

WEATHER

Max: 32.9°C
Min: 20.2°C
RH: 42%
Rainfall: likely
Forecast: Rain and thundershowers likely, Max/Min temp. 32/21°C

ASTROGUIDE

Vikari: Uttarayana
Tithi: Phalguna Shuddha
Saptami till 12.23 pm
Star: Kritika till 8.53 am
Varjyam: 1.58 am to 3.40 am
(Tuesday)
Durmuhurtam: 12.45 pm to 1.39 pm; 3.12 pm to 4.01 pm
Rahukalam: 7.30 am to 9 am
MURTI CALENDAR
Rajjab: 6,1441 AH
PRAYERS
Fajar: 6.00 am
Zohar: 1.30 pm
Asar: 5.00 pm
Maghrib: 6.34 pm
Isha: 8.15 pm
SUNSET TODAY 6.22 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.32 AM
MOONRISE TODAY 11.26 AM
MOONSET TODAY NA

COUNTER POINT



SC to hear plea in Nirbhaya case

New Delhi: The Supreme Court will on Monday consider in chamber the curative plea of one of the four death row convicts, Pawan Kumar Gupta, in the 2012 Nirbhaya gang-rape and murder case, a day before their scheduled hanging.

10 killed in two road accidents

Vijayawada: Ten people were killed in two accidents in Guntur district on Sunday. In the first mishap at 5 mile junction point of Vaddurthi erukuru mandal, six people were killed. In the second mishap, four people were killed in Ramapuram Thanda.

9mm rain lashes Hyderabad

Hyderabad: The month of March began on a rainy note for Hyderabad with the Met officials recording 9.2 mm (till 8.30 pm) of rain, on Sunday. After the year 2015, this is the highest rainfall recorded by IMD.

INSIDE

CITY... PG4

Earth moves busy on call causes girl's death

POLITICS... PG5

KTR penalises party leaders for flexis

NATION | 9

Opposition to CAA will fail, says Shah

India may pull out citizens from Iran

NEW DELHI, MARCH 1
India and Iran are engaged in hectic parleys after New Delhi is believed to be exploring ways to evacuate Indians stranded in Iran after the outbreak of the coronavirus infection there.

INSIDE

TRUMP RULES OUT PANIC AS 22 FALL ILL IN U.S.

1ST FATALITIES IN THAILAND, AUSTRALIA

FRIENDLY PECK POSES DILEMMA FOR EUROPE

REPORTS ON PAGE 13

There are apparently 2,000 Indians in Iran who may have to be evacuated in case New Delhi decides to do so. Similarly, about 2,700 Iranians may want to return from India after the reported travel restrictions by India on flights between the two countries. Iran is battling a severe outbreak of the dreaded coronavirus which is believed to have spread from Iranians who returned recently from China.

New Delhi is "working to facilitate the return of those Indians wishing to go back home" and "discussions (are) underway with concerned authorities to work out arrangements". Iran is reportedly keen that New Delhi facilitates transportation of Iranian citizens who wish to return home. India had last week said it is closely monitoring the situation in Iran, Italy

Metro to display 'pucca' language

BALU PULIPAKA | DC
HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

The stations of the Hyderabad Metro Rail Ltd. (HMRL) will soon have primers for the uninitiated into the unique linguistic idiosyncrasies that make up the "Hyderabad" tongue.

With a large number of migrants from other parts of Telangana, the neighbouring Andhra Pradesh as well as rest of the country making Hyderabad their home, the HMRL has resolved it is high time that newcomers to the city, in any case those who use Metro Rail services, should enjoy a bit of cultural induction with an introduction to Hyderabad's lingua.

While Hyderabadis of long standing are no strangers to conversations peppered with words like 'kaiku, hau, nakko', not to mention pluralised words such as 'bussan' (buses), 'schoolan' (schools), 'collegan' (colleges), HMRL on Sunday said that newcomers could use a bit of help in familiarising themselves to words and phrases which might otherwise strike them as alien.

"We will create 'Pucca Hyderabad' walls at all stations, with words and phrases that are unique to our city. We hope this will not only be an introduction to the city's lingua but also be an exercise in sharing information about our culture and ethos," N.V.S. Reddy, managing director, HMRL, said. These walls would not just have words and phrases but also their meaning and contexts they are typically used in. "When engineers design and build stations, they view them purely as engineering structures created to serve a set of pre-defined purposes. Our endeavour is to convert such stations from merely serving as a get-in, get-out areas for metro trains but into places for celebration of urban life," Mr Reddy said. "We want our stations to be places to celebrate life," he said. He said that HMRL was inviting suggestions for the 'Pucca Hyderabad' walls on the email id cprohmrl@gmail.com.

SPORTS | 16

Lowly Watford stun leaders Liverpool in English league

TABLOID

The (day)game of dating

Shahen dadis put riders

Protesters seek written assurance on citizenship to end agitation

SIJAY KAW | DC
NEW DELHI, MARCH 1

As parts of northeast Delhi continued to suffer in the aftermath of the worst communal clashes in the capital in more than three decades, a large number of people at Shaheen Bagh, which has been the epicentre of the anti-Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) protests, on Sunday said that they were ready to call off their 75-day long agitation if they were given a written assurance by the BJP government at the Centre that a 10 self-attested affidavit, supported by one or two witnesses, would guarantee that their citizenship is not snatched away. Soon after some TV news channels started a scroll that Section 144 of the Cr.P.C. barring assembly of more than three people, was imposed in Shaheen Bagh, a large number of people, mainly women, came out of their homes to join the anti-CAA protesters.

Contrary to claims by channels that a heavy police deployment was put in place in Shaheen Bagh, a visit to the area revealed there was not a single cop nearby on or bylane of the protest site.

Despite living in constant fear of violence and apprehension that they can be removed forcibly at any time, protesters made it clear that they have resolved to resist. "Either take back CAA or guarantee us that in the absence of any document like Voter Identity card, Aadhaar or Passport, even a self attested affidavit on 10 stamp paper, duly signed by two witnesses, will be enough to prove our citizenship," said a 28-year-old Mirza.

When asked if everybody agreed to the suggestion, the 100-old people at the protest site shouted in unison "Jo Bifur Ya Manzoor Ha. (Yes surely this is acceptable to us)."

A 48-year-old Akhtar Khan said that many protesters know that the BJP government would not roll back the CAA, but all they want was a clear assurance that their citizenship would not be snatched.

"People are scared as many people do not have any document to even prove their date-of-birth. All that the government should now do is to assure us that a self attested affidavit would be enough to prove our Indian citizenship."

When asked what they would do if Section 144 was imposed, Araf (54) said: "We will continue with our protest. We are all peaceful citizens of this country. Instead of removing us, any Central government nominee can visit us. We will greet them with flowers."

OPPN TO RAISE DELHI RIOTS IN PARLIAMENT

REPORTS ON PAGE 9

The notice board outside the control room. "Compliance with Section 41-C and providing information regarding details of those arrested and in custody is necessary to provide families of those persons with clarity about their whereabouts to ensure that the correct information is reaching all concerned and their suffering is not worsened by the spread of misinformation," the letter posted on Twitter by Bharadwaj said.

"Despite the express mandate of law, the names and addresses of all arrested persons are not being displayed in North-East and Shaheed districts and police stations falling within the area," it said.

The letter also stated that the police has failed to publicise the details of arrested persons in previous incidents of unrest in Delhi over the past months as well. "In the present circumstances, such clarity will go a long way in dispelling rumours and misinformation that are plaguing those affected. We appeal to you to ensure compliance with this legal requirement," it added.

Violence continues in Shillong, toll 3

MANOJ ANAND | DC
GUWAHATI, MARCH 1

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Meanwhile, M. Ravi Kumar, who owns a dog, said he had to shell out ₹4,000 in addition to ₹800 rent per month to the house owner for being allowed to keep his pet. "Despite my dog being vaccinated and sterilised, many owners refused to let out a portion," he said.

Syuro-Malabar Church priest Robin Vadakkumchery is currently serving a jail term for impregnating a 16-year-old girl in Mananthavady diocese. "Vadakkumchery has been expelled from the exercise of priestly duties and rights, according to church officials."

He was suspended from priestly duties soon after the news about his crime was reported in early 2017. A POCSO court in Thalassery last year had sentenced Vadakkumchery to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment and slapped a fine of ₹3 lakh on him.

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Display names of all those arrested, demand activists

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HOUSE | HUNTERS

Desperate tenants are forced to give up pets to get roof over their heads in city

PEOPLE with pets find search tough

REstricted Renting

When it comes to finding an apartment or a house to rent in the city, people with pets suffer an extra bite, besides a few scary barks from irate landlords.

Interviews with several pet owners and landlords revealed that having a pet can be a divisive issue, and many a times, crucial forces desperate tenants to give up their pets so they can find a roof over their heads. On rarer occasions, lucky ones manage to find a landlord who is just quite fine with a tenant having a pet, as long as the pet is well behaved. Deepshika Sharma, who lives in Shameerpet, is one such. She had to give up her puppy, passing it to one of her friends, who was willing to adopt it. "We had to very hard to find a house whose owner would accept our pet. After struggling to find a place, we finally decided to give up on our pup and handed it over to a friend. Because most house owners we approached were not in favour of renting out to pet owners, we had no other option," she said with sadness.

House owners, who are reluctant to rent their properties to pet owners, have their own reasons. According to a Ravula

House owners say that tenants do not train or take care of their pets or clean up after they leave.

Tenants who have pets are forced to shell out additional money as rent every month to keep pets.

In spite of dogs being vaccinated, many owners refuse to rent houses.

Sundar Rao, a house owner in Kukatpally, said he was initially pretty okay with tenants having pets. "We did this for about 10 years. But over time, I realised that most pet owners do not train or take care of their

pets, or clean up after them. In my experience, most dog owners simply do not train their pets to behave. They may claim to be animal lovers but are in reality some of the worst animal abusers I have come

across," he said. Mr Rao said that once he decided not to let out to pet owners, his stress levels have fallen. "I no longer have to keep cleaning up and fixing the place because of damage unruly pets can do," he said.

Ratnam Prabhakar Sharma, a retired professor who lives in Kukatpally, Phase 4, said that he lets out a fully furnished place that invariably ends with furniture getting chewed and scratched by pets. "Pets can definitely damage furniture, making them look worn out and less appealing to next tenant," he said.

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GHMC neglects parks, okays illegal buildings

GHMC parks are all in a shambles

It is good that the GHMC is building many parks and facilities but the enthusiasm shown at the time of their opening is not seen later in maintaining them. For example, many old parks like Indira Park, Vengal Rao Park at Banjara Hills and NTR Gardens used to have pedal-boating facility but this has been abandoned and the ponds have dried up or have a stinking smell. Parks like Barkatpura round chaman used to have fountains with lights but they are not working. In most of the parks, the plants are not watered daily. Some times the lawns, hedges and trees are not trimmed. Toilets are unhygienic due to poor maintenance and water scarcity. The GHMC should focus on maintenance of the existing parks before going for new ones.

— T. Kailash Ditya
3-4-871/A Barkatpura,
Hyderabad.

General stores don't return small change

Major stores in the city have odd prices for commodities like loose groceries, vegetables and fruits, like ₹22.90, ₹4.50, ₹1.80, ₹9.90 per kg or per piece. When I buy these, the counter clerk does not return the small change saying the coins are not in circulation. This means collecting extra money in a hidden way and customers feel cheated.

— D. Manoj Kumar
Secunderabad



There is utter chaos at the Sangeet Crossroads as there is no proper stop line.

Motorists find themselves at the crossroads near Sangeet

The junction at Sangeet Crossroads is an absolute nightmare to navigate. The road from Iskon rotary going towards Secunderabad station does not have a proper stop line. The awkward position of the Metro Rail pillar further adds to the confusion of the traffic. The vehicles

which halted at the signal end up blocking the way of the vehicles which want to take a right turn and go from Rail Nilayam towards Iskon rotary and

beyond. It has become a nuisance for all road users. On several occasions, motorists end up arguing with each other. I request the traffic police to place stop line markers and streamline the vehicular movement so that traffic jams can be avoided.

— Dr Sudhir Mane,
Secunderabad

Illegal layouts, bad roads spoil Godavari Gardens

My wife and I are senior citizens, aged 70 and 78 respectively, and have lived in this colony for over 20 years, and have been paying the property tax etc, every year. Ever since, there have been problems galore faced by us.

The road in front of the house, the "second parallel", has not been laid/tarred since 2000, and dug up time and again for laying a pipeline etc, whilst the other roads were tarred long ago. Construction of buildings in the colony is going on in full swing, but apparently flouting the rules and requirements of the layout as approved by the GHMC, especially with regard to adhering to setbacks mainly in front. This irregularity on the part of owners results in their cars being permanently parked on the road(s) as there is no porch or parking provided in the house(s). This causes great inconvenience to other residents.

builders are constantly in the habit of encroaching on the road, using it as a dump yard for assorted building material and debris resulting in blockade of the road, causing great inconvenience to the movement of vehicles.

There is no proper drainage in the colony, post the initial makeshift drainage provided by the developer/promoter way back in 1997 that has become defunct, resulting in foul-smelling effluents flowing on the roads or in adjoining vacant plots. Indiscriminate felling, chopping and uprooting of substantial trees in the colony continues for construction of buildings. Whether it is permitted by the GHMC or forest department is not known. There is no regular cleaning of the roads nor is there proper collection of garbage from the residences.

— Dr S.C. Bhargava
Founder President,
Godavari Gardens
Welfare Association
(GGWA)
18, Godavari Gardens,
Yapral, Secunderabad

Plastic menace by veg vendors at Madinaguda

Vegetable vendors indiscriminately use non-biodegradable plastic bags in Madinaguda, Miyapur, especially at the Sunday markets on the Manjeer Pipeline Road and near

Pranaam Hospital. I tried stopping them but in vain. I request the authorities concerned to take strict action.

— Prithvi Raj
Hyderabad

Air pollution is on the rise, kill it before it snuffs your lives out

Curb smoke, encourage car pooling

There are many reasons which cause air pollution: smoke from vehicles, factories, burning of garbage etc. It is our duty to protect the environment. This can be done by car pooling, travelling in buses and locating factories away from the cities. Chemicals from factories released into the air, garbage not cleared regularly, smoking etc., are to be controlled. Air pollution causes many diseases, so this should be taken as a major concern and every citizen must be involved in the fight against it.

— Farhana Aziz
44, Teacher, Hyderabad

Unpolished rice and a few cosmetics

Even our modern food habits are adding to air pollution. To get double polished rice, the outer nutritional layers of paddy is removed in rice mills which are major polluters. Let us eat unpolished rice which contains more nutrition and reduce air pollution to some extent.

People use cosmetics, several of which like face creams, lotions and perfumes are shown to add to air pollution during their manufacture. We should reduce the use of such cosmetics.

We still use a pollutant like bitumen to lay roads. Let us build cement roads which wears less and also reduces dust particles in the air. We can also control the bursting of crackers.

— A. Robert Cauton
Kumar
63, Automotive engineering
119-79/83, Ayodhya Colony,

Insist on air curtains to prevent pollution inside

People walking on main roads amidst vehicular traffic inhale more than their normal air intake. Everyone stepping out on to the road without a pollution mask or a handkerchief to cover their nose is vulnerable. Even those in fancy air-conditioned showrooms without air curtains at the entrance are vulnerable.

A major cause of air pollution is vehicles, especially diesel engines as well as two-stroke petrol engines. Others are diesel gensets used during power cuts and burning of dry leaves as well as plastic which is extremely carcinogenic. Coal burning for power generation is another major contributor. The more we save power, the lesser the pollution we cause.

The next time you step out on the road, wear a pollution mask/handkerchief. Request the municipal

sweepers to stop burning leaves on the roadside every morning. A local area composting pit for dried leaves could be a solution.

When your neighbours turn on their gensets during power cuts, close all windows immediately. Question people who park their cars with the air conditioner on, ask them to turn off the engine and stop polluting our air. We can request all commercial establishments to install air-curtains at the entrance. We can also invest in an air purifier for home or office.

And lastly, plant more trees.

— Vishnu. R.
50, Business
Road No. 14, Banjara
Hills

Try traditional methods, be responsible personally

Air pollution is now a chronic concern for the planet. Global activists have strived towards controlling air pollution but it keeps increasing. We as responsible citizens should try to curb air pollution at an individual level. We can try by planting air-purifying plants in our surroundings. Instead of using mosquito repellent sprays loaded with chemicals, we can use natural oils like citronella and lemon grass

plants. Car pooling and use of public transport should be prioritised. Minimise the use of air conditioners and refrigerators as much as possible. Vegetables and fruits can be placed in wet jute cloth in big earthen pots to keep them fresh. Overall, it's time to understand our personal responsibility to minimise air pollution.

— Raaga Jain
18, Student,
3/4/221/501, Present
Nest, Kacheguda

Switch to public transport

Responsible for over five million premature deaths per year, air pollution is one of the biggest and the most consequential challenges in history. Effects range from respiratory disease, like emphysema, to brain stroke and other neurological issues linked to cognitive decline. Airborne toxins reduce our nation's life expectancy by 1.5 years.

The surge in industrialisation, incineration of wood during wildfires, gasoline in cars and burning of coals are a few of the many reasons why air pollution is rampant. Carbon monoxide, for example is one of the most deleterious toxins that is harmful for plants, humans and animals.

We can bring change by multiple ways: Switching to public transport, switching to solar power, planting more trees and conducting programmes for raising awareness in both rural and urban areas about the root causes that lead to air pollution.

— Rudra Krishna
20 years, Engineering
2nd year, GRET, 294,
Shri Venkateshwara
Homes,
Naren Estate, Miyapur,
Hyderabad-500049

Recycle as much as possible

Air pollution affects those with asthma and affects the heart, eyes and other parts of the body. Acid rain caused by pollution destroys plant and animal life. Our cities are turning into concrete jungles due to cutting down trees. Vehicular pollution is one of the main reasons for air pollution. The use of plastic also causes air pollution. By recycling and reuse, we can reduce air pollution to an extent.

— Gopal Krishna
Hyderabad



A factory chimney emits smoke in thickly-populated Tarnaka area.

Have grasslands more than trees

Experts in the 1970s forecast how much water the world would consume in the year 2000. The total usage that year was half what was predicted, not because there were fewer humans but because human inventiveness allowed more efficient irrigation for agriculture, the biggest user of water.

Eighty per cent greenhouse gases come from fossil fuel consuming industries. Disposable diapers and sanitary napkins take approximately 200-300 years to decompose. 4.7 billion plastic toothbrush-

es and 500 billion coffee cups are major contributors to landfills every year. Microwave ovens are no less responsible. These ovens across Europe emit as much carbon dioxide as nearly seven million cars according to a study.

Replacing non-biodegradable items with biodegradable alternatives is the first step to reduce the use and emission of carbons. Instead of investing decades into growing more biomass like trees, a better alternative is grass which starts a cycle each year. Grass stores carbon not in its biomass like trees,

but rather in the soil. This is why grasslands are often considered superior carbon sinks to forests because they sequester their carbon deep in the soil where it is both stable and can perform a series of other miracles like water retention and cleaning, increased plant growth and increased biodiversity, healthy diet for livestock or ruminants.

— Molugu V.
Sreenivasulu
62, Movie artiste and
fashion designer, 8-1-394
Shivajinagar, Adjacent to
Dargah, RP Road,
Secunderabad-500003

Move all industries to city peripheries

Unfortunately the byproduct of any progressive new development is pollution. Pre-World War 1, life was slow but the environment was unpolluted. Now, industries such as the ones in Jeedimetla emit noxious gases into thickly populated urban areas. GHMC

lorries carry garbage on the roads leaving behind an unbearable stench. Government and citizens should endeavour to arrest this cancer-like problem of air pollution. Government should mercilessly move all industries to the periphery of residential zones. Take urgent

measures to increase staff in municipalities, pollution control boards, food inspectors and police to arrest and award punitive punishment to erring industries. Educate the people to cooperate and comply.

