationship between humans and our best friends one of the most significant interspecies partnerships in history. Clive Wynne, founder the Canine Science Collaboratory at Arizona State University, makes the case in *Dog is Love: Why and How Your Dog Loves You*.

The animal psychologist, 59, began studying dogs in the early 2000s, and, like his peers, believed that to ascribe complex emotions to them was to commit the sin of anthropomorphism — until he was swayed by a body of evidence that was growing too big to ignore. “I think there comes a point when it's worth being skeptical of your skepticism,” the Englishman said in an interview with AFP.

Canine science has enjoyed a resurgence in the past two decades, much of it extolling dogs' smarts. Titles like *The Genius of Dogs* by Brian Hare have advanced the idea that dogs have an innate and exceptional intelligence. Wynne, however plays spoilsport, arguing that Fido is just not that brilliant. Pigeons can identify different kinds of objects in 2D images; dolphins have shown they understand grammar; honeybees signal the location of food sources to each other through dance; all feats that no dogs have ever been known to accomplish. Wynne proposes a paradigm shift, synthesizing cross-disciplinary research to posit that it is dogs' “hypersociability” or “extreme gregariousness” that sets them apart.

— AFP

**SHORT TAKES**

**Mayank has clarity of mind: Gambhir**

**New Delhi:** Former India opener Gautam Gambhir has backed Mayank Agarwal to shine in the upcoming two-Test series against New Zealand, starting Friday in Wellington. Gambhir feels that even though the youngster isn't as destructive as a Virender Sehwag or David Warner, Agarwal's clarity of mind is his biggest strength. "I have a lot of faith in Mayank Agarwal. He may not be the most gifted going around but he is certainly the most organised. He will not treat bowlers with disdain like Virender Sehwag or a David Warner did but has the clarity of mind of an opening batsman," Gambhir wrote in his column. Commenting on Agarwal's opening partner for the series, Gambhir said that it will be interesting to see how either Prithvi Shaw or Shubman Gill react to the opportunity of opening the batting for India. — Agencies

**IPL all-star game to be scrapped**

**New Delhi:** The highly awaited All-Star game that was to be played before the start of the 13th edition of the Indian Premier League looks set to be scrapped due to the objections from the franchisees. A brain child of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) President Sourav Ganguly, the game was expected to be played around March 25 with the top stars battling it out in a one-off game. An official of one of the franchisees said that it would eat into the preparation time for the cash-rich league and that isn't something that the franchisees are keen on. "The big names start coming in around a week before the tournament starts. Now, if you have them going to play the All-Star game say on March 25, that means they leave for the venue on March 23 night or March 24 morning. They play the next day and return only on March 26 and the tournament gets underway on March 29. Does that really make sense? Also, is it fair on the franchise?" the official asked. — Agencies

**Australia on charm offensive**

**Johannesburg:** Australia have been on a charm offensive ahead of Friday's first Twenty20 international against South Africa at the Wanderers Stadium, a ground renowned for being among the most intimidating in the world. The match will be Australia's first in South Africa since the infamous "Sandpaper-gate" tour of 2018 and will mark the return in front of South African crowds of former captain Steve Smith and opening batsman David Warner, both banned for a year for their role in the scandal. The Wanderers 'bullying' is likely to be packed to its capacity of just under 30,000. It is a noisy venue and especially so when Australia are the opposition. But all opposition teams are regarded as fair game. As recently as last month, England's Ben Stokes was provoked into swearing at a rowdy spectator after he was dismissed during the fourth Test against South Africa. In the lead up to the match, the Australians have been at pains to say how much they enjoy playing in South Africa, while Smith tweeted that a visit to a Soweto school for children with special needs was a "humbling experience". Smith told journalists that he expected to be targeted by the crowd. "They are hostile at the best of times here," he said. — PTI

# Battle of the Basin

**Battle-hardened India look to topple formidable hosts in Test series**

**Wellington, Feb. 20:** India's battle-hardened cricketers are ready for their toughest challenge of the World Test

Championship till date as they face formidable hosts New Zealand on a spicy Basin Reserve track in the series-opener beginning here on Friday. Virat Kohli's top-ranked team, with 360 points in its kitty, is certainly the favourite on paper but the Black Caps under Kane Williamson are experts at wearing down opposition with their patience on pitches which turn flat as the game progresses. The last time New Zealand lost a series at home was back in March 2017 and since then have won five (10 Tests) in familiar conditions. For New Zealand, it is time to pick up pieces after their 0-3 drubbing in Australia while the current Indian team would love to reassert that they are the best when it comes to winning in adverse conditions like they did in Australia last year. The open Basin Reserve ground has always been challenging for both batsmen and bowlers due to cross winds. And the new opening pair of Prithvi Shaw and Mayank Agarwal will have its task cut out against a top class seam attack comprising Trent Boult, Tim Southee, and Kyle Jamieson, who in all likelihood will make his debut. However, the absence of left arm speedster Neil



India captain Virat Kohli during a training session.

