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भाजपा संकल्प पत्र - 2020



रेहड़ी-पटरीवालों का नियमितीकरण और जीवन बीमा
हर वचन निभाएंगे, दिल्ली में करके दिखाएंगे



देश बदला अब दिल्ली बदलो
दिल्लीवासी इस बार कमल का बटन दबाएंगे
भाजपा को जिताएंगे



भारतीय जनता पार्टी, दिल्ली प्रदेश, 54, पंडित पंत मार्ग, नई दिल्ली द्वारा जारी

WINDOWS



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COUNTERPOINT



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WEATHER

Max: 19°C
Min: 7°C
RH: 62%
Rainfall: 10%
Forecast: Sunny

ASTROGUIDE

Vikari: Uttarayana
Tithi: Magha Shuddha Navami till 9.14 pm
Star: Kritika till 12.48 am (Tuesday)
Varjyam: 11.58 am to 1.40 pm
Durmuhurtam: 12.52 pm to 1.37 pm; 3.07 pm to 3.53 pm
Rahukalam: 7.30 am to 9 am
SUNSET TODAY 6.01 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 7.08 AM
MOONRISE TOMORROW 12.38 PM
MOONSET TODAY 1.25 AM

Lockdown in major China city; toll 304

1st coronavirus overseas death reported from Philippines

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BEIJING, FEB. 2

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AGE CORRESPONDENT
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address from the Opposition, but if he does not it would be the Congress' Lok Sabha leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhary. Congress chief whip K. Suresh and Assam MP

anyone's citizenship. In an interview to Saamna, the Sena mouthpiece, the CM said: "The NRC will not be allowed in Maharashtra. Proving citizenship will be difficult for both Hindus and Muslims. I will not let that happen." **More on Page 3**

Gaurav Gogoi will, meanwhile, move adjournment motions in the Lok Sabha to immediately discuss the anti-CAA protests. Sources said that if Speaker Om Birla does **Turn to Page 4**

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NIA raids across Kashmir to trace cop-militant links

YUSUF JAMEEL
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2 jawans, 2 civilians hurt in grenade blast

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Iowa votes today: Bernie leads Biden

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Women take up innovative farm practice

Project started in Odisha to be extended to 32 gram panchayats soon ■ Tech where fodder is grown in farm & their waste products used as manure

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO
BHUBANESWAR

Women members of several self-help groups (SHGs) in Boriguma block of Odisha's Koraput have started novel agriculture practices under the Integrated Multiple Farming (IMF) system in the unused government lands.

IMF comprises cultivation of vegetables, flowers, mushroom and allied activities like animal husbandry, poultry and fish farming at one place. This is an inter-linked technique where fodder for animals is grown in the farm and their waste

products are used as manure and fertilizers for crops.

According to local Block Development officer (BDO) Pranaya Kumar Behera, the district administration under the guidance of the collector has acquired 18 acres of barren land at Bhatigam village under Kamara panchayat in Koraput district for the purpose and engaged women members of the SHGs in the farming activities. Apart from flowers, vegetables and fish farming, the SHG women members also planted coconut, banana and other trees in the land.

"In the first phase, we have started a pilot project at Bhatigam village and it will be replicated in 31 more gram panchayats. Women SHG members were engaged in developing the land and paid as provided by the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). The pilot project was started four months ago. The first sum of money has recently come from floriculture and it has been placed with the local gram panchayat. A bylaw is being prepared for transparent administration of revenue earned from the



Flower and vegetable cultivation by women in an unused land at Bhatigam village under Boriguma block in Odisha's Koraput district.

project. Once the bylaw is ready, the associated women members will get their share from the earned revenue," said Mr Behera. Joshada Bishoyi, an SHG

member, said, "We have grown varieties of flowers, vegetables and mushrooms. We also rear livestock in the IMF project."

Another member of the SHG, Ratna Bisoyi said, "Now in the first phase, we have got engaged in the project development work and getting a good payment for our labour. After the land is fully developed and farm activities start, we hope that each member will earn not less than ₹7,000 to ₹8000 per month."

Boriguma block administration, as the BDO informed, is spending around ₹60 to ₹70 lakh in

each panchayat to develop such farming project.

Satyanarayan Sethi, assistant engineer of Borigumma block, said, "There were huge patches of government land in several panchayats of the block which were either encroached upon by the villagers or left unused. We identified those lands and started the project."

This initiative of the Borigumma block authorities, first of its kind in the state, will make the tribal woman of the region independent. Such initiatives should be taken up across the state, said a local.

POST BAN ON MANUAL SCAVENGING

When life goes down the drain

Manikandan, a former manual scavenger, shares with this newspaper his travails after losing the job of cleaning drains/septic tanks, fighting penury and the government's failure to keep its promise of providing him a permanent job

T. SUDHEESH
CHENNAI

The abolition of manual scavenging, through a law, has a dark side, too. It has suddenly rendered many men jobless, which in turn has wreaked havoc in the lives of their family members.

Take the case of 19-year-old Anupriya, who was forced to drop out of her nursing course. All because her father Y. Manikandan, who was into manual scavenging, lost his job last year and was unable to pay the course fees.

Father of four girls, Manikandan was taking care of his children, wife and mother when his photograph appeared in a newspaper in 2016, which changed his life.

In that picture Manikandan was standing in a manhole with the muck inside the drain reaching up to his neck. Soon activists and officials were at his doorstep, explaining that it was illegal for him to do a job like that after manual scavenging was abolished in 2014 through the introduction of Prohibition of Employment as manual Scavengers and Rehabilitation Act -2013.

Manikandan, a school dropout, had entered the job as a contractor lured him at the age of 17. His father was a daily wage worker and none of his siblings is into manual scavenging. He was well aware that it was a job done by a particular community but took it up as he had no other means of finding a livelihood.

So, even after he was told that he was doing something illegal, he continued to go out with contractors who offered him the work of entering cesspools to clear clogged drains and help the corporation maintain its underground drainage system. He was paid about ₹350 per job.

But Manikandan was the cynosure of the official eye and was keenly watched. Pressure from the authorities and activists, particularly Samuel Velanganni, state coordinator, Safai Karamcharis Andolan, continued. He was asked to give up the job.

On September 4, 2017, the Union ministry of social justice and empowerment directed the state Adi Dravida and Tribes Welfare Board to provide him a permanent job at the city's slum management department. But till today the direction of Union ministry has not yielded any results despite Manikandan sending a reminder.

That left him with no option other than to go out when the contractors offered him work. But on day in 2019, an executive engineer of the Slum Clearance Board, Soundarajan, called him and gave him an ultimatum. He should not engage in the work he was doing. Simultaneously, the contractors, too, stopped calling him, leaving him jobless.



Manikandan along with his elder daughter Anupriya (left) and youngest daughter Vinodhini at his house at K.M Garden on Wednesday.

So the elder, who had studied reasonably well till her plus-2 and had joined the School of Nursing in Ranipet, had to drop out. For, could not find alternative employment, too, as he had been labelled a manual scavenger.

His other daughters are in school, studying in various classes, and he had pay a monthly rent of ₹2,500 for his dilapidated tenement. So his wife, Maniyammal, started working as a domestic maid to take care of the seven-member family.

"I want an alternative job. I need to educate my kids and feed them on time. My kids are irregular in the school because I have nothing to feed on time. They suffer because I am jobless," he laments.

According to him, there are many people who are still doing manual scavenging on the sly. "They continue to do the job as nobody calls them for work other than manual scavenging," he reveals.

When he got job offers, till about a couple of years back, he would work on three to six septic tanks per day. He still keeps a diary on the work he did since 2014, in which both employer and service seeker had to sign.

He said that most of the contractors had refused to put their signature on record as they knew it would invite legal trouble.

SAFAI KARAMCHARIS: GOVT DIDN'T ACCEPT OUR DATA

Samuel Velanganni, state coordinator, Safai Karamcharis Andolan, criticised the lackadaisical approach of authorities despite the apex court orders in creating awareness among these communities who are traditionally engaged in the regressive job. "We conducted a survey in nine districts of the state in 2018 and found that there were 3,124 manual scavengers. We had given a report to the government on a rehabilitation package, based on the survey. But the government has never accepted our data. According to the government, there is only 462 manual scavengers," he says.

He also demanded effective aware-

ness campaigns among these communities to discourage a new generation from following this job. The government is still in a denial mode in terms of employment of manual scavengers. If there is no manual scavenging, why reports of people die in manholes appear? Even late last year a young boy named Arunkumar lost life while doing this job in the town, he points out.

As per National Commission for Safai Karamcharis, it is striving hard to pressurise the state governments to get the Supreme Court order implemented. The district administrations are obliged to take steps to discourage people from doing such jobs.



SC DIRECTIVE TO STATES

The Supreme Court, in 2014, had directed the states to identify the families of the persons who died during cleaning of septic tanks since 1993. The court had also asked the state governments to fully implement the Abolition of Manual Scavenging Act and take stringent action against violators since it upholds the citizen's right to live a dignified life that guaranteed by part III of the Constitution. The court had observed that as per Article 46 (that comes under part IV of Indian Constitution), it's moral duty of state government to protect the weaker section of society.

TN TOPS FATALITIES' LIST

As per the survey of ministry of social justice and empowerment, Tamil Nadu had witnessed most number of death cases (206) as per the survey. But the state has paid 98 per cent of victim families.

The fact remains that Rajinikanth has riled both Dravidian camps

R. Mohan

What made Rajinikanth come out with such stern condemnation of an event that took place nearly 50 years ago will remain a mystery for a while more, at least until he plunges full time into politics sometime this year when the Assembly elections still lie ahead in the summer of 2021. It's not easy to buy a theory that his naivety in politics sucked him into the narration because he was at the Thuglaq jubilee event.

We would know whether this Pongal offering harking back to half a century ago was a prelude to his political plunge if he does make his foray public with a clear enunciation of the politics he would like to pursue - spiritual, or a pure power-oriented thrust, or one just to bring about the big change in Tamil Nadu. What Rajini's firm stand on there being no need for an apology does, however, suggest he has made up his mind on where he

will be going in his political journey.

The whole episode was in a way surreal. In recalling one perverted event in which zeal for reform and the battle against superstition went too far in denigrating Hindu Gods in the crudest manner imaginable, Rajini had opened up a can of worms. Nearly 50 years down the road, not even the staunchest Periyar follower would like to believe that any re-enactment of the exhibition of iconoclastic atheism would be possible in these more enlightened times.

And in any case faith seems to have far overtaken the doubters leaving space only for conflicting opinions to co-exist without any overt opposition to the majority.

As a nation we have been prone to worshipping thought leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Periyar without ever following their teachings. So anything said of the iconic thinkers will be taken amiss. If Rajini does not wish to apologise he may have been convinced by the Illustrated Weekly of India issue in which all the excesses of Periyar's followers were made



explicit in images seen on the banners held aloft by many in the procession in which vulgari-

ty was more obvious than any nudity. In any case, 'nirvanam' in the Indian thought stream,

history and culture is not as bad as 'abasam'.

What we lose sight of in any set of arguments about the 1971 procession is Periyar's revolutionary thinking was far above what happened on the ground in this awareness really on eradicating superstition. How else do we explain how a man who has been dead now for 37 years be bang in the centre of a political controversy? The fact is he is still considered the father of the Dravidian movement and the parties, even if a major one split from his DK (into which the Justice Party members were subsumed) due to differences over his marriage to a much younger woman and that Dravidian party further split after a bitter fight for leadership. Such is his legacy that it continues to "live" on decades in which so much has changed.

EK Ramaswamy's Dravidian Self-Respect movement created a template and its progenitor became 'Thanthai Periyar', father figure and great man, as opposed to Mahatma Gandhi, the great soul, from whom he distanced himself and quit the Congress in 1925. His fight

against the caste system was radical in its time considering how deeply entrenched for centuries the obnoxious system was.

And he was far ahead of his time in speaking up for women in colonial India's patriarchal society.

It would be a travesty then if Periyar were to be recalled only for his anti-Brahmin stance. His hatred was focused on them because they were thought to be the top of the pyramid for centuries, if not millenniums. It would also be a travesty if the excesses seen in that one day in 1971 were to be held against Periyar forever.

Angry students we may have been on hearing about what happened that day in Salem, but we can see it in a historical light now as something that took place late in Periyar's life and over which he may have had less control than popularly believed. It is a day of excesses that even his followers must forget.

Now, coming to whether Rajinikanth should apologise for raking up a dark event from history - as facts as established by reports published close to the

day bear out, Rajini may have been on doubtful ground only in details about nudity in Rama and Sita effigies. But that is quibbling over technicalities as the fact remains that his account of the day's event stands up in general terms.

The audio clip of Periyar narrating his side of the 'anti-superstition' rally went viral recently in which Periyar, in his account of the incident, admits that he exposed the 'obscurity of the Gods'.

The fact remains that Rajini has riled both Dravidian camps. As ideological descendants of Periyar, DMK sees him as a threat while the AIADMK sees him as an unpredictable wild card, much like his fellow star Kamal Haasan who, however, has already stepped into politics and made somewhat of an impression on poll debut. The BJP may be cheering now in having found a Hindu champion, but there are miles to go before the ballot next summer.

The author is the Resident Editor of the Chennai and Tamil Nadu editions of this newspaper



Rahul takes a dig at PM Modi over economy, says please try 'your magical exercise routine a few more times'

IN BRIEF

60 artists protest against CAA, NRC

Thane: At least 60 artists from various parts of the country on Sunday vented their anger against the CAA-NRC-NPR regime on canvas at Mumbra in Maharashtra's Thane district. The "Mumbra Shaheen Bagh" protest was organised by the Joint Action Committee for Social Justice, the Secular Art Movement of Maharashtra, the Artist Rises for India and local activists in solidarity with the Shaheen Bagh protesters in Delhi. "The artists came from different parts of the country and raised their voice on canvas against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), the proposed National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the National Population Register (NPR)," an organiser said. He said they invoked Chhatrapati Shivaji, saint-poet Tukaram, and noted Urdu poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz, demanding that the Constitution be protected. —PTI

Raja asks secular forces to oust BJP

Kolkata: Communist Party of India (CPI) general secretary D. Raja on Sunday called upon secular and democratic forces of the country to join hands to oust the BJP from power accusing it of trying to polarise the society on religious lines by bringing the Citizenship (Amendment) Act. Addressing a public meeting on the first day of the three-day CPI national council meeting, Raja said the new citizenship law is not only against Muslims but also "against the poor, Dalits, tribals and common people". He said the party is launching a "BJP Hatao, Desh Bachao" campaign. "By bringing in the CAA, the BJP and RSS want to break India, divide people, want to polarise society. This is their sinister design," he said.

Punjab CM hits out at SAD chief

Chandigarh: Punjab chief minister Amarinder Singh on Sunday slammed SAD chief Sukhbir Singh Badal for praising the Union Budget as pro-poor and pro-farmer. The chief minister claimed that even agriculture experts and farmer bodies have rejected the Budget as totally bereft of any initiative to save the agrarian sector. "While the BJP was blinded by power and could not see the problems faced by the farmers, the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) president was apparently so blinded by his sycophant love for the ruling party that he could see nothing wrong in their actions," Singh was quoted as saying in an official statement.

CONCENTRATE ON BUILDING NATION, SAYS BHAGWAT

Guna (MP): Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat on Sunday appealed to youths to focus on the nation-building by "putting aside personal interests". Addressing the 'Yuva Sankalp Shivir' of the Sangh on its concluding day, Bhagwat said, "Focus on the nation building by putting aside your personal interests. If you resolve to give a little time to nation building, the country would emerge as the 'vishwa guru' (world leader)". According to Sangh insiders, a total of 1376 youth, mostly students drawn from Madhya Pradesh's 16 districts between the age group of 16 to 30, took part in the three-day "Yuva Sankalp Shivir". The camp was held in Veer Savarkar locality in an area of 10 acres where huts were pitched for the participants. Various cultural programmes, debates on various issues and other events were held, at the camp. It is known that the Sangh-affiliated Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) and other organisations have been stridently supporting the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) which has been opposed by the Left-backed bodies in some universities. —PTI

Hindu outfit's UP chief shot dead

Incident in heart of Lucknow; 4 cops, including SI, suspended for alleged laxity

Lucknow, Feb. 2: A leader of a right wing Hindu outfit was shot dead on Sunday while he was out on a morning walk, barely a couple of kilometres away from the high-security Uttar Pradesh legislative complex in the heart of the state capital. Saffron-clad Ranjeet Bachchan, 40, who had founded the Vishwa Hindu Mahasabha, was shot in the head and his cousin Aditya Srivastava injured in the attack by an unidentified assailant who also snatched their mobile phones, according to Joint Commissioner of Police Naveen Arora. The attacker had covered himself in a shawl and was on foot, police said quoting eyewitnesses. Four police personnel, including a sub-inspector, were suspended for alleged laxity and a case has been registered at Hazratganj police station in connection with the



Wife of Antarrashtriya Hindu Mahasabha leader Ranjeet Bachchan, who was shot dead by unidentified assailants when he was out on a morning walk. —PTI incident which occurred near the Collectorate building, days after Lucknow came under the police commissioner system with an aim to improve law and order. Later, police released CCTV footage showing a suspect and announced a cash reward of ₹50,000 for providing information, a senior official said. According to Akhil Bharat Hindu Mahasabha president Swami Chakrapani, Bachchan was also the working president of the outfit's Uttar Pradesh unit. Chakrapani condemned the murder and hit out at chief minister Yogi Adityanath. The incident

comes nearly four months after the leader of a little known Hindu Samaj Party was killed in the city. On October 18, Kamlesh Tiwari (45), who was earlier associated with a faction of the Hindu Mahasabha, was found murdered at his home in the congested Naka Hindola area of the city. "Such incidents throw a challenge to UP chief minister Yogi Adityanath. He should weigh his options as to whether election campaigning in other states is more important or improving the law and order of the state," Mr Chakrapani said. Arora said as per initial information, Bachchan and his wife Kalindi Sharma Bachchan were not in a cordial relationship and a case in this regard was registered in Gorakhpur. "This angle is also being looked into," he said. He said Bachchan was

associated with the Samajwadi Party previously and took part in cycle rallies of the party between 2002-09. Arora said they are examining CCTV footage from the area and checking the background of the people with whom Bachchan had any dispute. "As many as eight teams of the crime branch are working to solve the case," he said. In the complaint registered with the police, Aditya Srivastava said, "I along with Ranjeet went out for a morning walk. At around 6 am, on the road outside Globe Park, an unknown person who had wrapped a shawl came from a behind, and asked us to hand over our mobile phones." "After this, the unknown person fired at Ranjeet, and also fired at me on my left arm. I ran from the spot in order to save my life," he added. —PTI

Uddhav opposes NRC, supports Citizenship Act

AGE CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI, FEB. 2

Chief minister Uddhav Thackeray on Sunday said that the proposed National Register of Citizens (NRC) would not be implemented in Maharashtra, arguing that it would make proving citizenship complicated for Hindus and Muslims. Mr Thackeray, on the other hand, defended the controversial Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) — which his own allies, the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and Congress, have opposed — saying that it won't take away anyone's citizenship but rather grant citizenship to persecuted minorities from neighbouring countries. Mr Thackeray and the Shiv Sena have been vocal supporters of the CAA, which is considered the precursor to the NRC. In an interview to the Sena mouthpiece Saamana, the chief minister said, "The NRC will not be allowed in Maharashtra. Proving citizenship will be difficult for both Hindus and Muslims. I will not let that happen," he said. The Sena chief also reiterated that his party would continue to endorse Hindutva. "We have not abandoned Hindutva and will never do so. Just that we have formed an alliance government in Maharashtra does not mean that we have changed our religion. We have not compromised anything on the ideology of Hindutva," he said.



Uddhav Thackeray

He argued that it would make proving citizenship complicated for Hindus and Muslims.

Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Raut, who is also the editor of Saamana, interviewed the Sena chief. A short clip of the interview was shared on Twitter while the full interview will be released in the coming days. The Shiv Sena had earlier criticised the Narendra Modi government over the new citizenship law and the proposed NRC, both of which have led to protests across the country. The Sena had earlier alleged that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) wanted a 'Hindu-Muslim riot' over the CAA. The CAA was passed by Parliament on December 11. Those opposed to the legislation have argued that it violates the basic tenets of the Constitution. However, the government and ruling BJP have been defending the Act, saying minority groups from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan have no other option but to come to India to escape religious persecution.

