

COVID-19 VACCINATION DRY RUN SUCCESSFUL: BALBIR SIDHU P03

INTER-STATE GANG OF CAR THIEVES BUSTED, SIX VEHICLES RECOVERED P05

BRISBANE CITY LOCKDOWN PUTS 4TH TEST UNDER CLOUD P12

COVID VACCINE ROLLOUT

PM to meet CMs on Monday

INDIA WILL BE ABLE TO VACCINATE ENTIRE POPULATION SOON: VARDHAN

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8



Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan reviews the dry run for administering COVID-19 vaccine, in Chennai, on Friday. PTI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will interact with chief ministers of all states on January 11 to discuss the COVID-19 situation and the vaccination roll-out in the country, his office said on Friday. This will be Modi's first interaction with chief ministers following the recent approval of two coronavirus vaccines for restricted emergency use by India's drug regulator. The Prime Minister has often spoken with state chief ministers following the pandemic's outbreak in the country. India is preparing for the roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines and the second nationwide mock drill on the drive was conducted on Friday.

India's drugs regulator has approved Oxford vaccine Covishield, being manufactured by the Serum Institute, and indigenously developed Covaxin of Bharat Biotech for restricted emergency use in the country.

In addition to it, Union

Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan on Friday said soon it would be a reality to vaccinate the entire population in the country against COVID-19 after prioritising risk groups. The Centre has started a new COVID platform to track particulars of potential vaccine beneficiaries and also issue electronic certificates to them, he told reporters after reviewing the dry run of administering COVID-19 vaccine at the Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital here as part of a state-wide programme.

India, he said, has done extremely well in developing vaccines in the shortest possible time, and presently two vaccines have been given emergency use authorisation.

"In the next few days, also in the near future, we should be able to give this vaccine to our countrymen prioritising those who are at risk in public and private sectors. The government has already made known the scheme of things," he added.

The Minister also visited the Government Omandurar Hospital here and a few other centres here. PTI

No breakthrough in govt-farmers talks

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

NEXT MEETING ON JAN 15



Farmers representatives during the 8th round of talks with the government over the new farm laws, at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi, on Friday. PTI

Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar virtually ruled out repeal of the laws saying many other groups across the country are supporting these reforms. On whether the government made a proposal to farmers to join a pending case in Supreme Court on issues related to farmers' protest, Tomar said the government did not make any such suggestion but it is always committed to follow whatever is decided by the Supreme Court.



Union Minister for Agriculture Narendra Singh Tomar during the 8th round of talks with farmers representatives at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi, on Friday. PTI

As the eighth round of talks between the Centre and protesting farmers on Friday failed to break an over-a-month-long deadlock, Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar said no decision could be reached as unions did not give alternatives to their demand for the repeal of laws. Speaking to reporters after the meeting that lasted for little over two hours, Tomar said the government is still hopeful that union leaders will come with alternatives to discuss in the next round of talks on January 15.

But, he virtually ruled out repeal of the laws saying many other groups across the country are supporting these reforms. On whether the government made a proposal to farmers to join a pending case in Supreme Court on issues related to farmers' protest, Tomar said the government did not make any such suggestion but it is always committed to follow whatever is decided

by the Supreme Court.

Sources said the next date has been decided after keeping in mind a scheduled hearing of the Supreme Court on January 11 as the government feels that the apex court may look into the legality of the three laws, besides other issues related to farmers' protests.

Asked whether the government would consider any proposal for allowing states to decide whether to implement the laws or not, Tomar said no such propos-

"Our 'ghar wapsi' (return to home) can happen only if you do 'law wapsi' (repeal of laws)," a farmer leader said at the meeting. "Ideally, the Centre should not interfere in agriculture matters as various Supreme Court orders have declared farming as a state subject" another farmer leader said at the meeting.

al was made by any farmer leader in this regard, but if such a suggestion is made the government will take a call at that time.

After the meeting, union leader Joginder Singh Ugrahan said the meeting was inconclusive and it was unlikely that any resolution can happen in the next round of talks as well.

"We do not want any-

thing less than the repeal of laws," he said.

"Government is testing our strength, but we will not bow down. It seems we will have to spend Lohri and Baisakhi festivals here at protest sides," he said.

Another union leader Hannan Mollah said farmers are ready to fight till death and going to court was not an option. PTI

BIRD FLU

Punjab bans import of poultry

BIRD FLU CONFIRMED IN 6 STATES: CENTRE

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU Chandigarh/New Delhi January 8



Centre on Friday said bird flu has been confirmed so far in Kerala, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Gujarat, and asked these six states to contain the disease as per the action plan

The Punjab Government has declared the whole state as a 'Controlled Area' in view of the outbreak of Avian Influenza (Bird Flu) affecting birds including poultry in the neighbouring states. In another major decision Punjab imposes complete ban on import of live birds including Poultry and unprocessed Poultry meat for any purpose into the state of Punjab with immediate effect till 15th January. The decision will be reviewed based on the evolving situation. In a Press Communiqué here today the additional Chief Secretary of the Animal Husbandry Department VK Janjua has said that both the decisions were tak-

en in consultation with the Animal Husbandry Minister Tript Rajinder Singh Bajwa to prevent/control the spread of Avian Influenza, a scheduled disease in the state.

He further said that these decisions have been taken as per provisions of the act to control of scheduled diseases under the Prevention and control of Infectious and Contagious

Diseases in Animals Act, 2009.

In addition to it, the Centre on Friday said bird flu has been confirmed so far in Kerala, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Gujarat, and asked these six states to contain the disease as per the action plan. Unusual mortality of 16 birds has also been reported at DDA park Hastal Village

in the national capital, and samples have been sent to a testing lab. "So far, the disease has been confirmed from six states (Kerala, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Gujarat). "It is learnt that culling operations have been completed in both the affected districts of Kerala. The disinfection process is underway," according to an official statement. PTI

Mumbai attack mastermind Lakhvi gets 15 years in jail

LAHORE, JANUARY 8

INDIA CALLS IT 'FARCICAL'



An anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Lahore has sentenced Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) commander Zakiur Rehman Lakhvi to at least 15 years imprisonment, after the court found him guilty on charges of terror financing. The Punjab province's counter-terrorism department on terror financing charges recently arrested Lakhvi. "The Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) Lahore convicted Lakhvi for commission of offences of terrorism financing in a case registered by the CTD for 15 years under different sanctions of the Anti-Terrorism Act 1997," said an ATC court official said. While India on Friday scoffed at Pakistan after a court there sentenced Mumbai attack mastermind

and UN proscribed Lashkar-e-Taiba commander Zakiur-Rehman Lakhvi to imprisonment over terror financing charges, saying it has become routine for it to come up with "farcical actions" prior to key international meetings.

Lakhvi, 61, was sentenced to five years in jail each on

three different counts with a fine of at least Rs.100,000 on each count. "In default of payment of fine, he will have to undergo an imprisonment of six months each on three counts. He has been sent to prison to serve the sentence", the official of ATC said.

As per the case details, Lakhvi has been using a dis-

pensary to gather funds and use them to facilitate and support terrorist outfits. It is pertinent to mention that Lakhvi is the mastermind behind the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks. The case has been pending in the Pakistan courts for years as Lakhvi has been on bail since the year 2015.

Asked about the jail sentence to Lakhvi, and issuance of an arrest warrant against Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) chief Masood Azhar by another Pakistan court on Thursday, Ministry of External Affairs Spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said the timing of these actions clearly suggests the intention of conveying a sense of compliance ahead of APJG (Asia Pacific Joint Group) meet and the next FATF (Financial Action Task Force) plenary meet in February 2021. PTI

BEANT SINGH ASSASSINATION CASE

SC asks Centre to decide on Rajoana's mercy plea by Jan 26

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

The Supreme Court Friday asked the Centre to take a decision before January 26 on Balwant S Rajoana's plea seeking commutation of death penalty in former Punjab Chief Minister Beant Singh's assassination case. A bench headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde said that the decision be taken before the Republic Day which is a "good date". "We will give two-three weeks. You should complete the process before January 26. January 26 is a good day. It will be

appropriate if you take a decision before that," the bench said.

Rajoana, a former Punjab Police constable, was convicted for his involvement in an explosion outside the Punjab civil secretariat that killed Beant Singh and 16 others in 1995.

Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for Rajoana, argued that his client's mercy petition is pending since 2012.

This court has held that the death sentence of a person, if delayed for over



eight years, can be commuted. He has been jail for 25 years, Rohatgi said. Additional Solicitor General K M Nataraj, appearing for the Centre, assured the court that a decision will be taken and

the file will be sent to the President by then. "Competent authority is looking into the file. We will try to do it by then," Nataraj said.

The apex court had on December 4 questioned the Centre over delay in sending to the President the proposal for commuting the Rajoana's death sentence.

It had asked the Centre to apprise it as to when the authority would send the proposal in this regard to the President under Article 72 of the Constitution.

The article deals with power of President to grant pardon, suspend, remit or commute sentences in certain cases.

The apex court had noted that a letter was sent from the Ministry of Home Affairs to Punjab chief secretary on September 7 last year intimating that a proposal would be sent to the President to commute the death sentence of Rajoana.

His plea sought direction for expeditious disposal of the MHA proposal. PTI

INDIA-CHINA BORDER ROW

Communication maintained at ground level to avoid any misjudgments: MEA

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

India and China have maintained communication at the ground level to avoid any "misunderstandings and misjudgments" even as discussions continue for achieving complete disengagement in all friction areas, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Friday. Asked about the status of talks with the Chinese side over the border row, MEA Spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said the latest



round of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination (WMCC) was held on December 18 and the two sides have agreed to hold next round of senior commanders meeting.

The two countries are in constant communication through diplomatic and military channels in this regard, he added. "In the meantime, both sides have maintained communication at the ground level to avoid any misunderstandings and misjudgments even as discussions continue for achieving complete disengagement in all friction areas in accordance with the existing bilateral agreements to restore peace and tranquility," he said. PTI

District admn ropes-in Anganwadi, Asha workers and health dept to ensure maximum enrolment under ABSSBY

NARINDER GUPTA Jalandhar, January 8

In a bid to ensure social security net to the needy people, the district administration has embarked on a special drive to ensure maximum enrollment of the beneficiaries under the Ayushman Bharat-Sarbat Sehal Bima Yojna (ABSSBY) in the district.



Divulging the details, Deputy Commissioner Ghanshyam Thori today said that all Anganwadi and Asha workers have been roped-in to sensitize and reach out to the real beneficiaries.

enrollment and E-card generation facilities. Terming this scheme a game-changer in providing social security to needy people, he said that all 13 government health institutions and 57 private hospitals were impaneled in the district, where people can seek cashless treatment up to Rs. Five lakh under the scheme.

Strict adherence to safety precautions will be ensure at any cost: DC

ASHOK KAURA Kapurthala, January 8

The district level 72nd Republic Day function this year would be a low-key affair in wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and strict adherence to the safety precautions would be ensured at any cost, said Deputy Commissioner Deepti Uppal on Friday while chairing a review meeting to oversee the ongoing preparations for the event.



Referring to the state government's guidelines regarding R-Day function amid COVID, she said that there would be no massive gathering during the event as it used to be in previous years and the contingent of Punjab Police would give salute.

She also clarified that there would be no other activities like PT shows, cultural events, parades etc in order to maintain the safety guidelines. She said that health & safety protocols including social distancing, wearing masks, hand sanitizing, disinfecting the premises would be accorded top priorities.

22 more new positive cases reported in Patiala



PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU Patiala, January 8

After crossing over a recovery rate of 96 per cent COVID-19 disease's impact has started receding in Patiala district as on Friday no new Corona death was reported in the district with number of total Corona deaths sticking at 489 and number of total Corona active cases touching to figure of 250.

Four years on, Nurmahal new grain market incomplete

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU Nurmahal, January 8

Even after four years the Punjab Agricultural Marketing Board has failed to complete the construction of the new grain market forcing farmers to unload their crops on muddy platforms.

Arora launches ₹22.39 lakh road work in New Gobind Nagar



DALJEET AJNOHA Hoshiarpur, January 8

Inaugurating the work of new road in Mohalla New Gobind Nagar of Local Ward No. 23, Industry and Commerce Minister Sundar Sham

Arora said that due to the development works being carried out by the Punjab government, the face of various areas of Hoshiarpur has changed. Regarding the construction of this

Arora hands over grant check of ₹2 lakh to Sri Guru Ravidas Dharamsala Society

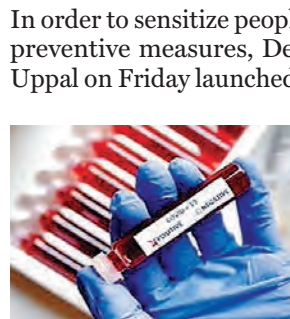
Industry and Commerce Minister Sundar Sham Arora handed over a check of grant of Rs. 2 lakh to Sri Guru Ravidas Dharamsala Society of local ward no. The Punjab Government is always committed to While handing over the checks to the office bearers of the society, the Industries Minister Sundar Sham Arora said that the Punjab Government under the leadership of Chief Minister Capt. Amarinder Singh has been providing necessary assistance to the NGOs, societies etc.

road at a cost of Rs. 22.39 lakh in New Gobind Nagar, Industries Minister Sundar Sham Arora said that the construction of the road would be completed within the stipulated time and

great convenience would be provided to the people. He said that the Punjab government was working tirelessly for the development of various parts of the city which would be accelerated in the near future.

DC launches 'Covid awareness posters' in Kapurthala

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU Kapurthala, January 8



In order to sensitize people about the Coronavirus and preventive measures, Deputy Commissioner Deepti Uppal on Friday launched 'Covid awareness posters' to be distributed among people under Jan Andolan Campaign by Punjab Skill Development Mission.

She said that these posters would educate residents about the precautionary steps that these posters would help to detail the people about the symptoms of the Coronavirus and would dispel all the misconceptions regarding the pandemic.

Hoshiarpur health authorities get FRV

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU Hoshiarpur, January 8



PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU Hoshiarpur, January 8

As part of its ongoing CSR initiatives towards Covid-19 relief efforts, Hero MotoCorp has donated a specially designed 'First Responder Vehicle (FRV)' to the health authorities at Hoshiarpur on Friday.

out to patients in the rural and remote areas and comfortably moving them to the nearest hospitals. The FRV has been custom-built as an accessory on the powerful Xtreme 200R motorcycle of Hero MotoCorp. The FRV has been equipped with a full stretcher with a foldable hood mounted on the side, essential medical equipment such as a detachable first-aid kit, oxygen cylinder, fire extinguisher and other safety features such as LED flasher lights, foldable beacon light, emergency wireless public announcement system and siren.

Summons of revenue cases to be sent through SMS or email: DC

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU Jalandhar, January 8

To ensure speedy redressal of the revenue cases, Deputy Commissioner Ghanshyam Thori on Friday said that summons pertaining to revenue cases would be served through Short Message Service (SMS), email, or WhatsApp soon. Participating in the video-conference presided over by Financial Commissioner Revenue Vishwajeet Khanna, Deputy Commissioner Ghanshyam Thori said that following the amendment of the Punjab Land Revenue (Amendment) Act, 2020, this new service of delivering the summons through digital mode, would be implemented.



He said that the service would not only help to quicken the pace of the cases but would also clear the pendency soon. The Deputy Commissioner added that after sending the summons digitally, the officers would keep the record of summons physically for the future purpose.

Illegally stored large quantities of firecrackers recovered

KULDEEP SOOD Barnala, January 8



Under the supervision of SSP Barnala Sandeep Goyal, the Barnala Police is committed to the safety of the city dwellers, has been conducting raids from time to time to protect the general public from unforeseen circumstances. During a series of raids, a large quantity (610 boxes) of illegally stored firecrackers have been recovered from two different warehouses at Link Road Farwahi which are close to densely populated areas.

The estimated cost of the fireworks is Rs 13.50 lakh. These firecrackers were illegally stored by the accused ignoring the instructions issued by the government and the district administration. The owner of the first warehouse, Tinu Jindal, son of Tarsem Lal, resident of Street No. 4, KC Road, Barnala, recovered 235 boxes of various types of firecrackers from the warehouse without license/permit at an estimated cost of Rs 6 lakh.

52 youths get employment on spot under GGRY, in Ferozepur

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU Ferozepur, January 8

Under Ghar-Ghar-Rozgar-Mission run by the Punjab Government, in the recent Rozgar Mela by HDFC Life Insurance Company for the post of Block Development Manager/Financial Assistant and Manager by Pukhraj Herbal Health Care Private Limited Co., 52 youths got employment on the spot selection. Divulging with details, Ashok Jindal, District Employment Training Officer said, in all, out of 106 candidates who appeared for the interview, 52 were short-listed and given an appointment on the spot. He said, the Bureau

of Employment Generation Skill Development and Training of Ferozepur district administration has organized 33 job fairs and placement camps with the selection of 4,205 candidates by 60 companies, during the year. Irrespective of low or high jobs, he asked the youths to participate in Rozgar Melas to avail the opportunity to get experience for updating their job profiles. Putting wiser about the self-employment scheme to the candidates, Gurjant Singh Placement Officer said, for serving in Tata Consultancy Services-TCS, the registered candidates will be given 100 hours free training for written test, before final selection.