— Indramohan
Cadaaloori
Hyderabad

Implement Walta strictly

The major causes for air pollution are vehicular traffic, construction activity and felling of trees. To curb pollution due to vehicle emissions, the odd-even formula has to be implemented and old vehicles must be seized and destroyed. Government should strictly instruct GHMC to control illegal

construction activity. Government must tell mandam revenue officials to strictly implement the Water Land and Trees Act (Walta). Otherwise, Hyderabad will become a gas chamber like Delhi.

— Dharmender Singh
Advocate
12-2-417/438,35 Plat 604
SV Samuru Nilayam
Saradaana Nagar Colony

Ban diesel vehicles in phases

Factories and diesel vehicles are mainly responsible to spread the bad air pollution. There is a need to take the strong steps to control air pollution by shifting the factories in the remote areas and banning all diesel vehicles in a phased manner. The pollution control board should chalk out the strategy to control the air pollution for the next 50 years and give the clean environment for our next generation.

— Syed Nissar
computer operator, 16-
11-20/1/d, Malakpet,
Hyderabad

Make the switch to green infra

We are always condescending about what we hand down to our successive generations, such as our assets, gold and wealth, but are less bothered about saving pure water and clean air. Especially in the case of urban areas, air pollution has a devastating impact on health. Pulmonary diseases are one of the outcomes of air pollution. We should switch to green infrastructure which is a worthwhile option. Almost all the developed nations have shifted to green infrastructure.

— Thejaswini
Ambrose
MA, TSSS(TPHD),
Research Scholar,
Department of Political
Science, Osmania
University, Hyderabad.



A lorry emits thick dark smoke in Hyderabad on Sunday.

— P. SURENDRA



A motorcycle spews noxious emissions on a flyover in the city on Sunday.

It's an animal farm

Asmgadh road slippery after car wash

A car is being washed on the public road beside Tirumala Hills temple, Asmgadh, at 12.30 pm on February 23, and the water was flowing on the road. This rendered the road slippery, endangering two-wheeler riders. The person washing the car said he had been asked to do so by the colony secretary. It is very common in Tirumala Hills Colony to see driving washes on the cars on the roads and letting the water run. I request the authorities to look into the matter.

K. Siva Kumar
Advocate

Control the cacophony at Badangpet

The sound pollution is unbearable in Badangpet especially at night. We are unable to sleep due to the loud noise from music bands in function halls. The police is informed but the noise continues till 2 am. For the cane and heart patients especially, it is a nightmare. I request the Badangpet Municipal Corporation officials and Meerpet police to take necessary action to ensure that the noise stops by 10 pm.

Kameswararao
Sita Meadows, Badangpet

I cleared all dues, but SBI buzzes me

I took a credit card of SBI when I was in service. I was retired in May 2014. In August when I went to the SBI branch to close the credit card account, they said I owed ₹30,000. I dropped a cheque for the amount. A year later, I received a message seeking ₹2,500 as credit account balance. I ignored it since I had paid the dues. A few months later, I received a letter from SBI saying I was owed ₹2,500 for final settlement. I was directed to their field officer Shiva. When I contacted him, he said I should pay the amount and he would issue a clearance certificate. I paid this too but I did not receive the clearance certificate. I contacted him several times but he is not taking my calls. The messages from SBI continue.

Shaik Tajuddin
Hyderabad

B'luru train late, there was no pantry

I was travelling from Hyderabad to Bengaluru by Train 12785 and it was running three-and-a-half hours late. Senior citizens have to take BP medicine after breakfast but there was no catering service on the train. Railway officials need to take note of this.

Doraboina
Secunderabad

Bad road at school in SKD Nagar

I would like to draw the attention of the authorities towards the poor condition of roads in SKD Nagar, Vanasthalipuram, near Bala Kakatiya School. The roads have several potholes. Things turn worse when it rains. I request the authorities to get the road repaired.

Harsha Varun
SKD Nagar, Vanasthalipuram

Dear Readers, We at Deccan Chronicle request you to kindly send all your complaints, issues, grievances, feedback and suggestions to our government and all its departments by writing to Speak Out, the voice of the people, to our email ID DCSpeakOut@gmail.com

— Editor



Dogs surround a police vehicle near KBR Park.

Dogs scare Walkers at KBR Park

This is to bring to your kind attention of the stray dogs that are causing a lot of inconvenience to the walkers at KBR Park. Sometimes they chase the walkers and women and children get scared. Moreover, the dogs defecate on the walking track and man time walkers stamp on it accidentally which is nauseating.

I request the GHMC and the KBR park authorities to look into this matter and ensure the walk is peaceful and pleasant for walkers.

Rukhsana Saleem
Srinagar Colony, Hyderabad

Control dog population at Khanamet urgently

In recent years in Madhapatla the canine population has multiplied. Efforts to draw the attention of the authorities to control the dog population have not yielded any result. Dogs on the streets of residential colonies now create anguish among pedestri-

ans and vehicle-riders, and bite children and elders. In the recent past, some children were bitten by a stray dog that led to severe injuries. The government should take strongest action to end the menace.

Nagarajamani M.V.
Khanamet, Hyderabad

Every street has 10 dogs in Maduranagar

Parents are scared to send their kids alone on the streets because of the presence of stray dogs at Maduranagar. Each street has a minimum of 10 dogs. Some of them chase two-wheelers especially at nights. The owner of a

rottweiler is not really concerned about his behaviour. I request the authorities concerned to take action before someone is hurt.

Saravanan Murguesan
Maduranagar, Hyderabad

Work unbalanced at Nizampet PO

A Nizampet village, the post office has two counters. The first one deals with Speed Post, money orders and registered posts. It gets few customers and closes by 11.30 am. The other counter deals with open-

ing of savings accounts, deposits and withdrawals. It is busy most of the time and people have to wait for two to three hours before it is their turn. As I am a senior citizen, waiting for such a long time is difficult. I request the

Postmaster General, to make it convenient for a surprise visit to the post office to see the situation for himself and make alternative arrangements for senior citizens.

Boddupalli Subrahmanya Sastry,
Nizampet, Hyderabad

NTR Park snacks for kids costly

I visited NTR Park on Sunday last with my kids. The overall experience was good but one shop, SVR Enterprises, charged me more than MRP rates for chips, kulfi and chips. I asked him the reason for the high prices and he refused to sell me the items. As I was helpless at that time I purchased the items. I request the officer concerned to take action against the vendor.

Dr Juvviah Shima
Santoshnagar Colony, Hyderabad

Sultan Bazaar roads are still not fixed

There is no difference to the condition of roads and footpaths before and after the Metro Rail work at Sultan Bazaar. The GHMC appears to have forgotten that people reside in the inside

lanes and they have to walk. Without a proper parking lot, vehicles are parked everywhere. Vendors take up vacant spots. From the right turn towards Kamkote, shopkeepers reserve footpaths for

their customers' vehicles. Bus drivers drive like they own the road. Are officials waiting for an incident to happen.

Residents of Sultan Bazaar

AC Guards road dug up, repair has been delayed

The road near Holy Mary High School, AC Guards, was dug up for civic works recently but has not been relaid. The poor condition of the road is an inconvenience to motorists and pedestrians. Local residents have repeatedly expressed their resentment through various platforms but nothing has led to a solution. People had also staged a demonstration



last month and the authorities assured them of necessary action but the problem has not been addressed.

Syed Shamsuddin Maghrabi
Red Hills

GHMC dumping trash in Azampura open area

This big space between two road underbridges at Azampura Chaman is being used for garbage dumping by the GHMC. This causes a bad smell to hang in the air and affects local residents. This has been brought to the notice of representatives and department officials several times but no action has been taken to clear the

garbage. The surroundings are occupied by vendors, also old vehicles are abandoned there. Nearby areas like New and Old Malakpet is taken care of but Azampura is ill-treated. I request minister K.T. Rama Rao, the area MLA and the corporator to do justice.

Abu Mustafa Hussaini
Azampura

Waiting for more than a year for BSNL's ₹728

My WILL phone was surrendered at the Tolichowki exchange for refund of my deposit. Even after I completed the process, I am yet to receive the refund of ₹728. I have also provided my bank account details

for online transfer as suggested by Mr Narendar, the then manager of the Tolichowki exchange, and change of address details. Repeated requests to Mr Narendar have not worked. It is

almost one year now and I have given up hopes of getting my refund.

Narendar Singh
201, CSR Towers, K.T. Harsha Nagar, Hyderabad-500091

Cattle tied on public road, owner is stubborn



Some residents in Gandipet beside Green Park think government property is their own. We have requested these people several times to tie their cows to the trees and electrical poles on the road. The answer we get is that they are using government property and not our property. We have approached the municipal office also but nothing has stopped the practice. At least by making this issue public, we hope that someone will take action. This place is on the road to Gandipet lake and is causing a lot of inconvenience to tourists heading to the place.

Ramesh Gandipet, Hyderabad

TS expands disabilities list: MS patients to get ID cards

T.S.S. SIDDHARTH I DC
HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

The department for women, children, disabled and senior citizens welfare will begin distributing Unique Disability Identity (UDID) cards to multiple sclerosis patients (MS) within the next two months.

Eligibility criteria, issued by the Centre, will depend on data provided by the Software for Assessment of Disabled for Access Rehabilitation and Empowerment (SADAREM). According to official, the software is used by the state government.

"The UDID cards have arrived from New Delhi. Only the distribution is pending. To apply for the cards, those eligible should first have their data fed into SADAREM, as the UDID card is also issued based on the same information and questions," Ms B. Shaalaja, director of the department, told Deccan Chronicle.

To avail the card, MS patients will have to indicate a multiple disabilities card, and follow the prompts of the website.

"The state will expand the list of disabilities from

the seven to 21, as listed by the Centre in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.

"We will issue disability certificates for all the 21 disabilities listed by the Centre. The work is being done by the Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty and we should have potential beneficiaries with 21 listed disabilities enrolled by April," she added.

Disabled people can now book an online slot at e-Seva and MeeSeva centres. The new rule came into effect on January 1. Following the announcement, members of the Multiple Sclerosis Society India (MSSI) Hyderabad, said that it would be a step towards inclusivity for MS patients.

SADAREM certificates will help the government in maintaining a centralized database of disabled persons. It will generate details, including support services the disabled persons are entitled to be based on a record of the services provided from time to time. The details to be hosted on a public domain would enable service providers to reach out to the disabled persons.

DISABILITY CONDITIONS IN RPWD ACT

- Blindness
- Low-vision
- Leprosy cured persons
- Hearing impairment (deaf and hard of hearing)
- Locomotor disability
- Dwarfism
- Intellectual disability
- Mental illness
- Autism spectrum disorder
- Cerebral Palsy
- Muscular dystrophy
- Chronic neurological conditions
- Specific learning disabilities
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Speech and language disability
- Thalassemia
- Hemophilia
- Sickle cell disease
- Multiple disabilities including deafness-blindness
- Acid attack victims
- Parkinson's disease

Night rain floods roads

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

March was welcomed with showers with MET officials recording 9.2 mm of rain till 8.30 pm on Sunday.

Since 2015, this is the highest rainfall registered by Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) in March. On March 2, 2015, the city received 18.7 mm of rain. It was 4.5 mm in 2017 and 0.5 mm in 2018. An official of the department said, "We are yet to receive data for 2019."

Sunday's spell comes after a heavy rainfall warning issued by IMD on Saturday. It had forecast the possibility of rains across the state.

"There are chances of rainfall over the state for now. This would not persist as the system that is bringing the cumulonimbus clouds would dissipate," Mahesh Palawat,



Rainwater on the roads makes it difficult for motorists at Padmaranagar on Sunday.

— S. SURENDER REDDY

chief meteorologist, SkyMet, a private weather forecaster. Following the downpour, net-savvy residents of the city took to micro-blogging websites to pour out their motoring woes.

'One rain and the road (Balanagar to Kukatpally) at Y Junction, Kukatpally just disappeared' (sic), said one Aadith Kamal. Others expressed their joy at the smell of petrichor.

Runners trash UoH campus

RAJESWARI PARASA I DC
HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

While the University of Hyderabad, claims to be eco-friendly, the marathons conducted by companies in the green-campus are just piling up the plastic waste in open grounds and pathways. Plastic waste is affecting the wild life as well.

A private company had sponsored a marathon on Saturday. The Students' Union is conducting Night Cup Cricket matches, and when the students reached the Sukoon open dais at around 1 o'clock to practice, all they could see was plastic debris left from the marathon. Students called in the university sanitation personnel who cleaned the place along with the stu-



Plastic littered on the UoH campus on Sunday.

Jillapalli from UoH. Plastic is still used in the university's food courts and plastic spoons and plates can be seen in places such as Gops and Shopcum in the campus. When the correspondent tried contacting the University officials, they were unavailable for comment.

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SHORT TAKES
EFLU ADOPTS CENTRALISED TEST PAPER

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

In an attempt to bring in uniformity as part of structural reforms to the existing online entrance exams, English and Foreign Language University (EFLU) has centralised the test paper setting to ensure uniformity across all entrance test papers at various levels, which facilitate early entrance tests.

This year, EFLU became the first university to finish its online entrance tests, which began on February 29 and concluded on Sunday. They were held for admission to 34 courses in post-graduation, doctoral programmes and teacher training courses.

According to EFLU officials, the total number of applications received by the University is 15,168, including 5,834 male, 9,532 women and two transgender applicants.

Online Entrance Examination for admission to undergraduate courses is scheduled to be held on April 12, for which a record 3,345 have applied.

Vice-Chancellor, Prof. E. Suresh Kumar said that there has been a sizable leap of around 2.65 times in the number of applicants to the University since 2016-17, for admissions to various undergraduate, postgraduate, teacher education courses and doctoral programmes.

From 5,739 applicants for the 2016-2017 academic year, it stood at 15,168 for the academic year 2020-2021. The number of tests conducted in the city has gone up from eight in 2016-2017 to 23 in 2020, while the number of test centres has gone up from 15 in 2016-2017 to 30 this year.

IT'S A BLESSING IF OWNERS ARE NOT AROUND

For someone like Manisha Kandadi, whose family lives in a rented house in Yapral, the fact that the owner does not live in the same house, or even the same city, was a blessing.

"Though our daily commutes are long, we decided to live here because our owner resides in Chennai and we can keep our dog with us," she said.

Bizarrely, some landlords who have pets face trouble from their tenants.

According to Tara Chowdary, who lives in Kalyan Nagar, "We have tenants on our first floor. We have a puppy. The tenants keep objecting saying that the pup will bite them. The tenant once kicked my puppy, after which we asked them to vacate."

TRS LEADERS DIVIDED IN OLD ADILABAD

DC CORRESPONDENT
ADILABAD, MARCH 1

Differences have cropped up among TRS leaders in erstwhile old Adilabad district in the run-up to the appointment of new ABCCB chairman.

Though senior party leaders claim that owing to the fine relations between Sirpur (T) MLA Koneru Konappa and minister, Allotia Prastha were strained after the arrest of Konappa's brother Koneru Krishna for attacking a forest staff at Sarasala last year.

The party leaders in the old Adilabad district were divided into two groups — one led by minister Indira Gandhi and another led by Jogu Ramanna.

HARD TALK **Cong MP asks why KTR is silent on 2BHK sop**

TRS delayed 2BHK flats: Revanth

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Congress MP A Revanth Reddy on Sunday alleged that the ruling Telangana Rashtra Samithi has been luring voters by promising them double-bedroom houses before every election, and then deceiving them.

While addressing a press conference on the conclusion of his week-long padayatra (Patham Chandra) on the basis of his Lok Sabha constituency, Mr Reddy said that he embarked on the foot march to get to know the people's problems not for the sake of votes.

The Congress MP questioned why TRS working president K.T. Rama Rao is not speaking about the delay in completing the promised houses during his visits under the Pattana Pragathi programme.

TRs remains firm on breaking up GHMC

Government may commission a detailed study; proposal to increase GHMC divisions is also under consideration

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

The ruling TRS party, which is keen on maintaining its hold on Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) by romping home in the ensuing elections, is toying with either decentralising into three to four corporations or to increase the number of divisions in the GHMC limits to give more access to people.

Speculations to this extent are ripe in the ruling party and GHMC official circles feel that the state government is keen on a division on the lines of Delhi and Mumbai municipalities.

The recent comments of the municipal administration minister K.T. Rama Rao are giving impetus to the division claims.

Mr. Rama Rao had told reporters recently that he is in favour of decentralisation of GHMC in view of the rapid expansion and growth of population in Hyderabad. The term of the current GHMC Council ends next February. Elections are likely to be held in December-end or mid-January, sources said.

GHMC SNAPSHOT

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation was created in April 2007 by merging several municipalities on the outskirts of the city with the Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad.

The corporation is divided into five zones and spread across 650 square km. It has over 60 lakh population.



Incidentally, GHMC came into being in 2007 by the Congress government by expanding the area of the erstwhile Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad (MCH) and dividing the corporation into five zones with 18 circles. Later, circles were increased to 24.

Recently the state government set up Jawaharnagar, Nizampet, Bandlaguda Jagti, Meerpeta, Peerzadiguda, Badanpet and Boduppal Corporation around GHMC. Sources in the party pointed out that this itself is an indication of the ruling party's keenness to decentralise city administration.



A flexi hoarding erected by Khammam municipal corporator and TRS town president K. Murali in Khammam on Sunday welcoming the visit of ministers K.T. Rama Rao and Puvvada Ajay Kumar.

KTR fines party leaders ₹1 lakh each for flexis

DC CORRESPONDENT
KHAMMAM, MARCH 1

TRS corporators of Khammam Municipal Corporation (KMC) were shocked when municipal administration minister K. T. Rama Rao asked the 16th ward corporator Kamartapu Murali to pay ₹1 lakh fine to the corporation for erecting flexis everywhere in the town without taking permission from the KMC.

Corporators should learn from CM: KTR

DC CORRESPONDENT
KHAMMAM, MARCH 1

Municipal administration minister K. T. Rama Rao asked people of Khammam district to pay their taxes promptly if they wanted their urban local bodies (ULBs) to develop at a rapid pace.

● The minister pointed out that provisions have been made to take action against persons who throw garbage on streets and in drains.

● Mr Rama Rao underlined that it was the responsibility of every citizen to keep their municipality clean.

● The minister also observed that it is incorrect to blame only citizens for streets being unclean.

KTR's order to Murali, who is also TRS town president, came when the corporator tried to present him a memento at a meeting held on Sunday in connection with the Pattana Pragathi programme. Mr Rao directed Mayor Papalal, who was there on the date, to ensure that the corporator paid the fine.

KTR reacted in a similar vein against Yellandu municipal chairperson Dammalapati Venkateswara Rao.

Pointing to the flexis at the public meeting, the minister asked the chairperson too to pay a fine of ₹1 lakh to the Yellandu municipality.

● The minister observed that it is incorrect to blame only citizens for streets being unclean. He said there must be a public discussion among 1,000 people in the town. "That way Khammam

needs 4,000 public toilets, 50 per cent of which should be for women," he remarked.

Mr Rama Rao asked every corporator to learn from Chief Minister N. Chandrababai Naidu and work hard for a clean Khammam.

"Just the minister and MLA cannot do everything. Corporators too should join hands with them in making Khammam town clean and green," he stated.

Mr Rao also inaugurated the integrated vegetable and meat market at the NSP colony in Khammam on the occasion.

He appreciated works taken up for widening of various roads and modernisation of the Gollapadu channel. He was also happy that the Gandhi Chowk was now free of traffic jams.

In Loving Memory of
JUSTICE B. SUBHASHAN REDDY
on his 77th Birthday, March 02nd

YOUR SPIRIT IS ALWAYS WITH US
With Love,
Smt. Ratna,
Chandrasen, Vijayesen, Indrasen,
Daughters-in-Law, Grandchildren, Near & Dear.

75 DECCAN CHRONICLE
YEARS OF PIONEERING

Hyderabad
IMAGES AND MEMORIES

We wrapped up our celebrations to mark the 75th anniversary of Deccan Chronicle on May 15, by bringing a special compilation of seventy-five stories filled with intrigue and delight from the final days of the Nizamshahi, titled Hyderabad: Images and Memories

From the palace mysteries and murder plots to the Nizam's 3,000 wives and how the ruler faced allegations of kidnapping his bride, all under the watchful eyes of the British, it is all there.