Wagner, who could have created awkward angles with his short balls, will provide some respite for the Indian middle-order. Wagner is on a break to welcome his first child. New Zealand named their 12 on the day and it will be a choice between seamer all-rounder Daryl Mitchell or slow left-arm orthodox Ajaz Patel. In an

open ground with overcast conditions expected, captain Kohli will not mind winning the toss and unleash Jasprit Bumrah, Ishant Sharma and Mohammed Shami on the home team. Even Kohli admitted that his men would need to have tons of patience once the track eases out as Williamson's team is

known to the play waiting game. "It doesn't matter how much patience opposition has, we have to show more patience. We can't really prepare in a manner where New Zealand show more patience and put pressure on us," skipper Kohli made his intentions clear during a media interaction. — PTI

**Virat and I have similar views on the game: Kane**

**Wellington, Feb. 20:** Chalk and cheese they might be when it comes to their on-field personas but that has not come in the way of Virat Kohli and Kane Williamson forming a mutual admiration club. The fierce Kohli and the mostly calm Williamson admire and respect each other as cricketers and more importantly as human beings. "If we had to share no.1 spot, it would be New Zealand," skipper Kohli said during a dinner hosted by the Indian High Commissioner on Wednesday. "Every team wants to beat us but I can tell you there would be no spite and that's why I could sit with Kane Williamson mid-game and have a conversation on life and not cricket," Kohli had said. Williamson couldn't agree more about the conversation beyond the boundary during a recent T20 game from which both sat out. "It was really interesting the other day to sit down and have a quiet chat on the outfield and share a lot of thoughts that we had and a lot of similar views on the game," the New Zealand skipper said. "We have slightly different approaches which was really refreshing but that is very inspiring from a guy that's leading the way in his tenacious and competitive attitude but his outlook on the game and what he does in and around it," Williamson added. — PTI

Williamson is not a fan of the points system used for the World Test Championship where a team gets a maximum of 120 points irrespective of the length of the series. As per points system, the value for each Test match win in the upcoming two-match series is 60 points per game. However if it's an Ashes series, the value of a Test match win is reduced to 24 as there are five matches. "It's an interesting one. I guess there's an element to it that isn't fair. But I guess there is an effort in bringing context to Test cricket which wasn't there. So I mean the World Test Championship is a step in the right direction." — PTI

Kane Williamson is not a fan of the points system used for the World Test Championship where a team gets a maximum of 120 points irrespective of the length of the series. As per points system, the value for each Test match win in the upcoming two-match series is 60 points per game. However if it's an Ashes series, the value of a Test match win is reduced to 24 as there are five matches. "It's an interesting one. I guess there's an element to it that isn't fair. But I guess there is an effort in bringing context to Test cricket which wasn't there. So I mean the World Test Championship is a step in the right direction." — PTI

## 320 is good first innings score: Rahane

**Wellington, Feb. 20:** A first innings total in the range of 320 on a bouncy Basin Reserve track is what India vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane is aiming for despite calling New Zealand the favourites going into the first Test starting here on Friday. "I think New Zealand are favourites in their home conditions. But I still feel the host country remains a favourite because they know what to bowl and batsman are aware of what shots to play. As a unit



**PANT NEEDS TO ACCEPT THAT HE IS GOING THROUGH A ROUGH PATCH, SAYS RAHANE**

**Wellington, Feb. 20:** Rishabh Pant needs to accept that he is going through a rough patch and remain focussed on improving as a cricketer, said India vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane here on Thursday. The 22-year-old Pant, who till five months ago was India's first choice wicketkeeper-batsman across formats, has lost

we need to learn and adapt quickly as New Zealand grounds have different angles," Rahane said on a cautious note on the eve of the Test match. But the 2014 win at Lord's or the 2018 victory in Adelaide had come with modest first innings scores of under 300 (295 at

his spot in limited overs cricket to KL Rahul and red ball place to a much accomplished Wriddhiman Saha. For Rahane, who too has also endured rough end of the stick as far selection matters go, had a word of advice for his young colleague. "It's important to accept whatever you are going through. Be positive, try

Lord's and 250 at Adelaide), a template that can be executed in Wellington also, feels the stylish Mumbaiaiker. "When you bat first, your mindset is always positive, not saying that it's not when you bowl first. If you get 320 to 330 outside India in first innings, it's a very good total. "All the matches if you see we won (in England and Australia), we got around 320 to 350 runs on the board in the first innings." While 320 may not be a big score but Rahane's confidence stems from the

and learn as many things as possible from any of the players. Not saying it has to be senior or junior," Rahane said. Asked how one can internalize rejection or failure, Rahane said, "See no one likes to sit outside but whatever your team needs on a particular game, you have got to accept that." — PTI

fact that India's world class pace attack, which has shown ability to pick 20 wickets in overseas conditions. "We know that our bowlers can take wickets in any condition but suppose you lose the toss and have to bat first, you should know that you are in right kind of mindset to actually go out there and tackle those situations. "Keeping mindset right in seaming conditions even if you lose the toss is really important. Same goes to bowlers who should keep their mindset right on flat wickets." — PTI