Vikramjit Singh Chaudhary inaugurates development works worth Rs 56 lakh in Phillaur

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU Phillaur, JANUARY 8

Continuing the fast pace of new development projects in the assembly constituency, former Punjab Youth Congress President and Phillaur in-charge Vikramjit Singh Chaudhary on Friday inaugurated multiple works worth Rs 56.03 lakhs in villages Jajja Kalan, Kutbewal and Dosanjh Khurd. These works included the water tank for supplying safe drinking water to residents, streets constructed with interlocking tiles, installation of streetlights, construction of a crematorium and boundary wall of a gymnasium.

Rajput Sahara Welfare Club Barnala unanimously declares Gurmeet Singh as independent candidate

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU Barnala, January 8

Political parties are on their toes in the Barnala area regarding the upcoming Municipal Council elections. Consequently, these elections have become a topic of discussion. In Ward No. 12, Rajput Sahara Welfare Club Barnala has decided to field Gurmeet Singh as an independent candidate. According to public discussion, Gurmeet Singh has done a lot of commendable social work with the Welfare Club. Local dignitaries like Kulwant Singh Raji, Patron of the Club, Gursewak Singh Manga, President, Balveer Singh Biri, Senior Vice President, and Balkar Singh, President of Reheri Union decided to support Gurmeet Singh keeping in view his dedication, hard work, and good nature. Gurmeet Singh assured the people that he has decided not to resort to any political party in Ward No. 12 and has sincerely decided to remain loyal to the cause of social welfare.

Adhering to safety precautions R-Day function this year to be low key affair amid COVID-19 pandemic: ADC

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU Jalandhar, January 8

The district level 72nd Republic Day function this year would be a low key affair in wake of the Covid-19 pandemic and strict adherence to the safety precautions would be ensured at any cost, said Additional Deputy Commissioner Jasbir Singh on Friday while chairing a review meeting to oversee the ongoing preparations for the event. He said that as per the government's guidelines this time gathering would be limited and the function would be kept simple

Adhering to safety precautions R-Day function this year to be low key affair amid COVID-19 pandemic: ADC

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU Jalandhar, January 8

and precise. Referring to the state government's guidelines regarding R-Day function amid COVID-19, the ADC said that there would be no massive gathering during the event as it used to be in previous years and the contingent of Punjab Police would give salute. He also clarified



that there would be no other activities like PT shows, cultural events, parades etc in order to maintain the safety guidelines. Singh said that health & safety protocols including social distancing, wearing masks, hand sanitizing, disinfecting the premises would be accorded top priorities.

Baseless and malicious: CM on allegations of deputing police officers to negotiate with farmers

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, January 8

Rejecting as completely baseless and malicious all allegations and reports to the contrary, Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh said there was no question of deputing police officers to negotiate with farmers protesting at the Delhi border.

Pointing out that he had made it categorically clear that the ball was in the Centre's court, with the Punjab government having no role to play in the negotiations with farmers, the Chief Minister ridiculed the charges being flaunted by Akali and AAP leaders on the basis of unfounded reports in a small section of the media.

With farmer protests going on in his state since long before the agitation started at the Delhi border, he had naturally asked police officers to give him regular intelligence reports and updates



on the situation not just from the national capital but also across Punjab, Captain Amarinder pointed out, trashing the twisted and senseless interpretation being given to the presence of a few Punjab Police personnel at the farmers' protest site. It was the job of the state police to keep tabs on the evolving situation, and it was his job, as both Chief Minister and Home Minister, to remain updated about all developments, he added.

"Anyone who believes that a couple of police officers can negotiate with the farmers or persuade

the Kisan leaders to accept the Centre's suggestions on amendments to the Farm Laws is really naive," the Chief Minister remarked. And where is the question of him (Captain Amarinder) coming into a negotiation process in which the top central government leadership is currently engaged?, he asked.

Captain Amarinder said both Sukhbir Singh Badal and Arvind Kejriwal, as well as their party colleagues, were resorting to lies and deceit in their desperation to cover up their own failures in the entire crisis triggered by the Farm Laws.

COVID-19 vaccination dry run successful: Balbir Sidhu

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
SAS Nagar/Chandigarh, January 8

As the Nation inches towards its mammoth COVID-19 vaccination programme, Punjab is all prepared to administer the vaccination as and when it is received, informed Balbir Singh Sidhu, Health Minister Punjab.

In an informal interaction with the media after the conduct of vaccination dry-run at District Hospital, phase 6 Mohali, Health Minister informed that Vaccination Dry-Run has been successful state-wide with requisite men and material in place. "All logistics have been worked out and we are good to go," said he. Simulation of the entire inoculation process was conducted; staff has been familiarized with all the aspects of the



actual administration of the vaccine. The operational aspects have been thoroughly reviewed and feasibility of CoWIN Portal has been monitored.

As of now we have 1,000 trained vaccinators and as many as four supporting team members per vaccinator are ready for the job. "As of now State is equipped enough to administer 4 lakh doses of vaccine per day," informed the HM.

He informed that vaccine would be administered only with the consent of the pre-registered recipi-

ent/beneficiary and in the first phase of vaccination, 1.6 lakh Health Care Workers (HCWs) from private and public facilities would be inoculated followed by front-line corona warriors including police, revenue officials and other field staff and subsequently the elderly and population with co-morbidities.

The Minister informed that he is in touch with Union Health Minister and he took up the issue to provide COVID vaccine free of cost to all states.

All rural households to get potable piped water supply in state by March next year: Razia Sultana



PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, January 8

The target to provide potable piped water connections to all 35 lakh rural households will be achieved by March, 2022 under the Jal Jiwan Mission, said the Punjab Water Supply and Sanitation Minister Razia Sultana, claiming that 66% of these households have already been covered by December, 2020.

Addressing a press conference here at Punjab Bhawan on Friday, she said that despite the COVID situation, Water Supply & Sanitation Department has provided the potable piped water supply in three districts SAS Nagar, SBS Nagar and Roopnagar, besides accomplishing the 100% piped water supply target in 14 blocks and 4608 villages.

Punjab took a lead across the country in providing potable piped water supply in all the private and government schools in rural Punjab with the help of the Education Department. Apart from this, a fund to tune of Rs.11 crore has been released by the Water Supply Department to the Education Department for construction of toilets in rural schools. Similarly, 709 rural water supply schemes have been completed at a cost of Rs.124crore during 2020.

Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh led Punjab government was committed to cover all rural households with potable piped water connections, said Ms. Razia Sultana, adding that water treatment plants are being setting up where water quality was impacted. 11 water treatment projects are being setting up in Moga, Patiala, Fatehgarh Sahib, Amritsar, Tarn Taran and Gurdaspur. These projects would benefit 1103 villages at a cost of Rs.1249 crore. Similarly, which villages could not be covered under canal based water supply, to provide them potable water supply, the department is installing Arsenic and Iron Removal Plants/ Individual Household Units/RO Plants in villages of Amritsar, Tarn Taran, Ferozepur, Patiala, Jalandhar, Kapurthala, Ludhiana, SBS Nagar and Gurdaspur at a cost of Rs.80crore.

She said that a high level laboratory has been set up at the state level in SAS Nagar to test the water quality besides multi district laboratories are already functioning in two districts Patiala and SAS Nagar. Further, a new Multipurpose Laboratory has been set up at Amritsar in September 2020 and more such laboratories would come up in three districts Hoshiarpur, Moga and Sangrur by March 2021. In addition, 24 Sub-District Laboratories are already functioning in Punjab, she added.

Centre govt should immediately repeal black laws on agriculture: Preet Kaur

BALINDER SINGH
Patiala, January 8

Expressing solidarity with the two farmer families of Village an in Patiala, who lost tractor and trolley during a road accident, on the way back to their village from Singhu Border Farmers' agitation, Member of Parliament and former External Affairs Minister, Preet Kaur along with Senior Congress leader Harinderpal Singh Harry Mann, handed over a new tractor and trolley to the mothers of deceased farmer Labh



Singh and Sarpanch Narinder Singh respectively.

She, especially thanked, Sonalika for providing a brand-new tractor and Nabha Power Limited for arranging a

new trolley to compensate the material loss of both the families on her request. Recalling the deceased member of the family, Preet Kaur said that it was not possible to bring back the

deceased farmer, but as a part of the society, we all express our solidarity by supporting the family to continue their farm chores. Expressing sympathy with Balwinder Singh father of deceased young farmer, Gurpreet Singh Goldy, she assured that as per the wish of family, she has asked the district administration to chalk out a plan for constructing a community centre in the sweet memory of young farmer.

Later on, visiting to village Partapgarh (Tara Chand), the Lok Sabha member, conveyed his condolences to Surinder Kaur, wife and Jaswinder Singh, son of deceased farmer Jagir Singh.

'5,000 youth to get mini bus permits by March'

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, January 8

To check monopoly in the transport business and provide employment opportunity to the youth of state, Transport department would complete the task of issuance of 5,000 new mini bus permits to the youth, as Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh had announced, by March this year, said the Punjab Transport Minister Razia Sultana,



while addressing a press conference here at Punjab Bhawan today.

While announcing several pro-people initiatives in the transport department, she informed that the Transport department has received about 12,000 applications for mini bus permits and the process of issuing 5,000 permits would be completed by March 2021. Subsequently, extra route permits for buses would also be started from March.

Mahinder Kaur files complaint against Kangana Ranaut in Bathinda court

BATHINDA (PB), JANUARY 8

Mahinder Kaur, who was mis-identified by Kangana Ranaut as Shaheen Bagh dadi, has filed a complaint against the actor in a court here. The complaint has been filed under IPC sections 499 (defamation) and 500 (punishment for defamation), Kaur's counsel Raghbir Singh said on Friday.

The counsel said the court has fixed January 11 as the date for hearing the complaint. In her complaint, the 73-year-old woman farmer from Punjab said the actor made false imputations and remarks against her in a tweet by comparing her with a woman, saying she was the same dadi who was part of the Shaheen Bagh protest. **PTI**

Rotational irrigation programme for RABI season till Jan 16

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, January 8

The Punjab Water Resources Department has announced the Rotational Programme of irrigation for the Rabi Season through canals from January 9 to 16, 2021. The channels of Sirhind Canal System would run on the priority basis from Abohar Branch, Patiala Feeder, Bathinda Branch, Bist Doab Canal and Sidhwan Branch respectively.

Disclosing this here on Friday, a spokesperson of the Water Resources department



said that Ghaggar Link and its off-taking Channels i.e. Ghaggar Branch and Patiala Minor in group 'B' being in the first preference will run to their indent and balance water supplies available will be utilized in the direct distributaries of Bhakra Main Line (BML) in Group 'A'.

The spokesperson further said that the distributaries of Harike

system in Group 'B' being in the first preference will run to their indent and the balance water supplies available will be utilized in the group 'A' distributaries.

The spokesperson also said that the channels off-taking from Upper Bari Doab Canal i.e. Kasur Branch Lower with its distributaries being in the first preference will run to their indent and balance water supplies available will be utilized in Sabhraon Branch, Lahore Branch with their distributaries and Main Branch Lower respectively.



Priyanka Gandhi meets Congress MPs, who have been protesting in support of farmers' agitation against the black laws at Jantar Mantar, on Friday. **BPE**

How much longer will you wait before exercising legal options to get Bills passed by assembly implemented: Harsimrat asks CM



PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, January 8

Former union minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal on Friday asked chief minister Capt Amarinder Singh to tell Punjabis how much longer he would wait before exercising legal options to ensure the three Agricultural Bills, passed unanimously in the Punjab Vidhan Sabha eighty days back to counter the ill effects of the hat-ed central Agricultural laws, were forwarded to the President for assent by the State Governor.

"Going by the current scenario you seem to have even forgotten you initiated the move to get the three Bills passed in the State assembly in the same manner in which a resolution rejecting the erstwhile Farm Ordinances was also passed but never forwarded to the centre", Harsimrat Badal told the chief minister in a statement here.

Punjab appoints two new Special Invitee Members in DGR Committee Amritsar

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, January 8

Punjab Government has appointed two new Special Invitee Members in District Grievance Redressal Committee, Amritsar on Friday.

An official spokesperson said that Dr. Kamaljit Singh son of Dr. Jagtar Singh and Nitin Arora son of P.K. Arora both resident of Amritsar has been appointed as special invitees in District Grievance Redressal Committee, Amritsar. He said that notification has already been issued in this regard.

'Adopt innovative approaches to make effective changes in education system for welfare of society'

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Bathinda, January 8

Central University of Punjab, Bethesda (CUPB) & Global Educational Research Association (GERA) successfully organised the two-day Virtual International Akhand Conference EDUCON-2020. On the last day, UGC Chairperson Prof. Dharendra Pal Singh delivered the valedictory address of this Akhand Conference held on Friday. During the Valedictory Ceremony Prof. Dharendra Pal Singh, Chairperson, UGC, New Delhi graced the occasion as Chief Guest. Prof. H C S Rathore (Vice Chancellor, CUSB) & Prof.



B.K. Tripathi (Director, IUCTE, BHU) joined the concluding session as guest of honour and special guest respectively.

This 31-hour long marathon International Conference was executed under the patronage of Prof. (Dr.) Raghavendra P. Tiwari (Vice Chancellor, CUPB) & Padma Shri Dr. Mahendra Sodha (Patron, GERA).

Three IPS officers transferred

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Chandigarh, January 8

The Punjab government on Friday, transferred three Indian Police Service (IPS) officers in the state.

As per orders, Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Phillaur Suhail Qasim Mir IPS has been posted as Superintendent of Police (SP) Phillaur, ASP Mehal Kalan (Barnala) Dr Pragma Jain IPS has been posted as Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (ADCP) Special Branch and Community Affairs, Ludhiana while ASP Sunam (Sangrur) Dr Mehtab Singh IPS was given the charge of SP Investigation Tarn Taran.

Cold weather conditions continue in Pb

CHANDIGARH, JANUARY 8

Cold weather conditions continued to sweep Punjab with Hisar turning out to be the coldest place on Friday.

Chandigarh, the joint capital of Punjab recorded its low at 12.6 degrees Celsius, seven degrees above normal, an official of the India Meteorological Department said here.

In Punjab, Amritsar, Ludhiana and Patiala recorded their respective minimum temperatures at 10, 9.4 and 8.6 degrees Celsius, up to seven de-



grees above normal.

The minimum temperatures of Pathankot, Adampur, Halwara, Bathinda, Faridkot and Gurdaspur were 12.6, 11.1, 11.8, 8, 11 and 9.2 degrees Celsius respectively.

Dense fog was also witnessed at many places including Ludhiana, Patiala and Gurdaspur, causing inconvenience to commuters. **PTI**

Tests confirm death of poultry birds due to avian flu

A.S. PRASHAR Panchkula, January 8

Confirming the worst fears of the authorities and the public, two of the three samples sent by the Haryana animal husbandry department from poultry farms in Panchkula's Barwala belt to the High Security Animal Disease Laboratory in Bhopal have tested positive for avian influenza.

Over 4.37 lakh poultry birds have died in Panchkula's Barwala and Raipur Rani areas, considered Asia's second-largest poultry belt, over the past 26 days. While the Jalandhar-based Regional Disease Diagnostic Laboratory is still processing the samples sent



to it, the Bhopal lab has confirmed the presence of influenza. The central team, which visited the Community Health Centre at Raipur

Rani, is discussing the line of action with the Panchkula district administration. Culling of birds is to take place within 1 km area of Kheri and Ghanauli villages

from where the samples tested positive. The death of poultry birds has been taking place since the first week of December and the Panch-

kula administration has come under criticism for inaction. The state animal husbandry and dairying department sent samples twice to the Jalandhar lab but the reports were inconclusive. It was only after the central team got the samples sent to Bhopal that the report came positive for bird flu overnight.

Dr Saroj Aggarwal, deputy civil surgeon, Panchkula, said that arrangements have been made at CHC, Raipur Rani, and isolation wards have been set up, while Tamiflu tablets have been procured to check human-to-human transmission of the influenza. "We are ready to deal with any situation," she said.

BJP's Ravi Kant Sharma elected Chandigarh Mayor

SECURES 17 VOTES OF THE 24 POLLED DURING THE ELECTIONS HELD AT THE MC HOUSE TODAY PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU Chandigarh, January 8



BJP's councillor Ravi Kant Sharma became the new Chandigarh Mayor on Friday. He got 17 votes of the 24 polled during the elections held at the MC house today.

Congress mayor candidate Devinder Singh Babla got only five votes. Two votes were declared invalid. While city MP Kir-

ron Kher and councillor Heera Negi couldn't attend the election because of poor health; lone SAD councillor Hardeep Singh boycotted voting. After Ravi Kant Sharma was

declared Mayor, all five Congress boycotted the Senior Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayor polls, alleging cameras were used during the polls by the BJP.

One more death, 54 new corona cases in UT

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU Chandigarh, January 8

UT reported the death of one more patients and 54 new cases of coronavirus on Friday. The caseload in the city now stands at 20,201 while the death toll has risen to 326. There are as many as 238 active cases of the infection.

According to a media bulletin issued here, an 82-year-old Covid positive male R/o Sector 38 West, a case of Type-2 Diabetes Mellitus and Hypertension, has expired at PGIMER.