We scoured the archives and collected anecdotal evidence from several actors of that era to discover delightful asides like how the matchmaker Jaddus got their name, how an aide saved the Nizam's legendary treasures for the royal family and how Indira Gandhi floored the Nizam.

There are more than 75 pictures, a few of them rare and perhaps being published for the first time.

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IN BRIEF

165 underpasses to be lit from March 3

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1.

All the 165 underpasses that dot the Outer Ring Road around the city will be brightly lit beginning March 3, Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority has said. In a release on Sunday, the HMDA said that all ORR underpasses have been fitted with LED lamps powered by solar power. Installation of these lights is part of the Pattana Pragati programme, the HMDA said citing instructions from Minister KT Rama Rao.

Delhi violence is a genocide: Owaisi

Accuses Nitish of lying on NRC, says states can't amend NPR

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

All India Majlis Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMM) party chief and Hyderabad MP, Asaduddin Owaisi, has called the Delhi riots as "targeted structural violence." He termed the violence in northeast Delhi a "genocide." Stating that the responsibility lies at the doorstep of the BJP government, he appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to visit the affected areas. While addressing a public meeting on AIMM's

62nd foundation day at party headquarters Darussalam on Sunday, he alleged that "this communal violence happened with full planning and preparation. An atmosphere of hatred was created. It cannot be called a communal riot but is a genocide." He said that "I want to ask Prime Minister why he hasn't spoken a word on the Delhi violence that took place a few kilometres away from his official residence. More than 40 people lost their lives in the violence. Modi should

asked "Who are these people saying 'Goli maaro desh ke gaddaron ko' (Shoot the traitors)?" Owaisi slammed the Bihar Chief Minister, Nitish Kumar, for saying that he would adopting the 2010 model NPR in Bihar. He pointed out that the NPR and NRC are in the realm of the union government and the state governments have no power or jurisdiction to meddle with the questionnaire prepared for the NPR and NRC and the states have to abide by the questionnaire.

He said "I want to tell the Prime Minister that this violence has happened because of the statements made by leaders of his party. This is a genocide. I thought that the Prime Minister got his lesson in 2002 in Gujarat but genocide occurred in 2020 in Delhi too." Referring to slogans raised by some youths in a metro station in Delhi, he



AIMM president Asaduddin Owaisi during his party's 62nd Foundation Day Ceremony in Hyderabad on Sunday. MIM floor leader Akbaruddin Owaisi (left) and the party chief's son Sultan Salahuddin Owaisi (centre) could also be seen. — STYLE

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4 pm to 5 pm
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KIMS Sub-Station
4 pm to 5 pm
Mayfair Complex, KPR Family Trust, VB Ramesh, Vishka Industries and Bharani Complex, Sindhi Colony, Ashoka Builders.

IN BRIEF

3 in observation for Covid-19

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Three persons have been kept under observation on Sunday at the Gandhi Hospital pending results of tests conducted on them for COVID-19, according to the State Health and Family Welfare Department. The three individuals take the number of those tested in the city so far for disease to 112. The three persons were among five persons who self-reported to the hospital suspecting coronavirus, the department said.

Centre will nail people behind CAA rumours

Kishan Reddy says law doesn't cancel anyone's citizenship

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Union minister of state for home G. Kishan Reddy blamed the recent riots in Delhi on rumour-mongering and misinformation on social media.

Mr Reddy, while delivering the inaugural address of the Policy Conclave at the Indian School of Business (ISB), while referring to the Opposition to the Citizenship Amendment Act, claimed a section of the people was unwilling to participate in dialogue and instead was spreading rumours.

The Secunderabad MP said it was unfortunate that many innocent people had lost their lives and property in Delhi, including a constable.

"An Intelligence Bureau official also fell victim to evil designs and rumours unleashed by a section of political parties and media. A section of social media added fuel to this fire," he said.

Mr Reddy said the Narendra Modi government was determined to uncover the truth and the "conspiracy" that triggered the riots.

Mr Reddy spoke at length on the controversial Citizenship Amendment Act. "Citizenship Amendment Act does not seek to revoke the citizenship of any Indian citizen but grants it to minorities in



Minister of state for home G. Kishan Reddy at the ISB on Sunday.

Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh who have been facing persecution based on religious grounds," he said.

Mr Reddy said the nation was partitioned on the basis of religion, against the wishes of the people.

● **MR REDDY** said Narendra Modi government was determined to uncover the truth and the "conspiracy" that triggered the riots.

● **The minister** said the nation was partitioned on the basis of religion, against the wishes of the people.

steps to be taken for this. However, while India

respected its commitment, Pakistan violated it. Now where will these minorities go," he asked. The minister claimed that Citizenship Amendment Act was in line with the views and ideas of Mahatma Gandhi, Vallabhbhai Patel, the late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and even the net Congress. "On what basis are they opposing it now," Mr Reddy asked.

Performing states must be incentivised, says MP

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

KEY POINTERS

G. Ranjith Reddy, the TRS MP from Chevella, accused the Centre of punishing states which perform well on various development indices during the devolution of funds. Reddy was speaking at a panel discussion on "sustainable policy-making" held as part of the Policy Conclave at the Indian School of Business.

The panel included Madhya Pradesh minister Jaivardhan Singh, BJP MP from Odisha Aparajita Sarangi, Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP from Odisha Amar Patnaik and YSRCP MP from Andhra Pradesh Lavu Krishnadevarayulu.

Mr Reddy, a businessman-turned-politician, said that the devolution of funds happens after an assessment of states on the basis of 16 parameters, including population and change in green cover.

"We have seen that when a performing state like Telangana does well in controlling its population, it gets a lesser amount of funds," he said.

The TRS MP said performing states need to be

● **THE PANEL**, included Madhya Pradesh minister Jaivardhan Singh, BJP MP from Odisha Aparajita Sarangi, Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP from Odisha Amar Patnaik and YSRCP MP from Andhra Pradesh Lavu Krishnadevarayulu.

● **Mr Reddy**, a businessman-turned-politician, said that the devolution of funds happens after an assessment of states on the basis of 16 parameters, including population and change in green cover.

● **Mr Sarangi**, while trying to defend the NDA government's economic performance, claimed BJP's approach towards the matter was a "sustainable" one as opposed to an "ad-hoc" one. She threw shade at the

Biju Janata Dal government in Odisha, indicating that it had won only because of freebies.

Ms Sarangi also attacked the former Reserve Bank of India governor Raghuram Rajan, who had recently said that the government was focusing on its social and political agenda more than the economy. "I expect no less from Rajan," she said.

She added that she was an "eternal optimist" when it came to the economy, adding that it was necessary to be unpopular initially if one chooses to refrain from distributing freebies.

Mr Krishnadevarayulu, the YSRCP MP from Narsaraopet, was asked to explain the freebie culture in Andhra Pradesh.

"We may call them freebies, but we can't look at them like that. It is important to understand that these freebies are solving a problem. For instance, if girls are getting a bicycle, the benefit to the economy from more women in education is very high. We cannot discount the larger picture," Mr Krishnadevarayulu said.

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IN BRIEF

Two Lashkar militants arrested

Srinagar: Two Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) militants were arrested in Srinagar and arms and ammunition recovered from their possession, police said on Sunday. They have been identified as Vakeel Ahmed Bhat alias Abu Zarar and Omar Ismail Das, both residents of Bibihara, area of South Kashmir's Srinagar district. On a credible input, security forces intercepted a car on Barzulla-Chanapora road on Saturday, a police spokesman said. He said while checking the vehicle, officers recovered arms and ammunition from the two persons.

Guj man, woman elope for 2nd time

Surat: A middle-aged couple from Gujarat had eloped once again, just over a month after they had returned to their respective homes, their family sources said on Sunday. The couple — Himmat Pandav (46), who hails from Surat and Shobhna Raval (42) of Navsari — had eloped weeks before the scheduled marriage of their respective son and daughter in January this year. They had returned to their respective families after two weeks, only to elope again, it seems. "Pandav and Raval left their respective homes on Saturday. They are reportedly staying in a rented house in Surat," sources said. However, unlike last time, no police complaint was filed about the duo going 'missing'.

Blaze at chemical warehouse

Chennai: The massive fire at a chemical warehouse here was put out on Sunday, after a battle of more than 18 hours, a Fire and Rescue Services official said. There were no casualties in the fire that broke out around 3 pm on Saturday and damaged raw material estimated to be worth about ₹100 crore, the official said. "The fire has been put out. Sensitive and heat atmosphere fire tenders are still engaged by cooling of the area by spraying water," he said.

NCW holds power walk

New Delhi: The National Commission for Women (NCW) on Sunday organised a "power walk" to promote gender equality and build awareness about crimes against girls and women at public spaces. The walk from India Gate to Janpath, which was led by NCW chairperson Sharma, saw the participation of hundreds of people, including students and activists. Participants were seen holding placards reading "I have nothing to be ashamed of" and "Don't take me the time, tell me the crime".

NAVY WOMEN OFFICERS PETITION SSC

PAWAN BALI IDC NEW DELHI, MARCH 1

Women officers seeking permanent commission in the Indian Navy have submitted before the Supreme Court that their plea is aimed at women getting equal opportunity in nation-building roles and not for beneficial measures. The apex court is in the final stages of delivering judgment on the petition of women officers seeking permanent commission in the Indian Navy retrospectively. Commander Seema Chaudhary sought that women officers be given a fair chance to serve as proud officers in the service of the nation. "It is submitted that the plea of women officers of the Indian Navy to serve as Permanent Commissioned Officers of Indian Navy, with fairness and in a just and reasonable manner, is not a welfare measure being sought by women officers," she said. She maintained that the issue is about allowing women, who are competent and capable, equal opportunity in nation-building roles. "It is about being fair, just and reasonable, and not allowing gender equality in true spirit and purport," Commander Seema stated. In 2008, Navy had allowed PC to women officers from Short Service Commission. However, it was not given to regular women. They were already serving in the Indian Navy before the provision of PC for SSC.

HAL helicopter on par with Apache to be ready by 2027

Bid to stop import of over ₹4 lakh crore worth of military helicopters

New Delhi, March 1: In an ambitious project of strategic significance, aerospace major Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) has started ground work to produce a 10 to 12 tonne attack helicopter by 2027 which will be comparable with some of the best medium-lift military choppers globally like the Apache of the Boeing.

Chairman and Managing Director of HAL R. Madhavan said the aim of the mega project is to stop import of more than ₹4 lakh crore worth of military helicopters over the three services in the coming years.

"We had the approval in 2020, we will be able to complete the first chopper by 2027. We are looking at producing at least 500 helicopters of the variant it will be a major project we are working on," he said. A military expert described the project as the biggest by the HAL after development of the Tejas military aircraft.

"We have done the preliminary design. We have also been in discussion with the Air Force and the Navy. The 10-12 tonnes category will have two basic structures on similar platforms. The naval version will have different dimension compared to the one for the Army and the Air Force," Madhavan said on

the proposed mega project. "Like the LCH (Light Combat Helicopter) we developed from the Dhruv platform, a similar variant of 10-12 tonnes category can be produced to make it an Apache equivalent," said Madhavan. The helicopter will be powered by twin engines and will feature blade folding option for ship deck operations. The planned roles for the helicopter will be to support air assault, air transport, combat logistics and combat search and rescue. The chopper will also have a very superior weapons package. Madhavan said the helicopter will have a huge potential for export.

The Mi-17 helicopter makes up the backbone of the IAF's helicopter fleet and they are planned to be phased out by 2032. The HAL's product range includes a number of helicopter like the LCH (Light Combat Helicopter) and multi-role ALH (Advanced Light Helicopter) and Chetak choppers.

India is one of the largest importers of arms and military platforms globally. The government has been focusing significantly on promoting defence indigenisation by taking a slew of reform initiatives including liberalising FDI in defence sector.

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21 farmers in 'bury' themselves

Jaipur, March 1: Twenty-one farmers, including five women, buried themselves deep in the ground in Rajasthan's Nindar village on Sunday to protest against the state government's acquisition by the Jaipur Development Authority (JDA) for a housing project.

The farmers have been demanding that their lands be acquired as per the amended Land Acquisition Act and compensation awarded accordingly.

The JDA has taken possession of 800 bighas of land so far and deposited ₹60 crore in a local court as compensation. The villagers have refused to accept the amount, claiming that it is not commensurate with the prevailing market rates. Around 10,000 houses will be built under the housing scheme which was announced in 2011. — PTI

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5,000 dabbawalas to get homes soon

DC CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI, MARCH 1

The Maharashtra government will give homes to nearly 5,000 dabbawalas under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) — which is meant to provide housing for all.

Under the scheme, dabbawalas will get 300 sq ft houses. "Talking to media Ghosalkar said, "Since there is no open land in the Mumbai city, Mhada has earmarked parcels of land in Thane and Kalyan city. Collector owns the land so it will be available at reasonable rates."

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Vatican rejects second appeal of nun expelled over lifestyle violation

Kochi, Mach. 1: The Vatican has rejected the second appeal filed by Kerala nun against the decision of Franciscan Clarist Congregation to strip her of membership for her lifestyle, which allegedly violated church rules, sources close to the nun claimed on Sunday.

Five months ago, the Congregation for the Oriental Churches in the Vatican had dismissed Sister Lucy Kalappura's first appeal challenging her expulsion by Franciscan Clarist Congregation (FCC).

The nun had written to the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, seeking an opportunity to be able to appear in person before the Supreme Tribunal of the Segnatura Apostolica in Vatican to present her appeal.

But, she was denied an opportunity to present her views, he said. He also said the nun would continue her legal fight in the courts in the country against the alleged move to force her out of the FCC convent she is staying in Wayanad.

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Floral fun



Visitors admire floral displays during the 33rd edition of the wGarden Tourism Festival, at Garden of Five Senses, in New Delhi on Sunday.

Three hawala operatives under scanner of ED for scam at JKCA

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 1

A day after attaching assets worth ₹2.6 crore in a money laundering case pertaining to alleged embezzlement of Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association (JKCA) funds, the money enforcement Directorate (ED) is now probing the alleged links of the Association's former treasurer Ahsan Ahmad Mirza and its finance committee member Mir Mansoor Gazanfer with three Delhi and J&K-based hawala operatives.

According to sources, investigation by the central probe agency has revealed that both Mirza and Gazanfer were allegedly in touch with certain hawala dealers. "At least three hawala operatives based in New Delhi and J&K are under the scanner of the agency. We will soon call the hawala operatives for questioning," sources said. Former JK&C Chief Minister and National Conference president Farooq Abdullah has already been questioned by ED officials.

Abdullah has been slapped with the Public Safety Act (PSA) and is under detention since August 5 after the Centre abrogated Article 370 provisions that accorded special status to the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir.

The ED on Saturday attached assets worth ₹2.6 crore allegedly linked to Mirza and Gazanfer. A provisional order for attachment of assets was issued under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) during the process.

"The attached assets consist of three FDRs (fixed deposit receipts) totalling ₹1.29 crore with J&K Bank's Lalpat Nagar branch in New Delhi in the name of Mirza Sons, a partnership firm of Mirza and his father; 11 Kanals of land with structure and commercial shopping complex at Pandrethban, Srinagar to the tune of ₹1.31 crore has also been

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Trump recounts visit to India

Washington, March 1: US President Donald Trump has said he would "never be excited about a crowd again" after his visit to India where he addressed a rally of over 1,00,000 people.

That's about three times...it's cricket. It's the biggest stadium. And they had a great guy and Trump said he shared the stage with Prime Minister Narendra Modi who is a "great guy" and is "loved by people of India".

During his maiden visit to India on February 24-25, President Trump and First Lady Melania were given a rousing welcome in the presence of more than one lakh people at the Motera stadium in Gujarat's Ahmedabad city.

Trump had an amazing thing and I went in and here's the problem. This is a big crowd and normally I like talking about my crowd because I get the crowds like nobody. But, I just got back from 140 or 50 or 60,000 people and now I am coming here. What does this place hold, 157? It's hard to be excited about that? I may never be excited again about a crowd after going to India. Actually have 1.29,000-seat stadium. Did you see it? The place was packed, and they did better than most.

The IAF is procuring a total of 22 Apache Guardian attack helicopters worth \$2.6 billion deal. Additionally, the Army is procuring six Apache helicopters along with weapons systems, a deal for which was sealed during Donald Trump's visit to India. —PTI

"They gave me credit for 1,00,000. That was not bad. It's 129 (thousand)... The stadium holds 100 (thousand). They had a field

AGHADI GOVT UNBREAKABLE WALL, SAYS AJIT

Mumbai, March 1: Ruling out any fissures in the Shiv Sena-led coalition government in Maharashtra, senior NCP leader and deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar said Sunday

invoked a popular television commercial on unbreakable wall to underline the unity of the ruling constituents.

Pawar's comments at the convention of the National Congress Party (NCP) here came against the backdrop of statements by some BJP leaders that they are dispensation comprising the Sena, the NCP and the Congress might not be long owing to contrasting view points of the member parties. Recently senior RSS leader and NCP ally Suresh 'Bhaiyaji' Joshi caused a flutter saying that former Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis of BJP will not remain in opposition for long. "Some people are talking about when the wall of the Maha Vikas Aghadi will develop cracks. But that wall is unbreakable due to the cemented bonds (among the three parties)."

He said the government will last its full term.

Department of Atomic Energy
Hyderabad Regional Purchase Unit

TENDER NOTICE

Regiona Director (F&S), HRP&L, Nuclear Fuel Complex, ECIL Post, Hyderabad 500019 invites online tenders as given below:-

1. Tender Enquiry No. DPS/HRP/LNFC/PT/TC/ICAP/1807
Description: Design, Engineering, Manufacturing, Supply, Packing, Forwarding and Sale Delivery upto NRC, Stores and all activities at NRC leading to complete Erection, Installation, Commissioning, Performance, Testing and Training at NRC site of Horizontal Rotary Calibration Furnace, Horizontal Rotary Reduction Furnace, Horizontal Rotary Stabilization Unit, Complete with all equipment, Piping, Electrical and Instrumentation items - Qty 1 No. each type cells as per tender specifications. Date of the Bidding: 03/03/2020 upto 10:00 AM (G) Last Date for Submission of Bid: 03/04/2020 upto 2:00 PM (G) Tender Fee: Nil. 2/20/14,00,000.-

2. Tender Enquiry No. DPS/HRP/LNFC/PT/TC/ICAG/18663
Description: Manual Vertical Pin and Hexagonal Tube Assembly Fixture - Qty 1 No. as per tender specifications. Date of the Bidding: 24/03/2020 upto 10:00 AM (G) Last Date for Submission of Bid: 03/04/2020 upto 2:00 PM (G) Tender Fee: Nil. 2/20/14,43,200.-

3. Tender Enquiry No. DPS/HRP/LNFC/PT/TC/ICAG/18732A
Description: Packing Boxes & Plywood Sheets as per Annexure and Drawings details as per tender specifications. Date of the Bidding: 31/03/2020 upto 2:00 PM (G) Tender Fee: Nil. 2/20/14,68,280.-

Visit <https://tenders.oppsr.gov.in> for details. [DPS/HRP/L

SHORT TAKES PROTESTERS VACATE ANTI-CAA PROTEST SITE

Aligarh, March 1: Scores of women who were holding a protest against the Citizenship Amendment Act on the Jiwangarh bypass road here for the past six days vacated the site in the presence of top district officials.

Barricades which were put up on the road in view of the protest were removed on Saturday night and traffic resumed, bringing relief to commuters.

Senior Superintendent of Police Muniraj said the protesters handed over a five-point memorandum to the district magistrate, which among other points sought withdrawal of cases filed against people protesting at Jiwangarh and the Aligarh Muslim University.

The district officials with the help of political and community leaders assured the protesters that they would discuss their demands with the state government.

District Magistrate Chandra Bhusan Singh announced that one of the demands of the protesters to grant financial assistance to a youth who was seriously injured in last Sunday's violence in Upper Kot area, has already been accepted.

Tariq Munawwar, who had sustained gunshot injuries in the violence, has been granted a financial assistance of Rs two lakh. Munawwar, whose lower part of the body has paralysed, will be provided medical treatment at the Jawahar Lal Nehru Hospital.

RSS MEET TO DISCUSS DELHI VIOLENCE

New Delhi, March 1: Communal violence in Delhi and protests against the new citizenship law are the issues likely to dominate the proceedings at the three-day annual meeting of the Swayamsevak Sangh's top decision-making body starting from March 15, sources said on Sunday.