**'WTC points system unfair'**

Kane Williamson is not a fan of the points system used for the World Test Championship where a team gets a maximum of 120 points irrespective of the length of the series. As per points system, the value for each Test match win in the upcoming two-match series is 60 points per game. However if it's an Ashes series, the value of a Test match win is reduced to 24 as there are five matches. "It's an interesting one. I guess there's an element to it that isn't fair. But I guess there is an effort in bringing context to Test cricket which wasn't there. So I mean the World Test Championship is a step in the right direction." — PTI



Kane Williamson

**WOMEN'S T20 WORLD CUP**



India women's captain Harmanpreet Kaur (right) and her Aussie counterpart Meg Lanning during a press conference ahead of their clash in the ICC T20 World Cup. — Twitter

## India to take on Aussies in opener

**Sydney, Feb. 20:** The Indian women's cricket team will be aiming for much needed consistency; when it opens its bid for an elusive ICC trophy with the T20 World Cup opener against defending champions Australia here on Friday. Inconsistency has plagued India for a long time and a classic example was their performance in the recently held tri-series in Australia where they reached the final. They won and lost a game against the more accomplished England and Australia before losing to the mighty hosts, who have won the T20 World Cup a record four times out of the six editions held so far. India's middle and lower-order needs to do a lot better than what it has been doing to beat the likes of Australia and England in the knock-out stages, something that has been acknowledged star opener Smriti Mandhana. The team needs to ensure that the frequent middle-order collapses are not repeated in the showpiece event. The southpaw and 16-year-old Shafali Verma will have to get India off to a flying start more often than not in the competition. Expectations are high from skipper

**LIVE on TV**  
India vs Australia  
on STAR Sports 1, HD  
@ 1:30 PM

Harmanpreet Kaur, who too has suffered from inconsistency and would like to correct that, beginning with the opener against Australia. It remains to be seen if the other 16-year-old in the squad, Richa Ghosh, gets to play regularly as she made her international debut only in the final of the tri-series. — PTI

**Need to come up together: Harmanpreet**  
The Indian women's cricket team captain Harmanpreet Kaur on Thursday said her side will target consistent collective efforts instead of relying on just a couple of players to deliver the goods when it takes on Australia in the T20 World Cup here on Friday. "If you want to do well as a team, you need to come up together and do well for the side," she said on the eve of the match. "Through past tournaments, we have learnt that you cannot depend on just one or two players to win the game for you," she added. — PTI

## Australia go in as favourites: Mithali

**New Delhi, Feb. 20:** The seasoned Mithali Raj has declared Australia as favourites to win Friday's Women's T20 World Cup opener against India in what she expects to be a high-scoring and "very close" game. "Australia go in as favourites, but India will be no pushover. They have some very talented players and I think it will be a very close, high-scoring game," Mithali wrote in a column for ICC. "Both teams have exciting players, particular in the batting units, and it will be a case of whoever can score the runs that their country need on the day. "I do think Australia have the advantage because of their T20 record and have a slightly better chance of winning the first game against India," she added. Female stars emerging as role models has been the "biggest change" in women's cricket's journey from near-anonymity to stardom, feels Mithali, who grew up idolising her male counterparts. — PTI



Mithali Raj

When Mithali started out in 1999, women's cricket was almost an unknown entity, a far cry from what it is on the eve of the T20 World Cup in Australia where the opening contest between India and the hosts is expected to witness sellout crowds. "Back in my day, we only had male players as inspiration because that's all we used to see on the television. Today a young girl can have a role model in the form of a female cricketer and I think that's the biggest change I have seen," Mithali wrote. She recalled the changes the women's game has seen since she played her first ODI more than 20 years ago. — PTI

**RANJI TROPHY QUATERFINALS**

## Saurashtra post 226 for 6 on opening day against Andhra

**Ongole (AP), Feb. 20:** Fighting half-centuries by Vishvarajsinh Jadeja (73, 179 balls, 10 fours), Chirag Jani (53, 128 balls, 5 fours) and Sheldon Jackson (50) helped Saurashtra make 226 for 6 in 79 overs on the opening day of its Ranji Trophy quarterfinal against Andhra here on Thursday. For the home team, left-arm medium-pacer Yarra Prithvi Raj was impressive, picking up three wickets in 20 overs conceding 51 runs. K V Sashikanth picked up two wickets. Sent in to bat by Andhra captain K S Bharat, the visitors lost opener Harvik Desai (0) in the third over. Desai nicked one from left-arm medium-pacer C V

**BRIEF SCORES**

**At Ongole:** Saurashtra 226/6 in 79 overs (Vishvarajsinh Jadeja 73, Chirag Jani (batting) 53, Sheldon Jackson 50; Prithvi Raj Yarra 3/51) vs Andhra.