Meanwhile, a total of 55 patients have been discharged including persons from home isolation who have completed 10 days and are asymptomatic, as per MoHFW guidelines.

PGI in collaboration with MC conducts COVID-19 vaccination dry run

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU Chandigarh, January 8

The COVID-19 vaccination dry run was successfully held at health and wellness center (HWC), Sector-49 under the guidance of Prof. Madhu Gupta, Department of Community Medicine and School of Public Health, PGIMER, Chandigarh. She said that HWC-49 is one of the designated sites for COVID-19 vaccination in Chandigarh.

Dr. Nikita Sharma, Senior Resident explained the preparations done for



the COVID-19 vaccine administration. The doctors and staff members have been trained for COVID-19 vaccination. Three rooms have been reserved for the vaccination which includes a waiting room, vaccination room and observation room. Five vaccination of-

ficers have been deputed for it.

A health care worker volunteered for the dry run of the COVID-19 vaccine. He was screened and verified in the list by the first vaccination officer who asked him to wait for his turn in the waiting room.

Individuals returning awards should also return privileges, perks attached: Sharma

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU Chandigarh, January 8

Socio political entrepreneur Sundeep Sharma has announced that legal notices are being sent to individuals who have stated to return their National/State / Departmental awards but have not returned the privileges and the perks attached with the award.

In the press conference held at the Press Club Chandigarh, he asked the awardees to return the cash prize (without interest), the government job, the commercial and the residential property if any, the state vehicles and also the photograph which decorates their living rooms, even though he salutes their commitment to their chosen causes.



Nandita's kathak dance mesmerizes audience

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU Chandigarh, January 8

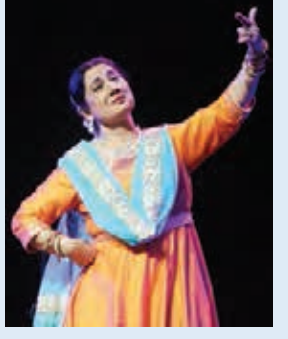
Chandigarh Kathak exponent actress Nandita Puri performed on the second day of Chandigarh Classical Dance Festival 2021 at Tagore Theatre on Friday.

Nandita commenced her recital with Ganga Stuti and shlokas of Shiv Tandav Stotra written by Ravan. Followed by a choreography on raag mala, a combination of four Ragas portraying different aspects of Shringar. She then presented pure Kathak in Dhamaar Taal that included todas, tukdas, laykari etc. She concluded her presentation with Durga Stuti.

Pt Kalinath Mishra on tabla, Vaibhav Mankad on vocals and harmonium along with Alka Gujar on sitar gave amazing contri-

bution. "Being locked at our house I realised that one must value his life first. We learnt that our needs are quite less and we were wasting time in running after material things, it was good to be at home. And now I'm very happy to come to stage. Its like a New Year gift for us" said Nandita.

NZCC director Dr Saubhagya Vardhan, kathak exponent Anu Sinha, were also present among other senior artists.



51 units collected at blood donation camp at Press Club

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU Chandigarh, January 8



Chandigarh Press Club in association with the Department of Transfusion Medicine, PGI, and Rotary Club Chandigarh Uptown organized a blood donation camp at the club premises on Friday.

A total of 51 members, club staff and guests donated the blood during the occasion. Organizers felicitated with winners the gifts and certificates. Ten were the first time donors who also assured their regular donations in the future to strengthen the movement.

Classifieds

CHANGE OF NAME

ਮੈਂ ਰਿਧੀਮਾ (ਅਧਾਰ ਕਾਰਡ ਨੰਬਰ 944973620733) ਪ੍ਰਤੀਗੀ ਗੁਰਚਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ (ਪਤਨੀ ਕਪਿਲ) ਵਾਸੀ ਮਕਾਨ ਨੰਬਰ 347/160 ਲਕਸ਼ਮੀ ਪੁਰੀ, ਸਲੋਮ ਟਾਥਰੀ ਲੁਧਿਆਣਾ ਬਿਆਨ ਕਰਦੀ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਵਿਆਹ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਮੇਰਾ ਨਾਮ ਰਚਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਕੌਰ ਸੀ। ਵਿਆਹ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਮੈਂ ਆਪਣਾ ਨਾਮ ਬਦਲ ਕੇ ਰਿਧੀਮਾ ਰੱਖ ਲਿਆ ਸੀ। ਸਾਰੇ ਸਕੇ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਨੋਟ ਕਰਨ।

I, Geeta wife of Subhash Shastri R/o House No. 97-B, Near City Hospital, Govind Nagar, Hisar (Haryana) have changed my name to Geeta Sharma.

I, Jasvir Kaur W/o Kashmir Singh R/o Village Mullanpur Kalan (Fatehgarh Sahib) have changed my name to Jasmine Sahota.

I Gurmukh S/o Mohan Singh R/o Village Mangli Tanda, P.O. Mattewara, Ludhiana have changed my name to Gurmukh Singh

I Manjit Kaur Alias Ramjit Kaur W/o Jagjit Singh R/o Village Gobindgarh Jejian Tehsil Sunam Distt Sangrur I have known as both names.

I SARBJIT KAUR CHAHAL W/O AVTAR SINGH CHAHAL R/O VILL KHERI CHAHLAN TEH DHURI DISTT SANGRUR HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SARBJEET KAUR CHAHAL

I Karanvir Kanda S/o Kuldeep Singh Resident of Lallu Patti VPO Dirba Distt. Sangrur have changed my name to Karanveer Kanda.

I hitherto known as REETA W/o KULWINDER SINGH, Residing at, H.NO.9033, St.No.38 Kot Mangal Singh, Miller Ganj, Ludhiana, PUNJAB, India have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SIMRAN KAUR.

I Jagsir Singh S/o Mohinder Singh R/o Vill Bangher Mohabat Singh Distt Bathinda Have Changed My Name To Jagseer Singh

I Jasvir Kaur W/o Jagseer Singh R/o Vill Bangher Mohabat Singh Distt Bathinda Have Changed My Name To Jasveer Kaur

I Charanjit Kaur Ved Vashist W/o Lachhman Das R/o Ward Number 5, Guru Teg Bahadur Colony, Sangrur have changed my name to Charanjit Kaur.

I, Jaspreet Singh S/o Sukhdeep Singh, R/o Near Dashmesh Chowk, VPO Jalal, Tehsil Phul, Bathinda, 151108, Punjab (India) have changed my name to Jaspreet Singh Sidhu.

I, Navdeep Kaur D/o Gursewak Singh, R/o VPO Dune Ke, Moga, Punjab (India) have changed my name to Navdeep Kaur Sidhu.

I KULJIT SINGH S/O HARDEEP SINGH R/O L-7/2661, GALI MURRABE WLAI KRISHNA NAGAR TARNTARAN ROAD AMRITSAR HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO KULJEET SINGH

I Sobha C.K (Adhar Card No- 3879 0713 4135) D/o V.K. Kesavan W/o Rajan Babu K.P Indian Army No. JC. 383404X R/o Kombipoykayil Post Kakkudumon Village Athikkayam District Pathanamthitta, Kerala 689711 declare that in my Husband Serive Book my name has been mentioned as Sobha in place of Sobha C.K.Sobha & Sobha C.K one and the same person i.e myself. Affidavit No. 14476 Dated 24-11-2020.

I, Pinki Rani W/o Jatinder Singh R/o Village Balala, Dasuya, Hoshiarpur Changed name Parminder Kaur.

I, Jaspreet Kaur w/o Akash Verma R/o 2781, Street No 4 and 5, New Janta Nagar ATI Road Ludhiana Changed name Ruhani Verma.

I Daljeet Singh s/o Surinder Singh r/o Ward No.46, H.No.1315, Near Ferozpur Line, Azad Nagar, Ludhiana. I have changed my minor daughter's name from Kirandeep Kour to Agamnur Kour. Concerned may be noted.

I Rajwant Singh s/o Natha Singh r/o H.No. 166 , Guru Nanakpura Mohalla, Village Dehlon Distt. Ludhiana declares that Rajwant Singh and Rajwant Singh Kaidey is one and the same person. I will be known as Rajwant Singh. Concerned may be noted.

I Manjit Singh Makkar s/o Gurbachan Singh r/o Ward No. 4, Dharamshala street, Goniana Mandi, District: Bathinda inform that Manjit Singh Makkar and Manjit Singh is one and the same person. Concerned may be noted.

I Kamaljeet Kaur Makkar w/o Manjit Singh r/o Ward No. 4, Dharamshala street Goniana Mandi, District: Bathinda inform that Kamaljeet Kaur and Kawaljeet Kaur is one and the same person. Concerned may be noted.

I, Neelam W/o. Vikas Khurana R/o. 2167, Gaushala Street, Muktsar have changed my name Neelam Sethi W/o. Vikas Khurana.

I Veerpal Kaur w/o Jagdeep Singh Sandhu R/o Village Buttar District Faridkot have changed my name to Veerpal Kaur Sandhu.

LOST AND FOUND

I Rajinder Singh Kalsi S/o Sh. Pritam Singh R/o #3033, Sector 19D, Chandigarh. Have Lost My Payment Receipt No. 463465 (09-12-2010) Rs. 9,40,000/-, 463466 (09-12-2010) Rs. 2,75,000/-, 846494 (04-02-2013) Rs. 45,575/-, of Plot No. 947 Omaxe New Chandigarh. If anybody found please return it to the above said address.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Lalan s/o Ram Shubham r/o H.No. 3841, Ambedkar Awas Yojna Sector 56, (Palsora) Chandigarh declare that my son Monu Kumar is out of my control. I disown him from my movable/immovable property. Anybody deals with him at own his risk.

I No. 15474706K Rank DFR Ravinder Singh 71 Armd Regr.C/O 56 APO -912671 R/o V.P.O. Samaspur Tehsil Khujra Distt. Bulandshahar State (U.P.)-203132 Declare that in my army record my Son name wrongly written as Shahil Kumar Rawat but her correct name is Sahil Kumar Rawat.

I Jagmohan Singh s/o Hardit Singh r/o 109-E, S.B.S Nagar, Pakhowal Road, Ludhiana. Owner of Vehicle No. PB10 8109 has applied for removal of Hypothecation of Maruti Countryvide AFSR Ltd. As the firm is closed with no office in Ludhiana anyone having any objection for issuance of NOC should approach RTO Ludhiana within 15 days of issuance of this advertisement.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform that Smt. Seema Devi W/o Sh.Mukesh Kumar, R/O House no.26c/1230, Street no.8, Gurmali Nagar, Lohara, Tehsil and District Ludhiana is the owner of the property constructed on Property measuring 100 sq. yard, bearing under Khata no. 40/40, comprised under Khaska No. 863, 864, 865, 866, as per Jamabandi year 2009-2010, Situated at Village Lohara, Tehsil and District Ludhiana. The above said owner is going to mortgage the property with Magma Housing Finance Ltd. The owner has misplaced the original sale deed bearing Vasika no. 3650 dated 12/05/1997 in favour of Sh. Surinder Kumar son of Sh. HansRaj and S.P.A. Vasika no. 5 dated 19/04/2006 in favour of Sh. Raj Kumar Son of Sh. Tilak Raj respectively. The owner of the above property and he/she has not been able to trace out the same. If anybody has any objection regarding the above said property the creation of mortgage over the said property then he/she should file objections at the mention address. In case no objections are received within 7 days of this publication then it will be presumed that there is no objection and after that period no objection will be entertained.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Rajinder Kumar S/o Charan Singh R/o House No. 195/A, Dashmesh Nagar, Sector-15, Tehsil Kharar, District SAS Nagar, Mohali, Punjab declare that my daughter Ms. Simran is out of my control. So, I disown her from all my moveable/immovable properties. Anybody dealing with her will do so at his/her own risk

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Sanjeev Kumar S/o Satpal R/o Village Narmana Teh.Nabha Distt Patiala Declare that My Son Deepak Sharma and his wife Kiranjit Kaur is out of my Control So I Disown her from my Moveable and Immoveable property. Anybody dealing with her at their own Risk. I Will Not Be Responsible. Concerned Note.

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ਵਿਸ਼ਾ :- ਸ੍ਰੀ ਤਿਲਕ ਰਾਜ ਗੁਪਤਾ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਰਾਮ ਵਾਸੀ ਮਕਾਨ ਨੰ: 604 ਗਲੀ ਨੰ: 6, ਅਕਾਲ ਨਗਰ, ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਗੁਜਿਆਰਪੁਰ ਈ ਪੋਸਟ ਉਪਰੰਤ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਸਟੇਪ ਅਕਟ 1899 ਈ ਜੋਰ ਧਾਰਾ 40-ਏ ਤਹਿਤ ਰਜਿਸਟਰਡ ਕਰਵਾਉਣ ਬਾਰੇ ਦਰਖਾਸਤ ਵਲੋਂ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਰਾਜੇਸ਼ ਗੁਪਤਾ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਤਿਲਕ ਰਾਜ ਗੁਪਤਾ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਰਾਮ ਵਾਸੀ ਮਕਾਨ ਨੰ: 604 ਗਲੀ ਨੰ: 6, ਅਕਾਲ ਨਗਰ, ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਗੁਜਿਆਰਪੁਰ।

ਪੱਤਰ ਨੰਬਰ 3084/ਅ.ਸ.ਮਿ.ਨਿ. 7-1-2021

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਰਾਜੇਸ਼ ਗੁਪਤਾ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਤਿਲਕ ਰਾਜ ਗੁਪਤਾ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਰਾਮ, ਵਾਸੀ ਮਕਾਨ ਨੰ: 604 ਗਲੀ ਨੰ: 6, ਅਕਾਲ ਨਗਰ, ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਗੁਜਿਆਰਪੁਰ ਇਲਾਕਾ ਬਨਾਮ ਜਨਰਲ ਪਬਲਿਕ ਆਫ ਨਜ਼ਰਾ ਉਤਰਵਾਦੀ.....

ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਵਿਸ਼ੇ ਦੇ ਸਬੰਧ ਵਿੱਚ ਦਰਖਾਸਤ ਕਰਤਾ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਅਦਾਲਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਦਾਖ਼ਲ ਆ ਕੇ ਅਨ-ਰਜਿਸਟਰਡ ਵਸੀਅਤ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਸਟੇਪ ਅਕਟ 1899 ਈ ਧਾਰਾ 40-ਏ ਤਹਿਤ ਰਜਿਸਟਰਡ ਕਰਵਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਦਰਖਾਸਤ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਸਦੇ ਪਿਤਾ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਤਿਲਕ ਰਾਜ ਗੁਪਤਾ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਰਾਮ ਵਾਸੀ ਮਕਾਨ ਨੰ: 604 ਗਲੀ ਨੰ: 6, ਅਕਾਲ ਨਗਰ, ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਗੁਜਿਆਰਪੁਰ ਨੇ ਇੱਕ ਵਸੀਅਤ ਨਿੱਤੀ 15.11.2020 ਨੂੰ ਲਿਖਵਾਈ ਗਈ ਸੀ ਪਰੰਤੂ ਉਹ ਅਣ-ਰਜਿਸਟਰਡ ਵਸੀਅਤ ਨੂੰ ਰਜਿਸਟਰਡ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਵਾ ਸਕੇ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਉਹ ਮਿਤੀ 19.11.2020 ਨੂੰ ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਚੁੱਕੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਵਸੀਅਤ ਤਿਲਕ ਰਾਜ ਗੁਪਤਾ ਵਲੋਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਦੋਵੇਂ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਰਾਜੇਸ਼ ਗੁਪਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਗੌਰਵ ਗੁਪਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਪਤਨੀ ਆਗਿਆ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਸੀ। ਦਰਖਾਸਤ ਦਾਇਰਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਸੀਅਤ ਨੂੰ ਰਜਿਸਟਰਡ ਕਰਵਾਉਣ ਦੀ ਮਨਜ਼ੂਰੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਇਸ ਇਲਾਕੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਸੀਅਤ ਨੂੰ ਰਜਿਸਟਰਡ ਕਰਵਾਉਣ ਦੀ ਮਨਜ਼ੂਰੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਅਗਰ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਵਸੀਅਤ ਦੇ ਰਜਿਸਟਰਡ ਹੋਣ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੋਈ ਉਤਰਾ/ਇਤਰਾਜ਼ ਹੋਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਇਸ ਇਲਾਕੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਆ ਕੇ ਇਸ ਮਿਤੀ ਤੋਂ 21 ਦਿਨ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਅੰਦਰ ਅਦਾਲਤ ਨੂੰ ਵਕਾਲਤਨ ਦਾਖ਼ਲ ਕਰਵਾ ਕੇ ਆਪਣਾ ਇਤਰਾਜ਼ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਬਾਅਦ ਗੁਜਰਨੇ ਮਿਆਦ ਕਿਸੇ ਆ ਕੇ ਵੀ ਉਤਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਜੇਕਰ ਇਹ ਅਣ-ਰਜਿਸਟਰਡ ਵਸੀਅਤ ਰਜਿਸਟਰਡ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਜਾਵੇਗੀ।

Doctors perform 'Reverse Shoulder Arthroplasty' to treat woman with shoulder arthritis

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU Mohali, January 8



A team of doctors at Fortis Hospital, Mohali performed a rare procedure - 'Reverse Shoulder Arthroplasty' or 'Reverse Shoulder replacement' - to cure a 76-year-old woman from Khamanon in Fatehgarh Sahib district of Punjab with severe shoulder arthritis and massive shoulder tendon tears. This unique surgery was performed by Dr Manjit Arora, an Orthopaedic and Sports Medicine Surgeon at Fortis Hospital, Mohali.