Expelled AIADMK MP Sasikala Pushpa joins BJP

New Delhi, Feb. 2: Rajya Sabha MP from Tamil Nadu Sasikala Pushpa, who was expelled from the AIADMK in 2016, joined the ruling BJP on Sunday in the presence of the party's national secretary P. Muralidhar Rao, and former Union minister Pon Radhakrishnan. Inducting Sasikala into the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) at a press conference, Mr Rao, who is the party's in-charge for the southern state, described her as a "very aggressive, vocal leader in Tamil Nadu". "Sasikala is a Rajya Sabha member and she



has been a very aggressive, vocal leader in Tamil Nadu. Coming from south Tamil Nadu, she has also been a mayor of Thoothukudi, a port town, and has worked as the chief of the AIADMK's women's wing for the state," he said. Sasikala's tenure in the Upper House of Parliament will come to an end in a few months. She was involved in an altercation with a DMK MP in 2016 and was accused of slapping him. —PTI



DMK President M.K. Stalin takes signatures of the general public for his party's signature campaign against the CAA, NRC and NPR in Chennai on Sunday. —PTI

4 more detained J&K leaders set free

Currently only 16 politicians are now detained at the hostel

YUSUF JAMEEL SRINAGAR, FEB. 2

Four more mainstream politicians were on Sunday released from detention in Jammu and Kashmir. They are among hundreds of political leaders and activists detained by the police before or immediately after J&K was stripped of its special status and split up into two Union Territories on August 5 last year. The four freed second-rung leaders belonging to National Conference (NC) and People's Democratic Party (PDP) were lodged at Srinagar's MLAs Hostel. After their release, only 16 politicians are now detained at the hostel. Those released on Sunday include Abdul Majid Larmi, Ghulam Nabi Bhat and Dr Muhammad Shafi of the NC and Muhammad

2 CRPF jawans injured in Srinagar grenade blast

AGE CORRESPONDENT SRINAGAR, FEB. 2

Two jawans of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and an equal number of pedestrians were injured when suspected militants tossed a hand grenade towards the security personnel deployed along Srinagar's busy Residency Road on Sunday. The police and witnessed said that unknown assailant targeted the CRPF personnel from behind at the eastern corner of Pratap Park, yards away from City Centre Lal Chowk. The injured were quickly evacuated to hospital where their condition is stated to be 'out of danger'. A report put the number of injured civilians at five, saying that three of them received minor splinter injuries and did not report to hospital.

their release from prisons within and outside the UT. Earlier on January 3, two PDP leaders Rafi Ahmad Mir and Abdul Majeed Paddar were released from house arrest. This was followed by the release of two more mainstream leaders and former MLAs Hakeem Muhammad Yaseen and Muhammad Ashraf Mir from the MLAs' hostel. The government had on December 30 last year released five second-rung leaders of the NC, PDP and Congress - after they reportedly signed bonds assuring the authorities that they will not indulge in any activities prohibited in the documents. They included Ishfaq Jabbar and Ghulam Nabi Bhat (NC), Bashir Mir (Congress) and Zahoor Mir and Yasir Reshi (PDP), the official sources said.

own assailant targeted the CRPF personnel from behind at the eastern corner of Pratap Park, yards away from City Centre Lal Chowk. The injured were quickly evacuated to hospital where their condition is stated to be 'out of danger'. A report put the number of injured civilians at five, saying that three of them received minor splinter injuries and did not report to hospital. They were freed days after the J&K government revoked the detention of 26 persons under stringent Public Safety Act (PSA) and ordered for

57-year-old dies of heart attack during CAA protest

RAJIB CHOWDHURI KOLKATA, FEB. 2

An elderly apparently died of heart attack early on Sunday while protesting against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), National Register of Citizens (NRC) and National Population Register (NPR) at an ongoing Shaheen Bagh-style agitation at Park Circus Maidan in the city. Sameeda Khatoun (57), the deceased, was a resident of Entally in central part of the city. She is survived by her husband, Mohammed Alauddin Ali and their eight children. At around 12.40 am she fell unconscious at the agitation venue due to high blood pressure, according to sources. Khatoun was rushed by

her family members and fellows to nearby Calcutta National Medical College and Hospital. Later she was referred to Islamia Hospital where she was declared brought dead. Asmat Jamil, one of the organisers of the Park Circus Maidan agitation, said, "We are in deep grief at the sudden demise of Khatoun, an activist of Park Circus Shaheen Bagh Manch. We express our sympathy with the bereaved family members and pledge to carry the movement in which she was actively involved against NRC-NPR-CAA." In the afternoon the demonstrators wearing black badges observed a two-minute silence in Khatoun's memory. One of them recalled that Khatoun used to come at 3pm daily to the agitation

venue, where several hundred people including 250 women from the city had been staging a peaceful sit-in demonstration since January 7 against the new act, and stayed till 1 am to extend her solidarity to the protest. "Like previous days, she also came on Saturday. Her family members including children were also present there," he said. A political slugfest has however begun over Khatoun's citizenship. Expressing his doubt, state BJP general secretary Sayantan Basu wondered if the deceased protester was a Bangladeshi national. He also claimed that majority of the protesters at the Park Circus Maidan were from the neighbouring country.

K'taka Cabinet: 13 MLAs set to take oath on Feb. 6

Bengaluru, Feb. 2: Karnataka chief minister B.S. Yediyurappa on Sunday said the expansion of his ministry will take place on February 6 and 13 MLAs will take the oath of office. These MLAs include 10 legislators who had joined the BJP from other parties, including the Congress and the JD(S), he said. Yediyurappa had on January 31 received the nod from his party's central leadership for expanding his six-month-old cabinet. The exercise has

been on the cards ever since the BJP won 12 of the 15 seats in the December 5, 2019, assembly bypolls, helping the Yediyurappa government retain majority in the House. "The cabinet expansion will take place on February 6 with the oath-taking ceremony at the Raj Bhavan at 10.30 am," the CM said. Thirteen MLAs, including 10 who had joined the BJP from other parties, including Congress and Janata Dal (Secular), will take the oath of office, he said. —PTI



Devotees from China, Hongkong and Taiwan participate in the 37th Kagyu Monlam prayers in Bodhgaya on Sunday. —PTI

RSS set to expand its base in Scindia bastion

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY BHOPAL, FEB. 2

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has firming up its strategy to expand its base in Guna Lok Sabha constituency, considered the traditional bastion of Scindia dynasty of Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh, leaving the ruling Congress worried. The decision by the RSS

to hold its 'Yuva sankalp Shibir', the youth camp, in Guna is a part of the strategy by the sangh to 'expand and then consolidate' its base in Guna in the wake of the Bharatiya Janata Party wresting the Lok Sabha constituency from Congress veteran Jyotiraditya Scindia in the last polls, sangh sources disclosed to this newspaper on Sunday. RSS supremo Mohan

Bhagwat, significantly, exhorted people to choose 'Nayak' or statesman over 'Neta' or leader while addressing the youths who attended the camp late on Saturday. Sangh sources revealed that RSS has chalked out a strategy to 'expand and consolidate' its base in Guna in the wake of changed political scenario in the constituency. "RSS has been working

in the Lok Sabha constituency since last five years to generate awareness among the people on the lack of development in the area. BJP had cashed in on the works done by RSS, by snatching Guna seat from Mr Scindia in the last LS polls", a senior sangh leader told this newspaper on Sunday requesting not to be quoted since he was not authorised to

speak to the media. BJP's K.P. Yadav, a greenhorn, won the seat by defeating Mr Scindia by a margin over one lakh votes in the polls. The Scindia dynasty used to be seen in reverence by the people in Guna, once a part of former Gwalior kingdom. Mr Scindia was given the charge of west UP by Congress in the last Lok Sabha polls.

MP to host IIFA awards 2020

Bhopal: Madhya Pradesh is all set to host International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) Awards 2020 in March this year.

to announce the schedule of the international event in Indore in MP on Monday, an official spokesman of state government said on Sunday. The event set to be telecast in 90 countries is scheduled to be held in the cities of Bhopal and Indore.

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Tete-a-tete

Jaishankar holds discussions on regional issues with Turkmenistan counterpart Rashid Meredov

IN BRIEF

3 escape from Amritsar prison

Chandigarh: Three undertrial prisoners escaped from the high-security Amritsar Central Jail by scaling the boundary walls, prompting chief minister Amarinder Singh to order a review and revamp of prison security across the state. The three — one accused of rape and the other two (both brothers) of theft and dacoity — escaped on the intervening night of Saturday and Sunday by making a hole in the wall of their barrack by removing about 10 bricks, officials said. "They then appear to have scaled the inner wall — which is about 16-feet high — by standing one atop the other. While the outer wall — approx 21-feet — was crossed by them using a hook made of a steel bar and the cover of a quilt to make a ladder. "They finally escaped the jail complex from a point near Tower no. 10, which was not under CCTV cover," DGP Dinkar Gupta said. — PTI

4 killed, 3 injured in UP car accident

Badaun: Four persons, including a couple and their 14-year-old son, died while three others sustained injuries after their car rammied into another vehicle in Uttar Pradesh's Badaun district, police said on Sunday. According to senior superintendent of police Ashok Kumar Tripathi, the accident took place late on Saturday night, when the victims were returning from a pilgrimage spot in Badaun's Dataganj area. The deceased have been identified as Baleshwar Singh (55), his wife Nirmala Devi (50), their son Sher Singh and a relative Ashok Kumar (40). "The accident took place, when a vehicle hit their car near a petrol pump. Villagers informed the police and also assisted in retrieving the bodies from the mangled vehicles," Mr Tripathi said. — PTI

Constable ends life in Muzaffarpur

Muzaffarpur: A police constable committed suicide by shooting himself allegedly with his AK-47 rifle in Bihar's Muzaffarpur district on Sunday. The deceased has been identified as Pawan Kumar Singh (36), who was posted as body guard of deputy superintendent of police (East), Muzaffarpur, Amitesh Kumar, a police officer said. The constable, a resident of Arwal district, died at Muzaffarpur police lines, senior superintendent of police, Jayant Kant, said. The SSP said the reason behind the incident will be ascertained following an investigation into it. The body has been sent to Sri Krishna Medical College and Hospital (SKMCH) for post-mortem examination. — PTI

2nd case in Kerala, India stops e-visas

Continued from Page 1 e-visas from China, the Indian government will now have the discretion of deciding whom to grant visas to, as there will be a manual interface now at an Indian diplomatic mission if a foreign applicant from China wants to apply for a visa to visit India. In the case of e-visas granted online, such an exercise of discretion would not have been possible which is why the Indian government took this decision, observers point out. "Due to certain current developments, travel to India on e-visas stands temporarily suspended with immediate effect. This applies to holders of Chinese passports and applicants of other nationalities residing in the People's Republic of China. Holders of already issued e-visas may note that these are no longer valid. All those who have a compelling reason to visit India may contact the Indian embassy in Beijing or Indian consulates in Shanghai or Guangzhou, and the Indian Visa Application Centres in these cities," the Indian embassy in Beijing tweeted. External affairs minister S. Jaishankar tweeted: "Seven Malaysians brought back with 323 Indians from Wuhan on the second Air India flight today. #NeighbourhoodFirst at work again."

Mantri says no virus case in Assam, denies reports

MANOJ ANAND GUWAHATI, FEB. 2

Assam health minister Himanta Biswa Sarma here on Sunday said that no coronavirus case has so far been reported in Assam. He however admitted that they are alert and taking all precautionary steps.

The clarification of the health minister came in the wake of a youth shifted to isolation ward of Guwahati Medical College Hospital.

Informing that a youth from Morigaon who works in Kerala landed at the Guwahati airport with symptoms of coronavirus, sources in Guwahati Medical College Hospital said that youth was shifted to isolation ward and his blood sample has been collected for confirmation of virus.

The medical team attending the patient said that they are not sure about the coronavirus but

Three test negative for virus in Jaipur

Jaipur, Feb. 2: Three persons who were admitted to a hospital here have tested negative for the novel coronavirus, officials said on Sunday. They were admitted to the hospital on Saturday and were kept under observation.

"All three have tested negative for coronavirus," Dr DS Meena, superintendent of SMS Hospital said on Sunday. Arrangements have been made at Alwar's ESIC Medical College for keeping nearly 300

Indian citizens airlifted from China's Wuhan city, the epicentre of the coronavirus outbreak.

The batch of passengers has not yet arrived and is likely to arrive on Monday, said Ravi Sharma, a state health department official coordinating with the Centre.

He said 300 beds have been prepared in two hostels and adequate staff has been deployed.

Deputy CMHO, Alwar, Dr Chhabil Kumar said the passengers will be quarantined. — PTI

Surveillance of air passengers is under way at Lokapriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport," the minister said.

Minister of state for health and family welfare Pijush Hazarika admitted that a patient with suspected infection of coronavirus has been admitted to the GMCH as precautionary measures.

"The patient who was returning from Kerala was having a very high fever. The doctors are examining and monitoring his health. However, he may not be infected by coronavirus, rather he could have small pox or dengue," the minister of state for health and family welfare told reporters.

He said that doctors would be monitoring the health of patient till Monday and only after that they would be able to clarify whether the patient is infected with coronavirus.

on the basis of symptoms, he has been isolated. Assam health minister said that there was no

need to panic about. "The Centre has issued a protocol for us to follow and we have already started it.

Schengen visa fee is hiked to Euro 80

New Delhi, Feb. 2: A trip to much of Europe has gone costlier from Sunday with increase in Schengen visa fees to Euro 80 from the current Euro 60, officials said.

A Schengen visa is needed to visit 26 European countries, including Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Switzerland and Spain.

"The visa fee increases from Euro 60 to Euro 80. This increase is the first one since 2006," an European Union (EU) official said.

The increase in the visa fee comes as an updated Schengen Visa Code takes effect from February 2 this year. It brings the fee in line with the level where it would be today if it had been aligned to the general EU-wide inflation rate since 2006.

"The increased visa fee will provide member states with additional financial resources to process visa applications quickly and more efficiently. By international standards, the visa fee remains low," the official said.

For regular travellers, the fee increase is offset by the new rules on long-validity visas. These travellers may save money under the new provisions. — PTI



An equestrian holding the national flag rides as he rehearses the Defence Expo 2020 in Lucknow on Sunday. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to inaugurate the mega event, to be held from February 5-9. — PTI

'Strong people-to-people bond behind strength of Indo-US ties'

New Delhi, Feb. 2: The "cross-fertilisation" of ideas among people of India and the US has been the "heart and soul" of growing relations between the two great nations, foreign secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla said on Sunday.

The newly-appointed foreign secretary also said strength and resilience of Indo-US relations comes from strong people-to-people ties.

Mr Shringla, who was India's Ambassador to the US before assuming charge of the new responsibility, was speaking at a ceremony to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the prestigious Fulbright

scholarship programme in India.

"The strength and resilience of India-US relations is derived from ties between the people of our two countries. Our respective citizens embody the shared values of democracy, diversity, creativity, and entrepreneurship — the characteristics that define our two great nations," he said in the presence of US envoy Kenneth J. Juster.

Mr Shringla said the natural partnership between India and the US has been an "article of faith" for the people who have been the driving force in deepening the ties.

"Academic exchanges

and cross-fertilisation of ideas represent not only some of our old linkages but also the heart and soul of our ties. Sanskrit was taught in Harvard (university) in the 18th century too, stocking curiosity about the past," he said.

Mr Shringla said the US has been the most favoured overseas destination for Indian students seeking higher education and that over 200,000 of them are now working in that country.

"Over 200,000 Indian students work in the US," he said.

On the Fulbright programme, he said it supported over 20,000 scholars from India. — PTI

Coastal security: Bangla vessels 'cause for concern'

Security agencies asked to follow protocol route

RAJIB CHOWDHURI KOLKATA, FEB. 2

The movement of Bangladeshi vessels in the Sundarbans delta off the Bay of Bengal has remained a "concern" for the coastal security mechanism in the eastern parts of the country.

To tackle the challenge, the Indian Navy has asked other security agencies to follow protocol route for monitoring the vessels from the neighbouring country in the Indian waters.

"We have been requesting all the agencies that they should follow the protocol route. That is the only the route we can actually monitor. You will not be able to know if any other route is followed. There is an issue of concern. I am sure the agencies concerned are putting in effort to tackle this," naval officer in charge (West Bengal) Commodore Suprobho K.

Indo-Bangla joint drill from today

Kolkata: The Indian Army and its Bangladesh counterpart will hold a two-week-long joint military exercise in Meghalaya from February 3, a Defence official said here. The exercise, termed "Sampriti-IX", to be held at Umroi till February 16, will stress on counter-terrorist operations. The exercise is part of the Indo-Bangladesh defence cooperation. — PTI

De told this newspaper on Sunday on the movement of Bangladeshi vessels.

He elaborated, "It has to be a collective effort. The Navy is getting involved as it is the maritime riverine border. The Border Security Force is also there. But since the Navy

is the overall in charge of the coastal security, mutual understanding is beneficial."

On the security threat in the delta, Cmde De pointed out that the riverine boundary is "very porous".

He added, "The chance of a boat coming through the sea and getting detected is higher than if it comes through creeks. There are so many places where people can make crossings. So this has to be a joint effort by the police, marine, border security force and customs. "It is our endeavour to interact with all the agencies."

Commodore Suprobho K. De was speaking after flagging in Matla Abhiyaan, a five-day-long coastal security exercise by a 20-member navy team led by Captain Joydeep Chakraborty in two boats from Kolkata to Sundarban delta, at Man Of War Jetty in the river Hooghly in the city.

Odisha Naxal camp busted in major ops

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO BHUBANESWAR, FEB. 2

Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) jawans seized a huge cache of arms, ammunition and other articles used by Maoists during combing operation in a forest under Chandrapur police limits in Rayagada district on Saturday evening.

The 8th Battalion of CRPF launched the combing operation based on specific intelligence regarding the presence of ultras in the region. Though the left-wing extremists managed to escape, the security personnel seized nine guns, 15 detonators, eight rounds of live bullets and other articles of the red rebels from the spot.

In another incident, Andhra Pradesh task

force also recovered a huge cache of arms and ammunition of the Maoists at Vijayanagar district near Odisha's Koraput district.

Similarly, the task force recovered a clay-mine, detonators and other explosives during the combing operation at Bangarugudi area. All the explosives were reportedly dumped at an isolated place.

Meanwhile, the Odisha police has beefed up security on border districts, including Malkangiri after a Maoist was stoned to death following a face-off with locals at Janturai village recently.

DGP Abhay said the state government has decided to make Malkangiri district, free from Maoists and elaborate plans have been made for the same.

Man booked for giving triple talaq to his wife in Jhansi

Gwalior, Feb. 2: A 28-year-old man from Jhansi in Madhya Pradesh was booked for allegedly divorcing his wife through the banned triple talaq method, a Gwalior police official said on Sunday.

His father and brother have also been booked for harassing the woman for dowry police added.

The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019

makes talaq-e-biddat or any other similar form of talaq having the effect of instantaneous and irrevocable divorce pronounced by a husband illegal.

Adil Khan, after "divorcing" his wife on January 28, asked her to marry his father and consummate the marriage, as per "nikah halala" norms, if she wished to marry him again, said Gwalior police official G. Badhoria. — PTI

Man enters runway, damages copter in MP

RABINDRA NATH CHAUDHURY BHOPAL, FEB. 2

A youth on Sunday entered the runway of Raja Bhoj International airport here dodging the security personnel deployed in the area and then damaged a helicopter when it was about to take off, police said.

The man was overpowered by Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) personnel and taken into custody. Interrogation is under way.

"Interrogation of the youth was on. He was yet to be identified," airport authorities said.

According to the airport sources, the youth scaled the boundary wall of the airport on one side and entered the runway.

He then came in front of the new Agusta AW-139, a private chopper, which was about to take off and then started pelting stones at it.

The glass window of the chopper was damaged in the incident, the airport sources said.

The chopper was grounded.

Lockdown in major China city; toll 304

Continued from Page 1

hours later. Most of the infections overseas have been in people who had travelled from Wuhan, an industrial hub of 11 million people, or surrounding areas of Hubei province.

The man who died in the Philippines was a 44-year-old from Wuhan, according to the World Health Organisation, which has declared the epidemic a global health emergency.