**At Jammu:** Karnataka 14/2 in 6 overs (Karun Nair (batting) 4; Aquib Nabi 1/6, Mujtaba Yousuf 1/5) vs Jammu and Kashmir.

**At Cuttack:** Bengal 308/6 in 86 overs (Anustup Majumdar (batting) 136, Shahbaz Ahmed (batting) 82; Preet Singh Chohan 2/52, Suryakant Pradhan 2/96) vs Odisha.

**At Valsad:** Gujarat 330/4 (Parthiv Patel (batting) 118, Bhargav Merai 84; Amit Verma 2/73) vs Goa.

Stephen on the wicketkeeper Bharat. Karnataka end Day 1 at 14/2 Karnataka were wobbling at 14 for 2 at stumps after only six overs were possible due to bad light on the opening day of their Ranji Trophy quarterfinal against Jammu and Kashmir at Jammu on Thursday. Overcast skies meant the light alternated between poor to border-line for most part of the day. — PTI

## Akmal suspended under anti-corruption code

**Karachi, Feb. 20:** Umar Akmal's flatter-to-deceive career took a massive blow on Thursday when the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) suspended the batsman pending an anti-corruption inquiry amid claims that he failed to report a spot-fixing approach. However, in its official statement, the PCB did not get into the specifics of the breach committed by Akmal. "The Pakistan Cricket Board today suspended Umar Akmal with immediate effect. he cannot take part in any cricket-related activity pending the investigation being carried out by PCB's Anti-Corruption Unit," the Board said in a statement. "As this is an ongoing investigation, the PCB will not make any further comments," it said. A top Board official, on conditions of anonymity,



said the Anti-Corruption Unit had evidence of Akmal not reporting an approach to spot-fix in the Pakistan Super League (PSL), which starts on Thursday. "The information is that Umar was made this offer few days back by a Pakistani and didn't report it immediately to the Anti-Corruption Unit as required under the rules," the source said. "Worse he met with the gentleman again and the ACU, while questioning Umar yesterday, showed him some evidence of the meeting and some messages," he said. Akmal was suspended hours before his PSL team Quetta Gladiators was to take on Islamabad in the opening match of the 2020 edition on Thursday. "Quetta Gladiators are allowed to apply for Umar Akmal's replacement in the HBL Pakistan Super League 2020," the PCB statement read. He is the younger brother of former Pakistan

**● A top Board official, on conditions of anonymity, said the Anti-Corruption Unit had evidence of Akmal not reporting an approach to spot-fix in the PSL.**

wicketkeeper-batsman Kamran Akmal, who played 53 Tests, 58 T20s, 157 ODIs, and cousin of current captain Babar Azam. The 29-year-old, who last played for Pakistan in October, has featured in 16 Tests, 121 ODIs and 84 T20s, scoring 1003, 3194 and 1690 runs respectively. Akmal, who promised a lot after making a hundred in New Zealand on his Test debut, has failed to live up to the high expectations that came with some fine performances early in his career. Constant run-ins with the authorities have also marred his stop-start career. Earlier this month, Akmal had escaped a PCB ban for allegedly making crude remarks to a trainer during a fitness test at the National Cricket Academy in Lahore. — PTI

## Pak PM urged to impose life bans on guilty players

**Karachi, Feb. 20:** Deeply anguished by the latest corruption scandal that has rocked Pakistan cricket, former skipper Ramiz Raja on Thursday urged Prime Minister Imran Khan to carry out a legislation to impose life bans on guilty players. "I am gutted today it just seems like the Sharjeel and Khalid Latif incident took place yesterday and now this. It makes me so angry that this keeps on happening in Pakistan cricket. I would like to see some legislation in parliament imposing a uniform punishment for guilty players," Raja said. — PTI

SHORT TAKES

Duplantis short of third world record

**Lievín, France:** Swedish star Armand Duplantis fell narrowly short of setting a third pole vault world record in 12 days at the indoor event in Lievín, France on Wednesday. The 20-year-old soared over 6.07metres to win the competition ahead of American world champion Sam Kendricks (5.90m), but failed to clear 6.19m from three attempts. Duplantis cleared 6.18m in Glasgow last weekend and 6.17m earlier this month in Poland to break Frenchman Renaud Lavillenie's six-year-old world record. He came close to increasing his mark in northern France, seeing the bar agonisingly drop on his second effort. "My legs abandoned me a bit. Two simultaneous world-record attempts are something we will probably never see again," said Duplantis. American Sandi Morris also surprisingly attempted a new women's indoor pole vault world record of 5.03m, but came up short, settling for victory with 4.83m. — AFP