The annual meet of the Akhila Bharatiya Pratinidhi Sabha will be held in Bhopal from March 15-17. The Pratinidhi Sabha is the highest decision-making body of the Sangh which meets once a year to take decisions and decide the future course of action.

BJP president J.P. Nadra and the party's general secretary (organisation) B.L. Santhosh are expected to attend this all-important meeting, a source in the Sangh said.

Another senior Sangh functionary said the recent violence in Delhi, protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act are among the issues likely to dominate the brain-storming sessions during the meeting.

The functionary said Sangh's Delhi unit may be asked to come up with a detailed presentation on the violence.

BSF JAWAN GETS ₹10L AID FROM ODISHA

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO | DC BHUBANESWAR, MARCH 1

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Pattnaik on Sunday announced ₹10 lakh as aid for a BSF jawan posted in Maoist-hit Malkangiri district whose house was recently torched on February 25 during communal riots in Delhi.

Expressing grief over the incident, Pattnaik spoke to BSF constable Mohammad Anees and empathised. He sanctioned aid from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF) for the loss.

"Constable Mohammad Anees is working in the 9th Battalion deployed in the Maoist affected district of Malkangiri. This Battalion of BSF is responsible for the overall security in the Swayamsevak Anchal (erstwhile Cut-off) area, which includes the Gurupuriya bridge in Malkangiri district. The CMO stated in a release on Sunday. Currently, Anees is posted at Hantalkonda camp in Chitrakonda area.

Anees' house at Khajuri Khas extension in Delhi was pelted with stones and burnt down during widespread communal violence on February 25. The Border Security Force (BSF) has extended a helping hand to rebuild the house. The 29-year-old BSF Constable hails from Munger district of Bihar. His family has settled in Delhi four decades ago.

WILL CONTEST POLLS WITH NDA, CLARIFIES NITISH KUMAR

DC CORRESPONDENT PATNA, MARCH 1

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Sunday said that the JD(U) would contest the next Assembly elections along with NDA and win more than 200 seats.

He was addressing JD(U) workers at Gandhi Maidan on the occasion of his 69th birthday while showcasing achievements of his government. Nitish said "The government has worked for the uplift of every class in the state. The scenario has become vibrant in the field of education. Distribution of uniform and cycles has increased the confidence of students, especially girls, who can be seen attending classes even in rural areas."

The rally is seen as a show of strength ahead of Assembly elections, slated to be held in October-November.

According to JD(U) leaders, the mammoth political event ahead of elections will serve as a befitting reply to the opposition parties, which have been involved in a campaign against NDA.

He said the people used to talk only about jungle raj in Bihar but now law and order has improved. "The crime ratio is among the lowest in the country", he said.

Kumar pointed out that the Assembly had recently passed a unanimous resolution against the NRC and NPR and there was no need to lose patience on the issue of CAA since the matter was before the court.

"The NRC will be done on the basis of 2010 format and a resolution regarding the issue has been passed in the state Assembly", he said.

Bihar had become the first NDA ruled state to pass a resolution to implement the NPR in 2010 format with the inclusion of a transgender column. The House has also passed a resolution that NRC will not be implemented in Bihar.



Men check the interiors of a partially burnt mosque in a riot-affected area in New Delhi on Sunday.

Shah: Opposition to CAA will fail

BJP workers raise 'Goli Maaro' slogan en route to party's mega rally addressed by Shah

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, MARCH 1

Exuding confidence that the saffron surge of last year's Lok Sabha elections will continue in West Bengal, Union home minister Amit Shah on Sunday predicted that the BJP would come to power in the Assembly polls next year by dethroning the Trinamul Congress with a two-third majority.

He described the road to success a "very tough battle" before directing the party workers to fight it. "Ruling out the possibility of dynasty politics, Shah also declared that no 'shehzada' but a "son of the soil" would become the next chief minister of the state.

He tore into Trinamul Congress supremo and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee after her tweet on "discrimination" while

claiming that her fierce movement against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) would not happen in Bengal.

Several BJP workers were heard shouting controversial 'goli maaro' slogans at Esplanade, en route to their party's mega rally in support of CAA at the Shahid Minar ground, where Shah kick-started the party's campaign Aar Noy Annay (No More injustice).

Waving BJP flags, they chanted, 'Desh ke gaddaron ko, goli maaro saalon ko (Shoot the traitors, stumping the police. Addressing the rally Shah said, "Mamataji would now wait and watch how the BJP comes to power with a thumping majority in the next Assembly polls. In 2014, the BJP got 87 lakh votes here. But in 2019, we got 2.3 crore votes here resulting in the BJP getting 10 MPs.

Amit Shah on Sunday performed puja at the famous Kalighat Temple in the city, police said.

Soon after delivering his speech at a pro-CAA rally, Shah went to the Kalighat Temple, which is only a few metres away from West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's residence.

I am confident that the progression, which started with 18 seats in the Lok Sabha polls, is continuing and is not going to stop. He told the BJP workers, "It will rest with a BJP government's formation with two-third majority in the next Assembly polls. It is a very tough battle. You will have to fight it for Bengal's development. The entire leadership including me will be with you for this. The thought of

appointing a Rajkumar as a successor cannot happen in Bengal."

The Union home minister added, "No shehzada (prince) would become the next Bengal CM. A son of the soil who will emerge as a leader, will become the next Bengal CM."

Spelling out a mobile number he asked the crowd to dial it in support of the CAA which, he assured, would give citizenship to the refugees, improvement in law and order, industrialisation and infiltration under the Trinamul's rule of a decade.

His blistering attack on the Trinamul chief was significant as Banerjee, in an oblique reference to the

CAA, tweeted in the morning. "Today on @UN #ZeroDiscriminationDay it pains me to witness the politics of discrimination being woven into the fabric of India. Let us pledge to uproot all forms of division based on caste, creed, and religion from our society. We will never stand for discrimination of any kind."

Shah also cautioned those "planning to break and harm the country and destroy its peace", to fear the National Security Guard (NSG). As a further warning, he asserted that the NSG would act tough if such elements did not relent. Shah, however, did not name his targets and kept it in suspense.

He also advised the NSG to reduce "operational time" of its counter-terror mechanism in order to make it swifter. Shah was speaking at the

UNDER FIRE, THAKUR BATS FOR ACTION

Chandigarh, March 1: Union minister Anurag Thakur who has been under opposition fire over his alleged hate speeches during Delhi assembly polls, on Sunday said strict action should be taken against those involved in the communal riots in the national capital.

The Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs was addressing a press conference here.

He was asked to comment on the alleged hate speeches made by him and other BJP leaders in the run-up to the Delhi elections and how such vitriolic speeches led to the riot in the city.

"Strict action should be taken against those involved in (Delhi) the riots. The strength of our country is that people of various faiths coexist and live unitedly contributing towards nation building," Thakur said.

On the communal riots, he said, "Police is doing its job..." -PTI

254 FIRS LODGED 903 PEOPLE ARRESTED

New Delhi, March 1: The Delhi Police has registered 254 FIRs and arrested or detained 903 persons in connection with the northeast Delhi violence, a senior officer said on Sunday.

Forty-one of the cases were registered under the Arms Act, they said. According to police, they did not receive any PCR calls of rioting in the last four days. The situation in the riot-affected area is under control, a senior police official said. -PTI

Inauguration of NSG 29 Special Composite Group Complex, an upgraded and permanent address of the elite counter-terror force.

Another pro-Pak graffiti found Oppn to raise issue of Delhi riots in Parliament

Bengaluru, March 1: Another incident of Pakistan Zindabad and anti-Modi wall graffiti in Karnataka came to light in Kalaburagi on Sunday morning, prompting the police to launch a probe to find out the culprits behind the act.

Police said the writings in English on the wall of a house in Saad Nagar, a government school in Budarasingi village in Hubballi had created a flutter with locals staging a protest against it.

In another incident, three students from Kasbir studying at a private engineering college in Hubballi were arrested on sedition charges last month for allegedly raising pro-Pakistan slogans and posting a video of it on a messaging platform.

staged a demonstration in front of Chowk Police station in Kalaburagi in north Karnataka, demanding that those behind the anti-national act be arrested immediately and police said.

Recently, writings such as 'Pakistan Zindabad and Tipu Sultan Shale (Tipu Sultan School)' on the wall and door of a government school in Budarasingi village in Hubballi had created a flutter with locals staging a protest against it.

In another incident, three students from Kasbir studying at a private engineering college in Hubballi were arrested on sedition charges last month for allegedly raising pro-Pakistan slogans and posting a video of it on a messaging platform. -PTI

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 1

As the second half of the Budget Session of Parliament begins on Monday, the Congress and other Opposition parties plan to corner the Union government in both Houses with demands for the resignation of Home Minister Amit Shah over the Delhi riots.

The Congress party is likely to submit adjournment motions in the Lok Sabha seeking a discussion on the widespread violence in Delhi last week. BSP leader N.K. Premachandran said he would give an adjournment motion demanding a response from Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Indian Union Muslim League and CPI and CPI(M) will also give motions under rule 267 in the Rajya Sabha.

"The government has miserably failed to maintain law and order. I think there must be some sort of a nexus between the rioters and a section of police officials which resulted in plan to corner the Union government in both Houses with demands for the resignation of Home Minister Amit Shah over the Delhi riots.

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"The manner and form of protest inside or out of Parliament is a matter of coordinated strategy and not an issue to be publicly aired. But the country is facing a crisis. We should charge our responsibilities vigorously and without fear, despite extreme personal killings and harassment," Singhvi said.

Opposition parties led by the Congress have already approached President Ram Nath Kovind demanding that Shah be removed as he is in charge of the Delhi police which was totally unable to control the riots.

The Budget Session of Parliament commenced on January 31 and continued till February 11. The second half will continue till April 3.

Senior lawyer and Congress Rajya Sabha member Abhishek Manu Singhvi said the party will take up in both Houses of Parliament in the strongest possible terms the destruction of

democratic values in this country.

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Security personnel patrol a violence-affected area of Northeast Delhi on Sunday. -PTI

4 more bodies found in nalas

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, MARCH 1

A week after deadly communal violence erupted in northeast Delhi, the situation in riot-hit areas remained tense on Sunday though there was movement of more people and vehicles on main roads amid heavy police deployment.

Four more bodies were traced from drains in Gokulpuri and Shiv Vihar on the sixth day of the violence, taking the total death toll to 46. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has deputed a fact-finding team to investigate the cases of violence.

"The situation is under control and we did not receive any PCR calls of rioting in the last four days. There is adequate force deployed in all areas of northeast district. We are holding talks with locals and trying to rebuild confidence," a senior police official told this newspaper.

No untoward incident has been reported from the northeast district over the past three days, he said, adding police are urging residents to report about rumours directly to the authorities. No untoward incident has been reported from the northeast district over the past three days, he said, adding that the police is urging residents to not pay attention to rumours and report them to authorities. All the bodies recovered on Sunday were sent to GTB Hospital for post-mortem. The deceased are yet to be identified. Art of Living founder Sri Sri Ravi Shankar visited some of the riot-hit areas, including Brahmapuri, and consoled the people disoriented by the violence in three decades in Delhi. Two days after the violence, there was an eerie silence in the streets that once used to be teeming with people and hawkers. In Shiv Vihar, among the worst hit areas, the senior police official told almost all the houses were locked. In Mustafabad, people were wary of stepping out of their homes in narrow bylanes.

GRIM SITUATION Several bodies in GTB Hospital mortuary remain unidentified

Anxious family members visit mortuary

New Delhi, March 1: With a photograph of her youngest brother in her hand, Nishi Jan frantically went around the GTB Hospital mortuary on Sunday, hoping that he was among those killed in the northeast Delhi communal violence.

A woman, whose 15-year-old son has been missing from northeast Delhi's Mustafabad area, fell unconscious after seeing a corpse at the mortuary. Her family later confirmed that her son's body was not in there.

Jan, whose younger brother Salman, 25, has been missing since he kept a phone, but it is switched off and there is no clue of what happened to him," Jan said. None of the bodies in the mortuary was of his brother, he said. Jan also spoke to a group of young lawyers and a team of the Shahdara



Charred remains of vehicles set ablaze by rioters in a violence-affected area of Northeast Delhi on Sunday.

District Legal Services Authority at a help desk, providing information and other help to the relatives of the missing persons.

"God knows what will happen to Salman's two sons, aged eight and six years, as their mother is already dead. I have lodged a complaint with police but there is no information about my missing son," she said. Saturday six bodies were unidentified at the mortuary and three were identified and claimed.

One body was charred and three others were also identified. Naem, 45, a resident of Jafraab who worked as a

book binder, went missing during the riots on February 24. The sources said to old Delhi for some work. He told over phone that situation was not good and he was near Usmanpur, Pehla Pushta. I have searched in many other hospitals and now came here," said his brother Najmuddin.

Mumtaj, a high court lawyer who is helping people along with her other leagues Farhan, Faraz and a team of volunteers, said record was being maintained by them to find about those missing. "We are also helping people in the release of the identified bodies," Mumtaj said. -PTI

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DECCAN Chronicle

2 MARCH 2020

New Delhi must show pragmatism in Kabul

The US-Taliban agreement, signed in Doha on February 29, is historic. It may just lead to peace in Afghanistan after 40 years of unremitting warfare, but that is a prospect that cannot be said to be in sight since nothing is yet known about the shape of the intra-Afghan talks that is expected to ensue from the Doha deal, also described as America's race to the exit. The agreement also goes to show that yet another empire has gone down in Afghanistan, after the British and the Soviet.

Why don't invaders succeed in Afghanistan is a fascinating question. The outlines of a possible answer may lie in the fact that the landlocked country, with its harsh terrain, does not have enough resources (though potential hydrocarbon reserves have been spoken of) to keep imperialists incentivised for long.

That is why they have come for geopolitical compulsions and have cut and run once those lose their salience. In 1842, the British had been chased out militarily but retained enough influence for 67 years after that to have their foreign policy goals met. This they did by playing the right kind of politics. It is to be seen if America attempts something similar.

The difference between the Soviet departure in 1989 and the American promise of departure now is that when Moscow departed Kabul, it was able to put in place a political compact leading to a short-lived governmental arrangement, no matter how shaky, under the *jihadi* groups which had fought it, though these people did not know how to rule and bring chaos to the country due to vicious internal warfare.

On the other hand, the US under President Donald Trump is just tugging and going. It is leaving the political groups in the country, which have enjoyed political power or privilege since 2001 (when the Taliban had been militarily ejected by the US for their role in the 9/11 military faction), to their own devices, merely urging them to engage in intra-Afghan talks, with the Taliban holding the whip hand. It is anyone's guess where this may lead.

It may be in America's interest, and that of its allies, including principal regional ally India, to continue supporting the people of Afghanistan and their government with badly needed aid. This may help moderate the Taliban, who may now be expected to call the shots and dominate other political trends. It may be that this will help keep Afghanistan on its version of the democratic track.

India can have a role to play in this if in the changed context it is able to persuade all Afghans, including the Taliban, that its friendship is for the people of Afghanistan and not any particular political dispensation. Only such an outlook on India's part can keep Afghanistan out of Pakistan's pernicious grip even when the Taliban are in command.

New Delhi could have chosen to engage the Taliban earlier and was shortsighted not to do so. It laboured under the pre-conceived notion of the Taliban being terrorists principally because it had been harboured by Pakistan. A stiff dose of realism is now called for.

A roof for the homeless

The Left Democratic Front government in Kerala has expanded the scope of Article 21 of our Constitution — the right to life with dignity — when it completed the first phase of LIFEP (Livelihood Inclusion and Financial Empowerment) Mission on Saturday constructing 2,14,202 houses for people living below the poverty line. Each eligible family was sanctioned ₹4 lakhs to complete the project and the total expenditure was about ₹6,000-crore. The state government tapped every resource to complete the housing mission as 65,092 families were in need of houses from the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana — ₹1.5 lakhs each for 48,445 urban homes and ₹72,000 each for 16,647 rural homes. Local self-governments bore half the total estimated cost for each house. The beneficiaries were fully spared the financial burden.

There are a lot of takeaways from such an impressive project. One is the extra mile the government walked to help complete those 50,000-odd partly-constructed houses. They had their foundations done; some even had walls but the residents wanted to complete them and had given up hopes on them. With a small but significant help, the government fulfilled their dreams of living in a fully done home. The other was the thought went into the planning. The 420-sq-ft houses do not look similar; they are not built in colonies; they bear no government stamp. They look like any other Kerala home. The families get them as their right and not as an offering of the state. This is not a common feature of a government-aided programme anywhere in the country, even in Kerala.

As per LIFEP Mission data, there are 4.92 lakh homeless families in the state, of which 1.58 are landless homeless. The first phase was aimed at them. In the next phase, the government is planning to cover the entire homeless population. It's an endeavour every state can think of emulating.

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Subhani



Delhi 2020: The twisted logic of 'riot' messaging



Nilofar Suhrawardy

In the immediate aftermath of the mayhem in Delhi, the communication strategy of those involved in the provocation of violence needs to be scrutinised carefully. The reported incidents of lives being lost and properties targeted were not the result of mob frenzy. In fact, India needs to be credited for having come a fairly long way from the times when groups of people could easily be provoked into communal violence on religious issues.

This reality has not yet sunk into the minds and hearts of those still being guided by the assumption that it is not a difficult task to incite people of different religious groups into engaging in communal violence. But if this were to be the case, not just northeast Delhi but the entire national capital, and may be the nation, would have been up in flames.

So let us analyse the various aspects of what happened in Delhi. Initially, in response to a petition filed by social activist Harsh Mander for investigating the violence in northeast Delhi, the Delhi high court bench, headed by Justice S. Murugesha, stated, "We'll not allow a repeat of 1984. Not under the watch of this court. Here, the judiciary did play its part even as continuation of the violence since the limited amount that it had. But certain outlets of communication chose to simply reiterate this statement. What is the latter gain from giving importance to only 1984? Why wasn't the same line of communication accorded to 1992 and even Gujarat 2002?"

Perhaps, as 2002 was confined to Gujarat and was not mentioned by them. But the same cannot be said for 1992. It is well-documented history that, following the assassination of then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1984, Delhi witnessed riots in which thousands of Sikhs were killed, allegedly at the behest of

Congress leaders. The demolition of Babri Masjid in Ayodhya on December 6, 1992, was accompanied by anti-Muslim communal frenzy provoked by the saffron brigade in most parts of the country.

While the Ayodhya issue is politically dead, certain extremist elements are still engaged in poisoning the minds of people with anti-Muslim rhetoric. Yet, during the initial phase of bloodshed in Delhi, the slogan circulated focussed on 1984 and not 1992. Two inferences may be drawn from this. One is that the extremist elements responsible for provoking anti-Muslim hysteria hoped to also conduct, to some degree, a negative campaign against the Congress. Second, they apparently hoped that reviving the memories of 1984 would give them access to the Sikh mindset. Some right-wing elements seemed quite frustrated by Citizen's (Amendment) Act protesters receiving the support of Sikhs. They hoped that a reminder of the 1984 riots would draw Sikhs closer to the Hindutva brigade and thus away from anti-CAA resistance. This perception, evidently, has fallen flat. Sikhs have gone out of their way to support the CAA. It is curious that, in the face of this, the judiciary did play its part even as continuation of the violence since the limited amount that it had. But certain outlets of communication chose to simply reiterate this statement. What is the latter gain from giving importance to only 1984? Why wasn't the same line of communication accorded to 1992 and even Gujarat 2002?"

Anti-Muslim propaganda confined to Gujarat and was not mentioned by them. But the same cannot be said for 1992. It is well-documented history that, following the assassination of then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1984, Delhi witnessed riots in which thousands of Sikhs were killed, allegedly at the behest of

only suggestive of attempts being made to re-enact the 1992 bloodshed and the 2002 Gujarat carnage.