China has embarked on unprecedented efforts to contain the virus, which is believed to have jumped to humans from a Wuhan animal market, and can be transmitted among people in a similar fashion to the flu.

Those efforts have included extraordinary quarantines in Wuhan and surrounding cities, with all transport out banned, effectively sealing-off more than 50 million people.

But 10 days after locking down Wuhan, authorities imposed similar draconian measures on Wenzhou, a coastal city of nine million people in Zhejiang province, part of

the eastern industrial heartland that has powered China's economic rise over recent decades.

Only one resident per household is allowed to go out every two days to buy necessities, and 46 highway toll stations have been closed, authorities announced.

The city had previously closed public places such as cinemas and museums, and suspended public transport.

Zhejiang has 661 confirmed infections, with 265 of those in Wenzhou, according to the government.

This is the highest tally for any province in China after ground-zero Hubei.

Internationally, the United States, Australia, New Zealand and Israel have banned foreign nationals from visiting if they have been in China recently, and they have also warned their own citizens against travelling there.

Mongolia, Russia and Nepal have closed their land borders.

The number of countries reporting infections rose to 24 after Britain,

Russia and Sweden confirmed their first cases this weekend.

The death toll in China climbed to 304 on Sunday after authorities reported 45 new deaths.

There were 2,590 new confirmed cases in China, bringing the total to nearly 14,500.

The number of confirmed infections in China is far higher than the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak of 2002-03.

SARS, caused by a pathogen similar to the new coronavirus and also originated in China, killed 774 people worldwide - most of them in mainland China and Hong Kong.

With hospitals in Wuhan overwhelmed, China will Monday open a military-level field hospital that was built in just 10 days to treat people stricken by the virus.

And with the Chinese economy suffering, the central bank announced it would release \$173 billion on Monday to maintain liquidity in the banking system. — AFP

NIA raids across Kashmir to trace cop-militant links

Continued from Page 1

as deputy superintendent of police at the Anti-Hijacking Squad at the Srinagar Airport, has since been placed under suspension. The police authorities have also recommended that he be dismissed from service.

The militant duo were travelling in a Hyundai i20 along the highway linking Srinagar and Jammu and were reportedly on their way to Chandigarh.

The police also arrested Irfan Shafi Mir, a lawyer by profession, who has been accused as an over-ground worker of militants. Subsequently, Naveed Babu's brother Syed Irfan Ahmed was arrested from Punjab.

The investigations by the J&K police had reportedly revealed that Singh had accompanied militants or helped them in relocating to various parts of country on different occasions in lieu of money and other considerations. However, the Centre later asked the NIA to probe the case.

The sources said a NIA team led by a DIG-rank officer went to Anantnag on Saturday and held a meeting with senior police officials there. This was followed by the NIA's raids in Shopian. The places raided by the NIA sleuths included the homes of Naveed Babu, Asif and Irfan Mir and also those of a Hizb militant, Adil Pala, and Khurshid Sheikh, a local resident who allegedly helped Naveed Babu, a former special police officer, in stealing four service rifles from a security picket at a Food Corporation of India store in central district of Budgam in 2017.

The sources said Khurshid Sheikh was not present at home. However, the NIA detained his brother Tariq Sheikh. The NIA also raided the house of Tariq Mir, the local sarpanch, in Maldera village of Shopian. Mir said to be associated with the BJP was, however, neither detained nor questioned, the sources said.

'Non-lapsable' fund for military, forces mooted

Continued from Page 1 defence and internal security, intends to constitute an expert group comprising representatives of the ministries of defence, home affairs and finance to consider the detailed modalities and implementation plan for accretion to, and utilisation of, the proposed non-lapsable fund or alternative mechanism," said its report tabled in Parliament on Saturday.

The commission said it is of the view that the non-

salary component should be allowed to grow at a robust pace so as to allow for a reasonable level of maintenance of defence assets. "An annual growth of 11 per cent in total defence revenue expenditure allows expenditure on maintenance of defence assets (the non-salary component of defence revenue expenditure) to grow at around 15.5 per cent in 2020-21, compared to an average growth of about eight per cent in the previous two years," it said.

Opp. set to take on govt over CAA-NRC

Continued from Page 1 not allow the motions to be taken up, the party will disrupt Question Hour. The party will also demand that PM Narendra Modi speak on the anti-CAA protests while replying to the motion of thanks, failing which they would stage a walkout, the sources added.

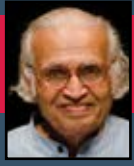
In the Rajya Sabha, the Trinamul Congress has given notice under Rule 267 for suspension of rules to discuss the "raging anti

CAA-NRC-NPR people's movement in India".

Also, for the first time since the party was formed in 1992, the TMC will move amendments to the President's motion of thanks address.

Sources said TMC parliamentary party leader Derek O'Brien and chief whip Sukhendu Shekhar Roy have moved six amendments in the Upper House and thus amendments would be moved in the Lower House too.

Remembering Kuchipudi dance-drama pioneer Vedantam Raghavayya



Sunil Kothari
focus

■ When I was researching Kuchipudi way back in 1962, I was staying with Guru Vempati Chinna Satyam in Madras. He suggested that I should go and interview a pioneer dancer, Vedantam Raghavayya.



In the early 1930s, the classical Kuchipudi dance-drama form had an interesting interaction with cinema. That is a fascinating chapter in the history of the Kuchipudi dance form. When I was researching Kuchipudi way back in 1962, I was staying with Guru Vempati Chinna Satyam in Madras. He suggested that I should go and interview a pioneer dancer, Vedantam Raghavayya, who was a renowned film director. He shared with me interesting facts about how Kuchipudi dance was introduced in Telugu films in the 1930s.

My friend Dashrath Patel, a celebrated designer, painter and photographer teaching at the National Institute of Design (NID), Ahmedabad, was also in Madras. He agreed to come with me to photograph Raghavayya at his residence in Madras, now Chennai.

What a personality Raghavayya was! He had a delectable cleft in his chin and a bright pair of eyes. Tall and handsome, he welcomed me and Dashrath with a warm smile as Vempati Garu had informed him about us and my research work in Kuchipudi. He had very kindly taken out a few photographs for us to see of his dance performances and a few photos of the films. Dashrath took several photos when Vedantam Raghavayya told us of the history of how Kuchipudi was introduced into films. Those rare photos taken of Raghavayya by Dashrath Patel are in the archive of NID, Ahmedabad.

Raghavayya was born on June 8, 1919 in Kuchipudi village into the Vedantam family and started learning Kuchipudi under Yakshagana Pitamaha Chinta Venkataramayya when he was barely six years old. After two years, he performed the role of Prahlada in Prahlada Yakshagana,



— ART INDIA FOUNDATION TRUST



A sketch of Vedantam Raghavayya (above) by D.S.K.V. Sastry



winning a gold medal. From then there was no looking back till 1931.

Reminiscing, Raghavayya told us that he continued to play the roles of Prahlada, Lohitayasa, Lava, Kusha and Dharmangada. And in 1931, he for the first time appeared in the female role of Usha Kanya. That won him quite an appreciation. The photo he showed us was quite in keeping with how females were dressed in those years. Since he started winning a number of gold medals, he began to feel high. He also followed with female roles of Chandramathi, Sita and Satyabhama that he played with consummate artistry. He also performed male roles such as Harishchandra and Ram.

The big break came in 1932 when in Madras, he performed for Andhra Natak Kala Parishad, Balagopal Tarangam, and also the role of Usha in *Usha Natakam* dance-drama. It was at that time that American dancer Ragini Devi, mother of Indrani Rahman, saw him and asked him to join her troupe, which his Guru Venakataramayya did not approve of and took him away to Kuchipudi village.

"It was in 1937 that I appeared in the film *'Mohini Rukmangada'*," said Raghavayya. "I danced Balagopal Tarangam in a female costume, which was a disaster. And then I vouched not to do anything with film. But in 1939, when the film *'Raitubidda'* was made, I was secretly taken away to Bezwada and was made to sign a contract, my performance in the film was satisfactory and I got good publicity."

It thus brought Kuchipudi dance into cinema and Telugu cinema

became an art form of Andhra Pradesh.

In the 1930s, oriental dance became popular in Madras. Even when Raghavayya was strong in the traditional Kuchipudi dance form, Oriental dance did influence him. "Of course, I was aware of Uday Shankar, whose presentations were mindboggling and far more artistic than what we were performing... we also formed a troupe with the name Prabhakar Natya Mandali with Vempati Peda Satyam, and Krishnamurthy and three of us, the trio, included dancers from non-hereditary dancers including Tandava Krishna and others. We had one successful tour, but then Peda Satyam left us..."

"It so happened that I was invited again in Madras to play the role of Garuda in the film *Garuda Garvabhangam* in which I choreographed dances. By then, Peda Satyam was with Ram Gopal, a contemporary of Uday Shankar, performing in Lahore. I summoned Peda Satyam to come to Madras. And we formed a troupe of 30 members and travelled to many cities. We were even encouraged to start a school of Kuchipudi called 'Kuchipudi Kala Vignan Kendram', but it did not succeed. Our last performance was in December 1943."

Raghavayya was vastly gifted and in no time he learnt the ropes

of the movies, directing the films, and not only choreographing dances as a dance master. Between 1940 and 1951, he directed and acted in the films *Keelu Gurram*, *Thyagayya*, *Yogi Vemana* and *Swapna Sundari*. The song "*Kuhu Kuhu bole Koyalia*" became a rage from *Swapna Sundari*. In 1951, he started Vinoda Pictures with C.R. Subburaman, D.L. Narayana and Samudrala Senior. Two more films, *Stree Sahasam* and *Shanthi* were produced and in 1953, Sharatchandra Chattopadhyaya's novel *Devadas* was made in Telugu as *Devadasu*.

Raghavayya rose in fame with films like *Anarkali*, *Suvarna Sundari*, *Swarna Manjari*, *Chiranjeevulu* and *Raja Nandini*. In 1964, he was awarded the "Bharata Kala Prapoorna" title in the All India Dance Festival organised by the Andhra Pradesh Sangeet Natak Akademi. Another important landmark in his career was the making of the film *Girija Kalyanam* and *Rahasyam* in 1967. In *Girija Kalyanam*, Vedantam Satyanarayan Sarma had played the role of Manmatha and Korada Narasimha Rao the role of Lord Shiva. These films contributed a lot in making Kuchipudi dance-dramas popular.

Banda Kanaklingeshwara Rao

and several other leading lights of Andhra were clamouring for the status of the Kuchipudi dance-drama form as a classical Indian dance form on par with Bharatanatyam, Kathak, Manipuri and Kathak. The central Sangeet Natak Akademi had by 1966 accorded the status to Odissi as a classical dance form. Vedantam Raghavayya, with his eminence as a multi-talented Kuchipudi dancer, performer, guru, choreographer and a successful film director, contributed to the acceptance of Kuchipudi dance as a classical dance form.

Vedantam Raghavayya passed away on October 9, 1971.

Recently, on 22 nd December 2019, his centenary was celebrated at Hyderabad, at Rabindra Bharathi Auditorium. Professor and head, Department of Dance, Dr Anuradha Jonnalagadda had invited me to visit Hyderabad and see the exhibition they had mounted of photographs tracing Raghavayya's life. There were lectures paying tributes to Raghavayya. Some dance performances were recreated after Raghavayya's choreography from his films and clippings of some of the films were screened. Musician D.V.S Sastry, Prof. Anuradha Jonnalagadda and Dr Katayayini Ganti were the three principal organisers. Dr Anuradha Jonnalagadda has edited a book containing rare photographs, articles in English and Telugu and the book "*Celebrating Life*" on Vedantam Raghavayya. It is a collector's item.

The writer is an eminent dance historian

Several leading lights of Andhra had clamoured for the status of the Kuchipudi dance-drama form as a classical Indian dance form

THE ASIAN AGE

3 FEBRUARY 2020

Budget lacks vision, a golden chance wasted

Disappointment is the one word that sums up Union Budget 2020-21. Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman had a great opportunity to boost economic growth, after the ill-conceived 2016 demonetisation and an ill-timed rollout of the Goods and Services Tax in 2017. However she frittered away a golden chance to course-correct the country's economic discourse by presenting a Budget that doesn't have any vision or idea to address the current economic problems.

India's economy is beset with three major problems: One, low consumer confidence, which discourages people from spending and thereby fails to create enough demand for entrepreneurs to invest and create jobs; two, poor prospects of future growth in demand and this inhibits business people from expanding their businesses; three, low capital formation and difficulty in securing loans. Any solution to boost economic growth must begin with restoring the people's confidence in the economy's future. But there was no major announcement in the Budget — something similar to the Atal Behari Vajpayee government's Golden Quadrilateral — that could revive confidence. When the government, that theoretically has unlimited spending power, shudders to fearlessly take up mega-projects to boost the economy, what can individuals and companies do? Similarly, nothing was done to either to resurrect state-run banks or privatise them to bring efficiency into their functioning.

When the government, that theoretically has unlimited spending power, shudders to fearlessly take up mega-projects to boost the economy, what can individuals and companies do?

The Budget, however, had some good proposals like encouraging women's self-help groups to build storage facilities for farm produce in villages, incentivising the construction of cold storages at the block level on PPP mode, and prodding state governments to amend archaic laws governing market-yards. In the proposed scheme, the Centre would remain a mere facilitator by providing financial support. How fast such proposals fructify, especially in the wake of a deep-seated resistance in rural areas to allow a new social order to emerge, is a trillion-rupee question.

Another great disappointment in the Budget was the new income-tax regime. There are many opinions on taxation — some call for taxing the rich at a higher rate and relatively less rich at a lesser rate, others prefer a considerably lower rate for everyone without a maze of deductions for easy tax compliance, and a few others oppose the concept of income-tax itself. On her part, Ms Sitharaman appears to have chosen the advice of the second lot, but not wholeheartedly. The result is that she abolished all deductions to make compliance easy, but tax slabs were rearranged in such a manner that the taxpayer continues to pay the same tax or maybe a little more. In a nation like India where each individual has to fend for himself due to the lack of a social security net, most people dislike the idea of working one-third (33 per cent) of their day to pay income-tax. And at any given opportunity, they would try to evade taxes. But if the tax rate is low and compliance easy, more people would become taxpayers. But sadly the finance minister failed to realise it, and her tax proposal has ended up as the butt of jokes in the social media.

Indian supremacy

The Austrians, it is said, had a genius for defeat. If sport is war minus the shooting, then the New Zealand cricket team seems to have become the modern equivalent of the Austrians, the historical losers on the battlefield, as in World War I. In an unprecedented 5-0 Kiwi-wash, Team India came away with all the laurels in the T20 series, which, incidentally was their first-ever in this format over the southerners, who have been the eternal bridesmaids of cricket for nearly half-a-century.

Often found, like wine, to be not taking too well to travel, the Indians stressed their newfound mettle in the white ball game by coming out of each tight situation as is the wont of true champions. Twice they survived a test of nerves in Super Overs, which is the game's most chancy lottery of a tiebreaker. There are very good signs to be read in this resilience as the Indians seemed to display the belief that, to borrow a phrase from the legendary Yogi Berra, no match is over until it is over.

Undisputed leaders in the Test format, Team India had been lacking the same self-belief in the white ball game and so the tour of New Zealand may represent a significant change.

What may not have changed though is dependence on the top four batsmen — Rohit Sharma, K.L. Rahul, Virat Kohli and Shreyas Iyer, with the team always looking even more positive when Rohit is in middling form.

It is the quality and cleverness in the bowlers of both spin and pace that sets this Indian team apart. The 34-run over by the rookie all-rounder Shivam Dube in the last contest may have been an aberration. Not winning an ICC tournament for seven years is still an albatross around the necks of this very competitive side led by the combative Kohli. Their 5-0 win might be a turning point as this year's T20 world championship is to be held Down Under.

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A 'make-do' Budget that adjusts to the slowdown



Parsa Venkateshwar Rao Jr

In the Winter Session of Parliament in December 2019, replying to a discussion on the economic situation in the Rajya Sabha, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman admitted that the economy has slowed down and said that there was yet no recession. The expectation was that in her Union Budget for 2020-21, she would address the issue of the economic slowdown and announce measures to reverse it, that is provide a stimulus. But her Budget speech lasting two hours and 40 minutes — the longest ever in the country yet — left her exhausted and left many disappointed that she did not respond to the challenge of the economic slowdown.

But if we put aside our expectations and pay attention to what she said that the government would do in the year, we will see that Ms Sitharaman presented a Budget for a slowed-down economy. In many ways, she tried to make do with what was at hand, which a good housewife — this term needs to be understood not in pejorative terms but in the positive sense of being frugal, judicious and economical — would do. It is a housewife's budget when things are down. The complaint that she did not do what was expected of her or that she did not show a way out is quite unfair. The strategy of the government is to sit out the economic lull, and do the small things that can be done for the moment and wait for the weather to improve. This is a kind of Plan B. The grandiose economic vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his first term in

office to turn India into an economic powerhouse has been put on the backburner.

There are vital clues for this strategy in the Budget speech. The first is the quotation from the ancient Tamil poetess of the Sangam era, Avayayar: "First tend to till one's land and then eat." This is a thought fit for hard times. There is no plenty around. You must work, build, prepare before you can eat. Though the finance minister used this line of poetry to outline the measures she announced for improving cold storage facilities in the agricultural sector, including allowing women self-help groups (SHGs) to provide cold storage, its implication is to be found in what she offered in the other sectors. There is a recognition that there are not enough doctors, either general physicians or specialists. She has announced that medical colleges — that is private medical colleges which do not have a hospital attached to them — will be attached to the government hospitals in the districts, and the state governments that agree to do so will get financial backing. Then there is a scheme of the local urban bodies to offer a one-year paid apprenticeship for engineers. Then there is the skill development scheme

Her speech lasting two hours and 40 minutes — the longest ever yet — left her exhausted and many disappointed that she did not respond to the challenge of the economic slowdown

Sitharaman's entire presentation on Saturday seemed like she, and the government, was waiting for the situation to improve, rather than do anything proactively to change it

for teachers, nurses, para-medical workers and caretakers as there is a demand for them abroad, and there is a provision to equip them with required foreign language proficiency as well. The finance minister saw an economic opportunity of attracting foreign students and creating an American-type SAT as an eligibility test for Asian and African students seeking admission to Indian colleges. Farmers are to be encouraged to run their pumpsets using solar energy, and also to generate solar power and contribute to the power-grid, as well as use fallow and wasteland to set up solar power generators which will connect to the power grid and this will enable farmers to earn money. Desperate measures? Yes. One is reminded of Mao Zedong's idea of running backyard steel plants where households could produce steel from micro units. At a time when solar power generation is not commercially feasible, to suggest farm-based solar power generators is an eccentric measure.

Will these small measures have a cumulative impact in the near future, and will things will turn sunny sooner rather than later? It is the kind of desperate wish that people caught in a bad situation entertain. The Narendra Modi government is not different. But the real lacuna in the Modi government's approach to the economy is that it does not know how to define its position. Prime Minister Modi is the man who is supposed to provide the big

idea or ideas, and the others in Team Modi can only do the implementation work. Mr Modi does not know whether he should allow the economy to function according to market principles, with its natural fluctuations, its ups and downs, its boom-and-bust cycles, because this would mean that he has to allow economic players — companies as well as individuals — the freedom to do what they want to, and reap the profits and losses accordingly, or he should guide their activities so that the nation achieves glory. The Economic Survey of 2019-20, placed on the table of the Lok Sabha on January 31, was arguing that there should be minimal state intervention in the economy. The Prime Minister and his party, however, do not favour the free market economy because of their so-called nationalist ideology. That is why Mr Modi wants the State to play an active interventionist role in the economy to help improve the lives of the people, but essentially for the greater glory of the nation. It is this ideological bent of mind that places Mr Modi and the BJP in a tight spot, and leaves no wiggle room when the economy is in a bad shape.

What Mr Modi wants to do is to wait for fair economic weather and take advantage of it to claim success and glory for his government, and for the nation under his governance. Ms Sitharaman's "make do" budget this year reflects the Prime Minister's approach. But economic growth and State control are incompatible. But the Modi government is unwilling to let go of its control over the economy. Hence the large number of government-directed small measures just to keep things going.