The patient was suffering from severe pain in her shoulder for the past 4 to 5 years and was unable to lift her arm to do her basic activities. She visited and consulted at many places where she was diagnosed with frozen shoulder and was administered many steroid injections. However, when she visited Dr Manjit Arora at Fortis Hospital, Mohali, it was found that her rotator cuff had severely damaged as many of her tendons with massive tears due to injections administered. This resulted in severe arthritis which was causing agonising pain.

41 test +ve for COVID-19

YOGESH KAPOOR
PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ludhiana, January 8

Deputy Commissioner Varinder Kumar Sharma on Friday informed that under the 'Mission Fateh' of Punjab government, the number of COVID-19 patients getting cured in district Ludhiana is increasing with each passing day. He said that there are 289 active patients in the district at present.

He said that sincere efforts are being made to keep people safe from COVID-19. He said that a total of 50 patients (41 new patients from district Ludhiana and nine from other states and districts) have tested positive in the last 24 hours.

He further said that till date, a total of 554546 samples have been taken,



out of which a report of 552338 samples have been received, of which 523578 samples were found negative while reports of 2208 samples were pending. He said that now, the total number of patients related to Ludhiana is 24971, while 3748 patients belong to other districts and states.

He said that unfortunately, two patients lost their lives on Friday (one each from Moga and Himachal Pradesh). Now, the total number of persons who have lost their lives stands at 969 people from Ludhiana and 458 from other districts.

He informed that till date, 55332 persons have

been kept under home quarantine in the district and at present, the number of such persons is 932. On Friday, 37 persons were sent for home quarantine.

He said that whenever the District Administration and Health Department Ludhiana find out about any positive or suspected COVID-19 person, their samples are immediately sent for testing. Similarly, 2329 samples of suspected patients were sent for testing on Friday and their results are expected shortly.

Sharma appealed to the residents to adhere all the safety protocols like wearing masks, maintaining social distance and washing hands frequently of the Punjab government to not only save themselves but keeping everyone around safe.

Inter-state gang of car thieves busted, six vehicles recovered

AMARPREET SINGH
PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ludhiana, January 8

Local police claimed on Friday to have arrested two members of an inter-state gang of car thieves and recovered six vehicles including a Toyota Innova, Maruti Breeza and Mahindra Scorpio among others from the accused.

According to police, the gang members used to steal the cars and further sell them after changing the engine number, chassis number and installing fake number plates on the vehicles. The arrested accused persons have been identified as Lavraj Singh and Ankush Kumar. Police have recovered one Mahindra Scorpio, two Toyota Innovas, two Maruti Breezas and one Maruti Baleno



from the accused.

Giving information, Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Simratpal Singh Dhindsa said that following a tip-off from sources, they have arrested the accused from Tibba Road. The accused were travelling in a Mahindra Scorpio SUV. During the investigation, two Toyota Innovas, two Maruti Breezas and one Maruti Baleno

were recovered from the accused. The DCP added that the accused used to change the engine number and chassis number of the vehicle and later sell it to customers after installing fake number plates. The accused were active in Punjab, Madhya Pradesh and other states. The Police is further investigating the matter and hope for more breakthroughs.

Applications invited for National Water Awards
PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ludhiana, January 8

The Union Government has decided to honour organisations with National Water Awards, who have made remarkable efforts towards water conservation. Applications in this regard have been invited from eligible organisations.

While giving the reference of letter of Union Water Resources, River Development, and Ganga Rejuvenation Ministry, the Additional Deputy Commissioner (D), Ludhiana Sandeep Kumar said that these awards will be given in 'Best State', 'Best District', 'Best Village Panchayat', 'Best Municipal Corporation' or other Corporation Bodies', 'Best Schools', 'Best TV Show' and 'Best Newspaper' categories.

31 held for selling Chinese string, police register 24 FIRs in one day



PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ludhiana, January 8

In a major crackdown, Ludhiana Police registered 24 FIRs in a day and arrested 31 persons. Police have recovered 1463 rolls of Chinese string from different places.

The accused have been booked under Sections 188 and 336 of IPC. Police Commissioner Rakesh Agrawal had issued advisory against use of Chinese string. Police

said that the people are advised not to use Chinese string. This is very dangerous as it gives no time to escape and several persons have been injured due to this in past.

Police had announced that if anybody found selling or using this will be severely punished.

Police informed that, they have registered 24 FIRs in last one day and arrested 31 persons. The drive will continue in coming days also.

BJP to move court to seek FIR against Bittu

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ludhiana, January 8

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders have decided to move court in demand of a FIR against Congress MP Ravneet Singh Bittu for his statements which may disturb peace and harmony

in Punjab. BJP leaders were protesting against Bittu from last four days but on Friday the protest was called off. Now, the party has announced to move court to fight legal battle.

BJP leaders said that the Congress MP Ravneet Singh Bittu has

given statement which may disturb peace and harmony in Punjab. The BJP leaders have lodged complaint against Bittu in all districts of Punjab and demanded FIR against him. The party leaders said that the protest will continue till the police will register FIR against Bittu.

Govt urged to exclude Electroplating Industry from Power Intensive Unit Load

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ludhiana, January 8

A delegation of local industrialists under the leadership of K K Seth met Er Bhupinder Khosla Engineer in Chief PSPCL Central Zone, and demanded Electroplating Industry to be excluded from Power Intensive and raised other important issues as well.

They said that PSPCL regularized the Power Intensive Unit Load on Electrolytes Processing Units, which is totally unjustified



for the Small electroplating processing industry. It will put direct burden on the industry. We request you to immediately rollback the decision, otherwise the industrialists will protest in opposition of the decision. Industry in Punjab is already being supplied with electricity at most expen-

sive prices when compared to the neighbouring states. This will further increase the problem of already struggling industry.

PSPCL takes U-turn on waiver of fixed charges for 2 months. The Punjab State Power Corporation Limited (PSPCL) latest decision that fixed charges will be levied on the industry, though they can provide these in installments. This decision will further increase the problems of the industry already struggling for revival.

Akal Takht requested to setup to 'Central Sikh Education Board'

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ludhiana, January 8

More than 45 world level Sikh organisations under the banner of coordination committee of Sikh organisations have organised high profile webinars on the agenda.

Dedicated to Akal Takht, these Sikh organisations are active in social, academic and religious activities. Harkirat Singh Managing Trustee Satnaam Sarb Kalyan Trust emphasis for raising the standard of education among Sikh children and imparting Gurmat edu-

cation in a more assertive manner for making high level Gursikh professional.

Brigadier Dr Rajwant Singh, former Vice Chancellor, Chitkara University, said that the reason for the failure of our educational programs was the lack of clarity in our vision, mission and objectives.

Coordinator Gurmeet Singh said that Sikh institutions, especially SGPC, Baru Sahib Trust, Chief Khalsa Diwan, Khalsa College Institutions, DSGMC etc have established around 400 educational institutions and 4 universities in the country. These institutions need

coordination in imparting quality education and Gurmat Education among the students. Sarabjit Singh, Renuka Sukrit Trust said that it is important for us to define our objectives and mission. Let's create golden Gursikhs instead of building buildings. Jatinderpal Singh Chairman and Baljit Singh, Vice Chairman, Guru Gobind Singh Study Circle proposed to establish a 'Central Sikh Education Board' under the auspices of Akal Takht so that concrete steps could be taken for the fulfillment of Sikh education and Sikh concerns.

Vet Varsity organises training programme on 'Skill Development in Viral Disease Diagnosis and Prophylaxis'

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ludhiana, January 8

The College of Animal Biotechnology, Guru Angad Dev Veterinary and Animal Sciences University, Ludhiana has started one week online training program on 'Skill Development in Viral Disease Diagnosis and Prophylaxis'. Dr Dipak Deka, Sr Scientist

and Organising Secretary of the training informed that this training has been organized as a part of the research project 'Molecular characterization of canine distemper virus field isolates for selection of suitable vaccine candidate (s)' under the aegis of Department of Biotechnology, Government of India. Coordinators of the De-

partment of Biotechnology -Canine Research Centre Networks program at GADVASU Dr JPS Gill, Director Research and Dr SK Uppal, Dean, Post Graduate Studies informed that this training is a part of series of trainings being conducted to fulfill the mandate of human resource development under this programme.

Bumpy rides on city roads irk residents



ROAD ACCIDENTS ARE A COMMON OCCURRENCE AS RAINFALL LEAVES THESE ROADS SLIPPERY AND FULL OF POTHOLE.

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ludhiana, January 8

A smooth ride might be a distant dream for residents of Ludhiana as an



extremely common experience for the residents of Durga Mata Mandir Chowk, near Jagraon Bridge, Bhai Bala Chowk and Aarti Chowk is an extremely bumpy ride.

Witnessing the pathetic condition of the roads in Ludhiana, it raises a big question mark on the functioning of the Municipal Corporation. Road accidents are a common occurrence as rainfall leaves these roads slippery and full of potholes.

Industrialists urge govt to give priority for COVID-19 vaccination to willing businessmen and professionals

A REQUEST LETTER WAS ALSO WRITTEN TO CAPTAIN AMRINDER SINGH, CHIEF MINISTER OF PUNJAB AND VINI MAHAJAN, CHIEF SECRETARY, TO START THE COVID-19 VACCINATION PROCESS FROM WILLING BUSINESSMEN.

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU
Ludhiana, January 8

A meeting of Industrial Association was called to discuss the issues of the industry, in which they have discussed about various problems faced by the industry as well as the COVID-19 vaccination by the government.

Members of the CFT Gill Road, Upkar Singh Ahuja, President, Pankaj Sharma, General Secretary, CICU, Didarjit Singh, Satinderjit Singh, Jaspreet Singh, Mahesh Arora, were present. They



said that government has given the permission of COVID-19 vaccination and also started in many states in India.

They urged due to COVID-19 situation post March there was no travelling by businessmen and professionals working in industry for business development and

few segment are facing problems of orders. Even costumers are not visiting. It is very important to meet counterparts for continuation of business.

India has an edge now over China and its good time to increase business as many new inquiries are being received.

In the light of above, it is very important that government should give priority for COVID-19 vaccination to businessmen and professionals.

A request letter was also written to Captain Amrinder Singh, Chief Minister of Punjab and Vini Mahajan, Chief Secretary, to start the COVID-19 vaccination process from willing businessmen.



ANGRY TWITTERATI

Game-changer on tracks

The launch of another section of the goods only rail corridor by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday marks another important step towards upgrading India's railway infrastructure which has languished for too long for want of funds and innovative thinking. The PM has aptly called it a corridor of development.

In an event held through a video link, Modi dedicated to the nation the 306-km New Rewari-New Madar section of the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor, terming it a game-changer. He also flagged off the world's first double-stack long-haul 1.5-km-long container train pulled by electric traction from New Ateli in Haryana to New Kishangarh in Rajasthan. The launch of the new section comes days after a similar ceremony to open the New Bhaupur-New Khurja portion in Uttar Pradesh of the eastern freight corridor, which he listed among the country's infra achievements in the last 10 or 12 days.

Railway Minister Piyush Goyal, Haryana Chief Minister M.L. Khattar and Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot also joined the event through video conference. The prime minister said the western freight corridor project is being seen as a game changer for India in the 21st century. After a lot of hard work in the last five to six years, today a big portion of it has become a reality. Dedicated freight corridors, be it eastern or western, are not just modern routes for modern goods trains. These dedicated freight corridors are also the corridors of the country's rapid development. Modi said the freight corridors will also form the basis for the development of new growth centres. The western corridor will bring new opportunities to farmers, industrialists and traders in the National Capital Region, Haryana and Rajasthan. The corridor will cover 133 railway stations in nine states. At these stations, new multi-modal logistics parks, freight terminals, container depots and parcel hubs will also come up. These will benefit farmers, small industries, cottage industries and big manufacturers. Using the railway analogy, the PM said the infrastructure work is going on two tracks simultaneously in the country. One track is development for the individual, he said, listing the provision of houses, toilets, water, electricity, roads and internet which make life easier for crores of people. The other track, he said, targets the country's growth engines and industry.

Modi has asserted that the kind of investment made in the last six years on the railway network has never taken place earlier. He predicted that the day when the capital of each northeastern state is connected by the railway is not far. He cited passenger amenities on trains now, comparing them with the time when there were heaps of complaints from the process of booking onwards. Who can forget the experiences of our rail passengers in the past? The New Rewari-New Madar section runs 79 km through Haryana's Mahendragarh and Rewari districts and 227 km through Rajasthan's Jaipur, Ajmer, Sikar, Nagaur and Alwar districts.

Donald Trumped

Outgoing leaders choose farewell moments. Trump chose farewell riot. That sums up his vile legacy. Insane as it might read, but what Trump led his extremists - we won't call them supporters or followers - to do at Capitol Hill, was callously predictable and deviously anticipated from a president who has been anything but a leader of the once most powerful nation on the planet all these four years. He had been salting the sand for months by unleashing barrage of cynical conspiracy theories that his election would be stolen.

Disbanding science in the face of greatest pandemic, fomenting racial discrimination, frothing disdain from anyone and everyone he did not like, and supplanting unfounded illegal voter frauds claims to dishevel every vestige of democratic ethos has been his forte all this while. Such is the creepiness of the times we live in, that the first reaction of horrendous assault on US democracy was one of not amazement but of tragic expectations. Blots of violent storming of Congress while it was on its way to ratify President-elect Joe Biden's electoral college win would hound America and its lofty credentials of being a shining beacon of democratic principles and ideals for a long time to come. That Trump directly instigated those rioters and even after the havoc caused by them only reluctantly offered to commit to orderly transition of power once again raises doubts over his mental make up in face of a proven defeat.

Rightly so, calls for his immediate removal by way of either by his Cabinet or possibly through impeachment have been raised by top democrats in Congress - House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. Even many of Trump's own loyalist Republicans have jettisoned his drowning ship by raising to the call of Constitution, including outgoing Vice-President Mike Pence, which must be distraughting for Trump to see but manages to hold a semblance of faith and trust in eventual individual goodwill over a collection greed for power. Pence found the frontier of his conscience, a line beyond which his ambition won't let him go finally snapped Trump's flagrant breach of all proprietary, falsehood, slander and bluster. That he has finally conceded, though not yet accepted defeat still cannot mitigate the last 13 days of his presidency.

Fears of him trying something malignant still hover around. Will Trump be impeached for the second time in a space of two years remains to be seen, and if that happens it would rightly cap a catastrophic tenure for US as a nation which saw its global stock as ruling force diminish like never before. Reactions from foreign leaders particularly from China where it literally and figuratively mocked American exceptionalism sum it up. Resumption of the congressional session and the continuance of the electoral vote count was the only white truth emerging out of a vertically divided nation on coloured affiliations. Joe Biden has an overwhelmingly onerous task at hand. Of making America great again.

How did the pro Trump mob waltz into US Capitol?

INDIANS WATCH US CAPITOL VIOLENCE WITH DISMAY, STRONG FEELINGS

RAHUL KUMAR

They smashed windows, they climbed walls, they took down the American flag and replaced it with a Trump flag they brought along, they sat in the Speaker's chair and left a quarter on her desk. After these scenes of violent protest played out at the US Capitol on January 6, a single question now hangs over it all: How did the pro-Trump mob simply waltz in? "Treason", is how Harvard Law professor Laurence H. Tribe described the chaos. "These people are 'levying war on the United States. That is the Constitution's definition of TREASON. Trump bears responsibility for what's going on now," he posted on Twitter.

Everybody agrees that what happened on the grounds of the US Capitol on January 6 was a tremendous and total law enforcement failure to secure the premises for a high security event. Was the Capitol Police infiltrated and compromised? How was it so easy? The investigations are coming.

In public comments after the bedlam subsided, lawyers are saying the pro-Trump mob has provided documentation of "many criminal" acts to the whole world, in real time. Online video clips of the actual violence are "very legal evidence" that could be used in future prosecutions that involve trespassing on federal property, intentional plot to disrupt government business, grievous bodily harm or death. Some of this carries substantial jail time. It involves not just the people who might be caught with firearms but people who were involved in conspiring with them as part of a group action.

The extraordinary situation



that engulfed Washington after thousands of President Donald Trump supporters, egged on by his speech, rioted in the US Capitol, made the day for the Twitterati. The formal, boring, administrative capital city of the US turned into a spectacle for a day as mobs indulged in rioting in the citadel of democracy.

Amidst a global shock and dismay at the ungainly scenes, Twitter erupted with myriad reactions at the violent conduct Trump's supporters displayed in the Capitol building - the temple of democracy. India Narrative collects reactions of prominent Indians both in the US and India.