Describe it as humanitarian and/or Indian, but help extended by the people to one another, cutting across religious lines, bears its own significance. It proves that this communalism is not truly an outburst of mob frenzy. The tag, "religious", cannot apply to the violence. It would be erroneous to even describe rioters as "religious" for that would be equivalent to denigrating whichever religion they belong to. Humanitarianism is, after all, the basic principle of all religions. The present rioting appears to have been well-planned with a set agenda. That includes a negative campaign against the Opposition, particularly the Congress and Muslims. The rioters primarily included "external elements", groups of people away from outside the targeted areas.

The Delhi mayhem seems to be a continuation of the incidents of hoodlams and/or police violence at Jawaharlal Nehru University, Jamia Millia Islamia, Aligarh Muslim University and other places where anti-CAA protests have taken place. The difference is that the 1984 angle was not brought in during these instances. Outsiders, with apparent support of policemen, seemed to comprise the bulk of the perpetrators in all these cases. Except in JNU, an anti-Muslim conspiracy was not brought in during these instances. The Delhi mayhem apparently led extremist elements to try their hand at how to help the victims and worse inhumanities.

They are chafing at the continuation of the anti-CAA protests and tasting the fruits of the same. Communication is not just at the command of leaders desiring to spread unrest though they seem oblivious to this reality. It is interpersonal communication among Indians that is keeping Indian secularism alive.

defeat in the Delhi Assembly elections. Intriguingly, little importance was given by analysts to the timing of the Delhi bloodbath. It took place in the national capital at a time when United States President Donald Trump was visiting. It may well have been a ploy to show him that India was being troubled by terrorism fomented by Pakistan. This may be linked with the greater circulation of "news" about "jihadis" (Muslim extremist/terrorist) supported by and/or from Pakistan being responsible for the violence in north-east Delhi. This communication strategy has failed. Hindutva extremists have largely been blamed for the violence in Delhi.

There is yet another angle that needs attention. Investigating violence of this kind may be a strategy by the political leadership to divert the attention of the people away from its failure to control inflation and solve economic problems. People are fed up of their Pakistan card and no longer moved by the Ayodhya subject. Shaken by reports of loss faced by victims, a large number have opened their homes and hearts to them. They have not shied away from blaming the Central and state governments for not taking steps to instantly check the violence. Communication is not just at the command of leaders desiring to spread unrest though they seem oblivious to this reality. For it is interpersonal communication among Indians that is keeping Indian secularism alive.

When interpersonal communication implies individual and groups of Indians going out of their way to help the victims and avoid violence, the lives lost cannot be brought back. But at least this violence spells a lesson for us all. Indians don't take long nor wait for official permission to come to helping other Indians in grief. Hats off to each and all of these Indians!

The writer is a journalist with specialisation in communication and nuclear diplomacy. She is also the author of several books.

LETTERS

DELHI VIOLENCE

The violence in Delhi shows how politicians successfully programme some people's minds to separate the word secular from India's identity. There is no need to feel awkward about condemning such acts. If one part of your body is injured, it needs to be mended soon.

Sami Uddin
Warangal

Delhi speaks emphatically through its injuries and wanton destruction over the last few days. A pattern of inaction against political trouble makers reflects poorly on true democratic governance. Deficiencies of the police are also obvious as they did not function independently. The need of the hour is to move out of dogmatism into pragmatism for the nation's sake and to equally respect all people without discrimination.

H.R.S. Sastry
Hyderabad

Things will fall apart if the Centre does not hold. Being at the Centre, it is high time the BJP shed its anti-Muslim prejudice among Hindus and ensure that such ugly riots do not happen again.

Mansoor Dashti
Secunderabad

It is not the Muslims alone who were affected by Delhi riots. Many Hindus were also hit by petrol bombs and stone pelting. One Bajrang Dal activist was killed in stone pelting and his body was dragged on the road. MIM leader Waris Pathan's statement is also responsible for the riots.

Sreekanth
Hyderabad

Email your letters to info@deccanmail.com, editor@deccanmail.com. You can also send them to Editor, Deccan Chronicle, 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad-500 003.

Purses to go in current session

NEW DELHI, MARCH 1.

Home Minister Y.B. Chavan assured both the Houses of Parliament today that legislation to abolish the priority purses and privileges of former rulers will be introduced in the current session.

Making a 50 YEARS AGO IN statement, Mr. Chavan said the bill's provisions were introduced in the current session.

Mr. Chavan said the passage of the legislation depended on the business schedule. In the Lok Sabha, Mr. Madhu Limaye rose on a point of order as soon as the Speaker arrived in the House to point out that the order paper makes no mention of the promised legislation to abolish the priority purses and privileges.

So I will request Indian readers to please refrain from shooting off nasty emails as I plan to make good use of my "delete" button.

By arrangement with Dawn

Irfan Husain

Thin skin, big chip, yes; yet Hindutva rise impacts us all

It's just as well that Donald Trump wears a bulletproof vest and a helmet, otherwise the Indian prime minister's repeated bear hugs might have bruised his ribs by now.

Narendra Modi probably clings to Trump to show everybody how close he is to the American president. But the expression on the latter's face says: "Get this guy off me!"

I know I'm going to get a lot of flak from Indian readers for daring to suggest that their prime minister comes across as a bit of a clown at times, but the truth has to be faced. When I wrote a piece a fortnight ago bemoaning India's slide into violent nationalism, my inbox was flooded with indignant emails defending their country. One Indian reader had the temerity to ask what gave me the right to write about India. I replied that I considered myself free to write on any subject, and hardly need his permission.

Over the years, it would appear that Indian skin has become thinner,

and the chip Indians carry on their shoulders has got bigger. A few years ago, I met the *Zionist* correspondent in Delhi who had come to Lahore to cover our general elections. When I asked him how covering India compared with writing about Pakistan, he replied: "When I do a negative story about India, all the Indians I know are furious; but when I write a similarly negative story about Pakistan, my friends here all agree with me."

So why are Indians so sensitive to criticism? Why can't they take a joke at their expense? I suspect this has to do with the fact that India has been ruled by Muslims and Brits for close to 1,000 years, and won independence just over seven decades ago. This has made them averse to criticism. And the Hindutva poison being injected into the mainstream has only made matters worse.

Some years ago, when I wrote a column critical of Pakistan — something I frequently do — Indian readers who were kindly enough to read didn't think articles like mine were

permitted in Pakistan. But as soon as I was critical of India, I would receive a flood of complaints.

These days, we are witnessing large-scale killings of Muslims by BJP thugs in the Delhi district of Mayapuri. These attacks have been aided and abetted by the police. A newspaper cameraman described how he was stopped several times by RSS hitboys who demanded to know if he was Hindu or Muslim. One hoodlum threatened to pull off his trousers to check if he had been wearing a condom. The police, who people have been killed in these sectarian riots.

But before the Mayapuri riots, we witnessed the Shaheen Bagh sit-in that was spearheaded by women who had never before participated in any form of political action. Irfanullah Farooqi writes: "...At Shaheen Bagh, the script is rewritten simply because the protester is endowed with a very different vantage point of belonging. Moreover, when she is a 90-year-old woman at one

end and a 20-day-old infant on the other, it is bound to offer us a new grammar of protest, a new language of resistance."

As this protest movement grows and spreads, thinking Indians need to ask what Mr. Modi is doing by dragging their country into it. Do they really need a leader who will abandon the secular path India's founding fathers had laid out? Clearly, this is a matter for Indians to decide. However, as I live in the neighbourhood, India's destiny is a matter of concern to me, whatever my Indian detractors may think. Indeed, given India's size and power, the entire region has cause for apprehension.

It would seem that under Mr. Modi, India's trajectory is fixed, given the huge support he is getting from his RSS and Hindutva supporters. Just as the Gujarat police were told not to intervene in the anti-Muslim pogrom unfolding before them, so too have the Delhi police remained passive witnesses as BJP hitboys targeted Muslims and tore down mosques.

Mercifully, many decent Indians — Hindus and Muslims alike — are resisting the Hindu onslaught. But given the power of the Indian state, I doubt if they will be able to succeed.

Can the world do anything to stop the carnage? I doubt it. While people in Mayapuri were being killed, Donald Trump was holding talks with Modi. Instead of reprimanding him, Mr. Trump sold India \$3 billion worth of arms. Other Western countries will similarly defer to India's size and power, and avoid criticism. Had Pakistan committed similar atrocities against its minorities, all hell would have broken loose. I am not suggesting that we treat our non-Muslims well, but the large-scale mayhem we are witnessing in Delhi today is very rare.

By arrangement with Dawn

SHORT TAKES

SAMSUNG SHUTS DOWN FACTORY AMID COVID-19

Seoul: Samsung Electronics shut one of its mobile device factories in South Korea after a worker tested positive for the coronavirus, the Yonhap news agency reported, citing a company official. The factory in Gumi, close to Daegu where most of the South Korean virus cases have been confirmed, was temporarily closed last month after an earlier case was discovered. The floor where the infected employee worked will reopen on Tuesday afternoon, Yonhap said. Samsung did not have immediate comment on the giant Hyundai Motor also stopped operations at one of its Ulsan plants after an employee tested positive for the coronavirus. — Reuters



'DOWNPLAY GREENNESS OF PRODUCTS'

London, March 1: Companies looking to promote their environmentally friendly products should downplay their green credentials to get more customers, according to a study which says by over-advertising green attributes, firms risk generating associations with weak product performance.

The researchers said this is because of the performance ability sometimes associated with green products which make consumers perceive them as being less effective. According to their study, by downplaying a product's greenness, firms may be more likely to persuade consumers to buy them, if promoted on more traditional channels than performance, aspects.

It said green products usually include environmentally friendly features that are less harmful to the planet and population, such as biodegradable and nontoxic ingredients, that enhance energy efficiency and include recycled components. However, while it has been suggested that consumers are willing to buy such products, these attitudes rarely result in purchases, and they often buy the conventional alternatives, the scientists said.

Based on earlier studies, they said consumers tend to choose products with superior functional performance over products with better sustainability characteristics, indicating that this choice is often related to assumptions about the performance ability of green products. The current study showed that the product category can influence the effect of a green product advertising strategy. 'Implicit' messaging is more effective in conditions under which consumers have more concerns about the product's performance, or have lower expectations about its greenness, the researchers added. According to the study, when the product-related attributes are prominent in advertising, if consumers perceive them as being at odds with the benefits associated with the product category, the resulting incompatibility may further reduce how the customers evaluate their performance. —PTI

Silicon Valley braces for Super Tuesday

Young and idealistic voters in Silicon Valley are largely united against Trump but split over Democratic hopefuls

San Francisco, March 1: The young and idealistic voters in Silicon Valley are largely united against US President Donald Trump, but split over the rival Democratic hopefuls as the crucial Super Tuesday primaries loom.

Front-runner Bernie Sanders has gotten the most donations from the "internet industry," according to tracking by the Center for Responsive Politics with rivals Pete Buttigieg and Elizabeth Warren not far behind in the tallies.

"Silicon Valley is many shades of blue," said Vivek Wadhwa, an entrepreneur and author who is a professor at Carnegie Mellon University's Silicon Valley branch.

"It is polarized, and it is polarized on the extrajob side. There is a consensus here that Donald Trump is the enemy," Sanders, who at 78 is from a different generation than the typical tech worker, connects with the younger crowd by promoting himself as a "disruptor," like many

emerging tech firms, said San Jose State University political science professor Melinda Jackson. "Focus on big ideas, political revolution, generational universal benefits — these ideas really appeal to a lot of folks," Jackson said.

DEBATING INCOME INEQUALITY

With Californians set to vote on this week's Super Tuesday, when 14 states go to the polls, support for Sanders and Warren comes even with the two progressive candidates pledging to sharply raise taxes on high earners and break up the largest tech companies which dominate key economic sectors.

"Sanders does appeal to many of the workers who feel the downsides of income inequality," said Jackson.

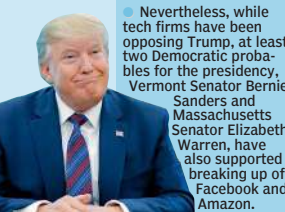
Some analysts see support for 38-year-old Buttigieg, with a more moderate platform. Reports said a Buttigieg gathering was hosted by

SILICON VALLEY'S TRYST WITH POLITICS

Tech companies in Silicon Valley have been at the forefront of US President Donald Trump's policies. In February 2017, just days after he was inaugurated, 127 tech companies opposed Trump's travel ban policy. It is to be noted that many high profile tech firms rely on an international talent pool.

Of late, tech honchos have been donating money to political causes. LinkedIn co-founder Reid Hoffman had donated money to four Democratic primary candidates, while Salesforce CEO Marc Benioff had provided money to three.

Netfix chief Reed Hastings and attended by people linked to Google, Facebook and other large tech firms, an event



denounced by rivals as the "wine cave" fundraiser. "Pete Buttigieg is the favored candidate of Silicon Valley as he has a tech-friendly agenda and a moderate stance in regulation," said Brookings Institution governance studies director Darrell

West. "He understands how businesses operate and what they need in order to do well," West added that while idealistic tech company workers are inclined to support progressive candidates, senior executives worry about regulatory backlash.

'THE OTHER POLE'

Buttigieg has the vote of Manu Koenig, who has worked at a series of tech startups and is running for an elected position in part of Silicon Valley. "For my friends and I, it is just that we want more return to normalcy rather than swinging from one pole to the other," Koenig told AFP.

"Clearly, Bernie is the other pole. That's what excites a lot of people about him and scares a lot of people about him," The 64-year-old entrepreneur of Buttigieg and Amy Klobuchar as a sign Silicon Valley voters want to reason and collaboration returned to US national

politics. Former vice president Joe Biden "is hardcore normalcy, but he is just too old," Koenig said. "We want normalcy 2.0, or even 3.0," he added, using a reference to improved second or third generations of a technology platform.

He sees former South Bend, Indiana mayor Buttigieg as in tune with Silicon Valley ways of thinking. From climate change to quickly rolling out solutions and then improving on them as feedback or data dictates. "I think it is just an awareness of our inter-connectedness and realizing that we're finding solutions together," Koenig said.

Volition startup founder and chief Mark Pinkston sees support for Michael Bloomberg and Buttigieg in the venture capital community. "Venture capitalists don't want to be taxed, and feel like Bernie and Warren are sort of out of reason and collaboration," Pinkston said. —AFP



People check the temperature of journalists wearing face masks as they enter the Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, South Korea. —AP

Covid-19 rumours on app cripples Koreatown

Los Angeles, March 1: In a Koreatown restaurant known for its beef bone broth soup, the lunchtime crowd on Friday was half its normal size. The reason was a virulent rumour about a customer with coronavirus.

Han Bat Shul Lung Tang was one of five restaurants that lost business after being named in posts on a Korean messaging app that warned a Korean Air flight attendant with the virus had dined there during a layover at Los Angeles city, situated on the Western coast.

Impact on the restaurants was a prime example of how fears of the virus combined with the speed and reach of social media can quickly cripple the healthiest of businesses and focus suspicion on ethnic communities. The virus, which began in China, has been spreading worldwide and has taken a big toll lately in South Korea. Lawmakers and advocates for immigrant communities have warned about xenophobia and discrimination aimed at Asian Americans. State Assemblyman Kansen Chu, D-San Jose, said Chinese businesses, in particular, were experiencing large economic losses as a result of racism and fear. A group representing Koreatown restaurants said business in general was down about 50% since the rumor spread on the

HAN BAT SHUL LUNG TANG WAS ONE OF FIVE RESTAURANTS THAT LOST BUSINESS AFTER BEING NAMED IN POSTS ON A MESSAGING APP THAT WARNED A KOREAN AIR FLIGHT ATTENDANT WITH THE VIRUS HAD DINED THERE DURING A LAYOVER AT LOS ANGELES CITY, SITUATED ON THE WESTERN COAST.

At Honey Pig, a Korean barbecue restaurant with 25 tables, only six parties were seated during one bad day of business this week, owner Chin Kim said.

Kakao Talk app on Monday. One message circulating on the app provided details of the flights the attendant worked on and listed the restaurants that said she purportedly visited with the message: "Please share with everyone to avoid these known spots," using an abbreviation for Koreatown.

"In the Korean-American community here, it went like wildfire," Alex Won said Friday as he ate a bowl of beef brisket soup at Han Bat Shul Lung Tang. Won said he got the message from friends and family members, but never really believed it because it wasn't reported in the news. He stopped at the restaurant at the start of the week and found it closed because of a water leak. He was happy to return for a late lunch Friday and was surprised to find he was the only diner. Owners of other restaurants named in the post said business died almost instantly.

At Honey Pig, a Korean barbecue restaurant with 25 tables, only six parties were seated during one bad day of business this week, owner Chin Kim said. —AP

'CoronaCoin' allows users to bet on international epidemic

Gig economy to be hit by Covid-19

DC CORRESPONDENT WITH AGENCY INPUTS HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

The ongoing Covid-19 scare is most likely to impact workers part of the gig economy, especially in the United States, a Washington Post report has said.

According to the report, those providing on-demand ride services and delivery services are at a greater risk due to the spread of Covid-19. This is because most of them are considered independent contractors and hence are ineligible for sick leave or healthcare benefits.

"With the gig economy specifically, it's full of low-income, independent contractors who don't have very good health insurance. They're not going to have better protections than anyone else, but they may have higher risk," said Alex Rosenblatt, the research lead for the non-profit organization Data & Society was quoted by the publication as saying.

Nevertheless, companies like Taxi aggregator service Uber recently sent an in-app message to its drivers in the United States, which included measures to protect themselves from the deadly virus that originated in the central Chinese province of Wuhan.

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HOW IT WORKS

The token supply is based on the world population, which stands at 7.64,953,650 as per the World Bank. Every 48 hours, the token is burned to reduce supply in line with reports on the Covid-19 spread. So for every one infection, one token is burned.

ALTRUISM MEETS CAPITALISM?

A portion of the tokens (20 per cent) has been set aside for donation to the Red Cross to fund relief efforts. By putting the information regarding infections and deaths, the cryptocurrency reportedly enables data to enter authoritarian countries. The data reportedly allows people to understand the true impact of the virus and prepare for any potential situations.

documents the spread of the virus and the token can be bought and sold on some online exchanges, such as Saturn.Network, according to Kemp.

Across 90 per cent of supply of supply will be allocated for donation monthly to the Red Cross to fund relief efforts. By putting the information regarding infections and deaths, the cryptocurrency reportedly enables data to enter authoritarian countries. The data reportedly allows people to understand the true impact of the virus and prepare for any potential situations.

Some users of social media platform credit users criticized the token. "Frankly this is amoral," said one. "Tasteless," commented other. "This is why we can't have nice things," wrote a third. Asked whether the token could be seen as morbid, Kemp said: "There are currently active pandemic bonds issued by the WHO. How is that different?"

New York: Cryptocurrency developers have created a digital coin that allows traders to bet on the coronavirus epidemic, based on how many people fall or die. Called platform Reddit users criticized the token. "Frankly this is amoral," said one. "Tasteless," commented other. "This is why we can't have nice things," wrote a third. Asked whether the token could be seen as morbid, Kemp said: "There are currently active pandemic bonds issued by the WHO. How is that different?" — Reuters

IT professionals, be careful of Mexican men in uniforms



Shrenik Avlani

It is not just thieves and common, Mexico-bound Indian IT workers and tourists have to be wary of the men in uniform too. Several Indian info-tech and software professionals who transit through the Mexican capital on their way to their new postings in Guadalajara, Jalisco and Monterrey have been robbed and scammed by policemen in uniform as well as by scammers at Mexico City's Benito Juarez

International Airport (Aeropuerto Internacional Benito Juárez). There are 6,500 Indians living and working in Mexico, including the big three — Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys and Wipro — have size-

able operations in Mexico. TCS's big campus is in Guadalajara. Wipro's is in Jalisco and Infosys in Monterrey. Venkateswar, 30, a software engineer from Hyderabad came to Mexico City in October 2017 on his way to his first overseas project at Monterrey in north-eastern Mexico. Shortly after disembarking from a flight, he cleared customs and checked in his bags for the connecting flight, which was taking him to Monterrey.

"My colleague and I were trying to figure out how to get to the domestic terminal when a couple of men in police uniforms came with ID cards, came and asked where we came from and where we were going? When we said Monterrey, they asked if we were on the KLM flight. The moment we said yes,

• About 60,000 Indians had travelled to Mexico in 2016 as more than five Indian IT firms, including the big three have sizeable operations in Mexico.