The writer is a Delhi-based commentator and analyst

LETTERS

WHAT A DOWNER

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman's much-awaited Budget has left the common man flabbergasted. The Budget fell short of expectations and failed to deliver on promises to revive the economy. The government has come out with a simplified income-tax regime at concessional rates, but the riders attached means that the taxpayers who opt for the new deal could end up burning a hole in their pocket. Investors in the stock market were also left looking down the barrel losing ₹3.5 lakh crores, the most on a Budget day.

N.J. Ravi Chander
Bengaluru

NO REAL RELIEF

THE CLAUSE in the Finance Bill 2020-21, that does away with all the tax exemptions now available to a taxpayer, is ambiguous. It says that if the assessee wants to avail of the new IT structure, then he should not claim any of the tax concessions. As all assesseees have their own savings bank accounts, the interest on which is non-taxable up to a certain limit, which, in other words, means he is enjoying a tax rebate. That makes him ineligible to be considered under the proposed tax regime. In short, no IT payer will qualify for inclusion under the suggested tax structure.

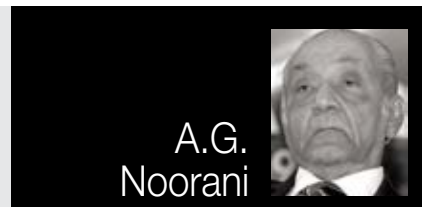
Arun Malankar
Mumbai

FALSE RHETORIC

VISIT ANY PLACE in India and it is the Christian community who run the best schools, the best colleges, the best charity hospitals, the best orphanages, the best homes for aged people, the best homes for the destitute and the best homes for leprosy patients. But what do we Christians get in return? Abuse from right-wing hooligans who keep accusing us of converting Hindus to Christianity (for instance, the RSS has been protesting the building of a 114-foot statue of Jesus in Karnataka's Ramanagara), which is untrue. If this were true, then the Christian population in India would have gone up and not fallen to just two per cent of the total population.

Jubel D'Cruz
Mumbai

₹500 for the best letter of the week goes to Chanchal Nandy (Jan. 30). Email: letters.asian-age@gmail.com.



A.G. Noorani

Arif was made Kerala gov just to spite Pinarayi govt

Kerala governor Arif Mohammad Khan has deliberately set himself on a collision course with chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan ever since the distinguished historian Irfan Habib rebuked him at the Indian History Congress. But the issues he has raised should be considered on their merits. They concern the right of the head of a state in a parliamentary system to be informed of the affairs of the state by the head of the elected government.

Article 167 of the Indian constitution says: "It shall be the duty of the chief minister of each state (a) to communicate to the governor of the state all decisions of the council of ministers relating to the administration of the affairs of the state and proposals for legislation; (b) to furnish such information relating to the administration of the affairs of the state and proposals for legislation as the governor may call for; and (c) if the governor so requires, to submit for the consideration of the council of ministers any matter

on which a decision has been taken by a minister but which has not been considered by the council."

It is an exact replica of Article 78 which defines the Prime Minister's duties towards the President. They codify the conventions that govern the relations between the Queen and her prime minister in the UK. Beneath those conventions lie a political culture which demands discretion, decency and rectitude.

The present controversy is a repeat, in a worse form, of that which developed in 1987 between president Zail Singh and Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi (from whose cabinet A.M. Khan resigned). The President's right to know became enmeshed in a wider plot and remained unresolved until Singh demitted his office as President. Relations between Zail Singh and Rajiv Gandhi soured first; the issue of the former's right to know arose later. In A.M. Khan — though it is hard to keep track of the political parties he joined and left — the BJP found one of its few Muslim poster boys. His appoint-

ment as governor of a state ruled by a party opposed to the BJP was itself wrong. He was sent to make things difficult for the Kerala government, a pattern followed in all states ruled by non-BJP parties.

Distrust grew as a consequence of Rajiv Gandhi's arrogance and ineptitude, and Zail Singh's ambition and passion for intrigue. Amendments to the postal bill provided a flashpoint. Singh argued that it violated the right to privacy and that he would not give his assent if the bill was passed. Neither did his successor. He leaked to the press, as some governors do; a vice not confined to BJP appointees.

A.M. Khan detected a window of opportunity in the Kerala government's opposition to the notorious Citizenship Amendment Act. On Jan 20, it was reported that a top source within the governor's office said that it "has sought a report from the chief secretary for not informing him about the state's move to approach the apex court against the CAA". On Jan 13, the

Left Democratic Front government had moved the Supreme Court challenging the CAA and had sought to declare it ultra vires the constitution. Attacking Vijayan, governor Khan had earlier said rulers were to be respected and that the "whims of an individual or a political party" could not influence public affairs and government business. Kerala was the first state to pass a resolution in its Assembly against the CAA.

If Zail Singh leaked to the press, A.M. Khan talks in gross impropriety. Even if the chief minister was wrong, the proper course was for the governor to write to him in confidence, in remonstrance. Singh was at the end of his political career. Khan fancies he is at the beginning of a new chapter in his career whose contents would be written by his mentor — Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Khan is out to please him.

But the three clauses of Article 167 do not support him. The first merely requires the chief minister to communicate to the governor

"decisions of the council of ministers and proposals for legislation". On the one hand, Khan challenges the validity of the Kerala Assembly's resolution to say it is no legislation. On the other, he demands its notification to him as if it was a proposal for legislation, which it is not. It is an expression of opinion.

The next clause requires the chief minister to furnish to the governor such information as he requires on the points the clause mentions, namely "administration of the affairs of the state" and "proposals for legislation". The state government's decision to challenge the CAA in the supreme court — which sent Khan hopping mad — falls into neither category. A petition in the apex court is not a matter that affects centre-state relations either. They are filed a dime a dozen. The governor has made himself ridiculous by his conduct. He could do worse if he does not stop now.

By arrangement with Dawn

China virus: A prelude to chem and bio warfare?



Abhijit Bhattacharyya

The Communist world, including China, is known for its ingrained psyche of secrecy. The Chinese Communists, however, have the added characteristic of mass-scale research and experiments on anything or everything artificial. Which can substitute cats and dogs, just as much as men or women, and can create "artificial intelligence" to replace human intelligence. Undoubtedly, though a futuristic/fertile idea, it comes with the tag of the Han Chinese being carnivorous, with a penchant for eating and gulping anything which moves.

That said, if the present Chinese-origin coronavirus, which has already impacted the whole world, doesn't abate soon, critical questions will be raised about China's overall intentions. Is this virus as simple as it's being made out to be by Beijing? Since Chinese PM Li Keqiang initiated economic,

political and diplomatic damage control measures to curb the adverse impact on China's overall image, is China on a treacherous path? China will definitely abhor the prospect of its status diminishing at a time of such high-octane global projects as the Belt and Road Initiative, among others. Beijing's Communist czars may soon face closer scrutiny by its people, who might challenge their iron grip on the State. It may also pose an existential internal threat to its superpower dreams, with a presence in every continent, landlocked states, (remote) empty islands, glittering city states with gambling dens and tax-free banking systems. All these are now under threat from a toxic virus wave. Beyond this grandiose scheme, however, is hidden the Chinese building of a "chemical and biological warfare" capability. It's the secrecy and silence of the Chinese which the world finds inscrutable. The Chinese continue to nurse a grudge deep inside — something akin to Germany after the 1919 Paris Peace Conference following the First World War — against all those foreign enemy states of the 19th-20th century imperial era, Japan included.

That China is hugely into CBWs and WMDs goes without saying. However, Chinese laboratories faced a big blow owing to the coronavirus 'leakage'. This may well be a prelude, if uncorrected, to a catastrophic Chinese venture.

Tokyo, as perceived even today, did Beijing in. Thus, when Japan and China signed a Memorandum of Understanding in July 1989 on the destruction of abandoned chemical weapons in China, followed by a report of the Japanese ministry of foreign affairs, December 1999, that Japanese troops abandoned approximately 700,000 chemical munitions in China during their retreat at the end of the Second World War, Beijing certainly couldn't be taking kindly to it. Any serious tracker of the contours of Chinese history and the collective psyche of present-day Communist rulers would understand what awaits future Chinese moves.

and biological warfare, however, the world woke up with its first serious act — when the Biological & Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) began work in 1972, followed by the 1993 Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), and operations of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in 2005. In this background, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1540 by consensus, calling upon member states to report on steps taken to control materials and technologies that could be used for nuclear and biological weapons (NBW). Here, it would be important to remember that India played a very positive role on the issue. Thus, although official public information on the type and quantity of India's chemical weapon stockpile is limited, yet "India met its deadline for destroying 45 per cent of its Category 1 stocks and was reported to have completed destruction of 80 per cent of its total stocks". [CBW Convention Bulletin, No. 66 (December 2004), Page 8.] The exemplary act by India apart, the future of man doesn't look bright as too many adverse reports are emerging from all corners. Bertrand Russell's

1961 book *Has man a future?* appears so relevant! A nuclear war resulting in "unmitigated calamity"! Is China doing a "CBW" to establish herself in a peaceful graveyard? There exist today several global hotspots which are under close scrutiny of a concerned UN and its members on weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and chemical and biological weapons/warfare (CBW), especially the latter. The world, however, seems more interested in poor, resource-rich Third World states. In the process, a giant like China appears to be escaping the world's scrutiny as it is operating below the radar. That China is hugely into CBWs and WMDs goes without saying. Today, however, Chinese laboratories faced a big blow owing to the coronavirus "leakage". This may well be a prelude, if uncorrected, to a catastrophic Chinese venture — as it has certainly awakened the world to the reality that is China today. In fact, it appears that the coronavirus could well be compared to the slow poisoning of humans through a chemical weapons system, in contrast to the Salisbury incident of March 4, 2018 in which Russia

allegedly used a toxic chemical (acetylcholinesterase inhibitor) in which was present a nerve agent. Though Russian ambassador Alexander Shulgin had then described the alleged Russian involvement as "unfounded and absolutely unacceptable", it didn't take away any of the dangers of CBWs. China's position today, in comparison to Russia, is totally different. The declining population of 130 million Russians are no match for China's upswinging economy of 1.4 billion people. Plus, the physical presence of hordes of Chinese, as tourists, technicians or telecommunications operators, along with its standard or sub-standard manufactured goods, definitely constitute a grave threat to our planet. Yet much of the world, like India, refuses to acknowledge the imminent danger it lies in. It's time to keep off China — physically, materially, financially, technically as well as commercially. Or else, as after the epic *Mahabharata* battle, we may again face the peace of the graveyard!

The writer, an alumnus of the National Defence College, is the author of *China in India*

Unlike Gujarat, Modi's focus is now on ideology, not economy



Aakar Patel

The Gujarat model was based on a particular narrative. It was that under Narendra Modi, there would be a departure from the way that government in India was run. It would be made more efficient, leaner, less corrupt. The existing bureaucratic apparatus would be mobilised under firm leadership to deliver the results it was capable of, and had not been delivering because of failures of the previous leadership. These results would show themselves above all in economic growth. This is what brought Mr Modi to the attention of the global media (and also national media). There have been some differing views of what exactly the growth rate was in Gujarat in the period before the BJP period (late 1990s to present) and specifical-

ly under Mr Modi. However, there has been no dispute that there was a determination to push economic growth. When I met him in that period, Mr Modi said that he wanted Gujarat's GDP to grow at 15 per cent a year so that India could grow at 10 per cent. He said that seriously, and he meant it. It cannot be disputed that in this same period, there was also a departure in the way that the state was governing its population and its justice system. The violence of 2002 was never put behind, and Mr Modi was the only leader in India's history to have been in power during a major riot and then remained in power after that. But through all of this, his stated intent was to provide strong economic growth for "all five crore Gujaratis". It appears to me that this focus on trying whatever was possible to push the economy has gone missing now from the Narendra Modi outlook. I hope that I am wrong in assuming this but it is difficult to see it and read it in any other way. The recent thrust from the government has been on an issue that has not been demanded by anyone and does not help the country in any particular way.

One is awaiting a sign from Modi that the attention of his government and of him personally has comprehensively shifted away from ideology towards the economy. The Budget that was presented on Saturday did not send out that message.

I mean of course the three laws and actions being pursued by the National Democratic Alliance. The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, the National Population Register and the National Register of Citizens. The ministry of external affairs made light of the fact that the European Parliament tabled a motion condemning the CAA. We were told that the resolution is not binding on India and that is true. But the government nonetheless took it seriously enough to try and ensure that the vote on the resolution was postponed by six weeks. Left unsaid was the fact that this was the first time that India's internal policies were being assessed and condemned

by such an important international body. Other than this effort from India to delay the criticism, nothing was done to protect India from the allegation that it was going down a path that was worrying the rest of the world. This is of concern because India is dependent on the world viewing it positively so that it can attract global capital. An economy cannot be healthy and cannot grow at optimum rates if the state is at war with a large number of its citizens and views millions of them with suspicion. The Budget that was announced on Saturday did not seem to take the view that there was a problem with the economy. It did not please those who wanted to see some initiative. This could have come through the recognition that something was wrong and then an attempt at fix it. India is growing at the lowest rate in the last decade. If it continues in that path, then the jobs and prosperity that has been promised by this government and on the basis of which it was voted in will continue to elude us. It has become clear that Mr Modi is keen on pushing the ideological aspect of the BJP's

agenda and much of that has already been achieved. The three big issues on which the BJP was built were Ayodhya, Kashmir and the civil code. The temple has been gifted to it by the Supreme Court, and Kashmir has been annexed to it by the Supreme Court, and triple talaq has also happened and that means that only polygamy remains to be struck down for the BJP to declare full victory. Given all of these developments, what is the need for Mr Modi to continue down the majoritarian path? Why take on a new front, the CAA-NRC, when you have already delivered what you promised you would do in your manifesto for three decades? This is puzzling given his own history in Gujarat and his ambition for India. One is awaiting a sign from Mr Modi that the attention of his government and of him personally has comprehensively shifted away from ideology towards the economy. The Budget that was presented on Saturday did not send out that message.

Aakar Patel is a writer and columnist

Punjab CM fights to retain top cop Dinkar Gupta



Dilip Cherian
Dilli Ka Babu

The quashing of the appointment of Punjab DGP Dinkar Gupta by the Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) is a big blow to the state government, though not entirely unexpected. The tribunal also stated that the process followed in Mr Gupta's appointment in February last year was against the provisions outlined by the Supreme Court. When the Amarinder Singh government appointed Mr Gupta as the state's top cop, he superseded five officers. Two superseded officers, Mohammad Mustafa and Siddharth Chatopadhyaya, then moved CAT to challenge the appointment, which has now struck down Mr Gupta's appointment. Further, it has called it an act of "favouritism" and "arbitrariness". The tribunal has now directed the state government to send names of the three senior-most officers to the UPSC for the appointment of a new candidate.

ment has, typically, maintained an aggressive approach. Most observers have noted that the existing silos within the Indian Railways had to be broken, as recommended in reports by several committees, the most recent being the one led by Bibek Debroy, eminent economist and chairman of the Economic Advisory Council (EAC) to the Prime Minister. Admittedly, it's not going to be an easy task, especially integrating some 8,401 officers into the new Indian Railway Management Service (IRMS). But the railways have begun working towards it. It has cancelled its plans to recruit fresh officers from the engineering services examination and the civil service examination this year. Some 250 candidates were to be recruited this year to these services.

RBI: A HOUSE DIVIDED

The introduction of the unified regulatory and supervisory cadre at the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in November 2019 has created a crisis, with several officers indicating that they want to opt out of the cadre. The deadline for deciding their career path ends this month-end. The move, which is probably the biggest shake up in the RBI's history, was seen as the first step towards hiving off the oversight functions into a separate entity, as recommended by the Srikrishna panel back in March 2013. But given that it has created unprecedented turmoil in the organisation, the central board of RBI is likely to review the progress on the unified cadre during its next meeting in February.

According to sources, the RBI clearly did not anticipate the disruptive impact the new oversight cadre would have on the officials. It is now felt that the groundwork including addressing the concerns of the officials could have been handled better. Watch this space for updates.

HEADING DOWN A NEW TRACK

The Cabinet's decision to merge eight service cadres of the railways into one has caused much heartburn ever since it was announced. But the government is determinedly going ahead, despite the intense social media campaign against it by officers who feel worried about their seniority and career prospects after the merger. After the announcement, several officers had begun a campaign where Prime Minister Narendra Modi was sent thousands of postcards with messages to "Save Indian Railways". Several others gave up the protection of anonymity and took to social media platforms to express shock and disappointment. However, the govern-

Love them, hate them ignore them at national peril, is the babu guarantee and Dilip's belief. Share significant babu escapades dilipcherian@hotmail.com



Ads invade Byte

The looping video app has launched its first ad campaign with Nike

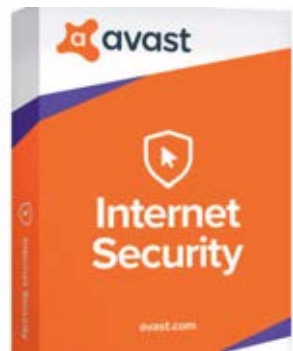
SHORT TAKES

NEW BILL TO PUNISH COs FOR USING E2EE

Washington, Feb. 2: A new bill in the United States would reduce legal protections for apps and websites, potentially jeopardising online encryption. The draft bill would form a "National Commission on Online Child Exploitation Prevention" to establish rules for finding and removing child exploitation content, according to multiple reports.

As per reports on Bloomberg and The Verge, companies not following these rules could lose some protection under Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, which largely shields companies from liability over users' posts.

— Agencies



AVAST SHUTS DOWN ITS DATA COLLECTION BIZ

New Delhi, Feb. 2: Following the revelation of Avast's data collection business, Avast CEO Ondrej Vliček, in a public letter, wrote that he and the company's board of directors have decided to "terminate the Jumpshot data collection and wind down Jumpshot's operations, with immediate effect."

Vliček, who became CEO of Avast seven months ago, said he has spent the first few months of his job "re-evaluating every portion of our business," and that the Jumpshot revelations had eroded trust in the company. "I feel personally responsible and I would like to apologize to all concerned."

"I came to the conclusion that the data collection business is not in line with our privacy priorities as a company in 2020 and beyond," he wrote.

"It is key to me that Avast's sole purpose is to make the world a safer place, and I knew that ultimately, everything in the company would have to become aligned with that North Star of ours."

— Agencies



HUAWEI RIVALS MAY STRUGGLE TO MEET DEMAND

Helsinki, Feb. 2: Tougher UK and EU rules restricting 5G network supplier Huawei should be a golden opportunity for competitors Nokia and Ericsson, but the companies may struggle to meet the increased demand, analysts warned.

On Tuesday, Britain imposed a 35 per cent cap on the role of "high-risk vendors" in building the country's next-generation communications network, over security concerns.

The change will hit Chinese giant Huawei, whom critics accuse of being ultimately under the control of Beijing, an allegation it strongly denies.

The EU followed by releasing guidelines urging member states to avoid dependency on "high risk" suppliers, though the bloc stopped short of naming Huawei or calling for an outright ban.

On the face of it, the biggest beneficiaries from this week's announcements appear to be the Chinese firm's two largest competitors, Nokia and Ericsson.

3D printing clones old musical instruments

Paris, Feb. 2: When Mina Jang played the same melodious tune on two different flutes behind a screen, she said the examiners grading her couldn't tell the difference.

Yet the two instruments were made in dramatically different ways.

One was a handmade version of an original early 18th-century flute crafted in 2001, while the other was made of white plastic and "cloned" using a 3D printer in 2019.

The Museum of Music in Paris, whose collection includes a 2,500-year-old flute made of a vulture bone, has recently begun experimenting with the technique in an effort to better preserve period instruments. "The idea was to find out how to rapidly obtain a copy of an instrument whilst respecting the original flute," said the 35-year-old professional flautist and researcher in baroque music, who initiated the idea.

Before being printed, the carefully copied 18th-century flute was x-rayed to identify its precise characteristics. The original it was based on was made by the celebrated French composer and instrument maker Jacques-Martin Hotteterre and is today preserved behind glass at the museum.

MUSICAL TIME TRAVEL
3D printing has advanced



Mina Jang with two copies of a flute. While one is a handmade version of an original early 18th-century flute, the other was made white plastic using a 3D printer. — AFP

tages over handmade instruments, taking just 24 hours to make, compared to a month in a workshop, and costing hundreds instead of thousands of euros.