Racer Newman out of hospital

**Miami:** Veteran US stock car driver Ryan Newman was released from hospital on Wednesday, two days after a horrifying final-lap crash at the Daytona 500 left him with serious injuries. About an hour and 15 minutes after updating his condition as alert, walking around the Halifax Medical Center hospital and playing with his children, Roush Fenway Racing said he had been treated and discharged. The race team tweeted a photo of Newman from behind exiting the facility, holding hands with each of his daughters as he walked to the parking lot. Newman's Ford Mustang had been leading on the final lap but spun out of control, struck the wall and went flying into the air before flipping onto its roof and bursting into flames. Several ambulances raced to the scene of the wreck by the 2008 Daytona 500 winner, who was extracted from the car with injuries that were not considered life-threatening. — AFP

Marquez extends Honda contract

**Paris:** MotoGP world champion Marc Marquez has extended his contract with Honda until the end of 2024, the Japanese team announced Thursday. "Honda Racing Corporation are delighted to announce six-time MotoGP world champion Marc Marquez has signed a four-year extension of his contract and will continue to race with the factory team until at least December 2024," the team said in a statement. Marquez, said he was "proud" to remain with the team who gave him his start in the sport. He signed the contract extension months after his younger brother Alex joined the team, as reigning Moto2 champion, replacing Jorge Lorenzo. The Marquez brothers will join the rest of the grid in Qatar next week for the final pre-season test ahead of the first race of the new season at Qatar's Losail International circuit on March 8. — AFP

DIVIJ-ARTEM CRUISE INTO QUARTERS

**Florida:** India's No.2 doubles player Divij Sharan along with his Kiwi partner Artem Sitak defeated the Swede-French pair of Andre Goransson and Ugo Humbert 5-7 6-4 10-7 to enter the quarterfinals of the Delray Beach Open here. Divij and Artem will meet top seeded doubles pair Mike Bryan and Bob Bryan of USA on Friday. The Indo Kiwi pair lost a close first set 5-7 on Wednesday, but came back stronger in the second set, winning 75 per cent of their first serve points. In the super tie breaker Divij-Artem closed out the match with a 10-7 win. The Bryan brothers sealed their quarterfinal spot after their opponents Nick Kyrgios and Jordan Thompson of Australia gave a walkover. — PTI

**The Results: Men's Doubles (round of 16):** Jonny O Mara/Marcelo Arevalo-Gonzalez, bt Philipp Oswald/Marcus Daniell 6-4, 6-2; Dennis Novikov/Christian Harrison, bt Robert Lindstedt/Dominic Inglot 6-4, 6-4; Artem Sitak/Divij Sharan, bt Andre Goransson/Ugo Humbert 5-7, 6-4, 10-7; Bob Bryan/Mike Bryan (1), bt Nick Kyrgios/Jordan Thompson, walkover.

# Salem make a splash

## Spartans pick Vijay, Periyasamy and M. Ashwin

DC CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, FEB. 20

Salem Spartans made full use of their first position in the order of the Tamil Nadu Twenty20 Premier League Season 5 draft to pick a strong squad on Thursday. The Spartans, formerly Tuti Patriots, not only netted the big fish, India all-rounder Vijay Shankar but they also laid their hands-on Season 4 top wicket-taker Ganeshan Periyasamy and star leg-spinner Murugan Ashwin. In fact, they managed to pick six players who represented last year's winners, Chepauk Super Gillies.

Chepauk, however, also had a say in the proceedings picking Season 4's top run-getter N. Jagadeesan. Spartan stars Washington Sundar and Vijay Shankar were confident of a better show and improve upon the fifth-placed finish last year. The two top-guns are likely to play the full season when the tournament kicks off from June 10, 2020.

"It is a great boost to have Vijay Shankar in the side. It is a new setup and we are looking to do better this year," said Sundar, who was among the three players retained by the franchise. "In the last three years I have played for different teams every year but I have only played 3 games of TNPL. I am looking forward to play the full season and help the team win matches and the tournament as well," Vijay Shankar said.

Chepauk coach Hemang Badani was unperturbed about losing key players from his title-winning squad. "I am very happy with the side. We prefer to have experienced campaigners in batting, bowling and fielding. Our USP has always been not many big names but to build a unit, work hard and stay disciplined. That has worked for us and we would like to stick to that," he said.

Last year's finalists Dindigul Dragons lost their star performer Jagadeesan but they are upbeat about their chances. New coach, former India batsman Subramanian Badrinath, feels they will continue to pose a serious threat to other teams. Dindigul captain Ravichandran Ashwin, who is on national duty in New Zealand, was glued into the proceedings here and was assisting the franchise to pick the squad, Badrinath revealed.