Indian-American Republican leader Pramila Jayapal, who was caught in the melee inside the Capitol, told the media that the members of the Congress had to put on gas masks and drop to the floor.

She narrated the atmosphere of fear that engulfed the lawmakers to the American media. In her tweets she made it clear that Trump has to resign. She invoked actions by Vice President Mike Pence and Trump's cabinet to invoke the 25th amendment and hold Trump responsible for the assault.

Similarly, Ro Khanna, tweeted his prayers for the injured people. His tweets made it clear that Trump had been rejected by the people, by the courts and also in the elections. He

added vehemently in his tweets that Trump was also rejected by: "his party's senate leader & VP. Democracy is still sacred for Americans. That spirit will overcome today's violence. Prayers for the injured."

Ami Bera, Indian-origin doctor and member of Congress, too renounced the violence that had taken over the Capitol. He assured his constituents: "My staff and I are safe. The storming of the US Capitol is dangerous and disgusting and needs to stop, immediately."

Vinod Khosla, technology guru and entrepreneur, retweeted former US President Barack Obama's complete statement on the violence. He also retweeted another statement which said: "... And we should all agree to not work with Trump and his supporters, even if that is expensive personally."

One of the most devastating tweets has come from author and publisher, Anand Giridharadas, who said: "What we're witnessing in the Senate is what we saw in much media coverage in the Trump years: processing extraordinary events through ordinary rituals, language, and formats unwittingly normalizes them. The president just incited a terrorist attack on democracy. Speak like it."

Dinyar Patel, Assistant Professor (South Asian His-

In the two decades since the 9/11 attacks, the US Congress campus has been encircled by consecutive rings of security. Protests are routine in the US Capitol but January 6 was something else. At around noon, a crowd waving flags and wearing red baseball hats crashed into police barricades, ran up the steps to the heavy iron doors of the US Capitol and were soon marching inside the building and posing in their outlandish costumes.

tory) at SP Jain Institute of Management & Research, associated with the Mittal Institute at Harvard, hit out at the equivalences. Patel said: "Some false comparisons. In HK, Kyrgyzstan, and Indonesia, protesters were fighting for democracy. In DC yesterday, bigots and conspiracy theorists were pushing the agenda of a megalomaniac who lost the popular vote twice."

Vindu Goel, Emerging platforms editor for The New York Times, kept a flurry of retweets from prominent media institutions on the developing situation. He also highlighted through a media article how lawmaker Derrick Evans, from West Virginia, was among the mob of Trump supporters who stormed the Capitol. Nidhi Razdan, Associate Professor of journalism at Harvard University, too retweeted prominent Twitterati and media organisations for the latest developments. Among her prominent retweets was one by Reuters that played a video statement by US Vice President, Mike Pence, condemning the violence by Trump supporters in an attempt to block certification of the presidential election results.

Parry Ravindranathan, global media executive and Angel Investor, kept his Twitter account alive with the developing situation. One of his prominent retweets emphasised on the stunning fact that Republican leaders were veering round to the view that Trump should be removed from office before his term ends. "Four of them called for the 25th Amendment to be invoked, and two others

said the President should be impeached," showing how the violence in the Parliament has divided the party itself.

Indians have been keeping a close watch on the extraordinary events unfolding in the US as people have been comparing and drawing satisfaction the images from Capitol Hill to those of other mob attacks in other countries.

The spotting of an Indian flag outside the Capitol did not go unnoticed.

It was made fun of by stand-up comic Vir Das. In his usual witty style, he said: "Dear random Indian dude waving Indian flag at the #CapitolRiots. Every large crowd IS NOT A CRICKET MATCH!"

Politician Priyanka Chaturvedi too tweeted her objection: "Whoever is waving this Indian flag should feel ashamed. Don't use our tricolour to participate in such violent & criminal acts in another country."

Many social media users have expressed their bitter feelings that the US forces were lenient on the rioters as they were white. People were wondering if the police would have used tear gas or force to break up the crowd if it were not white.

Twitter handle, Asian in America, @Asian_Amerikkka, managed by "a brown multicultural Asian intersectional feminist immigrant..." retweeted a video saying: "Super nice of that cop to help a MAGA terrorist down the steps of the Capitol."

(This content is being carried under an arrangement with indiannarrative.com/IANIS)

Jai Jawan Jai Kisan

Col Charanjit Singh Khera (Retd)



Farmers and soldiers are like two sides of a same coin. While one secures the nation, the other secures food for the people. And it was best summed up by our late Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri in his slogan, "Jai Jawan Jai Kissan". Since then the slogan has become a popular idiom. The spirit behind the slogan is best reflected now during the ongoing agitation of the farmers against three agricultural laws. The popular Slogan which had touched every Indian emotionally after 1965 victory over Pakistan, carried the message of collective unity of farmers and soldiers. It had faded away for decades and there was none to keep the slogan alive.

We know that the contribution of soldiers (Jawans) and farmers has given stability to the Nation in terms of security. The Jawan provides National Security guarding borders by shedding his blood for the Nation and farmers provide food security by toiling and sweating in his fields. Both are national pillars since for decades and cannot be seen in isolation nor ignored.

Today the vote politics has taken over the nation and the interest of the "two pillars" of the nation seems to be ignored and overlooked. The farmers are on the roads against the three laws passed in Sep 2020 by the government of India, which have generated a sense of insecurity in farmers as well as soldiers as both are interrelated. Maximum soldiers enrolled in armed



forces and paramilitary forces are from farmers' communities. The soldiers after successful tenure in defence forces fall back to their parental profession of farming.

No wonder the ex-servicemen are actively supporting the farmers' stir. The Ex-Servicemen Joint Action Front (Sanjha Morcha), Veterans Welfare Committee Ambala and Indian Ex-Servicemen settled in Canada and who have formed Senior Veterans Association, Ontario, Canada, along with many other association of ex-servicemen from all over India have already pledged to extend full support to farmers' agitation.

If nothing can be done then last but not the least option is repeal the three laws and make fresh ones after discussion with concerned parties like farmers and state governments.

The farmers feel that these laws have legally put them on a weaker wicket as they are not permitted to approach civil courts in case of dispute with Corporate/buyers nor complain to the police. The Corporates now cannot be dragged in civil court and are safeguarded from civil courts litigations. Farmers can

only approach SDM/DC only. The clause incorporated states that no suit, prosecution or other legal proceedings shall lie against the Central Government or the State Government, or any officer of the Central Government or the State Government or any other person in respect of anything which is in good faith done or intended to be done under this Act or of any rules or orders made there under. No civil court shall have jurisdiction to entertain any suit or proceedings in respect of any matter, the cognizance of which can be taken and disposed of by any authority empowered by or under this Act or the rules made there under. The farmers mostly uneducated and unaware legal complications with less knowledge, will be at the receiving end. Farmer cannot be assisted by anyone, he has to fight his sole battle to get legitimate Justice. Even the state government is kept out from this ambit, Probably the farmers agitation at Delhi boarders has gone beyond the expectation of the government now getting world wide support and from all sections of societies i.e. Artiyas, shopkeepers, lawyers,

supreme court bar association, college students judges, youths, sports persons, actors, all communities irrespective of religious beliefs.

The Ex-Servicemen mostly belong to farmers' communities. The sons and daughters of Ex-Soldiers are serving in the armed forces and are supporting the farmers' agitation.

The slogan "Kissan Mazdoor Ekta Zindabad" has no reverberates with "Jai Jawan Jai Kissan". The ex-servicemen are visiting the farmers and giving them moral support.

In the last but not the least the Central govt must reconsider the demand of farmers to repeal the one sided laws and in the National Interest. An immediate withdrawal of Acts as demanded by farmers and other sections Society by calling a quick session of Parliament is the only solution.

As the eighth round of the negotiations again remained inconclusive, there needs to be a pragmatic and out of box solution to the problem. Both sides need to be resilient and reconciliatory towards each other. After all it is not a negotiation between two enemies or rivals. Farmers are part and parcel of this nation and the government belongs to the nation. A negotiated settlement is no big deal and hopefully it should head towards that.

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SPIRITUAL WORLD

ਆਪੁ ਤਿਆਗਿ
ਹੋਈਐ ਸਭ ਰੇਣਾ
ਜੀਵਤਾਇ ਇਉ ਮਰੀਐ ॥

ਆਪਾ-ਭਾਵ ਫੱਫ ਕੇ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਚਰਚਾ ਦੀ ਪੁੱਛ ਬਣ ਜਾਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ,
ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਜਿਉਂਦੇ ਜੀ ਹੀ ਮਰ ਜਾਈਦਾ ਹੈ,
(ਭਾਵ, ਇਸ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਤੋਂ ਨਿਰਮੋਹ ਹੋ ਜਾਈਦਾ ਹੈ)।

NEWS BRIEFS

5,142 new corona cases in Kerala, 5,325 recoveries

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: As many as 5,142 new coronavirus cases were reported in Kerala on Friday even as 5,325 more COVID-19 patients recovered, Health Minister K K Shailaja's office said. As many as 64,236 corona patients are under treatment in Kerala, the official release said. As many as 59,569 samples were tested in the past 24 hours. The positivity rate is 8.63 per cent. Ernakulam district reported the highest 708 new cases and Kasargod lowest 65 cases. Three UK returnees tested positive on Friday, taking such cases in Kerala to 50. The samples of corona positive UK returnees were sent to the National Institute of Virology at Pune in Maharashtra for further tests, of which six were found infected with new virus strain. **IANAS**

319 new corona cases, 308 more recoveries in Andhra

AMARAVATI: Andhra Pradesh registered 319 new coronavirus cases on Friday, taking the state's tally to 8.84 lakh, even as 308 more patients recovered from the infection. Krishna district accounted for highest 46 infections in the past 24 hours, followed by Chittoor (44), Guntur (39), West Godavari (27), and East Godavari and Kurnool (26 each), Visakhapatnam (25), Nellore (23), Anantapur (22), Srikakulam (12), Prakasam (10), and Vizianagaram (5). East Godavari district has so far recorded the highest infections of more than 1.23 lakh. **IANAS**

Can't ensure women's safety with victim blaming: Priyanka on NCW member's remark on Budaun victim

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Friday lambasted the remarks made by a member of the National Commission for Women (NCW) who had said the gangrape and murder of a 50-year-old woman in UP's Budaun could have been avoided had the victim not gone out in the evening.

"Will we be able to ensure women's safety with such behaviour? Member of the Women's Commission is blaming the victim for rape. The Budaun administration is concerned about how the post-mortem report of the victim, that brought out the truth, was leaked," said the AICC general secretary in-charge for Uttar Pradesh, in a Facebook



post. "Remember that at this time, a victim of Moradabad is fighting a battle against death in another horrific rape case. Women will not forgive this administrative system and such disgrace," she said in the post in Hindi, referring to another incident of rape in the state.

NCW member Chandramukhi Devi had on Thursday said the gangrape and murder of the 50-year-old anganwadi

worker could have been avoided if she had not gone out unaccompanied in the evening.

"I tell women again and again that they should never go out at odd hours under anyone's influence," she had said after meeting the woman's family members in Budaun district of the state. "I think if she had not gone out in the evening or was accompanied by any child of the family perhaps this incident could have been avoided. But this was pre-planned as she was called through a phone call. She went (out) and then returned in such a state," she had told reporters at the victim's village in Budaun district. Devi has since retracted her statement after a backlash from the opposition and women's bodies. **PTI**

India only country to keep commitments on climate change, says Javadekar

KOLKATA JANUARY 8

Union environment Minister Prakash Javadekar asserted on Friday that India is the only country to keep its commitments on climate action, despite accounting for only six to seven per cent of total carbon emissions in the world. Speaking at a webinar organised by Merchants' Chamber of Commerce & Industry here, Javadekar also claimed that the country is not responsible for climate change, but it is working towards enhancing the generation of solar and renewable energy.

"India is the only country which is honouring its commitment on climate change, even though it is not responsible for it. Several other countries are now preaching carbon neutralisation, something that Indian industry has



adopted on its own. "The Indian industry is taking steps themselves to go carbon neutral. And they are doing it responsibly," he said.

Javadekar also said that the country should gradually shift towards electric vehicles (EVs) to reduce pollution. "Prices of EVs, as of now, are at least 40 per cent higher than their counterparts in diesel and petrol variants. But with the rising volume of EV sales, prices will come down," he

stated. The Union Minister said initially 3000 battery charging stations will be set up along Delhi-Chandigarh and Delhi-Agra highway.

The government has allowed a battery swapping policy as well, under which discharged batteries would be replaced at designated facilities. Talking about the economic crisis caused by COVID-19, Javadekar said that the government had pumped in Rs 30 lakh crore to boost targeted sectors of the economy. **PTI**

SC seeks replies of Centre, UP on plea for filling up vacancies at national, state SC/ST panels

NEW DELHI JANUARY 8

The Supreme Court Friday asked the Centre and the Uttar Pradesh government to reply to a plea seeking appointment of chairperson and others members in national panels for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and in the UP SC/ST commission. A bench headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde took note of an Allahabad-based organisation's PIL that there were several vacancies in National Commission for Scheduled Castes, National Commission for Scheduled Tribes and Uttar Pradesh SC and ST Commission at a time when the atrocities against these communities are rampant. Issue notice, ordered the bench which also comprised Justices A S Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian in the proceedings conducted through video conferencing. **PTI**

Two Ayodhya residents move HC challenging acquittals of Babri mosque demolition accused

LUCKNOW JANUARY 8

Two Ayodhya residents on Friday moved the Allahabad High Court challenging a special CBI court's ruling that acquitted all 32 accused including BJP veterans L K Advani and Murl Manohar Joshi the 1992 demolition of Babri mosque. Ayodhya residents Haji Mahboob and Haji Sayyad Akhlaq Ahmad filed the petition in the Lucknow bench of the high court on behalf of All India Muslim Personal Law Board.

The two decided to challenge the special court's judgement after the CBI did not move the high



court against the acquittal of the accused by the special court, said a counsel for Ayodhya residents.

Twenty-eight years after the Babri Masjid was razed, the special court last year had acquitted all 32 people including BJP veterans L K Advani, M M Joshi and Uma Bharti, accused of inciting a mob of kar sevaks to demolish the Babri mosque. The mosque was believed to have been

HIGHLIGHT

■ Twenty-eight years after the Babri Masjid was razed, the special court last year had acquitted all 32 people including BJP veterans L K Advani, M M Joshi and Uma Bharti, accused of inciting a mob of kar sevaks to demolish the Babri mosque.

built after razing a temple existing at the exact birthplace of Lord Ram. **PTI**

Spurious liquor kills 5 in UP's Bulandshahr; accused held

BULANDSHAHR JANUARY 8

Five people have died and 16 others hospitalised after allegedly consuming spurious liquor in Uttar Pradesh's Bulandshahr district, police said on Friday. The authorities have suspended four policemen and removed three senior Meerut zone excise officials from their post for laxity. An excise inspector and three other members of the department have also been suspended. Police have also arrested the main accused, identified as Kuldeep. **PTI**



A health worker prepares for the dry run of COVID-19 vaccine at a civil hospital, in Bengaluru on Friday. **PTI**

DELHI/NCR

20 crows die in Delhi's Mayur Vihar, officials looking into bird flu angle

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

The death of around 20 crows over the last few days amid the bird flu scare has triggered panic in Mayur Vihar Phase 3 area here. Officials from the animal husbandry unit of the Development Department on Friday collected samples from the area and sent them to a designated laboratory in Jalandhar, Punjab.

"Around 20 crows have died in the area over the last few days. We are following the standard operating procedure. It is yet to be ascertained whether the cause of death is bird flu infection," Dr Rakesh Singh from the department said.

The Centre had on Wednesday said the avian influenza or bird flu out-



break has been reported at 12 epicentres in Kerala, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh, while Haryana is on high alert due to unusual mortality at poultry farms in Panchkula.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia had said on Thursday that there is no case of bird flu in Delhi yet and asked officials to keep a close watch on poultry birds coming in from neighbouring states to prevent any infection. **PTI**

Delhi govt announces 7-day mandatory institutional quarantine for those arriving from UK

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

Travellers coming to Delhi from the United Kingdom will have to undergo a seven-day institutional quarantine even if they test negative for COVID-19, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced on Friday, tightening protocols to "protect Delhiites" from the new UK variant of SARS-CoV-2.

After completion of the institutional quarantine, such passengers will have to go under home-quarantine for another seven days which will be ensured through "strict surveillance" by district authorities.

In an order issued on Friday, the Delhi Disaster Management Authority said the new rules would be applicable on a trial basis till January 14. An official



said a decision on extending the enforcement of the new rules will be taken after reviewing the situation.

Those who test positive for COVID-19 at the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport on arrival from the UK will be isolated at facilities set up by the government, the Chief Minister said. "To protect Delhiites from exposure to the virus from the UK,

the Delhi government has taken important decisions. Travellers coming from UK will have to mandatorily undergo a self-paid RT-PCR test on arrival at the airport," he said.

"All those arriving from the UK who test positive will be isolated at an isolation facility. Negative ones will be taken to a quarantine facility for seven days, followed by seven days of

home-quarantine," Kejriwal tweeted. "Those found negative will be given the option of both the paid and the government's free institutional quarantine facility," Chief Secretary Vijay Dev said. So far, 13 Delhi residents have been found infected with the mutant variant of COVID-19 that was first detected in the UK.