But Stephane Vaedelich, in charge of the museum's laboratory which worked with other partners on the project too, says the move is purely about conserving musical heritage. "3D printing isn't about replacing instrument makers," he told AFP. "The idea is to recreate a historical instrument so that the public can appreciate its sound and to revive an important heritage."

"It's an extraordinary way of travelling through time and recapturing old repertoires," he said, adding that a second flute had also been cloned.

While 3D printing has become increasingly popular in different sectors over the last 20 years, including for reproducing instruments, Vaedelich said the museum believed it was the first to experiment with the 3D reproduction of old instruments, using a scientific approach.

A few orchestras play using original instruments from the period, such as the French group Les Sיעles (The Centuries), but wind instruments struggle to withstand humidity. "It expands wood and can break" the instru-

ments, Vaedelich said.

The museum chose to copy a transverse flute, precisely because - unlike an oboe - most of the musician's breath passes outside the instrument.

"The material has less of an impact on the timbre," Vaedelich said.

Using plastic for the 3D reproduced instruments also raises environmental issues. Vaedelich said the ideal would be to print using recycled materials.

Fanny Reyre Menard, vice-president of the trade union grouping together makers and repairers of instruments, said the material used was the only downside.

"For craftsmen, plastic cannot be compared to wood," she said. "A wooden sound box is fundamental for a violin." On the whole though, Menard said that 3D printing presented an opportunity.

"It's not a danger, but rather a very good tool for sharing information and prototypes between craftsmen," she said. Instruments sometimes need to be customised for musicians with different needs. "Some parts are improved when adapted, for example chin rests for violins or mouthpieces on wind instruments," said Menard.

"If I find a form that interests me, I send a file to a colleague and he prints it. It's great." — AFP

Watershed moment for 'biometric privacy'

Facebook's massive settlement in a class action case over violating a state law on how it uses facial recognition is being hailed as a watershed moment for "biometric privacy."

FB settles class action suit on how it uses facial recognition

Washington, Feb. 2: Facebook's massive settlement in a class action case over violating a state law on how it uses facial recognition is being hailed as a watershed moment for "biometric privacy."

The leading social network said Wednesday it agreed to the \$550 million payout after failing to win dismissal of the case alleging it illegally collected biometric information for "face tagging".

"We hope and expect that other companies will follow Facebook's lead and pay significant attention to the importance of our biometric information," Attorney Nathan Wessler of the American Civil Liberties Union, which backed the plaintiffs' legal arguments, said the settlement could mark a turning point for consumers and biometrics.

"Companies are going to have to take this seriously," Wessler said.

"Hopefully a settlement of this size will be a deterrent." The deal is one of the largest settlements in a US privacy case, topped only by Facebook's \$5 billion deal with the Federal Trade Commission on its data practices. Both are awaiting court approval.

FACIAL RECOGNITION
The legal case comes amid an array of deployments of biometric technologies such as facial recognition for law enforcement and border control, but also for "tagging" in social networks and in applications for retail stores or unlocking

personal devices and cars. Several US cities including San Francisco have passed bans on the use of facial recognition technology. There are concerns about creating large databases with the potential for errors in identifying some individuals. "We have seen growing recognition in the courts and in the public for the last few years on the need for reasonable but strong limits on the collection and use of our most private information," Wessler said.

The Illinois law does not apply to government entities or contractors. At least two other states have similar laws, but Illinois is the only one allowing for private lawsuits for damages when companies collect data without consent. — AFP

FB TO REMOVE HOAXES ON CORONAVIRUS

San Francisco, Feb. 2: Facebook said it will take down misinformation about China's fast-spreading coronavirus, in a rare departure from its usual approach to dubious health content that is presenting a fresh challenge for social media companies.

The coronavirus outbreak has stoked a wave of anti-China sentiment around the globe. Hoaxes have spread widely online, promoted by conspiracy theorists and exacerbated by a dearth of information from the cordoned-off zone around China's central city of Wuhan, where the outbreak began.

Facebook said that it would remove content about the virus "with false claims or conspiracy theories that have been flagged by leading global health organisations and local health authorities," saying such content would violate its ban on misinformation leading to "physical harm." — Reuters

Budget and Cybersecurity, a missed opportunity



Prateek Waghre

In the lead up to the 2020 Budget, the industry looked forward to two major announcements with respect to cybersecurity. First, the allocation of a specific 'cybersecurity budget' to protect the country's critical infrastructure and support skill development. In 2019, even Rear Admiral Mohit Gupta (head of the Defence Cyber Agency) had called for 10 per cent of the government's IT spend to be put towards cyber security.

Second, a focus on cybersecurity awareness programmes was seen as being critical especially considering the continued push for 'Digital India'.

On February 1, in a budget speech that lasted over 150 minutes, the finance minister made references to 'cyber' only twice. Once in the context of cyber-forensics to propose the establishment of a National Police University and a National Forensic Science University.

Second, cybersecurity was cited as a potential frontier that Quantum technology would open up. This was a step-up from the last two budget speeches (July 2019 and February 2019) both of which made no references to the term 'cyber' in any form.

In fact, the last time cyber was used in a Budget speech was in February 2018, in the context of

The oft-reported instances of cyber or cyber-enabled fraud that one sees practically every day in the newspaper clearly point to a low-level of awareness and cyber-hygiene among citizens. Allocation of additional funds for MeitY's Cyber Swachhta Kendra at the Budget would have sent a strong signal of intent towards addressing the problem.

cyber-physical weapons. When combined with other recent developments such as National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) call for inputs, a National Cyber Security Strategy (NCSS), the inauguration of a National Cyber Forensics Lab in New Delhi and an acknowledgement by Lt. Gen. Rajesh Pant (National Cyber Security Coordinator) that 'India is the most attacked in cyber-

sphere' are signals that the government does indeed consider cybersecurity an important area.

While the proposal to establish a National Forensic Science University is welcome, it will do little to meaningfully address the skill shortage problem. The Cybersecurity Strategy of 2013 had envisioned the creation of five lakh jobs over a five-year period. A report by Xpheno estimated that there are 67,000 open cybersecurity positions in the country.

Globally, Cybersecurity Ventures estimates, there will be 3.5 million unfilled cybersecurity positions by 2021. Two million of these are expected to be in the Asia Pacific region.

It is unfair to expect this gap to be filled by state action alone, yet, the budget represents a missed opportunity to nudge industry and academia to fulfilling this demand at a time when unemployment is major concern. The oft-reported instances of cyber or cyber-enabled fraud that one sees practically every day in the newspaper clearly point to a low-level of awareness and cyber-hygiene among citizens.

Allocation of additional funds for MeitY's Cyber Swachhta Kendra at the Union Budget would have sent a strong signal of intent towards addressing the problem.

(The writer is a research analyst at The Takshashila Institution, an independent centre for research and education in public policy. All views are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect the newspa-

FCC: At least 1 telco broke law

Washington, Feb. 2: At least one US phone company likely broke the law by sharing data that can pinpoint the location of smartphone users, the Federal Communications Commission said Friday.

FCC chairman Ajit Pai said in a letter to Congress that one or more wireless companies apparently violated federal law and could be subject to penalties. He didn't name any companies but said the commission would decide soon on enforcement actions, now that the agency has completed an investigation.

The FCC's enforcement bureau began investigat-

ing following 2018 reports that US wireless providers were selling real-time phone location information to outside data aggregation firms without phone users' knowledge or consent. Location-tracking services can use the data to keep tabs on packages and vehicles or create personalised marketing pitches, but it can also be used by bounty hunters or stalkers to identify the whereabouts of nearly any phone in the US within seconds.

The reports led the four major companies,

Verizon, AT&T, Sprint and T-Mobile, to pledge to stop providing users' location information to data brokers, stepping back from a business practice that had drawn criticism for endangering privacy.

A statement by FCC Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel said the safety and privacy of millions of Americans was at risk and "it's a shame that it took so long for the FCC to reach a conclusion that was so obvious."

"For just a few hundred dollars, shady middlemen could sell your location within a few hundred

meters based on your wireless phone data," she said. "It's chilling to consider what a black market could do with this data."

Democrats in Congress clashed with Pai on this issue last year, expressing concern in a November letter to the FCC that it was shirking its duty to protect consumer privacy.

Pai, a Republican, responded in December that FCC was taking its investigation seriously and said he recognised the importance of the issue to domestic violence victims, victims of sex trafficking and others. — AP

E-Health Records and the need for Health Surveillance



Srinivas Kodali

There is an international outbreak of coronavirus leading to thousands of people being kept under quarantine and watched for symptoms. In Kerala, a patient who has been a victim of coronavirus has resulted in the health ministry tracking 69 people in direct contact with the patient and in total around 1793 people are being watched. The Kerala health ministry needs to be lauded for what they are doing, but the question is can this be replicated in larger scales in remote parts of the country.

Tracking the travel and contact history of individuals will be really hard as

state machinery goes thin in various parts of the country. The state over the years has developed and evolved techniques to help it aid with this task. Epidemiology as a branch evolved with the cholera outbreak in 19th century London and John Snow's map was used to identify it was water-borne and wells in London were helping spread the disease. John Snow's map is an important piece of history which was replicated with cholera outbreaks in other cities including Calcutta to track victims and deaths.

Health surveillance and quarantine protocols are not new, the history of quarantine leads directly

back to the 15th century sea explorers returning from their african and asian adventures and brought back some exotic diseases with them. This led to the creation of public health departments across the world over the years. But with people moving so fast across the globe, disease spread has also become a major issue. If the corona virus toll indeed rise up, a global travel ban would be imminent and health surveillance becomes key.

Health surveillance in general is a very passive exercise where public health officials are monitoring the spread of disease by looks at statistics across hospitals. But dur-

ing health emergencies it becomes an active form of surveillance where people are being tracked directly. This is the only form of surveillance no sane person can argue against, it is important and opposing this only invites actual harm to society. Not all forms of surveillance are bad, only the forms which are invasive and non-accountable are the problem.

The ministry of health has been pushing for digitization of personal health records over the years and has brought the electronic health records standards in 2016. These standards enable the hospitals and government to store patients records

over the years and even transfer them to other hospitals, when patient moves. The government after working on the standards is now working towards building health data repositories part of National Health Data Blueprint.

The National Health Data Blueprints recommends a variety of systems to be built to improve public health, but it also has another aim of enabling a health-tech industry. This makes the storage and sharing of health data complicated considering the private nature of health data and how it could be exploited against an individual. The proposed solution for this

has been to anonymise the data and not allow anyone access without the patient's direct approval except in case of emergencies. During emergencies, the blueprint allows the government to de-anonymise the individuals personal details without consent.

The idea of de-anonymization of data directly comes for active health surveillance and is indeed important during emergencies. People need to be tracked and the spread of disease cannot be allowed. These health protocols evolved over time, the use of data for this is not new and technology can indeed help. But the economic interests of capitalism without the right laws could lead to exploitation. Higher premiums because your health records says you are more prone to disease should not be allowed. This is why privacy is also critical for individuals.

The proposed data protection law penalises de-anonymisation of personal data, but there is a use-case for it during emergencies. To implement this in the right way, the government needs to provide exemptions but with due checks in place. Misuse of personal data can always happen, the key is to balance public interest and personal interest. This is why laws are designed to withstand various tests, if the government intends to bulldoze certain issues without thinking them straight, it will only harm the society more. The key issue with data and technology in the hands of government is accountability. Until we don't have accountability, no amount of technology can help us solve our problems.

(The writer is an independent researcher working on data, governance and internet. All views are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect the



BPCL Eol in next few days

It's official: General Motors confirmed its plan to reboot the Hummer—a military-style behemoth once seen as a symbol of American excess—in an all-electric version. GM will unveil the revamped GMC Hummer EV in an ad during Sunday's Super Bowl game, reviving the a vehicle launched in the 1990s but phased out after the 2008 financial crisis.

quick
BITES

INDICATORS	%
Sensex	39,735.53 -2.43
Nifty 50	11,661.85 -2.51
S&P 500	3,225.52 -1.77
Dollar (₹)	71.35 -0.20
Pound Sterling (₹)	93.58 0.48
Euro (₹)	78.74 -0.067
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	41,453.131 -0.31
Brent crude (\$/bbl)	56.62 -0.71
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.599 +0.621
US 10-Yr T-bill yield	1.505 -0.800

As of Friday/Saturday

FPIs invest
₹12,000 cr in
equities in Jan.

Foreign portfolio investors have pumped in Rs 12,122 crore in the stock market in January, remaining net buyers of Indian equities for the fifth consecutive month, helped by easing geopolitical tensions. However, they withdrew a net amount of Rs 1,119 crore from the debt segment last month. This translated into a net investment of Rs 1,003 crore.

China's PBOC to
pump \$173 bn
into economy

China's central bank said it would pump 1.2 trillion yuan (\$173 bn) into the economy as it ramps up support for a nationwide fight against the coronavirus. The People's Bank of China (PBOC) said it would launch a 1.2 trillion yuan reverse repurchase operation on Monday to maintain "reasonable and abundant liquidity" in the banking system.

CSL gets 100%
control of two
Kolkata dry docks

Cochin Shipyard (CSL) has taken 100 per cent stake in an SPV that it formed along with Hooghly Dock and Port Engineers Ltd for modernisation and renovation of the two dry docks on western bank of the Hooghly river. The special purpose vehicle, Hooghly CSL, was set up to bring new investors to revive docks in Nazirgunj and Salkia.

Sobha Q3 net
profit up 5%
at ₹73 crore

Realty firm Sobha Ltd has reported a 5 per cent rise in its consolidated net profit at Rs 73.2 crore for the December quarter compared to Rs 69.8 crore in the year-ago period. Total income rose to Rs 901.2 crore from Rs 807.7 crore. J.C. Sharma, VC&MD, Sobha, said: "We are poised to launch real estate projects to the tune of 13.64 million square feet."

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■ Those working in Middle East, tax-free countries won't be taxed

No intention to tax global
income of NRIs, says FM

New Delhi, Feb. 2: Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday said the government has no intention to tax the global income of NRIs and only income generated in India will be taxed. She also said the proposed tax on non-resident Indians (NRIs) will not apply on bona fide Indians working in tax-free foreign countries, like the Middle East countries, and is intended to tax only those seeking to escape tax by exploiting their non-resident status.

Following the budget announcement on Saturday there was confusion about the tax liability of NRIs on their global income. "What we are doing now is that the income of an NRI generated in India will be taxed here. If he's earning something in a jurisdiction where there is no tax, why will I include that into mine that has been generated there," she asked, adding: "Whereas if you have a property here and you have a rent out of it,

What we are doing now is that the income of an NRI generated in India will be taxed here. If he's earning something in a jurisdiction where there is no tax, why will I include that into mine that has been generated there

—NIRMALA SITHARAMAN



but because you are living there, you carry this rent into your income there and pay no tax there, pay no tax here... since the property is in India, I have got a sovereign right to tax," she said in a post Budget interaction with media.

"I am not taxing what you're earning in Dubai but that property which is giving you a rent here, you may be an NRI, you may be

living there but that is revenue being generated here for you. So that's the issue."

The Finance Bill, 2020 has proposed that an Indian citizen shall be deemed to be resident in India, if he is not liable to be taxed in any country or jurisdiction. This is an anti-abuse provision since it is noticed that some Indian citizens shift their stay in low or no tax jurisdiction to avoid pay-

ment of tax in India, the finance ministry said in a statement. "The new provision is not intended to include in tax net those Indian citizens who are bona fide workers in other countries. In some section of the media the new provision is being interpreted to create an impression that those Indians who are bona fide workers in other countries, including in Middle

East, and who are not liable to tax in these countries will be taxed in India on the income they have earned there. This interpretation is not correct," it said.

In order to avoid any misinterpretation, it is clarified that in case of an Indian citizen who becomes deemed resident of India under this proposed provision, income earned outside India by him shall not be taxed in India unless it is derived from an Indian business or profession, it added.

Revenue secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey said the new rule was "an anti-abuse provision planned to plug loopholes in the system and not intended to tax income earned by those working overseas". He said Indians working in the Middle East, as well as those in Merchant Navy, will not be taxed.

The CBDT said an "Indian citizen shall be deemed to be resident in India if he is not liable to be taxed in any country or jurisdiction. —PTI

Budget could trigger
a rally in G-secsFC BANKING BUREAU
MUMBAI, FEB. 2

The budget could trigger a short-term rally in bonds, with relief stemming from the absence of additional borrowing for the remaining part of the fiscal year and gross issuance largely in line with market expectations, said experts. Bonds are likely to rally when markets open on Monday.

The FY21 budget pegged the FY20 (revised estimate) deficit at 3.8 per cent of GDP and FY21 at 3.5 per cent. This overshoot was backed by evoking the 'escape clause' under the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Mechanism (FRBM), which allows for a 0.5 per cent deviation on targets on certain conditions.

Abhishek Goenka, founder, IFA Global, said, "The FY21 gross borrowing at Rs 7.8 lakh crore and fiscal deficit at 3.5 per cent of GDP is in line with what the markets were pricing in. Therefore, the bond markets may not be as unhappy with the budget as the equity market."

Nomura, in its report on the budget, said, "The budget should be neutral to slightly positive for bonds, with some relief stemming from the absence of additional borrowing in FY20 and gross issuance largely in line



with our forecasts (Rs 7.8 lakh crore versus Nomura forecast of Rs 7.6-7.9 lakh crore). Continued fiscal consolidation in FY21 could be viewed by markets as positive for the Indian rupee, but the weak external environment remains a considerable headwind."

The government also announced several measures intended to deepen the bond market, such as increase in foreign portfolio investment (FPI) limit in corporate bonds to 15 per cent from 9 per cent, allowing NRIs to participate in G-Secs, cut in withholding tax on overseas listed corporate bond issuances and a debt ETF for government securities.

Radhika Rao, senior vice

president & economist, DBS Group Research, said, "Bond supply and optimism that ongoing tweaks could pave the way for a bond index inclusion eventually, will be construed as positives by the bond markets. Slippage in the fiscal targets was largely priced in, we don't expect a lasting impact on the GSec yields. Small savings collections are expected at Rs 2.4 lakh crore in FY21, broadly steady from FY20 and continues to remain a key source of support on the financing end. Notably, the global environment is bullish for bonds, as global central banks maintain loose monetary policies and outbreak of the coronavirus adds to the down-drift in global yields."

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Budget blues could take Nifty to 11K level

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD
MUMBAI, FEB. 2

After the disappointment from the Union Budget, brokerages feel the equity market is likely to trade in a narrow range and the Nifty-50 Index could dip to 11,000 levels based on the Budget fine print.

With corporate earnings not so overwhelming and negative global cues from China, the market could feel the pressure. Good rabi crop harvesting is the only green shoot expected as of now.

"Market expectations from budget were high on some kind of sector-specific stimulus (housing, infrastructure) and capital market reforms (abolishment of LTCG on equities) which have not materialised and to that extent there could be near-term disappointment. The fine print in the budget has also increased the disappointment factor. Any further escalation of the coronavirus epidemic can be negative for Indian equities," said Kotak Securities.

"Budget lacked punch as there was no fiscal stimulus, although it was not acknowledged explicitly, the budget appears to have realised the fiscal limits. Not surprisingly then, it did not excite the market, where expectations were running very high," said analysts from Motilal Oswal.

"Overall from an equity market perspective, we believe the budget has



been a non-event and belied the lofty expectations. Incrementally, it puts the hopes of a sharp corporate earnings recovery at risk. We believe once the fine print is absorbed, the market's focus should revert to fundamentals, viz. corporate earnings growth, global cues around the spread of coronavirus and its potential impact on global growth," Motilal Oswal said.

Given the absence of sharp growth revival, analysts expect the market to stay in a narrow range. Select sectors with better earnings visibility will continue to enjoy valuation premium over the broader markets.

The Nifty could potentially go down to around 11,000 levels if there are further negatives related to the capital markets or taxation that came out in the fine print. The risk-reward ratio turns very favourable closer to 11,000 levels, says Kotak

Securities.

As the Budget is not negative from the foreign investors' perspective, in the short to medium term, the market may not face any sudden exit from them.

"From a flow perspective budget is not very negative for FPIs but their actions would be more top-down based on global developments and view on emerging markets. Interest in mid and small caps had revived before the budget but it may take a backseat for some time till clarity emerges on the broader Nifty-50 Index," Kotak Securities said.