**Draft for outstation players in May**  
Tamil Nadu Cricket Association president Rupa Gurusamy, who addressed the gathering, revealed the franchises can add two outstation players for which a separate draft will be held in



VB Kanchi Veerans during the TNPL draft on Thursday.

THE SQUADS

SALEM SPARTANS (20 PLAYERS)

**Retained players:** Washington Sundar, Akshay Srinivasan, M Ganesh Moorthi  
**Capped players:** Vijay Shankar, Ganeshan Periyasamy, Murugan Ashwin, KH Gopinath, Daryl Ferrario, Umashankar Sushil, MK Sivakumar  
**Uncapped players:** B Pranesh, TD Lokesh Raj, Akkii Srinath, M Suganesh, S Abhishek, S Boopalan, Prashanth Prabhu, M Vijay Kumar, T Rajkumar, Shubham Mehta  
**Head coach:** S Suresh

CHEPAUK SUPER GILLIES (20)

**Retained players:** Kaushik Gandhi, Ramadoss Alexandar, Uthirasamy Sasidhev  
**Capped players:** N Jagadeesan, Rajagopal Sathish, M Sidharth, RS Jagannath Srinivas, V Arun Kumar  
**Uncapped players:** D Rahul, S Harish Kumar, S Sujay, H Prashid Akash, B Arun, R Ram Aravind, B Rahul, B Sai Prakash, S Vijayakumar, V Santhana Sekar, R Ajith Kumar, Vikram Jangid  
**Head coach:** Hemang Badani

KOVALI KINGS (19)

**Retained players:** M Sharukh Khan, Thangarasu Natarajan, S Ajith Ram  
**Capped players:** Abhishek Tanwar, Krishnamoorthy Vignesh, V Ganga Sridhar Raju  
**Uncapped players:** P Shijith Chandran,

Ashwin Venkataraman, R Kavin, U Mukiesh, MP Rajesh, J Suresh Kumar, GR Manish, N Selva Kumar, C Atheeg-ur Rahman, B Sai Sudharsan, J Gowjith Subash, G Aravindh, Nishanth Kumar Alwar  
**Head coach:** Sriram Somayauala

MADURAI PANTHERS (19)

**Retained players:** KB Arun Kaarthick, Varun Chakravartthy, Kiran Akash  
**Capped players:** Jagadeesan Kousik, NS Chaturved, Ramalingam Rohit, B Anirudh Sitaram Aushik Srinivas  
**Uncapped players:** Ramachandran Mithun, M Shahjahan, Aditya Varadarajan, V Gowtham, P Praveen Kumar, Raghupathy Silambarasan, P Hemcharan, DT Chandrasekar, K Deeban Linges, PS Nirmal Kumar, S Ganesh  
**Head coach:** TBC

TRICHY WARRIORS (20):

**Retained players:** Murali Vijay, Sai Kishore, Sonu Yadav  
**Capped players:** Aniruda Srikanth, Rahil Shah, Mukund Karunakaran  
**Uncapped players:** P Saravana Kumar, Nidhish Rajagopal, Anthony Das, Aditya Ganesh, Sumant Jain, Akash Sumra, M Poiyamozhi, Muhammed Adnan Khan, R Ganesh, VP Amith Sathvik, Yash Arun Mozhi, S Santhosh Shiv, G Hemanth Kumar, Karthik Shanmugham  
**Head coach:** Ajay Kudua

VB KANCHI VEERANS (18)

**Retained players:** Baba Aparajith,

Sanjay Yadav, NS Harish  
**Capped players:** Baba Indrajith, Athiyasaraj Davidson, Pradosh Ranjan Paul, L Surya Prakash  
**Uncapped players:** Trilok Nath, Arjun Murthy, M Abhinav, S Sharun Kumar, CH Jitendra Kumar, T Ajith Kumar, S Senthil Nathan, P Vidyuth, R Jayachandran, V Rajinikanth, Ashwath Mukunthan  
**Head coach:** M Shanmugham

DINDIGUL DRAGONS (20)

**Retained players:** Ravichandran Ashwin, Munnusamy Silambarasan, Rajendran Vivek  
**Capped players:** C Hari Nishanth, Yo Mahesh, L Vignesh, MS Sanjay, R Srinivasan  
**Uncapped players:** Vishal Vaidhya, C Mani Bharathy, Rangaraj Suteesh, RS Mokit Hariharan, S Lokeshwar, Adithya Arun, S Arun S Swaminathan, V Lakshman, C Ashwin, Viva Murugan, Advait Sharma  
**Head coach:** S Badrinath

TIRUPPUR TAMIZHANS (20)

**Retained players:** Dinesh Karthik, R Rajkumar, Maan K Bafna  
**Capped players:** M Mohammed, Aswin Crist, Abhinav Mukund  
**Uncapped player:** S Dinesh, S Mohan Prasath, P Francis Rokins, S Aravind, Gowtham Thamarai Kannan, A Karuppusamy, S Manikandan, S Siddharth, C Sriram, Tushar Raheja, Mohit Panghal, Siddharth Ahjuja, M Rooban Raj, Abhinav Vishnu  
**Head coach:** R Prasanna

people to watch the matches from rural areas. When you see your own boy going out and play from your hometown, it is a great inspiration, I think it will do a lot for rural cricket. The more stadiums you have the better reach you have. So ultimately the aim of TNPL is to spread

throughout the state and to give a stand for the young players to come and I think that's what we are doing," she said. For the first time this season, no TNPL games will be played in Chennai with all matches to be spread across Salem, Coimbatore, Tirunelveli and Dindigul.