• The Indian embassy takes note of such complaints and then raises it with Mexican authorities when the ambassador meets them.

they said that the airport train was cancelled for the day and KLM was providing free transfers. They even showed us a video of a man in uniform who spoke English and showed us papers that looked real so we went with them," said

Venkateswar, who still works in Monterrey for the same multinational firm that has a large presence in India.

"They trouble started now. They put us in a cab and five minutes into the ride, the driver stopped the car and asked us to stop. He threatened to delay us long enough to make us miss our flight and even hurt us if we didn't give him money. Both Srikant, also from Hyderabad, and I were scared but said we didn't have any money. He threatened and after a few more threats, each of us ended up paying him \$100 each," Venkateswar added. He didn't go to cops because he was scared that he might run into the same cops or their friends at the airport.

"An Infosys employee from Pune on his way to Monterrey had a similar experience last year. Suryaprakash Sahoo, 32, a senior software engineer at Infosys from Bhubaneswar, who arrived in Mexico City in January this year, on his first international assignment, was scammed at the airport. "I needed directions to get to my connecting flight. I asked a security woman but she spoke Spanish which I didn't understand. A smartly dressed man who was nearby spoke English and offered to help. He asked me to follow him, which I did. After a minute or so I sensed something wasn't right, so I said I'd manage from here. He didn't listen to me and started pushing my trolley. Luckily, he took me to the train but forced me to pay him," Sahoo said. Sahoo said he has heard of other incidents of Indians being robbed and

scammed at airports in Mexico, including one involving his colleague from a different team. There have also been incidents of tourists, Indian and other nationalities too, being robbed by armed but unknown while conducting random checks and pat-down searches on travellers in Tulum, the popular beach holiday destination in south-western Mexico on the Caribbean coast. The Indian embassy takes note of such complaints and then raises it with Mexican authorities when the ambassador meets them. Sivan said, "When we get such complaints, the victims expect us to help them recover the money, which we can't do. We let the Mexican officials know and ask them to stop the recurrence of such incidents," he added.

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IN BRIEF

Speak on bullying, Opposition to Priti

London: The UK's Opposition Labour Party on Sunday called on Home Secretary Priti Patel to address Parliament on the allegations of bullying against her following the resignation of one of her top civil servants...

Mahathir seeks Parliament vote

Kuala Lumpur: Mahathir Mohamad called Sunday for an urgent sitting of Malaysia's Parliament to contest the appointment of a former ally as prime minister under a Malay-majority coalition...

SL Parliament may be dissolved: Min

Colombo: Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa is likely to dissolve the Parliament later on Sunday, paving the way for snap elections in the country...

'IMMEDIATE' ANNEXATION, PLEDGES BIBI

Jerusalem, March 1: A day ahead of Israel's third election in a year, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu pledged Sunday that if re-elected he would announce the annexation of the occupied West Bank...

US President Donald Trump's widely-criticised Middle East peace plan, unveiled in late January, gave the Jewish state a green light to annex the area and proposed a corridor to set out the exact borders of the territory to be annexed...

13,000 migrants at Turkey's border: EU

Turkish Prez promises not to close gates to refugees, says European Union has to keep its promises



Migrants walk on railways toward Meritsa river, near Edirne, to take a boat to attempt to enter Greece by crossing the river on Sunday.

Kastanies, March 1: The United Nations migration organization said Sunday that at least 13,000 people were massed on Turkey's land border with Greece, after Turkey officially declared its western borders were open to migrants and refugees hoping to head into the European Union...

The UN's International Organization for Migration said Sunday that by the previous evening, its staff working along the land border "had observed at least 13,000 people gathered at the formal border crossing points at Pazar-kule and Ipsala and multiple informal border crossings, in groups of between several dozen and more than 3,000."

Greek authorities fired tear gas and stun grenades through Saturday to prevent repeat attempts by a crowd of about 4,000 people massed at the border crossing in Kastanies to cross, and fought a cat-and-mouse game of Greece cutting holes in a border fence along the border to crawl through.

Minister Alkiviadis Stefanidis told the local broadcaster Skai there were around 4,000 attempts to illegally cross Greece's border during the night Saturday to Sunday. Stefanidis said all were successfully thwarted. Previously several dozen migrants had managed to make it through. Greek officials said they arrested 66 migrants Friday, 17 of whom were sentenced to 3.5 years in jail for entering the country illegally.

All Afghans, they were the first migrants sentenced for illegal entry since 2014. On Saturday, Greece arrested another 70 people who tried to cross the border illegally. Others were making the short but often perilous sea crossing from the Turkish coast to the Greek islands.

At least three dinghies carrying migrants arrived on the Greek island of Lesbos Sunday morning. Turkey's decision to open the borders with Greece came amid a military escalation in northwest Syria's Idlib province that has forced hundreds of thousands of Syrian civilians to flee fighting there.

The mass displacement there. The mass displacement there. The mass displacement there. The mass displacement there. The mass displacement there.

Brussels, March 1: The EU's border protection agency Frontex said Sunday it is on "high alert" on Europe's borders with Turkey as thousands of migrants seek to enter the bloc, adding it is deploying support to Greece.

EU border agency issues 'high alert'

Brussels, March 1: The EU's border protection agency Frontex said Sunday it is on "high alert" on Europe's borders with Turkey as thousands of migrants seek to enter the bloc, adding it is deploying support to Greece.

Tayyip Erdogan said he "opened the gates" for them after dozens of his troops were killed in airstrikes in northern Syria by Damascus's Russian-backed regime.

Biden pockets South Carolina

Washington, March 1: Former US vice president Joe Biden won the South Carolina primary on Saturday, giving a big boost to his presidential campaign. Biden, 77, scored more than 50 per cent of the 2020 primary vote in the crucial state of South Carolina, where the primaries for the Democratic party's presidential race were held on Saturday.

Senator Bernie Sanders, 78, with a distant second place behind Joe Biden in South Carolina's primary. Sanders' team also announced that it was making television ads buys in nine more states: Idaho, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri and Washington, which vote on March 10, and Arizona, Florida, Illinois and Ohio, which vote a week later.

The senator's multi-generational, multiracial working class coalition keeps fueling his campaign for transformational change. Sanders' campaign manager Faiz Shakir said in a statement.

Virginia, March 1: Bernie Sanders' presidential campaign said it raised more than \$46.5 million in February, a show of financial strength announced Sunday, after the Vermont senator finished a distant second behind Joe Biden in South Carolina's primary.

Former Afghan Taliban fighters stand next to weapons before handing them over as part of a government peace and reconciliation process in Jalalabad on Sunday.

Prisoner release: First snag in Afghan deal

Kabul, March 1: Afghanistan's president said Sunday that he will not free thousands of Taliban prisoners ahead of all-Afghan power-sharing talks set for next week, publicly disagreeing with a timetable for a special prisoner release laid out just a day earlier in a US-Taliban deal.

The present shafq Ghani's comments pointed to the first hitch in implementing the fragile deal, which is aimed at ending America's longest war after more than 18 years and getting rival Afghan factions to agree on their country's future. Still, the US has said a planned US troop withdrawal over the next 14 months is linked to the Taliban's counterterrorism performance, not to progress in intra-Afghan talks.

The release of prisoners was a decision for his government to take and that he wasn't ready to release prisoners before the start of negotiations. "The request has been made by the US for the release of prisoners and it can be part of the negotiations but it cannot be a precondition," Ghani said.

There are spoilers both within Afghanistan and outside, you will have to keep a lookout for them and deter them. You have to identify them and put them to blame and shame. A mechanism is needed for that.

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SANDERS SAYS HE RAISED \$46.5M IN FEBRUARY ALONE

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Will down 'enemy' aircraft: Damascus

Damascus, March 1: The Syrian military Sunday threatened to down any aircraft over northwest Syria after Turkish drone strikes killed dozens of pro-regime forces in the embattled region.

Turkish drone strikes and bombardment since Friday to 74, said the Britain-based monitor, which relies on sources inside Syria. Ten Hezbollah fighters and four allied militiamen also died, the Observatory said.

French President Emmanuel Macron has called for a truce and Russia to implement a lasting ceasefire in Syria's Idlib province in conversations with the two countries' leaders the Elysee said.

Op. 'Spring Shield' on: Defence Minister

Ankara, March 1: Turkey said Sunday it was continuing a military operation against the Russian-backed Syrian regime in Syria's northwestern Idlib region but insisted it did not wish to clash with Moscow.

Following the heinous attack on February 27 in Idlib, operation 'Spring Shield' successfully commenced in Syria's northwestern Idlib region but insisted it did not wish to clash with Moscow.

WEDDING BELLS

Carrie Symonds' pregnancy had been an open secret in government circles: Reports

Boris proposed to me late last year, says GF

London, March 1: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson proposed to partner Carrie Symonds late last year, his pregnant fiancée revealed on social media to her friends after the couple formally announced their engagement.

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British Prime Minister Boris Johnson with Carrie Symonds.

IN BRIEF

Mexico confirms fourth infection

Mexico City: Mexico confirmed its fourth case of the new Covid-19 — all linked to recent travel to Italy — after a young woman tested positive for infection. Health authorities on Saturday said the 20-year-old from northern Coahuila state was carrying the virus without showing symptoms. She had recently travelled to Milan and was now under isolation in her home, according to the state government. Another eight people are being tested for suspected infection, authorities said. The other three confirmed cases — two in Mexico City and one man in northern Sinaloa state — are all believed to have visited northern Italy, authorities said Friday.

Nigeria patient gets better care

Lagos: Nigerian health authorities said Saturday an Italian who tested positive for the Covid-19 in Lagos, the first case in Nigeria, has been relocated for better care, a health official said. The Italian, quarantined at the Infectious Diseases Hospital in Yaba on Friday, had complained of poor facilities, Lagos health commissioner Akin Abayomi told reporters. He was moved to a renovated facility with air-conditioning and the patient was now comfortable. As of this morning, his condition has improved, he hasn't developed any new symptoms, but he's still got a 'mild fever,' he added. Meanwhile, Nigeria consumer officials warned against arbitrary hikes in prices of protective kits and products. It urged pharmacies and department stores to stop hoarding the products.

S Africa to airlift 151 from China

Johannesburg: South Africa will evacuate 151 citizens from the Covid-19-hit Chinese city of Wuhan within days, the health minister said today, as the death toll and number of infected worldwide mounted. The decision to airlift the trapped citizens came after President Cyril Ramaphosa on Thursday directed the repatriation of those who have asked to return home. "We were asked by the president to start the process immediately — (so) within seven to 10 days. The evacuation team has now completed the task," Health Minister Zweli Mkhize said. The minister told a news conference at the country's main OR Tambo International airport that there were 201 South Africans in Wuhan and that "151 have indicated they want to be repatriated." The group will be kept in quarantine for 21 days. Health authorities have refused to disclose. "The people we are bringing in are South Africans who are healthy and as far as we are concerned, are not infected," Mkhize said.

POPE CANCELS RETREAT DUE TO 'COLD'

Vatican City, March 1: Pope Francis on Sunday said he was cancelling a four-day intensive spiritual retreat south of Rome after coming down with a "cold". "Unfortunately, a cold forced me to cancel this year," the 83-year-old pontiff said after coughing a couple of times during his weekly Sunday appearance. The pontiff's decision is a rare political window in front of supporters. The cancellation of the retreat, which was supposed to start Sunday, came only a few days after Europe's worst outbreak of the new Covid-19 that has spread from China across much of the world. The number of cases in Italy surpassed 1,000 on Saturday. There have been 29 confirmed deaths and 183 people were receiving intensive care treatment in hospital — all of them in three adjacent northern regions near Milan. The Vatican quickly shot down speculation that the Pope himself had come down with Covid-19. "There is no evidence to suggest a diagnosis of anything other than a slight ailment," a Vatican spokesman told AFP on Sunday. The Pope himself looked relatively strong Sunday despite two coughing fits. He invited him to briefly turn away from the crowd. Yet concerns about his health have been mounting. He first looked unwell on Wednesday and lightened his workload for the rest of the week — AFP



Health officials, wearing face masks amid fears over the spread of Covid-19, check the body temperature of policemen before an anti-government rally in Bangkok on Sunday. — AFP

1st fatalities in Thailand, Oz

China Covid-19 deaths at 2,870 while casualties in Iran spiral to 54

Bangkok, March 1: A patient in Thailand who contracted the novel Covid-19 infection has died, the first fatality in the country involving the outbreak. The 65-year-old retail worker had dengue fever and the new disease known as Covid-19, Suwanachai Wattananagch-aroenchai, director general of the Department of Disease Control, said in a briefing Sunday. The patient had been hospitalised for nearly a month and died on February 29 after multiple organ failure.

The patient had tested negative for the virus since February 16, but the damage was already done to his body" from the infection, said Tawee Chotiyasatayon, a health adviser to the Department of Disease Control. The health ministry is still looking into the case, Suwanachai said.

78-year-old succumbs to virus in Australia Sydney, Mar. 1: A 78-year-old man evacuated from the Covid-19-stricken Diamond Princess cruise liner in Japan died at a Perth hospital on Sunday, becoming Australia's first fatality from the disease, officials said. His 79-year-old wife was also infected with the disease during the cruise and remains in a Perth hospital, a spokeswoman for the Western Australian state health department told AFP.

The couple were among about 160 Australians evacuated from the cruise ship on February 21 while the Princess last month and they tested positive for the Covid-19 during their flight home. They were immediately transferred to isolation units in the Perth hospital on Sunday. The rest of the evacuees were quarantined in a former military camp near the northern city of Darwin.

China's confirmed cases surge to 79,824 Western Australia's chief medical officer said the couple initially seemed to have only a mild version of the illness, but that the man's condition subsequently deteriorated. He insisted both had been isolated early and that their cases posed "no risk to the general community or (medical) staff". Earlier Sunday, health authorities in New South Wales state confirmed a 26th case of Covid-19 in Australia after a man in his 40s who had travelled from Iran was diagnosed with the disease. He was the first Australian infected in Iran.

Beijing, Mar. 1: China's Covid-19 death toll climbed to 2,870 with 35 new deaths, while the confirmed cases increased to 79,824 even as the infections outside the worst-hit Hubei province dropped with only three positive cases reported in a single day, continuing the trend of slowdown in the rest of the country, health officials said Sunday. The National Health Commission (NHC) said it received reports of 573 new confirmed cases of novel Covid-19 infection and 35 deaths on Saturday from the Chinese mainland.

Among the deaths, 34 were in Hubei and one in Henan Province. Covid-19, which at one time started spreading rapidly all over China, showed a declining trend with three new confirmed cases reported outside Hubei on Saturday.

385 infections in Iran Tehran, Mar. 1: Iran's health ministry on Sunday reported 11 new deaths from the novel Covid-19 and 385 infections, bringing the overall number of

lives lost to 54 and cases to 678. "Eleven people lost their lives in the past 24 hours," spokesman Kianoush Jahanpour said. Armenia joins 'hit' list Armenia on Sunday confirmed its first case of coronavirus, an Armenian citizen who recently returned from Iran and who was in stable condition in hospital. Around 30 people who had been in contact with the patient had also been placed in isolation, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said on Facebook. — Agencies

Gatherings of 5,000 cancelled in France France cancelled gatherings of 5,000 people or more after a surge of new cases were confirmed there on Saturday. The country's total stands at 100, with two deaths logged. In two regions hard-hit by the virus, Oise and La Basse-Normandie, some schools were closed while the authorities warned against non-essential travel and encouraged people to work from home.

22 sick but don't panic: Trump

Washington, March 1: Seeking to reassure the American public, President Donald Trump said there was "no reason to panic" as the new Covid-19 claimed its first victim inside the US. The White House also announced new restrictions on international travel to prevent the virus from spreading. Trump appeared at a hastily called news conference in the White House briefing room with Vice President Mike Pence and other public health officials to announce that the US was banning travel to Iran and urging Americans not to travel to regions of Italy and South Korea where the Covid-19 has been prevalent.

IRISH MAN BACK FROM ITALY TESTS POSITIVE

Dublin, March 1: Ireland on Saturday confirmed its first case of Covid-19 after a man who had returned from northern Italy tested positive. Health officials said the man, from the east of Ireland, was "receiving appropriate medical care" after they followed "established protocols" in testing and diagnosing him.

The case is associated with travel from an affected area in northern Italy, rather than contact with another confirmed case, the Department of Health said in a statement. The authorities were working rapidly to identify any contacts the patient may have had, "to provide them with information and advice to prevent further spread", it added. Health Minister Simon Harris said the development was "not unexpected". "We have been preparing for this since January in Ireland."

Meanwhile mainland UK has seen 23 cases so far. In the northern Irish case, the man involved had travelled through Dublin Airport on his way home to Northern Ireland from northern Italy. — AFP

Armenia joins 'hit' list Armenia on Sunday confirmed its first case of coronavirus, an Armenian citizen who recently returned from Iran and who was in stable condition in hospital. Around 30 people who had been in contact with the patient had also been placed in isolation, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said on Facebook. — Agencies



Simon Harris DEVELOPMENT WAS not unexpected. We have been preparing for this since January. SIMON HARRIS, Irish Health Minister

S Korea wages 'all-out response'

Seoul, March 1: South Korean President Moon Jae-in said Sunday the government was waging "all-out responses" to contain the novel Covid-19 as the country added 586 more cases, taking the total to 3,736. South Korea has the largest national total in the world outside China, after it saw a rapid surge in the number of Covid-19 cases.

Stars BTS were among cancelled events. K-pop star Chung Ha was placed in self-quarantine when a member of her staff tested positive after visiting Italy last month. Yonhap news agency reported. The country's largest test centre, the centre of the country's outbreak and neighbouring North Gyeong-gang province, the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said in a statement.

The country reported one more death Sunday, taking the total death toll to 18. South Korea has an advanced health system with both consumption and exports. "The government is now waging all-out responses after raising the crisis to the highest level," Moon said at an Independence Movement Day ceremony scalded down to the streets. "We will be able to overcome the Covid-19 outbreak and revive our shrunken economy," he added. Concerts by K-pop super-

stars BTS were among cancelled events. K-pop star Chung Ha was placed in self-quarantine when a member of her staff tested positive after visiting Italy last month. Yonhap news agency reported. The country's largest test centre, the centre of the country's outbreak and neighbouring North Gyeong-gang province, the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said in a statement. The country reported one more death Sunday, taking the total death toll to 18. South Korea has an advanced health system with both consumption and exports. "The government is now waging all-out responses after raising the crisis to the highest level," Moon said at an Independence Movement Day ceremony scalded down to the streets. "We will be able to overcome the Covid-19 outbreak and revive our shrunken economy," he added. Concerts by K-pop super-

PAK TO CLOSE AFGHAN BORDER FOR SEVEN DAYS

Islamabad, March 1: Pakistan will close its border with Afghanistan for seven days from Monday to prevent the spread of novel Covid-19, the Interior Ministry said on Sunday, as authorities stepped up efforts to stop the new cases.

Crew left Japan ship: Minister With 12 new cases, UK tally rises to 35

Tokyo, March 1: All crew members from a Covid-19-stricken cruise ship off Japan have now disembarked, the country's health minister said. The crew began leaving the Diamond Princess on Thursday for quarantine ashore after the last of the passengers had departed. "Including the captain and all crew members disembarked," health minister Katsunobu Kato told reporters late Sunday. Around 130 people — including the captain and 98 health ministry officials who were working aboard — tested negative for the virus as they left the vessel, he said. "They will be staying in government-designated dormitories before being allowed to leave Japan, while the vessel will be disinfected before sailing again."