The market attention is likely to shift to the rural economy, with rabi crop harvest beginning. "Rural sector could revive with bumper rabi output and higher food prices. Revival in rural consumption could provide the much-needed green shoots in the coming months," according to analysts.

Brokerages and stock exchanges are, however, excited about the budget proposal for an LIC IPO.

Kajal Gandhi, analyst, ICICI Direct, said, "Life Insurance Corporation is likely to become the country's biggest company by market capitalisation on the day of the listing given it's the largest company managed by assets under management...At even 25-30 per cent of its AUM, the company can be valued at around Rs 8-10 trillion. Even a 10 per cent dilution will be difficult for market to absorb in one go and the government may look at doing this in lots."

Motilal Oswal said, "The government's proposal to list LIC will be a significant event to monitor. LIC accounted for 61 per cent/71 per cent of total new business on weighted/un-weighted basis as at 9 months of FY20; its share in industry AUM stood at 78 per cent (Rs 27.6 trillion) as at FY19."

Start-ups seek removal of regulatory
hurdlesSANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, FEB. 2

Though start-ups got a shot in their arm from the Budget presented by finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday, they are disappointed that measures to ease regulatory hurdles, a pressing need for them, was not addressed by the Budget.

However, start-ups got much relief on the tax front. The Budget proposed to increase the limit and extended the duration for tax deduction and relaxed the employee stock option (Esop) norms.

According to the proposals, an eligible start-up having turnover up to Rs 25 crore is allowed deduction



of 100 per cent of its the profits for three consecutive assessment years out of seven years if the total turnover does not exceed Rs 25 crore. The turnover limit has been increased to Rs 100 crore and period of eligibility for claim has been extended to 10 years.

Currently, Esops are taxable as perquisites at the time of exercise. This leads to cash flow problems for the employees who do not sell the shares immediately and hold them for the long term. The Budget deferred the tax payment by five years or till they leave the

company or when they sell their shares, whichever is earliest. The government also proposes to provide early life funding, including a seed fund to support ideation and development of early stage start-ups.

In order to encourage entrepreneurship the Budget proposed to set up an Investment Clearance Cell that will provide "end to end" facilitation and support, including pre-investment advisory, information related to land banks and facilitate clearances at Centre and State level. It will work through a portal.

The Budget also proposed a digital platform that would facilitate seamless application and capture of IPRs and a centre would be

established to work on Intellectual Property. Knowledge Translation Clusters.

However, the industry wants many regulatory hurdles to go. "MSMEs and start-ups are neck deep in managing the day-to-day complexity of multiplicity of licences, registrations, renewals, maintaining registers, managing returns among others. They end up seeking professional help from professionals and consultants in managing their labour and tax compliance. Budget has largely remained silent on serious reforms in Land, Labor and Contract Enforcement," said Rishi Agrawal, co-founder and CEO, Avantis Reg Tech.

SECOND TRANCHE
OF DEBT ETF IN Q4FC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, FEB. 2

With an aim to improve retail participation and broaden the government securities, or G-sec, space the Centre is expected to launch its second tranche of debt-based exchange traded fund (ETF) in the current quarter. The government move follows the success of Bharat Bond ETF, the first corporate bond ETF meant for public sector entities, launched in December 2019.

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday said the govern-

ment might launch its second tranche, primary for government securities, in the current quarter.

An ETF is a mode of investment that comprises a basket of stocks or bonds that are traded, similar to individual stocks, on an exchange during regular trading hours.

At present, retail participation in the G-Sec market is quite negligible. In a move to deepen the bond market, Sitharaman in her second budget on Saturday proposed floating of a new debt ETF comprising primarily of government securities.



Age-shaming

I am 'grateful everyday' that I'm ageing: Actor Eva Mendes to trolls

IN BRIEF

No more *Watchmen* seasons, says Lindelof

Los Angeles: *Watchmen* creator Damon Lindelof says at the moment there are no plans for a second season of the show but he would not rule out its possibility in the future. The HBO show, featuring Oscar winner Regina King besides actors like Jeremy Irons, Don Johnson, Tim Blake Nelson and Yahya Abdul-Mateen II, received overwhelming response from both the fans and the critics upon its debut in October last year. Ever since, Lindelof has been flooded with questions regarding its second season. "I never wanna close the door completely because if two, three years from now I say, I just had another idea, it will be that much harder to open. But I would say it's barely ajar. I think that there are no current plans to make any more *Watchmen*," Lindelof said. — PTI

Taraji P. Henson postpones wedding

Los Angeles: Actor Taraji P. Henson has pushed back her wedding with fiancé Kelvin Hayden. The actor said she was thinking of getting married in April but after her wedding planner warned her about the rains she decided to postpone the ceremony. "I mentioned one date. It was 4/4/20 and we were really going to do it 4/4/20, but my wedding planner was like, 'Okay, in case it rains, we'll have umbrellas'... And I was like, 'You know what, never mind about April, let's move it later.' I am excited (for the new date). I usually don't get excited until it's closer to me. It still seems so far off," Henson told Extra magazine. The actor had previously said that she doesn't want her wedding to be a "big show" and is trying to find a "happy medium" with Hayden. — PTI



'Tried to connect with Mayer on dating app'

Los Angeles: Actor Lucy Hale has revealed that she once tried to match with singer John Mayer on a dating app. In an interview with *Cosmopolitan*, the *Pretty Little Liars* actor said she pressed yes for the musician on a "so-VIP-it-can't-be-named app," but he didn't seem interested. "I pressed yes for him, but I don't think he pressed yes for me," Hale said. The 30-year-old actor added that she wasn't bothered about Mayer's past dating reputation. "I'm so drawn to musical talent, I don't care." Mayer, 42, has dated several stars like Katy Perry, Taylor Swift, Jennifer Aniston, Minka Kelly and Jennifer Love Hewitt. — PTI

JOKER LEADS THE PACK AT BAFTA AWARDS

London: The hit film *Joker* leads the nominations for Sunday's Bafta awards but *1917* is hotly tipped for best film at the last major prize ceremony before the Oscars. Hollywood stars will pack the Royal Albert Hall in London for the glitzy bash, where Joaquin Phoenix and Renee Zellweger are tipped to scoop the main acting awards. The psychological thriller *Joker*, with Phoenix in the Batman villain title role, leads the way with 11 nominations, followed by crime flick *The Irishman* and comedy-drama *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*. However, Sam Mendes' *World War I* epic *1917*, which has nine nominations, is the favourite to win the best film and best director categories. The British Academy of Film and Television Arts' 73rd annual movie awards could indicate which way the Oscars might go in Los Angeles on February 9. Last year, Bafta gave the best acting prizes to Rami Malek and Olivia Colman. — AFP



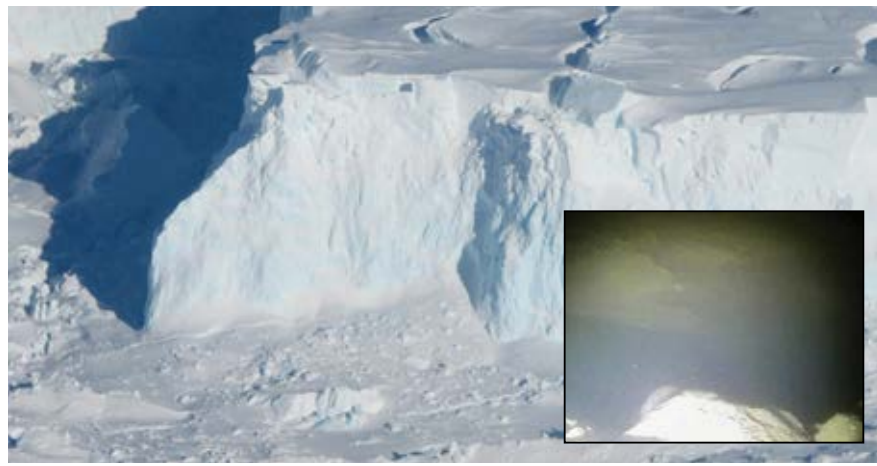
Joaquin Phoenix

Scientists click foundation of 'notorious' Antarctic glacier

New York: Using a robotic submarine, researchers have taken the first-ever images of the Antarctic Thwaites glacier's foundations, a step towards better monitoring of the ice sheet which is notorious for its contributions to sea-level rise.

According to the researchers, including those from Georgia Institute of Technology in the US, Thwaites accounts for about four per cent of global sea-level rise, causing concerns that a tipping point in its stability may result in a run-away collapse of the glacier, and boost sea levels by as much as 25 inches.

A particular area of concern, visited by the robotic submarine, named Icefin, is a boundary called the grounding line between where the glacier rests on the ocean bed, and where it floats over water. The scientists noted that this grounding line is important to the stability of Thwaites Glacier's foot-



An aerial view Thwaites Glacier. The scientists noted that the grounding line (inset) is important to the stability of the Glacier's footing since the farther it recedes, the faster the ice can flow into the sea, pushing up sea-level.

ing since the farther it recedes, the faster the ice can flow into the sea, pushing up sea-level.

"Visiting the grounding line is one of the reasons work like this is important because we can drive right up to it and actually measure where it is," said Britney Schmidt, a

researcher from Georgia Institute of Technology, who is part of the project.

"It's the first time anyone has done that or has ever even seen the grounding zone of a major glacier under the water, and that's the place where the greatest degree of melting and destabilisation can

occur," Schmidt said.

As part of the project, Icefin swam over 15 kilometers round trip during five missions, including two passes up to the grounding zone — one where it got extremely close to the place where the seafloor meets the ice. — AFP

NEWS INUGGETS

'LOW WEIGHT AT BIRTH LINKED TO POOR FITNESS'

London: Babies with low weight at birth may grow up to have bodies with weaker ability to supply oxygen to the muscles, according to a study which emphasises the importance of strategies to reduce low birth weight in infants.

According to researchers, having a good cardiorespiratory fitness is important for staying healthy, and can reduce the risk of numerous diseases and premature death.

However, they said this ability of the body to supply oxygen to muscles during exercise is declining globally, both for youths and adults.

The current study, assessed if low birth weights played a role for cardiorespiratory fitness in individuals born after pregnancy of 37-41 weeks. — PTI

'HIGH-TEMPO MUSIC MAY IMPROVE BENEFITS OF ENDURANCE TRAINING'

London: Researchers have demonstrated for the first time that listening to high-tempo music may increase the benefits of exercise, and reduce perceived effort, particularly during endurance training.

According to the researchers, while earlier studies have shown some of the beneficial links between music and exercise, the specific properties of music that affect us during training remains unknown. — PTI

The current study, published in the journal *Frontiers in Psychology*, assessed 19 active women in their mid 20s during endurance walking for 10 minutes during high intensity exercise under four different randomly assigned conditions — without and with music. "We found that listening to high-tempo music while exercising resulted in the highest heart rate compared with not listening to music," explained study.

VARYING INTENSITIES IN EXERCISE MAY INFLUENCE BRAIN FUNCTION: STUDY

London: In a first, researchers have shown that low and high exercise intensities influence brain function differently, a finding that may pave the way for better clinical applications of physical activity in patients recovering from mental illness or brain injury.

The study, published in the journal *Brain*

Plasticity, used resting state functional magnetic resonance imaging (rs-fMRI) — a noninvasive technique that allows for studies on brain connectivity — to demonstrate that low-intensity exercise triggers the brain's nerve networks involved in thought control, and attention processing. — PTI

BEST FIRST AID FOR MILD, MODERATE BURNS IS COOLING WITH RUNNING WATER FOR 20 MINUTES, SAYS STUDY

Melbourne: Twenty minutes of cooling with running water is the best initial treatment for a child's burn, according to a study which may lead to new clinical first aid recommendations for mild to moderate burns.

According to the study, published in the journal *Annals of Emergency Medicine*, cool running water can reduce the odds of needing a skin graft, accelerate healing, and lessen the chance that a young burn victim requires admission to the hospital.

The study assessed nearly 2,500 children with a median age of two years undergoing treatment for burns at a hospital in Australia.

According to the researchers, including those from the University of Queensland in Australia, the patients were treated mostly for mild to moderate scalds, liquid or steam burns, on or near their arms or legs.

"If a child is burned, the first course of treatment should be 20 minutes of cool running

water," said Bronwyn R. Griffin, study co-author from the University of Queensland in Australia. "Cool running water is most effective immediately after a burn occurs, but evidence suggests it remains beneficial for up to three hours following an injury," Griffin said.

According to the study, children who received adequate first aid involving 20 minutes or more of cooling with running water had the odds of skin grafting reduced by more than 40 per cent. — PTI

BRITISH ACADEMY OF FILM & TELEVISION AWARDS



Florence Pugh and Saoirse Ronan arrive at the Bafta Nominees Party in London on Saturday. — AP



Paris Hilton attends Rolling Stone Live in Miami on Saturday. — AFP

Tina Fey attends the 72nd Annual Writers Guild Awards at Edison Ballroom in New York on Saturday. — AFP

Pamela-Peters part ways less than two weeks after wedding

Los Angeles: Actor Pamela Anderson has split from her husband of less than two weeks, Jon Peters.

Anderson, 52, and Peters, 74, got married in Malibu on January 20 in a private ceremony but never filed for a marriage certificate.

"I have been moved by the warm reception to Jon and my union. We would be very grateful for your support as we take some time apart to re-evaluate what we want from life and from one another.

"Life is a journey and love is a process. With that universal truth in mind, we have mutually decided to put off the formalization of our marriage certificate and put our faith in the process. Thank you for respecting our privacy," Anderson said in a statement to *The Hollywood Reporter*.

The *Baywatch* star had shared her first post-wedding photo with Peters eight days ago on Instagram. The two first dated when she was 19 after meeting at the Playboy Mansion.

After the wedding ceremony, the 74-year-old Peters told *THR* of his new bride: "Pamela has never seen her full potential as an artist. She has yet to shine in a real way.



Pamela Anderson and Jon Peters

There is much more to her than meets the eye, or I wouldn't love her so much." He continued, "There are beautiful girls everywhere, I could have my pick, but — for 35 years — I've only wanted Pamela. She makes me wild — in a good way. She inspires me. I protect her and treat her the way she deserves to be treated."

The split was abrupt, with Anderson hopping a flight to her native Canada this morning, just days after posting a loving shot of her and Peters on her Instagram Stories.

Anderson was previously married to rocker Tommy Lee, Kid Rock, and Rick Solomon. She was recently linked to French soccer icon Adil Rami.

Anderson and Peters were formerly neighbors in Malibu. Anderson still resides in the beachfront enclave, but it is unclear if Peters still owns his property there. — PTI

Gang Of Four guitarist Andy Gill dies at age of 64

London: A n d y Gill, the founding member and guitarist of British post-punk band *Gang Of Four*, has died aged 64.

The musician's scratchy, staccato riffs provided the band with their signature sound, and influenced the likes of Nirvana, Fugazi and Franz Ferdinand.

His bandmates announced his death in a statement, saying: "Our great friend and supreme leader has died today".

Gill had developed a "respiratory illness," after finishing an Asian tour with *Gang Of Four* last year, they said.

"This pain is the price of extraordinary joy, almost three decades with the best man in the world," wrote his wife, Catherine Mayer, on Twitter.

"Andy's final tour in November was the only way he was ever really going to bow out; with a Stratocaster around his neck, screaming with feedback and deafening the front row," wrote current *Gang Of Four* members Thomas McNeice, John Sterry and Tobias Humble. — Agencies



Masset's thriller *Mother's Instinct* bags Belgium's Oscars

Brussels: Olivier Masset-Depasse's retro psychological thriller *Mother's Instinct* swept the Magritte Awards on Saturday, winning nine of the 10 categories it was nominated in at Belgium's version of the Oscars.

Favourite and Cannes winner *Young Ahmed* won just two gongs — most promising actor for Idris Ben Ali, 14, who plays a radicalised teenager, and best supporting actress for Myriem Akheddiou, who plays his teacher and victim. Adapted from Belgian author Barbara Abel's detective novel *Behind the Hatred* and with nods to David Lynch and Alfred Hitchcock, *Mother's Instinct* took home best film, best director and best original screenplay, in a night to remember for the 49-year-old director from Charleroi.

Veerles Baetens won best actress for her role in Masset-Depasse's third offering that explores how the friendship between two neighbours descends into tragedy after the child

Lee Isaac Chung wins Grand Jury Prize at Sundance

Los Angeles: Filmmaker Lee Isaac Chung's semi-autobiographical feature *Minari* and Iranian director Massoud Bakshshi's *Yalda*, a *Night for Forgiveness* were awarded with Grand Jury honours at the 2020 Sundance Film Festival.

Minari, about a seven-year-old Korean-American boy whose life turns upside down when his father decides to move their family to rural Arkansas and start a farm in the mid-1980s, was adjudged the winner of the US Grand Jury Prize (Dramatic).

While *Yalda*, about a woman who is sentenced



Han Yeri (top left), Steven Yeun, director Lee Isaac Chung, Yuh Jung Youn (bottom left) Alan Kim and Noel Cho at *Minari* promotional event in Utah. — AP

death for accidentally killing her husband, bagged the World Cinema

Grand Jury Prize (Dramatic). The jury, headed by

of one of them is killed in an accident.

Belgian actor Bouli Lanners won in the best actor category for his role in Claire Burger's "Real Love". *Mother's Instinct* also swept the field for

technical awards, taking home gongs for best sound, best editing and best cinematography.

Belgian-Guatemalan director Cesar Diaz won best first film for *Our Mothers*, which delves

into Guatemala's civil war and the search for "missing politicals".

It also won the Camera d'Or at Cannes last year for best first feature.

Belgian Mya Bollaers, 23, won most promising

actress for her role in *Lola*, which tells the story of a young transgender woman's struggles with her father as they both come to terms with the death of her mother. — AFP



Herbal cosmetics queen Shahnaz Husain speaks at a conference on 'Ayurveda: A Power for Health and Beauty' at India House in London recently, where India's high commissioner to the UK Ruchi Ghanashyam also spoke.



Chappell hails Kohli

Australian great Ian Chappell has lauded India captain Virat Kohli for being able to channelise his "highly emotional temperament" towards building a versatile team that has tasted plenty of overseas success

SHORT TAKES



Shubman Gill

Gill smashes 204* in a drawn game

Christchurch: Shubman Gill is expected to retain his place in India's Test squad after scoring an unbeaten 204 for the 'A' team in the drawn four-day game against New Zealand 'A' here on Friday. Resuming the day four at 127 for two, India 'A' went on to make 448 for three in their second innings with Gill scoring his second double century on an away tour (the first one came in West Indies last year). Gill and Test regular Hanuma Vihari (100 off 113) shared an unbeaten 222-run stand for the fourth wicket to save the game for India A. Another valuable contribution came from Priyank Panchal (115 off 164). Gill's 279-ball effort comprised 22 boundaries and four sixes. It was a much improved batting effort from India A as the pitch eased out at the Hagley Oval. — PTI

It's a disappointing series, says Taylor

Mount Maunganui: After India secured a win in the fifth T20, New Zealand batsman Ross Taylor said the whole series has been disappointing. Taylor on Sunday became the first New Zealand male cricketer to play 100 T20I and scored 53 in the match. Despite his brilliant performance, India managed to thrash the hosts by seven runs in the fifth T20I. "It was nice to contribute and play 100 games but I think the whole series has been disappointing by the way we put ourselves in good positions and fail to capitalise on that... You cannot give this Indian side an inch and we gave them a lot more than that and they took advantage of that," Taylor said in the post-match press conference. — PTI

England, SA in ODI battle

Cape Town: World Cup champions England return to one-day international action when they start a three-match series against South Africa at Newlands on Tuesday. Both countries have made numerous changes from the squads that played in the global event between May and July last year. Only eight of England's winning squad will be in action, while South Africa, the first team to be eliminated from contention for the World Cup semi-finals, have retained only five players. — AFP

Fantastic five

India complete their 5-0 whitewash of Kiwis with a seven-run win in final T20

Mount Maunganui, Feb. 2: India choked New Zealand yet again to turn it around for a seven-run win in the fifth T20 International, giving them a rare 5-0 series whitewash in the shortest format here on Sunday.

The Indian pacers, led by ever-reliable Jasprit Bumrah, shared seven wickets among them for 25 runs in match-changing 7.2 overs to restrict the Kiwis to 156 for nine while defending 163 for three.