On Thursday, Kejriwal had urged the Centre to extend the ban on flights between India and the UK till January 31 in view of the "extremely serious" COVID situation in that country. A government official said the authorities have identified some hotels near the IGI Airport for paid institutional quarantine for those who do not want to stay at government-run facilities. **PTI**

Cabinet gives nod to set up Konkani academy in city

KEY POINTS

- Konkani is an Indo-Aryan language that is spoken by the Konkani people living primarily in the country's western coastal region.
- It is one of the 22 scheduled languages mentioned in the Constitution's 8th schedule and the official language of Goa.

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

The Delhi cabinet on Friday approved the setting up of a Konkani academy in the national capital. "Congratulations to all Konkani speaking people and all those who love Konkani language. To promote Konkani language, Delhi Cabinet on Friday approved setting up of a Konkani academy in Delhi," Chief

Minister Arvind Kejriwal said in a tweet.

Konkani is an Indo-Aryan language that is spoken by the Konkani people living primarily in the country's western coastal region. It is one of the 22 scheduled languages mentioned in the Constitution's 8th schedule and the official language of Goa. **PTI**

COVID: National capital reports 44 fresh cases, 10 deaths; positivity rate 0.59 per cent

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

Delhi recorded 444 fresh COVID-19 cases on Friday, the seventh time the daily infection count stood below the 500-mark in January, while the positivity rate dipped to 0.59 per cent, officials said.

The infection tally in the city stood at 6.29 lakh and the death toll mounted to 10,654, they said. The active cases tally on Friday dropped to 3,779 from 4,168 on Thursday. The city had recorded 654



cases on Wednesday with a positivity rate of 0.88 per cent, the only time the daily infection count has crossed the 500-mark in the first seven days of January.

Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain had earlier

said the positivity rate had been below one per cent for the past several days, indicating improvement in the pandemic situation here.

From December 21-23, the daily case count had been below the 1000-

mark. On December 21, 803 cases were reported; 939 on December 22 and 871 cases on December 23.

However, on December 24, 1,063 cases were recorded, dropping again to 758 on December 25 and 655 on December 26. On December 27, 757 cases were recorded while on December 28, the daily cases count was 564, the lowest in the last five months. On December 29 and 30, the city recorded 703 and 677 cases, respectively. **PTI**

Police nab key member of illegal arms ring, seize 35 pistols

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

Ahead of Republic Day, Delhi Police's Special Cell has arrested a key member of an interstate illegal arms supply racket and also confiscated 35 pistols along with 60 live cartridges from his possession.

The accused was identified as Ashish Kumar Pandey (24), a resident of Uttar Pradesh's Allahabad. Police said that acting on a tip-off the accused was arrested from Pitampura area on Thursday. "During



a search of his car, which was earlier stolen from the Pandav Nagar area, 35 illegal semi-automatic pistols and 60 live bullets hidden in a secret cavity in the vehicle were recovered. "We have also confiscated a mobile handset

along with a SIM card, used in illegal arms supply activities, from him. "Four pistols were recovered from the secret cavity of each door of the car and 19 pistols from under the stepney. A case was registered at PS Special Cell, Delhi," said Sanjeev Kumar Yadav, DCP, Special Cell.

During interrogation, Ashish disclosed that he was a part of an illegal arms supply syndicate and used to supply the weapons and cartridges to

various persons after getting them from Prahalad, a resident of Badwani in Madhya Pradesh. Ashish, who confessed to being in this illegal trade for more than two years, said that he provided the illegal pistols to criminals in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana. He admitted to having made the secret cavities in the car's doors to dodge the law enforcement agencies.

He disclosed that it costs hardly Rs 7,500 to manufacture a pistol and Rs 15,000 to supply one. Pistols supplied by him in Delhi were eventually sold for Rs 25,000 to Rs 35,000 per pistol, in the adjoining areas. **IANAS**

NEWS BRIEFS

Nigerian, wife caught by HP police for cyber fraud

SHIMLA: Himachal Pradesh Police has arrested a Nigerian and his wife from Delhi in connection with a cyber fraud of around Rs 13 lakh, a senior police official said. Nigerian Nwachukwu@Prince and his Manipuri wife Thanmhing were arrested from Uttam Nagar in Delhi on January 6 in connection with a cyber fraud case registered at Kihar police station in Chamba district, Chamba Superintendent of Police (SP) S Arul Kumar said. An FIR was lodged on January 4 after a complaint was received by a man regarding cyber fraud, he said. Sixteen SIM cards, nine mobile sets, six bank passbooks and other incriminating documents were recovered from them, he added. The SP said that the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the Nigerian High Commission have been informed regarding the arrests. Informing about their modus operandi, he said that the accused befriended the victim through a fake Facebook profile where he wrote that he was from London. He told the victim that he had sent him an iPhone and 30,000 pounds, the SP added. PTI

Madrasa gutted in massive fire in Srinagar

SRINAGAR: A Madrasa was completely damaged in a massive fire in Srinagar, official sources said here on Friday. They said fire broke out in Madrasa Islamia Arabia Daru Salaam at Noorbagh in the city late on Thursday night. "Fire tenders were immediately rushed to douse off the leaping flames, clearly visible from a distance," they said. However, they said before the fire was brought under control, the Madrasa was completely damaged, resulting in loss of property worth lakhs of rupees. "No one was injured in the incident," they said, adding the fire reportedly broke out due to short circuit. They said a case has been registered and further investigation has been initiated into the incident. UNI

Two arrested by J&K Crime Branch

JAMMU: The Crime Branch of Jammu and Kashmir police on Friday arrested two people from Poonch and Jammu districts in connection with the 'Hables-e-commerce' multi-crore fraud case, officials said. The case pertains to huge financial fraud committed by a non-banking financial company in the name and style of 'Hables-e-Commerce Private Limited' run by six accused people who swindled the hard-earned money from gullible people in the twin districts of Poonch and Rajouri after inducement on the pretext of providing them different products with huge interest, they said. PTI

Dry run of COVID-19 vaccine conducted at 36 centres in HP

SUSHIL KUMAR SHARMA PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU Shimla, January 8

A dry run for vaccination against COVID-19 was conducted at 36 centres in Himachal Pradesh, health officials said on Friday. Twenty-five people were administered the dummy vaccine at the centres during the dry run held on Wednesday, they said. All of them were kept under observation for half an hour, they added.

The dry run was done at three centre in the state capital Shimla including IGMC, Ghanahatti and Mashobra, officials said.

On Friday Chief Minister also reviewed the COVID-19 situation in District Kangra and said that there are about 1,200 active cases of COVID-19 in the State, out



KEY POINT

Twenty-five people were administered the dummy vaccine at the centres during the dry run held on Wednesday.

of which there are three hundred cases are in District Kangra. He said that a decline in COVID-19 cases has been observed since December 15, yet it is important to be careful. He said that it is also important to follow the guidelines issued by the Health Department. He said that arrangements for vaccination campaign of COVID-19 have been completed and the vaccination campaign would be made successful as per guidelines.

J&K govt bans entry of poultry

JAMMU, JANUARY 8

The Jammu and Kashmir government has banned the entry of poultry into the union territory following the outbreak of bird flu in neighbouring Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. The ban was announced on Thursday and comes into effect from Friday.

An order issued by Navin K Choudhary, principal secretary, agriculture and animal husbandry department, said, "In the wake of spread of bird flu in neighbouring states of J&K as a measure of abundant precaution and in view of the declaration of whole J&K as 'controlled area' for bird flu disease, government of UT of J&K imposes complete ban on import of live birds,



including poultry and unprocessed poultry meat for any purpose into the union territory of J&K with immediate effect till January 14." Authorities have already said that so far there was no reported incident of bird death due to bird flu in the union territory. Meanwhile, there are reports of scores of crows dying in Rajouri district. The authorities said they have collected samples to ascertain whether these deaths are related to bird flu or not. Another red herring in this regard is that J&K plays host to thousands of migratory birds each winter and the spread of bird flu is primarily attributed to these migratory birds. The wildlife department has, however, asserted that so far there were no reports of bird flu in nearly half a dozen bird sanctuaries in the union territory. IANS

J&K's COVID tally rises to 1,22,303 with 127 fresh cases

SRINAGAR, JANUARY 8

Jammu and Kashmir's COVID-19 caseload climbed to 1,22,303 on Friday with 127 fresh infections while the death toll mounted to 1,907 as four more people succumbed to the disease, officials said. Of the fresh cases, 85 were from the Jammu division and 42 from the Kashmir division of the union territory, they said.

Jammu district recorded the highest number of fresh cases at 48, followed by 22 in Srinagar and 10 in Samba, the officials said. While four districts Anantnag, Kulgam,

The number of active cases in the union territory stands at 2,241. So far, 1,18,155 patients have recovered

Kishtwar and Shopian did not report any fresh cases, 13 other districts recorded fresh cases in single digits. The number of active cases in the union territory stands at 2,241. So far, 1,18,155 patients have recovered, the officials said. Of the four deaths recorded in the union territory on Friday, two each were from the Jammu division and the Kashmir Valley, they said. PTI

3-year house tax exemption for people of merged areas of Palampur Municipal Corporation: HP Minister

PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU Shimla, January 8

Himachal Pradesh Urban Development Minister Suresh Bhardwaj said the residents of areas that have been merged with the newly created Palampur Municipal Corporation will be exempt from any house tax for three years. Addressing a press conference in Palampur on Friday, the Minister said, "While giving relief to the people of the merged area, the state govern-



ment has decided that they will not have to pay any kind of house...taxes for the next three years." This would not mean that there would be no development of the municipal corporation, he said adding that according to the draft and rules

of the corporation, the development work of all the wards will continue. In October 2020, the Himachal Pradesh Cabinet decided to upgrade the municipal councils of Mandi, Solan and Palampur towns to municipal corporations by inclusion of adjoining area. Himachal Pradesh has only two municipal corporations, namely Shimla and Dharamsala. After the merger, the government property and the property of the pan-

Haryana Poultry farms in deep crisis due to suspected bird flu

RAJENDRA KHATRY PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU Chandigarh, January 8

Poultry farm operators have suffered a major loss due to the death of about four and a half lakh chickens in the last few days in Barwala, Haryana. Many poultry farms were closed here during the Corona period. Now the panic of bird flu has spread.

According to the sources around 10 lakhs chickens have died in the region. There were around 90 lakh chickens in the region before the disease outbreak. Now the central team has collected samples of the dead birds to confirm the disease. Panchkula poultry farms have a huge turnover of around Rs 5 crore per day. Currently there is a difference of

The area has several poultry farms, which have a capacity of 50,000 eggs per day. Some have a daily production of three to four lakh eggs.

up to ten per cent in production.

The trouble is more where the farm owners where the chickens were few and most have died. It is worth mentioning that there were about 135 poultry farms in the Barwala and Raipur Rani belt before the Corona period.

The average business here was Rs 8 crore per day. More than 40 poultry farms here were closed after the Corona period. Now only 90 poultry farms are left. The area

has several poultry farms, which have a capacity of 50,000 eggs per day. Some have a daily production of three to four lakh eggs.

Some poultry farm owners say that the loss of chickens has resulted in damage, but there are many farms in which not a single chicken has died. There is not much impact on eggs business yet. The sample report will decide a lot. Poultry farm owners say that they are taking precaution in the maintenance of chickens.

Eggs are supplied from the Poultry Farm area of Panchkula to Jammu, Kashmir and even North-East. The region is the second largest producer of eggs in Asia. Many poultry farms in the Barwala-Raipur Rani poultry belt were closed during the Corona period.

Himachal sets up teams to contain bird flu, monitoring situation



PUNJAB EXPRESS BUREAU Shimla, January 8

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur said on Friday that authorities were monitoring the migratory birds at the Pong Dam and adjoining areas and set up quick reaction teams to contain bird flu. Thakur said that 65 teams of the Animal Husbandry and the Wildlife Departments were regularly monitoring the situation. Presiding over a review meeting here on the ways to control avian influenza reported in the Pong wetlands this week, he said that 3,410 migratory birds have so far died of the flu. 90 per cent of the dead birds were endangered bar-headed geese.

The infected birds have been buried as per the health protocol to prevent the spread of the virus. Samples of poultry have also been sent to the Regional Disease Diagnostic Laboratory in Jalandhar in neighbouring Punjab.

A communication from the ICAR-National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases in Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh said that all five birds sent by the Himachal government had tested positive for H5N1 avian influenza virus by real-time RT-PCR tests. Besides the bar-headed geese, other affected species were the Shoveller, River Tern, Pochard and Common Teal. Every winter, the Pong wetlands offer home to over 1,00,000 birds of 114 species, including the Bar-Headed Geese, Northern Pintail, Eurasian Coot, Common Teal, Common Pochard, Northern Shoveller, Great Cormorant, Eurasian Wigeon, and Ruddy Shelduck. PTI

Srinagar-Jammu highway cleared of snow, debris; stranded vehicles allowed to ply as of now

SRINAGAR, JANUARY 8

Vehicles stranded on the Srinagar-Jammu national highway were allowed to ply towards their destinations on Friday as the arterial road was cleared after remaining closed for five days due to heavy snowfall, officials said.

No new traffic was, however, allowed on the highway, the only all-weather road connecting Kashmir with the rest of the country, even though there was improvement in weather conditions across the Valley, they said. "Stranded traffic has been allowed to move after the highway was cleared for the movement of traffic this morning," an official of the Traffic control room said.



The 260-kilometre-long highway was blocked due to snow, landslides and shooting stones caused by heavy snowfall since Sunday.

"After the light traffic is cleared, essential service vehicles and fuel and gas tankers will be allowed to ply towards Srinagar," he said. The decision on re-opening the highway for fresh traffic will be taken once all the stranded vehicles are cleared and the condition of the road, which has become slippery

at places due to snowfall, is assessed, the official said.

The official said Mughal Road the alternative road-link which connects the Valley to Jammu division through the Shopian-Rajouri axis was closed for traffic due to heavy snowfall in the region. BKashmir valley was cut off from the rest of the country on Sunday as the surface and the aerial connections were suspended because of the heavy snow.

However, air traffic to and from Srinagar airport was restored on Thursday morning. Meanwhile, the weather office said conditions have improved across the Valley and it is likely to remain dry till January 14. PTI

Minor who inadvertently crossed LoC repatriated

JAMMU, JANUARY 8



A minor, who had inadvertently crossed the Line of Control (LoC) from Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) to Poonch district in Jammu and Kashmir, has been repatriated, the army said on Friday.

Ali Haidar, 14, had

crossed the LoC into the Indian side on December 31 and was apprehended by a police party near the Batar nallah in Poonch.

He has been handed over to the Pakistan army.

"Ali Haider, son of Mohd Sharief and resident of Mirpur (PoJK), who had inadvertently crossed over to our side of the LoC on December 31, has been handed over to the Pakistan army," the Indian army said. On December 7, two girls, who had inadvertently crossed into the Indian side in Poonch, were repatriated by the army. IANS



View of the snow covered area after the town received fresh snowfall, at Keylong in Lahaul-Spiti District, on Friday. PTI

J&K police introduces highway patrol vehicles to increase security

SRINAGAR, JANUARY 8

Further strengthening its security grid, Jammu and Kashmir police have introduced highway patrol vehicles and launched CCTV network monitoring lab in Jammu. "There have been many infiltration attempts in Jammu province through national highway in past years. There have been many encounters and a larger number of arms and ammunition have been recovered at the highway," said Mukesh

Singh, IGP Jammu Zone. "The security personnel have prevented these by strengthening the border grid. In this process, the police headquarters has introduced highway patrol vehicles which are equipped with screens, cameras and announcement systems," informed IGP. "These vehicles can send live feeds in the highway patrol vehicles CCTV network monitoring lab and police control rooms where head police officials

will be able to keep an eye on the moments on the highway especially during infiltration, protest, accident or while following a vehicle," IGP said adding that the higher officials could also be able to guide the jawan in the vehicle if needed with the help of the two-way communication system installed in the vehicle. "As many as 33 vehicles have been introduced across the Jammu region," informed Kulbeer Singh, SSP Police Control Room, Jammu. AGENCY

NEWS BRIEFS

Merkel angry, sad over US Capitol chaos

BERLIN: German Chancellor Angela Merkel expressed her anger and sadness after supporters of US President Donald Trump stormed the Capitol building in Washington D.C. The unsettling pictures of the riots that took place on Wednesday afternoon made her "angry and also sad", Xinhua news agency quoted Merkel as saying in a video statement on Thursday. The Chancellor said she deeply regretted that Trump had not admitted his defeat since the November 3, 2020, US presidential election. "Doubts about the outcome of the election were stoked, and that set the atmosphere for the night's events to become possible," Merkel said. **IANIS**

Global Covid-19 caseload nearly 88mn: Johns Hopkins

WASHINGTON: The overall global coronavirus caseload has increased to nearly 88 million, while the deaths have surged to more than 1.89 million, according to the Johns Hopkins University. In its latest update on Friday morning, the University's Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) revealed that the current global caseload and death toll stood at 87,952,778 and 1,895,925, respectively. The US is the worst-hit country with the world's highest number of cases and deaths at 21,543,310 and 364,735, respectively, according to the CSSE. **IANIS**

NZ woman killed in suspected shark attack

WELLINGTON: A young woman died on Friday after a rare suspected shark attack in New Zealand, the police confirmed on Friday. According to the police, the incident took place at Waihi Beach, a popular tourist spot about 153 km southeast of Auckland, on Thursday evening, reports Xinhua news agency. "Emergency services were called at about 5.10 p.m. after reports of a woman being injured in the water. Initial indications suggest she may have been injured by a shark," said a police statement. "Sadly, she died at the scene a short time later," it said, adding the death has been referred to the coroner. **IANIS**

Bilawal re-elected as PPP Chairman

ISLAMABAD: Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari has been re-elected unopposed as Chairman of the opposition Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) for another four years, the media reported on Friday. In a statement on Thursday, the party's media office said that Bhutto-Zardari's re-election was confirmed after intra-party elections at the federal level were held in Karachi on Wednesday "in accordance with Constitution of the PPP and the country's Elections Act 2017". Dawn news reported. Besides Bhutto-Zardari, Syed Nayyer Hussain Bukhari has been elected unopposed as the PPP Secretary General, Faisal Karim Kundi as Secretary Information and Rukhsana Bungash as Secretary Finance. Son of late Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and former President Asif Ali Zardari, Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari has been the PPP Chairman since he assumed the post in December 2007. **IANIS**

Capitol siege raises security concerns for Biden inaugural

WASHINGTON, JANUARY 8

The violent insurrection at the US Capitol is intensifying scrutiny over security at an inauguration ceremony for President-elect Joe Biden already reshaped by a pandemic and the prospect that his predecessor may not attend. Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris will take the oath of office from the Capitol's West Front, one of the very locations where a violent mob overpowered police and stormed the building.