UK tally rises to 35

London, March 1: British health authorities on Sunday announced 12 new confirmed cases of the new Covid-19, bringing the country's overall tally to 35. The government's chief medical officer, Prof. Chris Whitty, said one of the new patients had not yet arrived from Iran, but yet clear whether they contracted it directly or indirectly from an individual who had recently returned from abroad. — AP

FEAR | NO official edict on the social custom in the wake of spread of contagion in Italy

Friendly kissing poses European dilemma

Milan, March 1: When French President Emmanuel Macron leaped in to give Premier Giuseppe Conte a kiss on the cheek last night, it was more than a greeting. It was a signal to citizens not to fear their neighbours as Covid-19 spreads, with Italy established as Europe's hotspot. Friendly kissing in the time of Covid-19 has become a fresh dilemma, especially in effusive southern Europe, with perhaps the power to reshape customs. But even more reserved

northerners are grappling with whether to forgo the hallowed handshake. The government's special commissioner for Covid-19, Angelo Borrelli, has suggested that Italians' demonstrative nature could be contributing to the virus spread, with more than 1,100 people testing positive and 29 deaths, almost all in the country's north. But there have been no official edicts on the social custom of kissing, which sociologists say is rooted in Italy's Mediterranean culture as well as its strong family and social structure. "We have a collective social life that is very fluid, very expansive. We

at VIRCHOW hospital in Berlin, doctors not only stopped shaking hands with their patients but are encouraging them to follow suit. HEALTH EXPERTS have been warning that shaking hands is a prime way to spread the virus. IN NORTHERN Italy, with schools, museums & offices closed, people are staying at home and avoiding social contact

has lots of contact, we shake hands, we kiss each other, we hug each other,"



French President Emmanuel Macron gives Premier Giuseppe Conte a kiss on both cheeks during a joint press conference on the occasion of a French-Italian summit in Naples. — AP

do not have too much contact, and try to be a bit less expansive, which is

quick BITES

INDICATORS	%
Sensex	38,297.29 -3.64
Nifty 50	11,201.80 -3.71
S&P 500*	2,954.22 -0.82
Dollar (₹)	72.17 0.79
Pound Sterling (₹)	93.39 0.99
Euro (₹)	79.93 1.60
Gold (10gm) (₹)	43,356.22 0.51
Brent crude (\$/bbl)	46.67 0.001
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.371 -0.007
US 10-Yr 'Floor' yield	1.163 0.001

* As of 9:30 pm IST

FPIs invest just ₹1,820 cr into equities in Feb.

Foreign portfolio investors put in only Rs 6,554 crore in Indian markets on net basis in February, as they adopted a cautious stance amid coronavirus scare, subdued economic data and disappointing corporate earnings. Depositories data shows FPIs invested a net Rs 1,820 crore into equities and Rs 4,734 crore into the debt segment between February 3 to 28, taking the total net investment to Rs 6,554 crore.

Labour ministry keen to retain 8.65% EPF rate



The labour ministry is keen to retain 8.65 per cent interest rate on provident fund deposits, a source said. The Central Board of Trustees of the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation is likely to consider the rate of interest on Employees' Provident Fund deposits in its March 5 meeting. The agenda for the CBT meeting has not yet been finalised and the rate will be fixed on the basis of EPFO's income projections for FY20.

SBI Cards allots ₹2,770 cr shares to 74 investors

SBI Cards and Payment Services made allotment of shares worth Rs 2,769 crore at Rs 755 per equity share to 74 investor investors. The allotment of the opening of the IPO on March 2. The SBI Card IPO is offered in the price band of Rs 750 to Rs 755 per share. The allotment at the upper price band in the Rs 10,350-crore plus issue were made to institutional investors, including 12 mutual funds, through 48 schemes and FPIs.

FM seeks tech to smoothen working of PFMS

The Centre has called for efficient and adaptive technologies to smoothen the working of the Public Financial Management System. The PFMS is designed to help government agencies process, track and monitor payments. At an event to mark the 44th Civil Accounts Day, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said accounts officers have to be "not only competent accounts persons but also competent technology professionals."

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Other automakers closely monitoring situation Covid-19 hits sales at Tata, Mahindra &M, MG Motor

MICHAEL GONSALVES
PUNE, MARCH 1

February sales at Tata Motors, Mahindra and Mahindra and MG Motor have been hit hard by component supply constraints from China while Maruti, Hyundai and Toyota, which also reported sales decline for last month, said production schedules were unaffected till date but were closely monitoring the situation.

Vehicle sales at Tata Motors, India's biggest firm by revenues, fell 34 per cent at 38,002 units in February from 57,249 units sold in the same month last year. But car sales at Chinese-owned MG Motor were not halved to 1,676 units in February from 3,130 units in January while Mahindra took a heavy hit of whopping 42 per cent at 32,476 units from 56,005 units sold in February 2019. Its exports dropped 40 per cent to 1,639 units in February from a year ago.

Girish Wagh, president, commercial vehicles at Tata Motors said the outbreak of Covid-19 virus in China and a recent fire incident at one of its strategic vendors affected the vehicle production and wholesale volumes.



"The ramp-down of BS-VI vehicle production has been in line with our plan for February. However, because of the unforeseen changes on the parts-supply from China, our BS VI ramp-up has been affected," Vejay Ram Nakra, chief of sales and marketing, automotive division at Mahindra and Mahindra, said.

"We do not foresee any problem as of now. We will keep in touch with our suppliers," a Maruti Suzuki spokesperson said.

A Hyundai spokesperson said the company was closely monitoring the situation. "However, at the moment there is no impact on the functioning."

Similarly, Toyota Kirloskar Motor said there has been no immediate impact so far on supply of parts and its production from coronavirus in China.

"Our tier-I and tier-II suppliers are not yet showing any possible slowdown that may come forth due to the slowdown in logistics flow in China, especially Wuhan," Naveen Soni, senior vice president (sales and service) at Toyota Kirloskar Motor, said.

LIC Q3 net p 21% at ₹8,632 cr

FALAKNAAZ SYED
MUMBAI, MARCH 1

A rising equity market has helped public sector behemoth Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) report a 21 per cent rise in profit from sale of investments to Rs 8,632 crore for the third quarter ended December 31, 2019. However, its provisions on impaired assets have risen too.

While most of the profits have come from sale of equities, LIC also holds older government securities at attractive price and normally holds them to maturity. The margin from equities is higher compared to debt investments.

During the December quarter, the behemoth saw

over Rs 10,000 crore of its investments from traditional and pension funds made into Yes Bank, IFCI Ltd, Dewan Housing Finance Ltd, ECL Finance, GMR Pochampalli Expressway and India Bulls Housing Finance being downgraded by rating agencies while as on date Rs 6,254 crore investments from traditional and pension policies have been downgraded by various rating agencies.

LIC's provision for doubtful assets on its long term exposure to bonds more than doubled to Rs 12,197 crore as at December 31, 2019 compared to Rs 5,633 crore as at December 31, 2018. Similarly, on short term investments its provisions for doubtful investments

rose to Rs 10,197 crore as at December 31, 2019 compared to Rs 7,880 crore in the corresponding period of the previous year. The bad loans in the Uip funds amounted to Rs 431.25 crore (book value) while the provisions made were to the tune of Rs 383 crore.

Like banks, LIC too has been facing a problem of bad loans in the last several years as loans given to various municipalities, state governments, corporate houses have turned bad and have been classified as loss, sub-standard and doubtful.

Of its life fund or premium from traditional life insurance business, loans given to several state governments, municipalities and state-owned entities have gone bad.

Govt in tax overdrive on Vishwas

K. J. BENNYCHAN
MUMBAI, MARCH 1

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) will link annual appraisals and postings of field officers with their performance in terms of collection under the 'Vivad se Vishwas' scheme.

A February 21 office memorandum from the CBDT said that collection outcomes would play a bigger role in the future postings of field officers.

The latest missive assumes significance as there have been concerns over alleged 'tax terrorism' and undue harassment of

taxpayers by tax officials. Soon after the dispute settlement scheme was announced, the department asked the field officers to work on holidays/Saturdays so that when the scheme is formally launched they get a head-start on the collection front.

'Vivad se Vishwas' scheme for resolving income tax cases was announced during the 2020-21 Budget presentation by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. A target of mopping up Rs 2 lakh crore by March 31 has been set.

The scheme would for-

mally be launched on Monday, when Parliament resumes the second leg of the budget session.

There are a host of direct tax cases worth over Rs 9 lakh crore pending in various appellate forums—linked to the 2014-15. Tribunal, high courts and the Supreme Court.

According to the memorandum, the department has told field officers that their annual performance and increments would be linked to the collection outcomes of the disputes they handle.

The memorandum has been sent to all zonal chief IT commissioners. —PTI

Even in bloodbath, Indian equity market stands apart

ASHWIN J. PUNNEEN
MUMBAI, MARCH 1

Despite the massive sell off in the domestic market last week, Indian equity indices like Sensex and Nifty-50 did better than their global peers like the Dow, FTSE, Nikkei, Nasdaq and S&P 500.

Investors in the Indian market were spooked by the global meltdown in equities, leading to benchmark indices falling by 7 per cent last week. However, relatively the Indian equities outperformed the US and European indices, which fell over 11 per cent, as fears increased in the wake of the global economic slowdown turned the week into the worst since the 2008 financial crisis.

According to analysts, the selling was mainly on account of a sharp increase in the number of warnings from the top global companies, including Apple, Disney, Microsoft and Qualcomm that the coronavirus is hitting their businesses. Also, companies have seen a sharp increase in the number of warnings for the products and services, especially in Asia.

Global GDP forecast have been lowered for the first

How indices fared

Index	% change*
Dow	-12.3
Nasdaq	-10.5
S&P 500	-11.5
FTSE	-11.2
DAI	-12.4
CAC	-11.9
Nikkei	-9.5
Nifty	-7.2
Shanghai	-5.2

(*In last week over previous week)

and second quarters of calendar year 2020, with downside risks still persisting. Global oil demand has also been lowered with downward revisions in demand from China and other Asian countries, experts said.

Even in the Indian market, sectors having global exposure, such as metals and IT, witnessed major selling last week. Shares of metal companies were the worst hit as the negative impact of the coronavirus outbreak on economic growth raised concerns of weak demand for metals. The uncertainty and fear in the market were visible from the 33 per cent spike in the volatility gauge, India VIX, the steepest such rise in two years.

The top 10 Indian companies saw a combined erosion of Rs 3.35 lakh crore in market valuation last week. RIL was the worst hit, as its market capitalisation (m-cap) declined by



Rs 99,430.93 crore to Rs 8.42 lakh crore followed by Tata Consultancy Services, the country's second most valued firm. TCS's m-cap fell by Rs 38,293.29 crore to Rs 7.50 lakh crore. HDFC lost market cap by Rs 33,222.99 crore, Hindustan Unilever by Rs 15,792.31 crore and HDFC Bank by Rs 12,369.47 crore.

"As corona virus spread rapidly around the world, hopes that it would be contained has vanished and market fears that it could turn into a pandemic. Investors are fearful that it might lead to global recession as the outbreak is spreading to the world's largest economy, USA as well as Europe, which will impact the global supply chains big time and derail economic growth. Markets would remain volatile and swing till the fast spread of corona virus gets controlled," said Siddhartha Khemka, head-research, Motilal Oswal.

Federal Bank gains market share as PSBs stay troubled

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, MARCH 1

Kerala-based Federal Bank has gained market share while its public sector counterparts have been busy tackling rising bad loans and merger of associate banks.

Public sector banks have been reeling under pressure to reduce their non-performing assets. Further, in the Kerala market, State Bank of Travancore was being merged with SBI along with other associate banks.

Federal Bank has utilised this opportunity to gain market share in its core Kerala market as well as outside the state.

"In the Kerala market, our market share in terms of total business has moved up from 13 per cent four years back to 15 per cent as of September 2019. Outside Kerala, the bank's market share has inched up from 0.4 per cent to 0.6 per cent," said Shalini Warriar, executive director of Federal Bank.

In Kerala, which is largely a deposit-oriented market, its share in deposits stood at 17 per cent at the end of September. It grabbed 22 per cent of the incremental deposit growth in the market during the past three to four years.

Similarly, in the markets outside Kerala, it has market share of 0.8 per cent in

Bank credit growth dips to 8.5% in Jan.

Mumbai, March 1: Bank credit growth declined to 8.5 per cent in January from 8.5 per cent in the year-ago period, led by a sharp slowdown in loans to the services sector, according to RBI data.

Growth in advances to the services sector decelerated to 8.9 per cent from 23.9 per cent in January 2019. Bank loan growth to non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) slowed to 32.2 per cent in January from a growth of 49.3 per cent a year ago.

During the month, the personal loans segment grew by 17.5 per cent against a negative growth of 2.3 per cent in January 2019.

By the latest quarterly statistics on deposits and allied activities contracted to 6.3 per cent from 7.6 per cent in January 2019.

Credit growth to industry decelerated to 2.5 per cent from 5.2 per cent.

By the latest quarterly statistics on deposits and credit of banks, bank loan growth decelerated to 7.4 per cent in the October-December, 2019 from 12.9 per cent the year-ago quarter.

—PTI

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, MARCH 1

Having clocked more than 200 per cent growth in transaction value, real-time payment system (UPI) is the most preferred digital payment mode in value terms. In volume terms, UPI is already the top payment mode and it more than doubled its transactions in 2019.

UPI, now growing faster than IMPS in value terms, is expected to beat IMPS in value terms as well as per data from



Worldline India.

Immediate Payment Service (IMPS) too continued its strong growth in 2019. It recorded 65 per cent YoY increase by facilitating about 2.3 billion transactions in volume, but clocked Rs 6 lakh crore in terms of value, up 41 per cent from 2018.

The key factors that powered UPI's transactions growth in 2019 were adopted by UPI 2.0 features by banks, enabling payments for IPO applications, facilitating foreign inward remittance service, supporting donations for relief programmes and numerous cashbacks and discounts offered by banks and non-bank players.

Further, in order to

enhance UPI's adoption among masses, the National Payments Corporation of India has advised that the regional rural banks (RRBs) can also participate in UPI as agents.

However, UPI's average ticket size (ATS) remained around Rs 1,500 in 2019, which indicates consumer preference for making small ticket size transactions via UPI.

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SHORT TAKES

ACC meet put off due to virus scare

Kolkata: A decision on the Asia Cup's venue still has to wait as the upcoming Asian Cricket Council meeting has been postponed after a few members, including BCCI president Sourav Ganguly, refused to travel to Dubai due to the coronavirus threat. The ACC meeting was scheduled to be held in Dubai on Tuesday but with the UAE reporting over 700 cases over the last few days, it had to be postponed till the end of this month. "Ganguly was supposed to leave tonight but the coronavirus scare in the UAE has led to the postponement of the meeting," a BCCI source said in Kolkata. The BCCI chief and secretary Jay Shah were to attend the meeting.

A Pakistan Cricket Board source added, "The chairman of the PCB, Ehsan Mani, is already in Dubai but CEO Waqar Khan didn't fly up on Sunday." — PTI

Klaassen does it for Proteas

Park: A maiden international century by Heinrich Klaassen set up a 74-run win for South Africa in the first one-day international against Australia at Boland Park. Klaassen hit 123 not out in a South African total of 291 for seven. Australia were on target midway through their reply but lost their last seven wickets for 43 runs to be bowled out for 217 on Saturday. Steve Smith and Marcus Labuschagne put on 84 for Australia's third wicket after the early loss of opening batsman Aaron Finch and David Warner, both dismissed by Lungi Ngidi, who finished with three for 30. Smith and Labuschagne hit only three boundaries between them as scoring proved difficult on a slow pitch and a big outfield. When they tried to accelerate Labuschagne was caught at long-on off left-arm spinner Keshav Maharaj. Mitchell Marsh helped Smith add 41 for the fourth wicket but Marsh was bowled by Ngidi and three balls later Smith was trapped leg before wicket by Nortje. — AFP

Sciver half-ton as England in semis

Sydney: Nat Sciver struck a half century before the spinners took up a fine bowing performance to help England seal a semi-final berth with a 46-run win over West Indies in the Women's T20 World Cup here on Sunday. All-rounder Sciver picked up from where she had left off in the last game to score her third half-century of the tournament and help England post 143 for five on a tricky pitch. In reply, West Indies struggled to get going with the bat and were folded for 97. — PTI

Brief scores: England 143/5 in 20 overs (Nat Sciver 57, Dani Wyatt 29) vs West Indies 97 in 17.1 overs (Lee-Ann Kirby 20, Sophie Ecclestone 3/7, Sarah Glenn 2/16).



Roll & hour-waitful

Sixteen wickets fall on Day Two as Boult takes Kiwis closer to 2-0 whitewash

reducing India to 90 for six in their second innings at stumps on day two as a third day finish is on the cards. India is now effectively 97 runs ahead with only four wickets in hand and it will take a herculean effort to avert another series whitewash after the ODIs. Trent Boult (2/12 in 9 overs) got Mayank Agarwal (3) and Cheteshwar Pujara (24) with conventional inswingers that tails into right-handers. Prithvi Shaw (14) was out in familiar fashion, finding a short ball from Tim Southee while skipper Virat Kohli's (14) indecisive footwork brought his downfall once again. Vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane, who was hit on the helmet, paid the price for an ugly shot, while Umesh Yadav expectedly didn't survive a rampaging Boult after he was inexplicably sent to the pavilion in the nightwatchman hour when nearly half an hour was left. "In our culture, we don't look at blaming anyone. Everyone is trying very hard and we know how the sport works. Some days, if as a bowling unit we don't pick up wickets that doesn't give the batsmen liberty to take our case, isn't it?" asked pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, as he defended the batsmen after

the game. A target of 250 in the fourth innings could well be a challenge for the Black Caps as there is still something in the track for the speed merchants despite batsmen getting a value for their shots. India would have ideally hoped that skipper Kohli would end his dreadful tour of New Zealand with one big knock but it was not to be as Colin de Grandhomme trapped him leg before with an off-cutter. No wonder Trent Boult was happy having kept Kohli quiet. "Obviously, he is a big player for them and we just tried to put enough pressure on him, keep him quiet and soak up those boundary balls, and it was nice to see him make a few errors," Boult said about the Indian captain whose highest score in the whole series is 19.

In the morning, the first two sessions belonged to Shami and Bumrah, who were nothing short of brilliant with their precision length, sideways movement and an occasional heavy ball that was slipped in between. — PTI

SCORE CARD

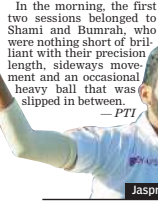
India (1st Innings): 242
New Zealand (1st Innings): Tom Latham b Shami 52, Tom Blundell lbw b Umesh 30, Kane Williamson c Pant b Bumrah 3, Ross Taylor c Umesh b Ravindra 15, Henry Nicholls c Kohli b Shami 14, BJ Watling c Ravindra Jadeja b Bumrah 0, Colin de Grandhomme b Ravindra Jadeja 26, Tim Southee c Pant b Bumrah 0, Kyle Jamieson c Pant b Shami 49, Neil Wagner c Ravindra Jadeja b Shami 21. **Trent Boult** (not out) 5-223.
Bowling: Bumrah 22-5-62-3, Yadav 18-2-46-1, Shami 23-1-81-4, Jadeja 10-2-22-2.
India (2nd Innings): Prithvi Shaw c Latham b Southee 14, Mayank Agarwal lbw b Boult 3, Cheteshwar Pujara b Boult 24, Virat Kohli lbw b de Grandhomme 14, Ajinkya Rahane b Wagner 5, Umesh Yadav c Latham b Hanuma Vihari (batting) 5, Rishabh Pant (batting) 1. **Extras (B-9, LB-10) 19. Total (for six wickets in 36 overs) 90.**
West Indies: 153-5-28-5-28-4-72.
Bowler: Southee 6-2-20-1, Boult 9-3-12-3, Jamieson 8-4-18-0, Grandhomme 5-3-31-0, Wagner 8-1-18-1.

Don't want to play the blame game: Bumrah

Christchurch, March 1: India bowlers' impressive performance in the second Test has been largely undone by a dismal batting show, but pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah said he doesn't want to indulge in a "blame game".

When a captain calls a three-zero loss to the Kiwi's in the ODIs as "irrelevant" and goes on to Test, exerting his test captaincy, he is not bothered if they lose the second Test match at Christchurch, it goes against the basic grain of the narrative of giving your best for your country. A loss is a loss, no matter how irrelevant and against who, it hurts the Indian fan.

One criticism that Kohli was probably trying to convey that no matter what the outcome is, team India will continue to maintain the aggressive and in-your-face psyche each time they take the field against all-comers. Victories and defeats are part of the game and everyone who follows cricket was akin to the fictional well-end up squaring the series. It's good to see that Kohli's shoulders are up in front of the wicket and after losing four consecutive matches — three ODIs and one Test.