Bumrah conceded just 12 runs in his four overs and got rid of three batsmen, bowling block-hole deliveries during death overs. India's total was built around stand-in skipper Rohit Sharma's 60-run knock after they elected to bat. Tim Seifert (50) and Ross Taylor (53) kept the Black Caps in hunt for a consolation win but the hosts again fell near the finish line.

This is only third time that India have white-washed opponents in away T20 series and first time in a five-match rubber. India had blanked the West Indies 3-0 in 2019 and beat Australia 3-0 in 2016. New Zealand got off to a poor start and were quickly reduced to 17 for three in the fourth over.

Bumrah had Martin Guptill lbw, and Sundar bowled Colin Munro (15). Tom Bruce's run-out didn't help the situation



Team India pose after completing their 5-0 T20I series win over New Zealand at Bay Oval on Sunday.

— AP

either. Taylor and Seifert came together at that juncture, putting on 99 runs for the fourth wicket, raising vision of an improbable win. Seifert reached his half-century off 29 balls, including five fours and three sixes, while Taylor got to his half-century in 42 balls. He hit five fours and two sixes. They took 34 runs

off Shivam Dube in the 10th over, after which KL Rahul, who led in absence of injured Rohit Sharma, had to take corrective measures. He brought back his frontline pacers and they both etched out wickets. Navdeep Saini dismissed Seifert and then Bumrah bowled Daryl Mitchell with a searing yorker.

— PTI

We need everyone to be best version of themselves: Kohli

Mount Maunganui, Feb. 2: India captain Virat Kohli on Sunday said he wants his players to be the "best version of themselves" in order to dominate world cricket in the coming years.

"We need everyone to be the best versions of themselves. It is all about laying the vision in front of the boys, the way you think, prepare. The guys are taking notice of it and they realise that the team needs 120 percent from them every time," Kohli said.

"Because only then you will find ways to win. That has been a massive change for us in the last two-three years. We have seen the results; we obviously won't win everything and these victories give a lot more pleasure than the one-sided victories." Heaping praise on the team, Kohli said: "All of us are really proud of how we played. It's about finding ways to win. Today, all these

young guys were on the field after Rohit's unfortunate injury and them coming together and handling the pressure." — PTI

Rahul wants to carry his form to T20 WC

Mount Maunganui, Feb. 2: Chief architect of India's rare 5-0 clean sweep over New Zealand, India opener KL Rahul on Sunday said he is not yet thinking about the T20 World Cup but wants to carry his sparkling form into the big event.

The 27-year-old from Karnataka was named the Player of the Tournament for scoring 224 runs in the five-match series at an average of 56. "I am batting really well now and I am happy to do the

roles I am doing for my side. Not thinking too much about the T20 World Cup at the moment, but hopefully I can continue batting this way," he said. The T20 World Cup will be held in Australia from October 18 to November 15. India notched up a rare 5-0 whitewash over New Zealand with a seven-run win in the fifth and final T20 International and Rahul said the team's ability to find answers in difficult situations was the key to its success.

"I am pleased. It is great to be standing here winning 5-0. Very happy that my performances could result in victories for India. We were happy to come into this series with confidence and to keep executing our skills every game." — PTI

SCORECARD

India: KL Rahul c Santner b Bennett 45, Sanju Samson c Santner b Kuggeleijn 2, Rohit Sharma ret'd hurt 60, Shreyas Iyer (not out) 33, Shivam Dube c Bruce b Kuggeleijn 5, Manish Pandey (not out) 11. Extras (LB-1 W-6) 7. Total (for three wickets in 20 overs) 163. FoW: 1-8, 2-96, 3-148. **Bowling:** Southee 4-0-52-0, Kuggeleijn 4-0-25-2, Bennett 4-0-21-1, Sodhi 4-0-28-0, Santner 4-0-36-0. **New Zealand:** Martin Guptill lbw b Bumrah 2, Colin Munro b Washington Sundar 15, Tim Seifert c Samson b Navdeep Saini 50, Tom Bruce run out 0, Ross Taylor c Rahul b Navdeep Saini 53, Daryl Mitchell b Bumrah 2, Mitchell Santner c Manish Pandey b Thakur 6, Scott Kuggeleijn c Washington Sundar b Thakur 0, Tim Southee b Bumrah 6, Ish Sodhi (not out) 16, Hamish Bennett (not out) 1. Extras (LB-1, W-3, NB-1) 5. Total (for nine wickets in 20 overs) 156. FoW: 1-7, 2-17, 3-17, 4-116, 5-119, 6-131, 7-132, 8-133, 9-141. **Bowling:** Sundar 3-0-20-1, Bumrah 4-1-12-3, Saini 4-0-23-2, Thakur 4-0-38-2, Chahal 4-0-28-0, Dube 1-0-34-0. Stats: S. PERVEZ QAISER

MOST 50+ SCORES IN T20I			
Batsman	M	Runs	50+
Rohit Sharma (India)	108	2773	25
Virat Kohli (India)	82	2794	24
Paul Stirling (Ireland)	75	2052	17
Martin Guptill (NZ)	88	2536	17
David Warner (Aus)	76	2079	16

INDIA'S OVERSEAS SERIES WIN IN T20s			
Year	Venue	Opponents	Result
2020	New Zealand	New Zealand	5-0
2016	Australia	Australia	3-0
2016	Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe	2-1
2018	South Africa	South Africa	2-1
2018	England	England	2-1

Kohli looks a much more secure captain than he was



Hemant Kenkre Silly Point

Virat Kohli & Co. have made a strong statement. The side that landed bleary eyed in the southwestern Pacific Islands and were put straight to the test by playing the first T20 at Auckland, is now bright and bushy-tailed having won the T20 international series 5-0 a feat never achieved by any Indian side across all formats of the game. The two wins at Hamilton and Wellington, both going into super overs adding to the excitement, is proof of the mindset that the team has. In both matches, India came back from the brink and turned the game their way in the final over. In the first, it was Mohammed Shami who showed he has ice running in his veins while in the second game, a relatively inexperienced Shardul Thakur shut the door on the Kiwis who had looked like running away with the game. In both matches, the usually consistent Jasprit

Bumrah ran off his tested track and was punished severely by Kane Williamson at Hamilton and in the two overs he bowled in the eliminators. When your lead bowler struggles the others need to provide the back up which Shami and Thakur did admirably. What was more commendable was that despite of Bumrah going a bit awry, skipper Kohli gave him the ball in both overs of the eliminators.

Today, Kohli looks a much more secure captain than he was in many series preceding those played in the past. One sees him willing to bat and lower down the order to give inexperienced players like Shivam Dube a chance to bat higher. There were many experts who had opined that Kohli should bat at number 4 at the International Cricket Council World Cup 2019 in England to settle down India's middle order issues. Kohli continued to bat at his favourite position, num-



Virat Kohli and Kane Williamson.

— Twitter

ber 3, and the team kept experimenting throughout the tournament which saw India lose the semi-final to the Kiwis by 18 runs. Giving an opportunity to KL Rahul to come in at the third position against Australia in the first ODI against Australia at Mumbai and getting Dube to bat at that position at Hamilton, in the third T20 against the Kiwis shows he is willing to give

others a chance to prove themselves.

Batting position apart, what was very creditable on Kohli's part was the faith he put in Bumrah in both eliminators. The Gujarat lad is the most valuable bowler in India at this point in time. He is the fulcrum around which the Indian bowling attack revolves. Kohli could have asked Shami and Thakur to do the honours in the super overs at Hamilton and Wellington.

Both had their rhythm very finely tuned when they bowled the 20th overs in the matches and no one would have questioned Kohli's decision had he done so. Kohli's act of asking Bumrah to bowl in the super overs just shows he does not want his spearhead to lose his confidence. Kohli knows Bumrah is his best bet if he has to continue India's winning streak in the three ODIs to follow and in the important two-Test series which is crucial for India in the World Test Championship.

Giving all selected team members a chance was rare in Indian cricket. There have been many tours in the past where team members were divided into players and tourists. The current Indian team management, led by Kohli and team coach

Ravi Shastri, are giving opportunities to players sitting on the benches to compete with those that are regulars in the playing eleven and making them feel a part of the team.

They have given many opportunities to young Rishabh Pant and are picking players like Washington Sundar and Sanju Samson in the playing eleven to prove themselves in the field of play. Kohli and Shastri would have had no opposition had they continued playing with a full side in the last two T20s against New Zealand after having won the T20 series.

Investing in people is what makes great leaders and drives teams to be successful across all genres. By resting in-form players like Rohit Sharma, Ravindra Jadeja and Shami and allowing Sunder, Samson and Navjot Saini to play the fourth T20, they have shown their willingness to create assets.

Backing talent and creating resources at the cost of going for glory — Kohli could have continued the same eleven for a 5-0 brown wash — will hold Kohli and Shastri in good stead. I do believe the duo, and the selectors, have realised the value these assets will provide in the future.

India women go down to Aussies

Canberra, Feb. 2: Indian women suffered a four-wicket loss against the mighty Australia after a disappointing batting performance in their second match of the T20 tri-series here on Sunday.

India struggled to 103 for nine in 20 overs after being asked to bat. The visiting team's bowlers did well to stretch the game till the penultimate over but there were not enough runs on the board.

Elysse Perry was the undisputed star of the game, picking up three wickets in one before making 49 off 47 balls in Australia's chase. India had beaten England in the tournament opener while Australia had lost to England in a Super Over finish on Saturday, leaving all three teams with a win each.

"Our lower order definitely needs to bat a lot better, especially when the top-order doesn't get runs. However, really appreciate the performance of the bowlers," said India skipper Harmanpreet Kaur at the post-match presentation. India next play against England at the Junction

BRIEF SCORES

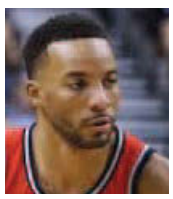
India 103/9 in 20 overs (Smriti Mandhana 35; Elysse Perry 4/13, Tayla Vlaeminck 3/13) lost to Australia 104/6 (Elysse Perry 49; Rajeshwari Gayakwad 2/18)

Oval in Melbourne on February 7.

Barring opener Smriti Mandhana (35) and Harmanpreet (28), Indian batters showed complete lack of application on a pitch offering extra bounce.

India lost their last six wickets for 21 runs with pacer Perry (4/13 in 4 overs) picking three of them in 14th over, removing Harmanpreet, Taniya Bhatia and Deepti Sharma.

Sixteen-year-old Shafali Verma, touted as the next big thing in women's cricket, lasted only three balls while Jemimah Rodrigues crawled to 1 off 11 balls, leaving their team at 16 for two in three overs. The experienced Mandhana and Harmanpreet stitched a 40-run stand before the latter's dismissal triggered a collapse. — PTI



Sidelined

Toronto Raptors guard Norman Powell who suffered a fracture in his left hand last week has been sidelined indefinitely

SHORT TAKES

Ankita clinches ITF singles title

New Delhi: India's best woman singles player Ankita Raina won her first ITF singles title of the season and 10th of her career when she beat Chloe Paquet in the summit clash of the USD 25000 event in Nonthaburi, Thailand on Sunday. The third seed Indian recorded a facile 6-3, 7-5 win over the fourth seed French woman, ranked even places below the Indian at 178. She has also won the doubles title with Dutch partner Bibiane Schoofs. It was Ankita's first victory against Paquet, who emerged winner in previous two meetings. It has been a good start for Ankita in the 2020 season, as she had made the semifinals at the another USD 25000 event in Canberra. "It's a positive start to the season. I didn't get much time for pre-season training but my coach was travelling for 3 weeks which helped me to train physically and tennis wise," Ankita said. — PTI

McDowell wins, Bhullar tied 67th

King Abdullah Economic City, Saudi Arabia: India's Gaganjeet Bhullar had another average day as he carded a second successive one-over 71 on the final day to finish tied 67th at Saudi International golf tournament here on Sunday. Bhullar finished with a total of three-over 283. He had two birdies and three bogeys in his card. Graeme McDowell used all his experience and stayed patient to finish at 12-under, two shots clear of defending champion Dustin Johnson (67) to claim the title. The win ended McDowell's nearly six-year long title drought on the European Tour. His last win came at the Open de France in 2014. It was McDowell's 11th European Tour victory and 16th overall and they have come in 12 different countries. "I hope this win will do for me what the Abu Dhabi win did for my friend, Shane Lowry last year. It was great of him to be there to congratulate me," said McDowell. — PTI

Finau in lead at Phoenix Open

Los Angeles: Tony Finau was on fire in the Arizona desert Saturday, posting an eagle and seven birdies in a nine-under par 62 for a one-shot lead in the US PGA Tour Phoenix Open. Finau's 16-under par total of 197 put him one in front of fellow American Webb Simpson, whose seven-under 64 included a hole in one at the par-three 12th. Overnight leader J.B. Holmes carded a one-under 70 on the TPC Scottsdale Stadium Course and was tied for third with Hudson Swafford (66) on 199. "I hit more fairways today, so I was able to give myself some short irons into the par-fours," said Finau, who started the day four strokes off Holmes's lead. He hit 12 of 14 fairways in regulation and 15 of 18 greens and said the round didn't require a lot of thinking. Finau was five-under for the day when he rolled in a 20-foot eagle putt at the 13th. — AFP

LA LIGA CELEBRATES 3 YEARS IN INDIA

New Delhi: La Liga, Spain's top division football league, celebrates its third anniversary in India, since launching its second office in Asia in New Delhi. La Liga came to India when the sport was still in its nascent phase in India and the past three years have proven to be revolutionary for the Spanish league, as the audience base has grown, accessibility to the sport has increased and LaLiga is closer than ever to its Indian fans. Jose Antonio Cachaza, Managing Director, La Liga India said, "India has been a priority market for us since several years, but being here and engaging directly with fans and stakeholders regularly has reinforced the potential and the astounding zeal this country possesses. At our third anniversary, we look back with pride and joy at everything we have done for our fans and how much love they have shown to us. Being in such a dynamic market, it has been critical to constantly evolve, adapt and come forward with innovative and clutter-breaking ideas for our existing and potential fans and with the new decade upon us, we look forward to doing exactly that." — Agencies

Lakers back on track

Davis leads LA to their 1st win since Kobe tragedy

Los Angeles, Feb. 2: Anthony Davis scored a team-high 21 points as the Los Angeles Lakers put the emotions of their Kobe Bryant tribute night behind them with a 129-113 victory over the Sacramento Kings on Saturday. The Lakers won their first game since Bryant died in a horrific helicopter crash after losing 127-119 on Friday to Portland on a night when they paid tribute to the former NBA legend. Davis followed up his 37-point performance against the Trail Blazers with another team-high total in the second game of a back-to-back set. "We got our first win. It is never going to feel normal. It is never going to feel the same," said Lakers coach Frank Vogel. "That is our first win since this happened. There are going to be a lot of important steps for us along the way. I loved the way we came out tonight," he added. LeBron James had a triple-double of 15 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists and Avery Bradley scored 16 of his 19 points in the first 12 minutes as the Lakers racked up 81 points in the first half. Bryant's career high was 81 points in 2006 against Toronto second only to Wilt Chamberlain's 100-point game in 1962. "We knew last night was going to be an emotional game. We got through it. Tonight it was get back on track and get out and get a win no matter what," Vogel said. James' triple-double was his 11th of the season, one off Luka Doncic's league lead, and the 92nd of his career. Only Oscar Robertson (181), Russell Westbrook (146), Magic Johnson (138) and Jason Kidd (107) have more career triple-doubles. James said they had to get used to Bryant tributes whenever they travel to a new NBA building, noting: "It should be acknowledged because of what he meant to this franchise for 20 years." One of the last people to talk to Bryant before he and eight others died last Sunday, James said it was a bittersweet recollection.



LeBron James (right) of Los Angeles Lakers drives against Harrison Barnes of Sacramento Kings during their NBA game in Sacramento, California (USA), on Saturday. The Lakers won 129-113. — AP

Elsewhere, red-hot Damian Lillard continued blistering pace with 51 points to lead the Portland to a 124-107 victory over the Utah Jazz. Lillard connected on 17 of 29 field-goal attempts and made all eight of his free throws en route to his third 50-point performance over the past six games and fourth of the season. In Boston, Jaylen Brown scored 32 points, as the Boston Celtics won their sixth game in the last seven with a 116-95 victory over the Philadelphia 76ers. Jayson Tatum tallied 25 points, and Brad Wanamaker chipped in 15 as the Celtics avoided a season sweep by Philadelphia. Boston played without

CURRY SET TO RETURN

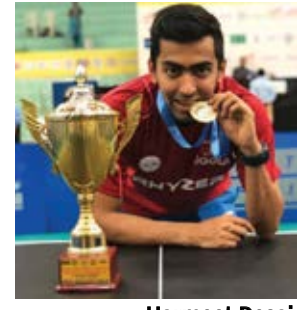
San Francisco, Feb. 2: Injured Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry, a two-time NBA Most Valuable Player and three-time league champion, will be re-evaluated in four weeks and could return in March, the club said Saturday. Curry, who turns 32 on March 14, suffered a broken left hand on October 30 against the Phoenix Suns and underwent surgery two days later. Curry "has made good progress during his rehabilitation over the last several weeks and continues to expand his individual on-court work each week," the Warriors said in a statement. Curry averaged 20.3 points, 6.5 assists and 5.0 rebounds in four games before the injury. He had career averages of 23.5 points, 6.6 assists and 4.5 rebounds entering this season. — AFP

injured leading scorer Kemba Walker, who has a sore left knee. Ben Simmons led the 76ers with 23 points, and Joel Embiid was held to 11 on a dismal one-of-11 shooting. Philadelphia was done in by poor shooting. They attempted 33 shots from three-point range but made just seven. The 76ers had beaten the Celtics in their first three

meetings this season, including December 12 at the Boston Garden. Also, Kawhi Leonard scored at least 30 points for the ninth straight contest as the Los Angeles Clippers beat the Minnesota Timberwolves 118-106. Leonard, who also had six rebounds, needed just 24 minutes of playing time to score 31 points. Paul George, playing in his second contest after missing nine games because of a left hamstring strain, had 21 points and seven rebounds in 25 minutes. In Washington, Brooklyn Nets guard Kyrie Irving sprained his right knee in the fourth quarter of Saturday's 113-107 loss to the Washington Wizards. — AFP

Harmeet, Sutirtha top players in TT

AGE CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, FEB. 2



Harmeet Desai

Sixth-seed Harmeet Desai defeated fourth-seed Manav Thakkar 4-3 in the men's singles final of the UTT 81st National Table Tennis Championships to win his maiden title at the Saroonagar Indoor Stadium here today. He had to wait seven-long years after he had reached his first final in 2013. Harmeet pocketed ₹2.5 lakh for his fantastic efforts, while Haryana's Sutirtha Mukherjee claimed her second National crown-she won her first at Ranchi in 2017- and ₹1.65 lakh in prize money. In the process, she also bagged three gold, including in the team event and women's doubles apart from getting a silver in the mixed event. A happy Harmeet, who trains at Axton Centre in Germany, attributed his success to the training he has received there. "Ever since I started training at the centre (in Germany) where I get to play with world's top paddlers, I have improved in my blocks and shot selections," he said. Indeed, that was true to a large extent but it was his calm and composure in the seventh set that helped him win the crown. "Manav I have been travelling together and when he engages you in long rallies, more often than not he wins. And the mistakes I made in the sixth set forced me rethink and I decided to keep my cool in the decider," he admitted. After taking a 2-1 lead, Manav kept coming at him and levelled to take the issue to the deciding set. But in the last set, it was a different Harmeet as he slowed down the pace to

deny Manav the leverage he was looking for. When he changed end at 5-2, the writing on the wall was clear for the Surat boy as Harmeet stroked his way to the title by allowing just three more points to his state mate.