They also scaled and occupied the scaffolding and bleachers in place for the ceremonies. Inauguration plans were already scaled back because of the coronavirus. But the brazen attack raises new questions about preparedness for the event that welcome the new administration after a bitter election. The congressional



leaders responsible for coordinating the inauguration insisted on Thursday night that events would move forward. "Yesterday was a sad and solemn day for our country," said Republican Senator Roy Blunt of Missouri and Democratic Sen. Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota.

"The outrageous attack on the Capitol, however, will not stop us from affirming to Americans and the world that our democracy endures.

The great American tradition of an inaugural ceremony has occurred in times of peace, in times of turmoil, in times of prosperity, and in times of adversity. We will be swearing in President-elect Biden," they continued.

Security forces have already begun taking extra precautions in the wake of Wednesday's mayhem. Roughly 6,200 members of the National Guard from six states Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Dela-

Inauguration plans were already scaled back because of the coronavirus but the attack raises new questions about preparedness for the event that welcome the new administration after a bitter election

ware and Maryland will help support the Capitol Police and other law enforcement in Washington for the next 30 days. Inauguration Day road closures may be altered. Crews also erected on the Capitol grounds tall, black metal fences designed to be impossible to climb. Similar structures have previously been used around the White House and in other cities that faced prolonged demonstrations. **AP**

Police officer injured in US Capitol riot dies, toll rises to five



WASHINGTON, JANUARY 8

A police officer who sustained injuries during the US Capitol violence has died, officials have said, raising the death toll in the riot to five. US Capitol Police Officer Brian D Sicknick was injured while engaging with protesters on Wednesday and returned to his division office, where he collapsed.

He was taken to a local hospital where he "passed away due to injuries sustained while on-duty" at

"approximately 9:30 pm this evening", US Capitol Police (USCP) said in a late-night statement on Thursday.

The death of Sicknick will be investigated by the Metropolitan Police Department's Homicide Branch, the USCP and federal agencies, the statement said. Congressman Dean Phillips said: "My heart goes out to the family of the officer and to all who risk their lives every day to protect and serve our communities with dignity

The death of US Capitol Police Officer Brian D Sicknick will be investigated by the Metropolitan Police Department's Homicide Branch, the USCP and federal agencies

and principle. "A US Capitol Police officer has died from yesterday's riot. That makes five known deaths from Trump's insurrection. We must have accountability," Congressman Lloyd Doggett tweeted on Thursday.

Others who died include Ashil Babbitt, a US Air Force veteran and a Trump supporter. Babbitt, a resident of San Diego, was shot by the Capitol Police on Wednesday. **PTI**

Restaurants, bars, cinemas in France to remain closed



PARIS, JANUARY 8

Restaurants, bars, cinemas in France will not reopen in January as earlier planned due to the high rate of Covid-19 infections and the risk of fresh cases of the new coronavirus variants recently

detected in the UK and South Africa, Prime Minister Jean Castex announced.

"The situation is far from being back to normal. The level of contamination remains high and has tended to increase since mid-December," Xinhua news agency quoted

Castex as saying at a press conference on Thursday. An average of 15,000 infections are registered per day versus 10,000 recorded in December 2020.

One in two intensive care beds are occupied by Covid-19 patients and non-essential surgical operations are still being postponed to alleviate pressure on hospitals. Also at the press conference, Health Minister Olivier Veran confirmed that 19 infections with the coronavirus variant first reported in the UK have been detected so far in France, including two cases identified in worrying clusters in Ile-de France and Brittany. **IANIS**

Easing of England lockdown to be gradual unwrapping: Johnson

MELBOURNE, JANUARY 1

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson said that the easing of England's new national lockdown, the third of its kind since the onset of the pandemic early last year, will be a "gradual unwrapping" and not a "big bang".

Addressing MPs in the House of Commons, Johnson said that the government will use "every available second" of the lockdown to place an "invisible shield" around the elderly and other vulnerable people through the rollout of Covid-19 vaccines in the coming weeks, reports Xi-



nhua news agency. The Prime Minister justified his decision to order a third national shutdown with the emergence of a new variant of the virus first identified in Britain, which is said to be up to 70 per cent more transmissible. The variant was "spreading with frightening ease and speed in spite of the sterling work of the Brit-

"This mutation has led to more cases than we've seen ever before. Numbers that alas cannot be explained away by the meteoric rise in testing"

ish public", said Johnson, adding that it left him with "no choice" but to implement the third lockdown in England. "This mutation has led to more cases than we've seen ever before. Numbers that alas cannot be explained away by the meteoric rise in testing," Johnson told MPs. **IANIS**

Kim Jong-un vows to advance social construction

SEOUL, JANUARY 8

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has vowed to further improve social system and foreign relations at the ongoing party congress, a state media report said on Friday.

In the report, the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said that Kim suggested practical ways to give full play to the advantages of the country's social system during third-day session of the eighth Congress of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea on Thursday, reports Xinhua news agency. **IANIS**

Australian bushfires to become 'more frequent, prolonged, severe'

CANBERRA, JANUARY 8

Experts have warned that Australia's devastating 2019-20 "Black Summer" bushfires were a "wake up call" to the extreme effects of climate change in the country.

In a study published on late Thursday, a team from the Australian National University (ANU) and the Australian Research Council (ARC) Centre of Excellence for Climate Extremes warned that bushfires will become increasingly more severe in the country as a result of global warming, reports Xinhua news agency. The



2019-20 bushfire season was one of the worst in Australian history.

More than 30 people died in the fires with another estimated 445 deaths linked to smoke inhalation, and more than 18 million hectares

of land were burned. "In the lead up to the summer of 2019/2020 many parts of southeast Australia were three years into a severe drought," Nerilie Abram, the lead author of the study from ANU, said in a statement. Abram

added that "2019 was our hottest and driest year on record. This climate set-up created exceptionally dry fuel loads that primed the landscape to burn, and dangerous fire weather that allowed fires to quickly escalate". "Our new work highlights the strong evidence that southeast Australia's climate has shifted, and that this type of fire weather is becoming more frequent, prolonged and severe." The study found that predictions made more than 10 years ago that the climate-driven fire risk would increase significantly by 2020 had come true. **IANIS**

Prominent Hong Kong pro-democracy activist arrested

HONG KONG, JANUARY 8

Joshua Wong, a prominent Hong Kong pro-democracy activist, was arrested on Friday over "subverting the state power" under the national security law which China imposed in the city last year.

Opposition politician Tam Tak-chi was also arrested along with Wong, who was the head of disbanded Demosisto -- a pro-democracy group advocating the city's independence, Xinhua news agency

The national security law was enacted in Hong Kong in June 30, 2020, to ban acts of secession, subversion, terrorism and collusion with foreign forces.

reported. Both Wong and Tak-chi have already been put in jail. Wong was sentenced to 13 and a half months in prison

last month for besieging the police headquarters in June 2019, and Tam is awaiting trial behind bars for multiple offenses. In August 2020, the 27-year-old activist was also charged for participating in a banned vigil marking the anniversary of the 1989 Tiananmen Square crackdown in China.

The national security law was enacted in Hong Kong in June 30, 2020, to ban acts of secession, subversion, terrorism and collusion with foreign forces. **IANIS**

Japan ordered to pay damages to WWII sex slavery victims

SEOUL, JANUARY 8

A Seoul court on Friday ordered the Japanese government to pay damages to South Korean victims who were forced into sex slavery during World War II. The Seoul Central District Court ruled that Japan should pay reparations of 100 million won (\$91,200) to each of 12 plaintiffs, who filed a petition for dispute settlement in August 2013, reports Xinhua news agency.

Out of the 12 plaintiffs joining the damages claim suit, only five are still alive. Among the 238 South Ko-



rean women who identified themselves as former sex slaves, the number of survivors is 16. It marked the first time that a court in South Korea handed a verdict to order Japan's reparation payment to the victims. The damages claim

suit was only referred to the Seoul court in January 2016, and the first hearing was held in April 2020. The court said in the ruling that the plaintiffs suffered from extreme, unimaginable mental and physical pain and were not even

compensated for their suffering, noting that illegal acts by the accused can be acknowledged through evidence, relevant materials and testimonies. The verdict noted that it would be reasonable to value the damages amount at over 100 million won.

According to historians, hundreds of thousands of Asian women, mostly from the Korean Peninsula, were kidnapped, coerced or duped into sexual servitude for Japanese troops before and during the Pacific War. The Korean Peninsula was colonised by Japan from 1910 to 1945. **IANIS**

lifestyle

Malaika Arora recalls days when she could rock the bangs

Malaika Arora posted a monochrome image from the days when she could rock the bang look. In the picture posted on Instagram, Malaika poses with a mic, aching the bang hairstyle. "The days when I could rock my bangs n in my head think am a rock star #throwbackthursday #fakemike pic @farrokhchothia," Malaika wrote with the picture.

Earlier this month, Malaika made her relationship with Bollywood actor Arjun Kapoor official on Instagram with a loved-up picture. She started the New Year with a picture with Arjun. "It's a new dawn, it's a new day, it's a new year 2021 #eternallygrateful," she captioned the image on Instagram. In the image, Malaika has her arm on Arjun's shoulder. She is seen in a shimmery pantsuit while Arjun is seen in a vibrant shirt with brown pants.

While Arjun and Malaika have not denied their relationship, they don't post many photos together on the internet. **IAN S**



Kareena is 'waiting'



Expectant mother Kareena Kapoor Khan is currently in wait mode, going by her post on social media. Kareena posted a monochrome photograph on Instagram. In the image, she sits on a sofa in a thigh high slit outfit. "I'm waiting... (heart emoji)," she wrote. The caption seems cryptic and seems like she awaits the arrival of her second baby. Kareena's best friends Malaika Arora and Amrita Arora too dropped comments on the picture. Malaika wrote: "Am also waiting" "I'm also waiting" Amrita said. Kareena, who is married to actor Saif Ali Khan, gave birth to their first-born, Taimur, in 2016. She is currently expecting their second baby, and she often shares photographs of her baby bump on social media. Kareena and Saif had announced on August 12 that they are expecting their second child. The actress recently completed her shoot for the upcoming film "Laal Singh Chaddha" co-starring Aamir Khan in Delhi. **IAN S**



Madhuri shares her 'perfect start to 2021'



Actress Madhuri Dixit Nene began the new year amidst sea, breeze and sunset. In a new Instagram photo she posted, Madhuri and her husband Sriram Nene are seen smiling for the lens with sea as a backdrop. "Sea + Breeze + Sunset= Perfect start to #2021," She captioned the photo. Her husband tweeted a solo pic and wrote: "Love the vitamin Sea!" On December 31, Madhuri had tweeted that she was "looking at the bright side with the hope for a better new year for all of us". Meanwhile, the actress had taken up her interest in music in a big way during lockdown last year. Apart from posting videos of her singing, she also released her first single titled "Candle". **IAN S**

Parineeti Chopra shares pics with her 'producers'



Actress Parineeti Chopra has shared a picture of her parents, hilariously tagging them as her producers. Parineeti posted a picture on Instagram, where she is seen posing with her parents in the garden. "My producers," the actress captioned the image. Parineeti's cousin and Indian actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas commented: "How lovely. I miss that garden." This year, Parineeti will be seen in "Sandeep Aur Pinky Faraar", directed by Dibakar Banerjee and also featuring her "Ishaqzaade" co-actor Arjun Kapoor. Her other upcoming film is "The Girl On The Train", directed by Ribhu Dasgupta. The film is an official Hindi remake of the Hollywood psychological thriller "The Girl On The Train", which is based on Paula Hawkins' 2015 bestseller of the same name. Parineeti will also be seen sharing screen space with Ranbir Kapoor in the upcoming film "Animal", directed by Sandeep Reddy Vanga. **IAN S**



KANGANA: I am being tortured mentally, emotionally and physically

Actress Kangana Ranaut has alleged that she is being tortured mentally, emotionally and physically. She further claimed she has been asked not to disclose to anyone about the kind of torture she is being subjected to. Kangana released a video on her verified Twitter account on Friday where she spoke about the cases filed against her and the torture that she is facing every day. She added that we are going back to the medieval age where women were burnt at stake. In the video, Kangana speaks in Hindi: "Ever since I have started speaking for the interest of the nation, the way I am being treated and tortured, the entire country can see that. My house was broken in an illegal manner. Everyday new cases are being filed against me because I have spoken for the interest of the farmers. One case has been filed against me even for laughing. My sister Rangoli has protested against doctors being tortured during the beginning of the pandemic. A case was filed against her and my name was also dragged into it, whereas I was not even on Twitter at that time. Our honourable Chief Justice ji has rejected it." "I have even been ordered to give haajri (attendance) at the police station although I don't know for what reason. I have also been asked not to disclose to anyone or talk about the kind of torture I am facing. **IAN S**

NEWSBRIEFS

ITC's Dermafique launches Bio-Cellulose Face Masques

AMRITSAR: ITC's leading skincare brand, Dermafique, announced the launch of its first Bio-Cellulose Face Masques. Co-designed by Dermatologists, the Dermafique Bio Cellulose Face Masques are crafted with biodegradable Bio cellulose fibers. **BPE**

itel Mobile becomes stronger with 7 crore happy customers

CHANDIGARH: itel announced seven crores+ happy customers in India. This milestone comes in less than five years of its operations. itel has been instrumental in democratizing technology for all, thereby empowering consumers with trendy technology, backed with affordability and accessibility. **BPE**

Raheja QBE General Insurance introduces Corona Kavach policy

CHANDIGARH: Raheja QBE General Insurance (RQBE) introduced the 'Corona Kavach' Policy. This new indemnity health insurance policy will offer cover against medical expenses incurred due to hospitalization of individuals seeking treatment for COVID-19. **BPE**

Taco Bell launches its new Best of Bell Menu

CHANDIGARH: Taco Bell launches its new Best of Bell menu, which offers the brand's signature menu items at 'delightful prices'. The Best of Bell menu is an innovative new value-offering being introduced by Taco Bell in India, with each item on the menu priced at just INR 59 (for vegetarian variants) and INR 69 (for non-vegetarian variants). **BPE**

Honda's Activa brand creates new history in the Indian 2Wheeler industry

CHANDIGARH: Honda 2Wheeler India today announced that India's No. 1 selling scooter brand 'Activa' has now created new first as the only scooter brand in the history of Indian two-wheeler industry to achieve 2.5 crore customers mark. **BPE**

SBI offers further interest concession on home loans

MUMBAI, JANUARY 8

While inviting the participation of foreign investors into India's economy, Union Minister Piyush Goyal on Tuesday said during April-September period, the country received FDI inflows worth \$40 billion.

Addressing the inaugural session of CII's Partnership Summit 2020, through virtual means, Minister of Railways, Commerce & Industry, Consumer Affairs and Food & Public Distribution Goyal invited foreign investors to be a part of India's growth story. The Minister said continuing on an open path, India has been systematically opening up new sectors of



the economy. He said that FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) flows in India have been continuously growing. "During the first nine months of this year, at the peak of Covid-19 pandemic, our FDI has grown. We have one of the most facilitative FDI policies in the world. During the April-September period, FDI inflows

are at \$40 billion, which has been higher than last year by about 13 per cent," he said. "Last year, we announced one of the most attractive tax rates available anywhere in the world at 22 per cent tax for businesses in India and 15 per cent tax for new manufacturing facilities set up after October 2019. **IAN S**

Equalisation levy non-discriminatory, says Centre

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

The Central government has said that the equalisation levy is non-discriminatory and seeks to ensure a level-playing field between e-commerce activities undertaken by entities resident in India, and those that are not. The development comes day after the office of USTR released its findings on the section 301 investigation into India's digital Services tax (DST) and concluded that India's DST - the equalisation levy - is discriminatory and restricts US commerce.