# Hamilton sets the pace

**Montmelo (Spain), Feb. 20:** World champion Lewis Hamilton hammered out an early season warning to his rivals on Wednesday when he set the fastest time on the opening day of pre-season testing at Barcelona.

Hamilton, who will attempt to equal Michael Schumacher's all-time record of seven world titles this year, clocked a best time of 1min 16.976sec off a total of 94 laps. He was the only driver at a chilly Montmelo to duck under 1min 17sec. Worryingly for the rest of the field, Mercedes teammate Valtteri Bottas was second fastest in 1min 17.313sec.

"It's been a good day and a really good start for all of us, considering we had a long break. So to come back and clock in over 170 laps just shows how hard everyone has been working over the winter," said Hamilton. Sergio Perez, in a Racing Point, was fourth best at 0.399sec off the pace while Red Bull's Max Verstappen was fourth at 0.540 after putting in 168 laps, the most of any driver. For Ferrari, Charles Leclerc replaced four-time world champion Sebastian Vettel for opening day duties after the German fell ill and returned to the team hotel. — AFP



Mercedes-AMG Petronas Lewis Hamilton drives during a Formula One pre-season testing session at the Barcelona Catalunya racetrack in Montmelo, outside Barcelona, Spain, on Thursday.

# McLaren wary of virus

**Montmelo, Feb. 20:** Formula One team McLaren revealed Wednesday that they are taking measures to counter the threat of the deadly coronavirus, including banning entry to their motorhome at winter testing to anyone who has travelled from China. The announcement was made after a Chinese journalist, who had journeyed to Barcelona from Shanghai, was refused

entry to the team's hospitality suite in the Montmelo paddock for the three-day pre-season test session which runs until Friday. A team spokesman also said that McLaren employees who were scheduled to travel to Melbourne via Hong Kong for next month's season-opening Australian Grand Prix will now no longer go via Hong Kong. They will instead stop over in the Middle East. Wednesday's announcement comes just a week after the Chinese Grand Prix, set for April 19 in Shanghai, was cancelled due to the virus which has now claimed more than 2,000 lives in the country. McLaren are the first team to introduce such measures to counter the spread of the coronavirus. — AFP

# ROGER TO MISS FRENCH OPEN DUE TO INJURY

**Paris, Feb. 20:** Roger Federer has undergone surgery to resolve a long-standing knee problem and said Thursday he would be out of action until after the French Open. The 20-times grand slam winner revealed on his Facebook account that he underwent surgery in Switzerland on Wednesday and would miss a string of tournaments including the May 24-June 7 French Open. "As a result, I will miss Dubai, India Wells, Bogota, Miami and the French Open," he said. The 38-year-old explained that he had intended to avoid surgery if possible but the knee problem refused to go away. "My right knee has been bothering me for a little while," said the world number three who reached the Roland Garros semi-finals last year. "I hoped it would go away, but after an examination and discussion with my team, I decided to have arthroscopic surgery in Switzerland yesterday," he added. After the surgery the doctors confirmed that it was the right thing to have done and are very confident of a full recovery. — AFP

CITY CLIPS

**MCC to meet Anna Nagar 'K' in final**  
Madras Cricket Club (MCC) finished on top of the league standings after registering wins over Anna Nagar 'K' Block, Mylapore Club 'A' and Mylapore Club 'B' teams in the UCAL TNTA mixed doubles league on Thursday. Anna Nagar 'K' Block scored an easy win over Mylapore Club 'A' and outlasted Mylapore Club 'B' to finish second in the league. MCC will meet Anna Nagar 'K' Block in the final at MCC on February 24.

**Results:** Madras Cricket Club bt Anna Nagar 'K' Block 1-0 (Manav Sreekumar/C. Sai Samhitha bt Arjun Krishnan/Samyuktha Vinodkumar 6-0, 6-0); Madras Cricket Club bt Mylapore Club A 1-0 (Manav Sreekumar/Riyah Dugar bt Dinesh Narayan/Vijaya Narayan 6-0, 6-0); Madras Cricket Club bt Mylapore Club B 1-0 (Manav Sreekumar/Riyah Dugar bt G. Rudr/Yuvashri 6-2, 6-0); Anna Nagar 'K' Block bt Mylapore Club B 1-0 (Sathesh Babu Dakshinamurthy/Samyuktha Vinodkumar bt Sriganesh Raman/Yuvashri 6-1, 7-6[10-8]); Anna Nagar 'K' Block bt Mylapore Club A 1-0 (Nishanth Madhivanan/Samyuktha Vinodkumar bt Dinesh Narayan/Vijaya Narayan 6-0, 6-1); Mylapore Club B bt Mylapore Club A 1-0 (Sriganesh Raman/Yuvashri bt Dinesh Narayan/Vijaya Narayan 6-2, 6-3).