Jasprit Bumrah

Christchurch, March 1:

India's top-order frittered away a golden chance with another shoddy batting show as New Zealand regained complete control of the second Test after Mohammed Shami and Jasprit Bumrah's hostile fast-bowling spell had given the visitors a slender first-innings lead here on Sunday. Shami (4/81 in 23.1 overs) and Bumrah (3/62 in 22 overs) were brilliant in their execution, dismissing New Zealand for 205 in 73.1 overs as they showed they are one of the deadliest fast bowling pair in Test match cricket. However, India's top-order failed miserably once again as New Zealand bounced back,

Batsmen need to adjust to the spongy bounce

One of the biggest challenges faced by modern day batsmen is switching their batting techniques between different formats. There are very few, barring lack of form, that have succeeded across all three configurations of the game: Test, One Day Internationals (ODI) and Twenty20 (T20). Playing back to back international matches in all three can take its toll on the best of batsmen.



Hemant Kenkre
Silly Point

Wellington. In the third Test inning (ongoing second Test at the Hagley Oval, Christchurch) the visitors looked slightly better than in the earlier two innings but squandered the advantage to Kane Williamson's Kiwis getting out for a below-par 242 runs.

The pitch looked as green as a Kiwi fruit with the zing of the famed gooseberry but had no room for batsmen to be worried about. Yes, it was a green track but not the kind teams would be up to in England's early summer. To succeed on such a surface the batsmen need to adjust to the spongy bounce that the Hagley Oval has on offer. The operative word on pitches such as these is patience, which was missing from the visitors arsenal. The switch from one format to the other seems to have affected the batsmen.

The Indians looked as though they were in a



Ravindra Jadeja pulls off a spectacular catch to dismiss Neil Wagner.

great hurry, trying to put pressure on the Kiwi attack with pointless strokes. If one analyses the first innings of the second Test, one will see three top order batsmen going past the 50 run mark, two of them - Prithvi Shaw and Hanuma Vihari had ODI type strike rates of 84.37 and 78.57 respectively. Shaw's 54 runs had 8 boundaries and a six while Vihari ended up with 10 thiries in the fence.

Both ended their sojourn at the crease playing shots that were not meant to be played. The other 50-plus Indian, the dependable Cheteshwar Pujara too offered his wicket on a platter. It just may be that the comments made by Indian skipper Virat Kohli, after the dismissal loss by 10 wickets in the first Test, exerting his test captaincy, he is not bothered if they lose the second Test match at Christchurch, it goes against the basic grain of the narrative of giving your best for your country. A loss is a loss, no matter how irrelevant and against who, it hurts the Indian fan.

One criticism that Kohli was probably trying to convey that no matter what the outcome is, team India will continue to maintain the aggressive and in-your-face psyche each time they take the field against all-comers. Victories and defeats are part of the game and everyone who follows cricket was akin to the fictional well-end up squaring the series. It's good to see that Kohli's shoulders are up in front of the wicket and after losing four consecutive matches — three ODIs and one Test.

Milind misses century; FMC zip past Zoroastrian in T20s

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

Mayank Gupta and Arvind Shetty helped Fatch Maidan Club (200/3) register a 12-run win over Zoroastrian Club (188/4) in the inter-club T20 cricket tournament organised by the Secunderabad Club.

Batting first Mayank, aggressor of the two, hit the opposition bowlers all over the park for a well-made 70 and Arvind added 68 to the team's tally. Jamsheed's 88 went in vain as Zoroastrian lost the game.

In another game, Man of the Match C. V. Milind with his brilliant 96 helped hosts Secunderabad Club (185/6) beat Jubilee Hills Club (185/5) by seven wickets. Batting first, Anirudh Sompalli (75) and Vivek Meenath (44) helped JHC post 185. C. V. Anand impressed with the ball, taking 3/23.

Chasing 186 for a win, Milind and Mickel Jaiswal (61) ensured they reached the target with two overs to spare.

In another long-sided match, Press Club (144/1) trounced

● **C. V. Milind smashed 96 while his father Anand scalped three wickets in Secunderabad Club's victory.**

● **Mayank Gupta (70) and Arvind Shetty (65) scripted the win for Fatch Maidan Club.**

Deccan Club and Jubilee Hills Club will be played on March 7 and the second between Secunderabad Club and Press Club will be contested on March 8.

BRIEF SCORES

■ **Fatch Maidan Club 200/3 in 20 overs (Mayank Gupta 70, Arvind Shetty 65) bt Zoroastrian Club 188/4 in 20 overs (Jamsheed 88, Maneek 43, Jehangir 33). Man of the Match: Mayank Gupta.**

■ **Jubilee Hills Club 185/5 (Anirudh Sompalli 75, Vivek Meenath 44, C. V. Anand 3/23, Shivan Madadi 2/35) lost to Secunderabad Club 188/3 in 18 overs (C. V. Milind 96, Mickel Jaiswal 61). MoM: C. V. Milind Secunderabad Club.**

■ **Nizam Club 143/8 in 20 overs (Shabaz 45, Mohit 30, Faraz 20, Shan Muk 3/22, Nitesh 2/19, D. Ashwin 2/24) lost to Press Club 144/1 in 13 overs (Shan Muk 84, Ratna 60). MoM: Shan Muk.**

■ **New Club 148/9 in 20 overs (Vineeth 58, Shreyas 28, Sai Venkatesh 23, Praneth Raj 3/31, Saket Dattak 2/35, Ashwin 2/24) lost to Deccan Club 149/2 in 17.1 overs (Karan 69, Sessa Giri 56). MoM: Karan.**

RANJI TROPHY SEMIFINAL Porel's fifer puts Bengal in command

Kolkata, March 1: Ishan Porel complemented Anustup Majumdar's unbeaten century with a five-wicket haul to put Bengal in command against a star-studded Karnataka in their Ranji Trophy semifinal here on Sunday.

After Majumdar's 149 not out propelled Bengal to 312 after being down at 87 for 6 at one stage, the 21-year-old Porel snared 5 for 39 as the three-pronged Bengal pace attack dismissed the batting-heavy Karnataka for a paltry 122 in 36.2 overs, their lowest total this season.

India opener Rahul, who was adjudged man-of-the-series in their 5-0 T20 whitewash of New Zealand recently, looked out of sorts and scored a forgettable 67 in 26 (2x4).

Spinner Krishnappa Gowtham (31) top-scored for Karnataka in a quick 56-run (46 balls) with Sudip Chatterjee giving an eighth-wicket stand with Abhimanyu Mithun (24) to lead to a sizeable 282-run. In the fog end, Majumdar survived after getting out off a no-ball off



Bengal's Ishan Porel celebrates a Karnataka wicket in Kolkata on Sunday.

A total of 15 wickets tumbled on day two as Bengal brightened their prospects to make their first final in Ranji Trophy after 13 years. Having already conceded the first-innings lead, Karnataka will now have to pull off something special in their second essay to avoid their third

BRIEF SCORES

Saurashtra 304 (Sheldon Jackson 103, Kishan Parmar 37, Arzan Nagwaswalla 5/8) vs Gujarat 119/6.

Bengal 312 in 32 overs vs Karnataka 149 n.o.

Ronit More 3/52, Abhimanyu Mithun 3/77, Prasidh Krishna 2/78 vs Karnataka 122 in 36.2 overs (K. L. Rahul 26, Ishan Porel 5/39, Akash Deep 3/30, Mukesh Kumar 2/46) & 72/4 (Mithun 3/9).

semifinal defeat in a row. Earlier, Majumdar played the innings of his life in a 207-ball knock spanning five hours as Bengal pulled off a feat with their last four batsmen adding 245 runs in a spectacular rescue-act.

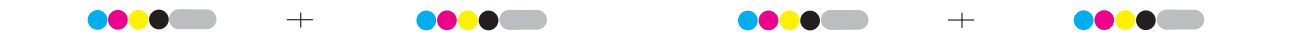
Jackson, bowlers give Saurashtra upper hand

Sheldon Jackson struck a gritty hundred before the bowlers shone as Saurashtra gained the upper hand on the second day of their Ranji Trophy semifinal against Gujarat at Rajkot on Sunday.

Jackson's knock of 103 helped Saurashtra post 304 and then the home team bowlers wreaked havoc on Gujarat's batting lineup to reduce them to 119 for six. Resuming on the overnight 217 for five,

when Sheldon Jackson called for a reprieve on 82 when skipper Parthiv Patel dropped a catch off pacer Arzan. He made the most of this by notching up his 19th first-class hundred and third this year.

"Jackson and Jani were looking good before Gujarat bounced back day of their Ranji Trophy semifinal against Gujarat at Rajkot on Sunday. Jackson's knock of 103 helped Saurashtra post 304 and then the home team bowlers wreaked havoc on Gujarat's batting lineup to reduce them to 119 for six. Resuming on the overnight 217 for five,



SHORT TAKES

Ranga Reddy raid Hyderabad Bulls

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

The Ranga Reddy Raiders got the better of Hyderabad Bulls with a 28-22 win on the eighth day of the Telangana Premier Kabaddi League season three currently under way at the Kotla Vijay Bhasker Reddy Indoor Stadium in the city on Sunday.

Riding on nine points from raider Yugander Reddy and four defending points from Naresh, the Ranga Reddy Raiders triumphed.

Despite raider Raj Kumar's brilliant 24-point performance, defending champions Cyberabad Chargers lost to a resurgent Mancheril Tigers 33-39. The best defender of the match was awarded to Shubham for the four points he earned for Mancheril Tigers.

The results: Rangareddy Raiders by Hyderabad Bulls 28-22; Mancheril Tigers by Cyberabad Chargers 39-33.

Hockey Olympian Kullar no more

New Delhi: Former India hockey player Balbir Singh Kullar, who was a part of the 1968 Olympics bronze-winning team, has died after suffering a heart attack at his home in Punjab. He died on Friday afternoon at the age of 77.

Kullar is survived by his wife, one son and two daughters. "My father was to travel with me to the US but suddenly he had a massive heart attack and he died on Friday afternoon at our family home in Sansarpur in Jalandhar district," his son Kamalbir Singh, who is based in US, said on Sunday.

Kullar's cremation will be conducted on Monday. "His last rites will be done on Monday," he added. Born at Sansarpur village of Jalandhar district in Punjab, Kullar made his India debut in 1963 in Lyon in France. He was member of the Indian team that won the Asian Games gold in 1966 (Bangkok) and the Olympic Bronze in 1968 (Mexico). Balbir was also part of the gold medal winning Indian team in 1966 Bangkok Asian Games. — PTI

Veteran athletics coach Saini dies

Patiala: Veteran athletics coach and Dronacharya award Joginder Singh Saini, who is groomed some of India's finest track and field stars, died here on Sunday due to age-related problems. He was 90.

Saini, who remained the chief national athletics coach for many years from the 1970s to 90s, was not keeping well for the past few days. Born on January 1, 1930 in Hoshiarpur district in Punjab, Saini was a science graduate and became an athletics coach in 1954 after completing a diploma in physical education and a course in coaching at the NIS Patiala. — PTI



Liverpool's Mohamed Salah is dejected after the match. — AFP

Wat the ford!

Relegation threatened Watford terminate leader Liverpool's 44-game unbeaten run with 3-0 win

London, March 1: Liverpool's unbeaten season in the Premier League was ended in spectacular fashion as Ismaila Sarr's double moved Watford out of the relegation zone with a 3-0 win at Vicarage Road.

The comprehensive scoreline helped the Hornets edge ahead of Bournemouth, who held Chelsea to a 2-2 draw, while West Ham also boosted their chances of survival with a 3-1 win over Southampton on Saturday.

Liverpool remain 22 points clear and well on course for a first league title in 30 years. But their hopes of doing so by matching Arsenal's invincible season in 2003/04 were ended by an inspired display by Watford.



Liverpool's Andrew Robertson (from left), manager Jurgen Klopp and Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain react at the final whistle after losing their English Premier League match to Watford 3-0 at Vicarage Road Stadium in Watford on Saturday. — AFP

● Jurgen Klopp's champions-elect served up their worst performance of the year as they were outplayed by a Watford side who started the game one from the bottom of the English Premier League table and 55 points adrift of his runaway leaders.

● It was Liverpool's first loss in the English Premier League since January 2019. They remain 22 points clear at the top and well on course for a first league title in 30 years but their hopes of doing so by matching Arsenal's invincible season in 2003-04 were ended.

how to Chelsea's chances of holding out their place in the top four.

Alonso's predatory header after Aaron Ramsdale parried Pedro Rodriguez's shot at least ensured the visitors led the Vitality Stadium with a point.

However, Frank Lampard's men have now won just five of their last 16 league games and could see their lead over fifth-placed Manchester United cut to just a point if the Red Devils win at Everton on Sunday.

"We had a bad 10-minute spell where they scored and that I don't like. I'm pleased with the character to get a draw but we should win the game," said Lampard.

"People talk about the defence but if you are 1-0 up and leave teams in the game then one set piece can change the game.

"We should score more goals and then we don't have that problem."

BOWEN'S DEBUT

West Ham moved out of the bottom three with a first league win since New Year's Day.

David Moyes handed Jarrod Bowen his first start since a £20 million move from Hull on dead-

DEFEAT COULD PROVE POSITIVE FOR US: KLOPP

London, March 1: Far from being dejected by his team's first Premier League reverse of the season at Watford on Saturday, Liverpool's ever-positive manager Jurgen Klopp reckoned the shock 3-0 setback could prove liberating for his trouble-seeking Reds.

"I see it rather positive because from now on we can play free football again. We don't have to defend or try to get a result, we can just try to win football games again and that is what we want," Klopp said. Asked if there was any disappointment, he added: "Not really, because I don't think you can break records because you are 100 percent focused on each step. And for that you have to perform."

"The boys performed and that's why we won the games, but tonight we were not good enough.

"It's not now a plus for me that in history, when they look back in 500 years, we were not good enough.

"Liverpool nearly did it." You cannot change that and it was always clear, sometime we would lose a game."

Klopp dismissed the suggestion that weariness might have crept into his side, who lost to the Champions League finalists at Atletico Madrid and then had not been at their sharpest in defeating West Ham United in their previous two matches.

"Nothing to do with tiredness," he said. "It's not easy to explain but it should not be now the biggest sensation in world football that it happened." — Reuters

THE RESULTS

Watford (Sarr 54, 60, Deeney 72)	3
Liverpool	0
Bournemouth (Lerma 54, King 57)	2
Chelsea (Alonso 33, 85)	2
Brighton Crystal Palace (Ayew 70)	0
Newcastle Burnley	0

OU paddlers second best, Dutee claims 200m gold

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, MARCH 1

The Osmania University table tennis team had to settle for silver as they lost the title clash 1-3 to Chitkara University at the Khelo India University Games in Bhubaneswar on Sunday.

In the first match, SFR Snehit blanked India No.8 Arjun Ghosh 3-0 to give Osmania University a solid start.

However, that was the lone rubber that Osmania managed to win as Md Ali lost to Ronit Banja 2-3, M. Raghuram went down to Jeet Chandra 0-3 as the scoreline read 2-1 in Chitkara's favour.

Then, in a one-sided reverse singles rubber Snehit lost to Ronit Banja 1-3 as OU handed the title to their rivals.

Meanwhile, Dutee Chand won her second gold at the Games after bagging the top honour in the women's 200m final on the last day of the event.

The 24-year-old, who is representing Kainga Institute of Industrial Technology, took the top place with a time of 23.66 seconds.

Kirti Vijay Bhoite from the University of Mumbai settled for silver with a timing of 24.98, while Deepali



Mangalore University, overall champions in athletics at the Khelo India University Games, pose with the trophy in Bhubaneswar on Sunday.

Mahapatra from Utkal University took the bronze, clocking 25.19 seconds.

Panjab University pipped Savitribai Phule Pune University to be crowned overall champions of the Games while Mangalore University walked away with the title in athletics.

MAHESHWARI WINS STEEPCHASE SILVER

Maheshwari Golla of the Palamuru University won silver in the women's 3,000 metres steepchase event.

With a timing of 10:41.90 seconds, the Andhra Pradesh girl took the second spot on the podium.

Savitribai Phule Pune University's Komal Jagadale got gold with 10:26.63 seconds, while Shaali Dhama of the Panjab University set-

HUMPY EDGES WORLD CHAMP FOR NO.2 SPOT

Chennai, March 1:

Grandmaster Koneru Humpy has moved up as No.2 player in the latest world ranking, displacing reigning world champion Ju Wenjun.

Humpy, the world rapid champion who recently won the prestigious Cairns Cup in the US beating a strong field that included Wenjun, is ranked behind China's Yi Fan Hou as per the March FIDE ratings.

Humpy, who won or tied for the first place in three elite tournaments in a row, is now on 2586 (Elo), trailing only Yi fan on 2628.

GM Harika Dronavalli is ranked ninth while Tamil Nadu player R. Vaishali moving up to ninth place from 10th rank in February in the junior girls category.

Interestingly, no Indian man figures in the top ten in the world rankings for the open section. Former world champion Viswanathan Anand is ranked 16th in the world, followed by Vinay Gujarati at 22nd place. Gujarati is now the second highest ranked Indian player, jumping four places from the 26th spot last month. World champion Magnus Carlsen tops the open rankings.

In the juniors section, Indian GM Nihal Sanik was ranked 10th in the world. — PTI

Saina wants Olympics cut off dates to be extended

New Delhi, March 1:

Indian shuttlers Saina Nehwal and Parupalli Kashyap feel that the BWF should extend the Olympic qualification period in view of the novel coronavirus outbreak wrecking havoc on the qualifying events for the Tokyo Games.

Concerns over the rapid spread of the deadly virus had forced the postponement of the four Olympic qualifying events so far - Lingshui China Masters (February 25 to March 1), Vietnam International Challenge (March 24 to 29) and German Open (March 3 to 8) and Polish Open (March 26 to 29).

The qualification period can be extended if the tournaments are getting cancelled cause of 'coronavirus', Saina wrote on her twitter handle, tagging the Badminton World Federation and the Olympic Committee.

"It will be unfair for most of the players who are really close to qualifying for Olympics 2020."

Saina, the London Olympic bronze medalist, is currently lying at 22nd in Race to Tokyo list and need a rapid rise in the rankings to qualify for the Games.



Saina Nehwal in this file photo.

● Saina is currently lying at 22nd in the Race to Tokyo list and needs a rapid rise in the rankings to qualify for the Games.

● Parupalli Kashyap and Kidambi Srikanth are at 24th and 21th spots respectively in Race to Tokyo list.

Her husband Kashyap, a 2014 Commonwealth Games champion, and former world No. 1 Kidambi Srikanth are at 24th and 21th spots respectively in Race to Tokyo list.

For them and several top players around the world, including China's two-time Olympic champion Lin Dan (currently placed at 36th), the next few tournaments will be crucial as they try to squeeze into the top 16 to qualify for Tokyo.

The prestigious All England Championships (March 11 to 15), offering 12,000 ranking points for the winner, is next in line, followed by Swiss Open, India Open (Super 500), Malaysia Open (Super 750), and Singapore Open (Super 500) before qualification period ends on April 28. — PTI

DJOKOVIC, NADAL WIN ATP TOUR TITLES

Dubai: Novak Djokovic set his sights on another marathon run of invincibility after capturing his 79th career title.

The world number one claimed the Dubai Championships for the fifth time, defeating Stefanos Tsitsipas 6-3, 6-4 in the final on Saturday.

Djokovic is now on an 18-0 winning run this season, and 21-0 overall since late 2019, as he ended an eight-match win streak for his Greek opponent, the champion last weekend in Marseille.

Meanwhile, World No.2 Rafael Nadal captured his 14th ATP Tour title of 2020, easily defeating unseeded Taylor Fritz in straight sets, 6-3, 6-2, in the final of the Mexican Open.

The 33-year-old Nadal didn't drop a set all week and improved to 19-2 all-time at this venue in his hometown of Marseille.

In women's singles final in Doha, Aryna Sabalenka won her sixth career title when she swept past former Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova 6-3, 6-3 in the Qatar Open final and dedicated victory to her father who died last year. The 21-year-old said the memory of her father Sergey, who died in November, was very much in her mind on Saturday. — AFP