THE RESULTS

- Men's singles final: Harmeet Desai (PSPB) bt Manav Thakkar (PSPB) 11-4, 11-13, 14-12, 9-11, 11-8, 5-11, 11-5. Semifinals: Manav Thakkar bt G. Sathiyana (PSPB) 11-9, 16-14, 7-11, 15-13, 6-11, 9-11; Harmeet Desai bt Soumyajit Ghosh (Har) 11-9, 11-7, 11-4, 8-11, 14-12.
- Men's doubles final: Jubin Kumar/ Soumyajit Ghosh (Har) bt Manush Shah/ Ishaan Hingorani (Guj) 11-7, 8-11, 11-3, 11-7.
- Women's singles final: Sutirtha Mukherjee (Har) bt Krittwika Sinha Roy (PSPB) 11-4, 11-5, 11-8, 11-4. Semifinals: Sutirtha Mukherjee bt Ayhika Mukherjee (RBI) 12-10, 8-11, 11-9, 11-5, 11-5; Krittwika Sinha Roy bt Ankita Das (Ben 'B') 11-9, 11-6, 15-13, 11-7.
- Women's doubles final: B. Sutirtha Mukherjee/ Riti Shankar (Har) bt Surbhi Patwari/ Poymantee Baisya (Ben 'A') 11-7, 11-7, 8-11, 11-8.
- Mixed Doubles final: Ronit Bhanja/ Mousumi Paul (Ben 'A') bt Sourav Saha/ Sutirtha Mukherjee (Har) 15-13, 8-11, 12-10, 13-11.

VIRUS RESTRICTIONS HIT AFC CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Melbourne, Feb. 2: The AFC Champions League was thrown into further chaos Sunday with Australia advising fixtures due to be held in Perth and Sydney can no longer take place due to travel restrictions over the deadly coronavirus. It follows the government on Saturday announcing that non-citizens arriving from mainland China would be barred from entering the country under measures to combat the spread of the epidemic. Perth Glory were due to host Shanghai Shenhua on February 11 and Sydney FC face Shanghai SIPG a day later. Football Federation Australia said it had told the Asian Football Confederation that "it will now not be possible to play matchday one in Australia as originally scheduled". Last week, home games for Chinese clubs in the AFC Champions League during February and March were rescheduled, and will now be played as away fixtures instead. FFA said the AFC had called an urgent meeting for Tuesday in Kuala Lumpur to discuss the situation with all stakeholders. Australian officials have confirmed 12 cases of coronavirus in the country so far. — AFP

India's Super Over wins suggest admirable never-say-die attitude



Why is the current Indian team so good? The answer perhaps is not so much in the talent available, rather the mindset in refusing to be daunted by adverse conditions or match situations. Back-to-back victories in the Super Over against New Zealand in the third and fourth T20s highlight this. The crucial aspect was not in the Super Over in both matches, where New Zealand obviously lost their nerve, but in the final over of these matches. Both times, defeat looked inevitable, but India managed to turn the tables. In the third match, Mohamed Shami got to defend only nine runs in the 20th over, with Kane Williamson and Ross Taylor, New Zealand's two best batsmen, at the crease. In the fourth match, Shardul Thakur defended even fewer, seven runs, with New Zealand having seven wickets remaining when he came on to bowl the final over. These stats only accentuate how well India responded to the excruciating situations. To win from very comfortable positions is important too, but hardly noteworthy. To snatch victory from the jaws of defeat — not as an isolated instance, but fairly regularly — suggests an admirable never-say-die attitude. Remember, in Test rankings, India has been no. 1 for over 36 months consecutively, in ODIs, it has hovered between no. 1 and 2 for a fair while, and while not in the top 3 in T20s, isn't too far behind on points. An upheaval is possible in the near future if the current form



Ravi Shastri and Virat Kohli.

holds. What's contributing to India's prowess across formats in the past few years? There are three reasons I see: High quality talent (particularly in fast bowling), aggressive leadership which pursues success relentlessly, and not the least, intense competition among players for places in the squad/playing side. Since talent is abundant for decades now, the second and third aspects are the more important in the context. Kohli's influence today stretches way past his brilliant batting. He's reshaped the ethos of the dressing room, providing no scope for defeatism or even defensiveness. He may still be on a learning curve tactically, as Ravi Shastri has pointed out a few times. But where team performance is concerned, Kohli sets exacting benchmarks. If a player's fitness and attitude is not geared towards optimizing team success, he is a liability. This

has sent a strong message in Indian cricket about the kind of players needed and has increased competition among players for making it in the team. The most mentally tough, physically fittest and with high ability can survive. Manish Pandey, who held the Indian innings together in the fourth match, was to spotlight this after the fourth match. In domestic cricket, Pandey bats 3 or 4, but in the Indian team he is slotted no. 6. "There is no place open in the top 4, so I have to wait for my turn and make the most at this position." A lesson there somewhere for youngsters like Rishabh Pant and Sanju Samson, who have squandered hard-to-get opportunities. It could legitimately be asked why the Indian team, if indeed it is so good, could not beat the same New Zealand in the ODI World Cup just over six months back. The only cogent answer to that the Kiwis were the better side that day, India messing it up in the last 25-30 minutes. To extend the explanation further laterally, invincibility in sport is a chimera. Even the best teams/sportspersons can for whatever reason be below par on a day and come to grief. The great West Indies team under Clive Lloyd in 1983 had one such day in the World Cup final that India memorably won. This is not to say the current Indian team is in the same league as West Indies between 1975 and 1990, or Australia from the early 1990s and to 2007-8. The hallmark of champions — individual or team — is how few times they lose over an extended period of time against all kinds of opponents in all kinds of conditions. Kohli's team is still some way off from being in this elite category just yet. But if the deep desire to win is sustained — and is obviously ratified by results — it might be impossible to keep it out. — AFP

CRISTIANO SHOOTS PAST FIORENTINA

Milan, Feb. 2: Cristiano Ronaldo stretched his scoring streak to nine consecutive league games with a penalty double on Sunday as Juventus bounced back from last weekend's defeat to Napoli with a 3-0 win over Fiorentina. The Portuguese striker slotted in both his goals from the spot in either half in Turin with Dutch defender Matthijs de Ligt heading in a third in injury time. Maurizio Sarri's side open up a six-point lead on top of the Serie 'A' table on second-placed Inter Milan, who travel to lowly Udinese later on Sunday. Juventus had fallen to just their second defeat of the season last weekend at Sarri's former club Napoli. Fiorentina, in 14th position, have had a resurgence in form since Giuseppe Iachini took over on December 24, and had been unbeaten in the league this year. They tested Juventus goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny early with the Pole getting his hand to deny Federico Chiesa's back-heel kick and a Pol Lirola effort. Fellow Pole Bartlomiej Dragowski denied Rodrigo Bentancur at the other end before a VAR viewing confirmed Fiorentina's German Pezzella had handled the ball in the area. Five-time Ballon d'Or winner Ronaldo made no mistake, slotting in five minutes before the break. — AFP

Tokyo cautious before Olympics

Tokyo, Feb. 2: Tokyo governor Yuriko Koike promised Sunday to implement "thorough measures" to protect people from the deadly coronavirus in the run-up to this summer's Olympic Games. At the opening of the \$330 million Ariake Arena, venue for Olympic volleyball and Paralympic wheelchair basketball, Koike said: "I will implement even more stringent measures to tackle infectious diseases. I am having discussions this weekend with senior officials to assure the safety and security of people in Tokyo — specifically focusing on ways to prevent the spread of the virus and strengthen testing systems." Koike also urged people to wash their hands and wear surgical masks to help protect them from disease. Japan has warned citizens against non-essential travel to China, where the outbreak began, and fast-tracked new rules including limits on entering the country as it tries to contain the spread of the virulent new coronavirus. The flu-like pathogen, which originated in Hubei's provincial capital Wuhan, has resulted in more than 300 deaths in China. No deaths have been reported so far in Japan. The health scare has led to the cancellation of Olympic qualifying events in China such as boxing and badminton. Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has said the travel warning for China will be raised to level two on the country's four-point system, advising people to "avoid travel that is not urgent or is not necessary". The ribbon-cutting for Ariake Arena on Tokyo's waterfront leaves just the Olympics aquatics centre as the last of eight permanent venues under construction, set to be completed later this month. The Tokyo Olympics begin on July 24 with the Paralympics starting on August 25. — AFP

Thorough measures will be implemented to protect people from the deadly coronavirus in the run-up to this summer's Olympic Games, assures the governor of Tokyo, Yuriko Koike.



Unhappy

Defender Luke Shaw reveals Manchester United's stars are hugely frustrated by their failure to close the gap to the Premier League's top four

SHORT TAKES

Joshna enters final in Cleveland

Cleveland, USA: Indian ace Joshna Chinappa stormed into the semi-final of the Cleveland Classic squash tournament after beating Annie Au of Hong Kong here. Chinappa won 3-6, 11-6, 6-11, 11-8, 11-6 on Saturday night. The tournament is a PSA World Tour bronze event. The fifth seeded Indian had to dig deep into her reserves to stop the fighting Hong Kong player, seeded fourth, in a close match that lasted nearly an hour. While Annie was relying on her consistency with the lobs and drops, Chinappa countered with hard shots, straight lines and volleys. The Indian could gain a touch of ascendancy towards the end of the contest. Earlier, Chinappa had a bye in the first round and an easy second round win after her Egyptian opponent Menna Nasser sustained an injury and retired. — PTI

Kryphsa extend winning run

Bengaluru: Kryphsa continued their winning form in the Hero Indian Women's League with another routine 4-0 victory over Punjab-based BBK DAV here

on Sunday. Anju Tamang's grounder in the 18th minute opened the scoreline for the Manipuri girls, much to the dismay of the BBK DAV goalkeeper Radhika Khodre who went down well to stop the ball but was unable to. After the breather, they came out with more purpose and scored three goals to assert their authority in the tournament once again. — PTI

Yadav, Anjali win Kolkata Marathon

Kolkata: Lucknow's Awadh Narayan Yadav and home favourite Anjali Saraogi clinched the top honours in the men's and women's categories respectively in Kolkata Full Marathon here on Sunday. Awadh clocked a timing of two hours, 30 minutes and 30 seconds, while Meghalaya duo of Tlading Wahlang (2:30:51) and Batsrang A Sangma (2:31:43) finished second and third respectively. For Anjali, it was a memorable hat-trick of titles on her home course as she led all the way to cross the finish line with a timing of 3:24:02. Anjali's city-mate Sunmul Rahman took home the second place with a timing of 3:44:12, while Meghalaya's Snora Lyngkholi finished third with a time of 3:46:48. — PTI

KRISHNA BRACE FLOORS JAMSHEDPUR

Jamshedpur: A brilliant Roy Krishna struck twice as ATK blanked an ineffective Jamshedpur FC 3-0 in a Hero Indian Super League clash at the JRD Tata Sports Complex here on Sunday. Krishna (2nd, 75th) and Edu Garcia (59th) were the goalscorer for ATK as the visitors secured their ninth win of the season. ATK are now level on points (30) at the top of the table with Goa after 15 matches. Jamshedpur have seen their play-off hopes virtually end and are now seventh with 16 points. ATK came out all-guns-blazing and broke the deadlock just two minutes into the game. The visitors' high-voltage start was rewarded when an under-pressure Sandip Mandi played a weak pass to Memo Moura. Krishna was alert and the Fijian striker intercepted, charged towards the goal and slotted past Subrata Paul with ease. Paul was next in line to err while trying to play out from the back. The goalkeeper tried to take a touch and kick the ball after collecting a back-pass from Memo but hit straight to Krishna. This time though, the striker sent his effort straight back at the keeper. It was one-way traffic in the first half as ATK continued to threaten Jamshedpur's goal. In the 26th minute, Edu outfoxed his marker and got into a one-on-one against Paul but the veteran custodian charged off his line and produced a crucial save. After the half an hour mark, Paul's desire to build-up play from the back went awry again. — PTI



DJOKER IS THE ACE

Novak beats Thiem in five-set epic to win eighth Australian Open

Melbourne, Feb. 2: Novak Djokovic admitted he was on the brink of defeat with dizziness and dehydration before coming through a five-set thriller against Dominic Thiem to clinch a record eighth Australian Open crown and return to world number one on Sunday.

The indomitable Serb stretched his unbeaten streak this season to 13 but he had to rally from two sets to one down to beat the courageous fifth-seeded Austrian 6-4, 4-6, 2-6, 6-3, 6-4 in a nearly four-hour marathon. It was his 17th Grand Slam title, moving him within two of Rafael Nadal and three of Roger Federer on the all-time list. "Definitely one of the toughest finals I have ever had in Australia," said Djokovic, who pulled alongside Nadal (12 at the French Open) and Federer (eight at Wimbledon) as only the third man ever to win eight or more titles at the same Slam. "I was on the brink of losing the match, I didn't feel that good. Dominic was dominating from the baseline... Then I regained the strength to pull

THE RESULTS

MEN'S SINGLES FINAL

▶ Novak Djokovic (SRB x2) bt Dominic Thiem (AUT x5) 6-4, 4-6, 2-6, 6-3, 6-4.

MEN'S DOUBLES FINAL

▶ Rajeev Ram (USA)/Joe Salisbury (GBR x11) bt Max Purcell/Luke Saville (AUS) 6-4, 6-2.

through in the fourth set, and in the fifth it was anyone's game." Victory ensured Djokovic will once again be world number one when the new rankings are released on Monday, displacing Nadal. Federer remains third with Thiem moving up a place to a career-high fourth. But it wasn't easy with the lethargic Serb looking out for the count in sets two and three before he regained his mojo after a medical timeout to grind down the talented Thiem. Djokovic said he felt dizzy and sapped of energy, with the trainer telling him he was dehydrated. "My energy completely collapsed. When I was tossing the

ball I started to feel dizzy... I couldn't believe what was happening," he said. Djokovic had never before won a Slam final in seven previous attempts when finding himself two sets to one down. "If you play a Grand Slam final against him, it's always going to be a match where very small details decide it," said Thiem. **NERVELESS START** The Serb, 32, was the overwhelming favourite, and the supremely fit and fast Thiem, 26, always had the weapons to trouble him, which he deployed successfully for much of the match, taming his serve and

My energy completely collapsed. When I was tossing the ball I started to feel dizzy... I couldn't believe what was happening. If you play a Grand Slam final against him, it's always going to be a match where very small details decide it. — NOVAK DJOKOVIC after winning the Australian Open

unleashing some explosive groundstrokes. However, it was a nerveless start from Djokovic, who comfortably held then put big pressure on the Austrian's serve to get an immediate break and the psychological edge after some monster rallies. Thiem, though, is as strong mentally as he is physically and he finally got on the scoreboard after another tough service game. And against the run of play, with Djokovic seemingly in control, he broke back, unleashing pinpoint groundstrokes. — AFP

Women's tennis 'never been more open' after Kenin's surprise victory

Melbourne, Feb. 2: The last five women's Grand Slams have now been won by five different players. Good luck trying to predict who triumphs at the French Open. Sofia Kenin's three-set victory over Garbine Muguruza in Saturday's final at the Australian Open underlined just how open the women's game is. The young American was seeded 14th in Melbourne and her best performance at a Slam prior to this was reaching the round of 16 at Roland Garros last year. But here the fiery 21-year-old was, beating world number one and home hope Ashleigh



Sofia Kenin of the U.S. holds the Daphne Akhurst Memorial Cup at a photo shoot on the Yarra River in Melbourne on Sunday.

Barty in the semi-finals and then defeating two-time Slam champion Muguruza. A Kenin-Muguruza

wildly unpredictable draw in which six of the top-10 women's seeds, including Serena Williams and holder Naomi Osaka, went out in round three. Yet she was reticent when asked if she will be the one who emerges from the pack behind the 38-year-old Williams to win multiple Major titles. "I would love to, that would be amazing," said Kenin, glass of champagne in hand after defeating Spain's Muguruza. "Right now I still can't believe what just happened. I need to somehow come down and just let it all sink in." — AFP

Sindhu guides Hunters in win

Hyderabad, Feb. 2: World champion P.V. Sindhu put up a masterclass to beat Shriyanshi Pardeshi in an all-Indian clash as Hyderabad Hunters notched up a thrilling 4-3 win over Mumbai Rockets in the fifth Premier Badminton League here on Sunday. Languishing at the bottom of the table, Hyderabad finally had something to cheer about as Sindhu lead a recovery after the team was 0-3 behind at one stage against the sixth-placed Rockets. Sindhu had come to this match on a two-match losing streak, having suffered a reversal of fortunes at the hands of Michelle Li and Tai Tzu Ying. However, this time the Hunters Trump made no mistake as she beat Shriyanshi 15-5, 15-10 in a clinical display. Priyanshu Rajawat then defeated Korea's Lee Dong Keun 15-13, 15-9 in the men's singles match, while Vladimir Ivanov and N. Sikki Reddy brushed aside KS Rang and Pia Bernadeth 15-

8, 15-8 to edge out Mumbai at the GMC Balayogi SATS Indoor Stadium. Earlier, 2014 CWG champion Parupalli Kashyap won his first match of the season after tasting a defeat in four consecutive ties. The Mumbai ace has a 3-2 head-to-head record against World No. 42 Daren Liew on the BWF World Tour and he used all that experience against the Malaysian, whom he last beat at the Korea Open in November. Showing all his rhythm and range, the Mumbai Trump was able to register a quickfire 15-8, 15-13 win. In men's doubles, Kim Sa Rang and Kim Gi Jung easily beat Hyderabad's Ben Lane and Vladimir Ivanov 15-10, 15-8 to make it 3-0 in Mumbai's favour. Sindhu then took the court and claimed a straight game win to start Hyderabad's recovery. In the first game, it was a one-way traffic as Pardeshi found it difficult to counter Sindhu's pace and power. — PTI

Reds in cruise mode, United held

London, Feb. 2: Liverpool surged 22 points clear at the top of the Premier League with a 4-0 win over Southampton, while Bruno Fernandes made his Manchester United debut in a goalless draw against Wolves on Saturday. Mohamed Salah scored twice as the champions equalled a Premier League record with a 20th straight home win at Anfield. Southampton believed they should have had a penalty early in the second half when Danny Ings went down in the box against his old club, but no spot-kick was given. Liverpool went straight up the other end to take the lead through Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain. Jordan Henderson doubled the European champions' lead with a smart finish on the hour mark. Salah then produced two cool finishes in the final 20 minutes as Klopp's men took their tally of points to a remarkable 100 from the last possible 102. Having completed his move from Sporting Lisbon on Thursday in a deal worth an initial £47 million, Fernandes went straight into the starting line-up at Old Trafford. The 25-year-old midfielder delivered a composed display full of neat passing as he lined up behind United



Arsenal's Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang (right) in action against Burnley in their English Premier League match at Turf Moor in Burnley on Sunday.

striker Anthony Martial and took the role of chief creator. He kept Rui Patrício on his toes with a series of long-range drives, one of which the Wolves goalkeeper nearly spilled into his own net. On Sunday, Arsenal lost

more ground in the race to finish in the Premier League's top four after being held to a 0-0 draw at Burnley. Mikel Arteta's side are trailing 10 points behind fourth placed Chelsea and look certain to fall well short of the Champions

THE RESULTS

SUNDAY

Burnley 0
Arsenal 0

SATURDAY

Bournemouth (Billing 37, Ake 44) 2
Aston Villa (Samatta 70) 1

Crystal Palace 0
Sheffield United (Gaiata 58-og) 1

Liverpool (Oxlade-Chamberlain 47, Henderson 60, Salah 72, 90) 4
Southampton 0

Manchester United 0
Wolves 0

Newcastle 0
Norwich 0

Watford (Masina 10, Pereyra 42) 2
Everton (Mina 45, 45+4, Walcott 90) 3

West Ham (Diop 30, Snodgrass 45, 57) 3
Brighton (Ogbonna 47-og, Gross 75, Murray 79) 3

League places. It was another frustrating afternoon for Arteta, who saw his team squander several chances to take the lead in a match they could easily have lost with better finishing from Burnley. — AFP

PLAZA STARS ON COMEBACK AS CHURCHILL WIN

Margao, Feb. 2: Comeback man Willis Plaza lived up to his reputation with a goal and two assists as Churchill Brothers notched up a 4-1 win over Nerocha FC in an I-League fixture here on Sunday. Ponif Vaz (5th), Willis Plaza (35th), Vinil Poojary (65th) and Israil Gurung (90+1st) scored for Churchill Brothers, while Philip Tettey (26th) struck once for Nerocha FC. Churchill Brothers now have 13 points from eight games and are placed fifth on the points table. It was a day of comebacks for both the teams, as the home team saw the return of star striker Plaza, who wasn't part of the loss that the Red Machines suffered against Gokulam Kerala FC away from home. Nerocha, on the other hand, saw the return of Singam Subhash Singh — their hero from the first season in the league, who made a move in the January transfer window from Real Kashmir FC. The first half started with high-intensity action as the home team drew first blood from a corner in the 5th minute. — PTI