**Vrishank, Abhinav sizzle**  
Vrishank Karthik (90 not out) and K. Abhinav (72 not out) guided Ramachandrapuram Public School to an easy win over Don Bosco MHSS 'A' in the semifinal of the under-14 of the TNCA city schools tournament for B. Somasundaram Trophy at the St. Bede's 'A' Ground on Thursday.

**Brief scores: At St. Bede's 'A' Ground:** Don Bosco MHSS 'A' 175 in 47.4 overs (S. Eshwar 41, G. Yuvan Srinivas 38; Reyhan Hussain 3/19) lost to Ramachandrapuram Public School 176 for no loss in 35.5 overs (Vrishank Karthik 90 not out, K. Abhinav 72 not out).  
**At Gandhi Nagar Ground:** Nellai Nadar MHSS 'A' 260/7 in 50 overs (A.P. Pradeesh Kumar 112, R.K. Jayant 68) bt St.Bede's AIHSS 'A' 233/8 in 50 overs (S. Birnaesh 57, C.S. Rohan 49, M. Vishal Ram 34, V. Varshith 30; J. Jai Suriya 3/37).

**Anusha excels for TN**  
S. Anusha's unbeaten 72 helped Tamil Nadu defeat Odisha in the BCCI senior women's one-dayers at Mumbai on Thursday.  
**Brief scores:** Tamil Nadu 227/4 in 50 overs (D. Hemalatha 49, Arshi Choudhary 34, N. Niranjana 34, S. Anusha 72 not out, S.B. Keerthana 28 not out; Madhusmita Behera 3/52) bt Odisha 212/9 in 50 overs (Madhuri Meheta 39, Sushree Dibyadarshini 50, Anjali Singh 41; L. Nethra 3/41, S.B. Keerthana 3/46).

# Rory rejects new tour proposals

**Mexico City, Feb. 20:** Rory McIlroy became the first top player to publicly reject the idea of a proposed new tour, saying he values his choice of where to play over whatever money the Premier Golf League is promising. "I would like to be on the right side of history on this one," McIlroy said Wednesday at the Mexico Championship. McIlroy said the only thing that could change his mind were if all the top players decided to join, and he doesn't see that happening. "I think it's very split at the moment," he said. Talk of a Premier Golf League has been around for about six years and picked up momentum along with serious funding, primarily from Saudi Arabia in recent months. Organizers have been talking to players and agents the last few months in the Bahamas, Australia and last week in Los Angeles. Phil Mickelson said Sunday he was not ready to announce his intentions but might be ready to state his view publicly to the Players Championship. — AP

# Task cut out for Indian golfers

**New Delhi, Feb. 20:** A strong Indian contingent comprising former champions will take on an equally strong international star cast at the Hero Indian Open which tees off at the DLF Golf and Country Club in Gurgaon on March 19. The flagship event of Indian golf — which is also the longest-running international event in India — will see almost all top Indian golfers, including past champions such as SSP Chawrasia (2016 and 2017), Anirban Lahiri (2015) and three-time winner Jyoti Randhawa (2000, 2006 and 2007), in action at the Gary Player layout. Established champions such as Shiv Kapur, Rashid Khan, Rahil Gangjee, Shubhankar Sharma and many others will also be in fray as a total of 144 players will vie for top honours at the \$1.75M tournament. PGTI regulars such as Udayan Mane, who has won the last three events on the domestic tour, Viraj Madappa, Khalin Joshi, S. Chikkarangappa, Ajeetesh Sandhu, Aman Raj, Kshiti Naveed Kaul, Karandeep Kochhar and Veer Ahlawat will all be hoping to strike it big at India's biggest golfing event. The stellar international field will also include past Indian Open champions such as Matt Wallace, Siddikur Rahman, David Gleeson, Liang Wen-chong and Mardan Mamat. Dane Thomas Bjorn, the winning captain of 2018 European Ryder Cup team, Dutch golfer Joost Luiten, a six-time European Tour winner and Andy Sullivan, a three-time European Tour winner, will also be vying for honours at the 56th edition of the tournament, which is co-sanctioned by the European Tour and Asian Tour. — AFP



From left to right: Golfers Shubhankar Sharma, Udayan Mane, Shiv Kapur with the Hero Indian Open trophy in New Delhi on Thursday.