Last year, the US administration had announced initiation of investigation under section 301 of the US Trade Act, 1974 against the taxation on digital services



"With respect to India, the focus of the investigation was on the 2 per cent 'Equalisation Levy' (EL) levied by India on e-commerce supply of services,"

an official communique said on Thursday. "The US investigation included whether the EL discriminated against the US companies, was applied retroactively, and diverged from US or international tax norms due to its applicability on entities not resident in India." As per the communique, the US administration requested for consultations, and India

submitted its comments to the USTR on July 15, 2020, participated in the bilateral consultation held on November 5, 2020, emphasising that the EL is not discriminatory. "It was also clarified that the EL was applied only prospectively, and has no extra-territorial application, since it is based on sales occurring in the territory of India through digital means." India based e-commerce operators are already subject to taxes in India for revenue generated from Indian market. However, in the absence of the EL, non-resident e-commerce operators are not required to pay taxes in respect of the consideration received in the e-commerce supply or services made in the Indian market. **IAN S**

Global used smartphone market to reach \$65 bn in 2024: IDC

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

The global shipments of used smartphones, both officially refurbished and used, are expected to reach 351.6 million units registering \$65 billion in market value in 2024, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 11.2 per cent from 2019 to 2024, an IDC report said on Friday. For 2020, the used smartphones shipments were likely to reach 225.4 million units.

This represents an increase of 9.2 per cent



over the 206.5 million units shipped in 2019. "In contrast to the recent declines in the new smartphone market, as well as the forecast for minimal growth in new shipments over the next few years, the used market for smartphones shows no signs of slowing down across all parts of

the globe," said Anthony Scarsella, research manager with IDC's Worldwide Quarterly Mobile Phone Tracker.

"Refurbished and used devices continue to provide cost-effective alternatives to both consumers and businesses that are looking to save money when purchasing a smartphone," Scarsella added. Over the past year, there has been rapid growth in trade-in programmes and average selling prices (ASPs) across numerous channels. **IAN S**

Vodafone Idea moves SC over 'errors' in DOT's AGR calculation

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

A day after Bharti Airtel approached the Supreme Court over the assessment of adjusted gross revenue (AGR) calculations, Vodafone Idea also moved the top court seeking "correction" in the AGR assessment.

The petition filed by the telco on Thursday said that payments made by the company have not been accounted for in the AGR demands issued by the department. Further, it



also said that double counting has been done on some revenue items in the AGR demands. It also said that deduction has not been given for PSTN related call

charges and for roaming charges actually paid to other operators. "The excess demand upon the applicant which is attributable to these error amounts to

Rs 5,932 crores of principal amount, which would have an overall impact of over four times on the total principal amount aforementioned due to the imposition of interest, penalty and interest on penalty," the petition said.

In September, the apex court allowed telecom operators 10 years to pay up AGR dues. Vodafone Idea's total AGR dues as per DoT stood at Rs 58,254 crore, while the dues according to the company stood at Rs 21,533 crore. **IAN S**

Possible govt intervention to curb high domestic steel prices: Report

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

The increase in India's domestic steel consumption from 2QFY21 has led to higher cost which might invite a government intervention to curb prices, India Ratings and Research said on Friday.

In its steel monitor report, the agency cited that India's domestic consumption in November 2020 was at 8.93 MT, 7.8 per cent higher on MoM level but 2 per cent lower in terms of YoY comparison. "The improved domestic demand is reflected in steel prices which further increased in November 2020." Con-



sumption within the flat products segment has been supported by a demand from the automobile and consumer durable industry, due to the festive season, in addition to the ongoing work-from-home culture and preference for personal

mobility." However, the report pointed out that steel mills have raised prices with consumption growing, resulting in a reduction in inventories at steel mills, in addition to the high iron ore prices because of tight domestic supplies. **IAN S**

Gold plunges Rs 614, silver tanks Rs 1,609

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

Gold prices fell Rs 614 to Rs 49,763 per 10 gram in the national capital on Friday, tracking a weak global trend, according to HDFC Securities. In the previous trade, the precious metal had closed at Rs 50,377 per 10 gram.

Silver prices also plunged Rs 1,609 to Rs 67,518 per kilogram from Rs 69,127 per kilogram in the previous trade. In the international market, gold was trading lower at USD 1,889 per ounce, while silver was quoting flat at USD 26.68 per ounce. **PTI**

63 moons urges NCD, FD holders to oppose DHFL resolution plan at NCLT, seek Rs 30,000 cr

MUMBAI, JANUARY 8

63 moons technologies has invited other non-convertible debentures (NCD) and fixed deposit (FD) holders of Dewan Housing Finance Ltd (DHFL) to oppose the DHFL resolution plan at the National Company Law Tribunal Mumbai, by filing separate applications to seek fraudulent transaction recovery benefits of Rs 30,000 crore.

The company stated that both NCD and FD holders have to face huge hair-cuts, approximately of Rs 50,000 crore in the current insolvency process. The promoters of DHFL have siphoned approximately Rs 30,000



crore, which has been traced by the Grant Thornton forensic audit report itself. 63 moons, which holds around Rs 200 crore of NCDs of DHFL, has already filed an application in the NCLT Mumbai, seeking that the fraudulent transaction recovery benefit of approximately Rs 30,000 crore filed by DHFL administrator under Section 66 of Insolvency

and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) should come to creditors, including NCD/FD holders who are the actual sufferers of the default, and not to the buyer (Resolution Applicant) in IBC.

The current DHFL resolution plan proposes that the recovery will go to the buyer, who would be paying a mere Rs 35,000 crore as against the debt of Rs 85,000 crore, resulting in Rs 50,000 crore write-off/loss to the creditors. 63 moons has argued that applications for recovery under Section 66 are meant for the benefit of the defrauded parties and the creditors and cannot be whittled away by the buyer (Resolution Applicant). **IAN S**

LG sees record Q4 earnings on solid home appliance sales

SEOUL, JANUARY 8

LG Electronics on Friday forecast robust fourth-quarter earnings as sales from its mainstay home appliances apparently remained solid despite the weakness of the US dollar. In its earnings guidance, the South Korean tech giant estimated its operating profit at 647 billion won (\$592 million) for the October-December period in 2020, a six fold increase from a year ago.

On a quarter-on-quarter basis, LG's fourth-quarter sales estimate was up 11 per cent from the previous quarter, when it racked up 16.9 trillion won. Operating profit, however, was down 32.5 percent compared to the third quarter. For the whole of 2020, LG expected its operating profit to reach 3.19 trillion won, up 31 percent from a



year earlier, with its sales to climb 1.5 percent on-year to 63.26 trillion won, reports Yonhap news agency. LG did not break down performances of its respective business divisions, saying it will announce the detailed earnings later this month.

LG's home appliance and air solution (H&A) business unit is again expected to have anchored the company's performance. LG's struggling mobile and vehicle component solutions (VS) business divisions were projected to remain in the red in the fourth quarter. **IAN S**

Sensex rallies over 300 points in early trade; Nifty tops 14,200

MUMBAI, JANUARY 8

Equity benchmark Sensex surged over 300 points in early trade on Friday, helped by gains mainly in index majors Infosys, TCS and HDFC Bank amid positive trend in global equities. The 30-share BSE index was trading 328.75 points or 0.68 per cent higher at 48,422.07. Likewise, the broader NSE Nifty jumped 101.15 points or 0.72 per cent to 14,238.50 in opening deals.

On the Sensex chart, Sun Pharma was the top gainer, rising around 2 per cent, followed by Infosys, PowerGrid, TCS, Tech Mahindra, L&T, Dr Reddys and Bajaj Auto. On the other hand, HDFC, Titan, Kotak Bank and Bajaj Finserv were among the laggards. In the previous session, the



Sensex had ended 80.74 points or 0.17 per cent lower at 48,093.32, and the Nifty had slipped 8.90 points or 0.06 per cent to 14,137.35. Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) were net buyers in the capital market as they purchased shares worth Rs 382.30 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data. According to Binod Modi, Head-Strategy at Reliance Securities, domestic equities continue to look steady

and firm at the moment. A sign of fatigue is visible in the benchmark indices for the last couple of trading days despite key economic data indicated a continued rebound in December 2020, he added. Similarly, a sharp dip in FPIs net flows in recent days indicate a kind of profit booking and sector rotation given a sharp return generated by select sectors, Modi said. Domestic markets are, how-

On the Sensex chart, Sun Pharma was the top gainer, rising around 2 per cent

ever, following the global investor euphoria around American politics. US markets recorded fresh highs as investors continue to focus on stronger fiscal stimulus after Congress confirmed president-elect Joe Biden's victory.

Elsewhere in Asia, bourses in Hong Kong, Tokyo and Seoul were trading with significant gains in mid-session deals, while Shanghai was in the red. Meanwhile, the global oil benchmark Brent crude was trading 0.26 per cent higher at USD 54.52 per barrel. **PTI**

Luxury car Mercedes Benz to turn further pricey from Jan 15



CHENNAI, JANUARY 8

Luxury car maker Mercedes-Benz India on Friday said its cars would turn costlier from January 15 onwards owing to five per cent price hike across its models range. According to the company, the weakening of the Indian currency compared to the euro since the past six to seven months, combined with an increase in input costs, have been exerting significant pressure on the overall costs.

A combination of all these factors led to a significant increase in the com-

pany's operational costs, prompting it to revise the ex-showroom of the entire model range and continue to build a sustainable and fundamentally strong business, the company said. According to Managing Director & CEO Martin Schwenk, the new price range of the company's select vehicles will ensure the brand's premium price positioning, assuring a sustainable growth both for the brand and the dealer partners, enabling continuation of the best-in-segment customer ownership experiences, equated with Mercedes Benz. **IAN S**

India fight back after Smith century on Day 2

SYDNEY, JANUARY 8

Steve Smith scored Australia's first century of the series to drive the hosts to 338 all out but India stood firm with 96 for two to leave the third Test in the balance at the end of the second day in Sydney on Friday.

India spinner Ravindra Jadeja took 4-62 and brilliantly ran out Smith for 131 to end Australia's first innings before tea and the home pace attack managed only to oust India's openers before the close of play.

Josh Hazlewood celebrated his 30th birthday by ending Rohit Sharma's first innings of the series caught and bowled for 26 before Pat Cummins had Shubman Gill caught at gully just after the young opener had reached



his maiden half-century.

The obdurate Cheteshwar Pujara, unbeaten on nine, and his captain Ajinkya Rahane, who had scored five not out, will resume India's innings on day three as the tourists look to break the 1-1 deadlock in the four-match series.

That task looked a lot easier while Smith was

face masks.

They were all on their feet in the early afternoon, however, as they joined a delighted Smith in celebrating his 27th Test century and first since the 2019 Ashes in England.

The former captain, who hit 16 fours in an all but chance-less knock, had a nervous spell on 99 before turning the ball off his hips to square leg for three runs.

"It's always nice playing at the SCG," said Smith. "It's my home and I love playing here, it was nice to put a score on the board and help Australia."

The frailties in the remainder of the Australian batting were plain to see, however, after Jadeja had broken Smith's promising

100-run partnership for the third wicket with Marcus Labuschagne, who was caught in the slips for 91.

Resuming on 166-2, Australia would have been looking to bat through much of the day for a tally well in



excess of 400 but they lost their last seven wickets for the addition of only 132 runs, most of them scored by Smith.

Matthew Wade departed for 13 after a rash charge down the wicket and skipper Tim Paine, all-rounder Cameron Green, Pat Cummins and Nathan Lyon barely bothered the scorer before following him.

Fittingly, Jadeja had the last word, showcasing his fielding skills with a direct hit from square leg to run out a diving Smith and close the Australian innings.

"Our approach tomorrow should be simple -- to spend time in the middle," Jadeja said. "Everybody needs to contribute and bat with responsibility if we are to put up a good total." AGENCIES

Brisbane City lockdown puts 4th Test under cloud



BRISBANE, JANUARY 8

A fresh three-day lockdown in Brisbane has put Cricket Australia in a spot of bother as it makes desperate efforts to hold the fourth and final Test against India in the Queensland state capital from January 15.

The lockdown was announced less than 24 hours after top cricket board officials from India and Australia engaged in discussion on relaxation of hard quarantine measures for the visitors.

"Cricket Australia executives are urgently trying to determine the impact of a three-day lockdown in Brisbane on next week's fourth Test at the Gabba, which was already under a cloud because of India's hesitation to fly north and be subjected to tighter bio-security restrictions," a local newspaper reported. "A hotel quarantine worker's positive test to the more contagious UK strain of COVID-19 is the latest spanner in the works for CA's hopes to close out the Border-Gavaskar Trophy series at the Gabba," it further wrote. While Cricket Australia was ready to allow a capacity crowd of 36,000, the fluid health situation might warrant a change in the spectator policy. "The health scare in the city, however, has left those attendance caps in jeopardy," the newspaper stated. On Thursday, The BCCI wrote to CA seeking relaxation in hard quarantine protocol of Brisbane, reminding the host board that the visitors are done with the strict isolation that was agreed upon at the beginning of the tour. The quarantine rules in Brisbane will restrict the players to just their hotel rooms after the day's play. CA has already verbally assured the Indians that 'a deal' has been 'signed off on by the Queensland government to allow players and staff out of their rooms to mingle together inside the hotel when not playing or training will remain in place for their week in the city.' AGENCIES

Australia would like to play at the Gabba, says Smith despite lockdown



SYDNEY, JANUARY 8

Australia 'would like to play' the fourth and final Test against India in Brisbane, batting mainstay Steve Smith said, on Friday, even as Queensland entered into a three-day coronavirus-enforced lockdown casting fresh doubts on the fate of the match.

The lockdown was announced less than 24 hours after top cricket board officials from India and Australia were engaged in a discussion on relaxation of hard quarantine measures for the visitors.

Smith said nothing changes for them as players.

"To my knowledge, not anything is changed from our point of view, we will wait and see and that is not our decision to make, we are the players and we go where we are told and do what we need to do, but we would like to play at the Gabba for sure," Smith said.

He was speaking at a press conference at the end of the second day's play in the third Test, in which he roared back to

form with a fine century.

Brisbane, Queensland's capital city, is scheduled to host the match from January 15, eight days after the state imposed the lockdown after a hotel quarantine worker was detected with the highly transmissible UK strain of COVID-19.

Smith's views came a day after the BCCI sought relaxation in Brisbane's hard quarantine protocol.

In a letter to Cricket Australia, the BCCI reminded the host board that the visitors are done with the strict isolation that was agreed upon at the beginning of the tour.

While Cricket Australia was ready to allow a capacity crowd of 36,000, the fluid health situation might warrant a change in the spectator policy.

Queensland has mandated institutional quarantine of seven days for those travelling from declared hotspots like Greater Sydney in New South Wales. The quarantine rules in Brisbane will restrict the players to just their hotel rooms after day's play. PTI

BCCI is fully entitled to protect its team: Gavaskar

MUMBAI, JANUARY 8

Former India captain Sunil Gavaskar said on Friday that the Board of Control for Cricket in India is only 'protecting its players' by seeking a quarantine relaxation ahead of the fourth Test, just like Queensland health authorities are entitled to shield their people in the wake of fresh COVID-19 cases in Brisbane.

The BCCI has already written to Cricket Australia for relaxation of hard quarantine in Brisbane and the home board has given verbal assurances. However, a new three-day lockdown in Brisbane has cast a shadow



over the game, scheduled from January 15.

"The Queensland government is fully entitled to protect its people. Similarly, I believe the BCCI is fully entitled to protect its

team. I think that's something we should never forget," Gavaskar said during commentary on Channel 7. "In Sydney, there are people coming to the ground and then going

back and having dinner at a restaurant or having a gathering of 20, 30 people in a pub."

Gavaskar said that Indian team is not unjustified in demanding that if the players are together at the ground for 10 hours, they should be at least allowed to mingle in the hotel.

"What they're saying is they should also be allowed to do something similar. You could have a situation where the ball goes into the crowd, somebody from the crowd touches the ball. One can understand that. One can understand why they're feeling that way," added Gavaskar. PTI

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Halep ready for 'mentally hard' quarantine

MELBOURNE, JANUARY 8

Simona Halep finds the prospect of 14 days of quarantine ahead of the Australian Open daunting but the world number two believes the experience of playing at bio-secure tournaments last year will help her get through it. The 29-year-old Wimbledon champion had an eventful



2020 season in which she ran up a 17-match winning streak, skipped the US Open over health fears but then contracted the coronavirus.

The start to her 2021 campaign will involve the long journey to Australia in mid-January before two weeks in quarantine ahead of the start of the year's first Grand Slam on February 8.

"I know that it will be hard mentally, but I feel like my experiences in bubbles in 2020 will help me know a little more what to expect," Halep told Reuters, adding she was grateful for the five-hour window to train every day during quarantine.

"I am also less stressed because I know

that they have COVID so well under control in Australia and that once we are out of quarantine, we will be free! "This year in lockdown has meant that we are all a lot more used to spending time inside than we used to be."

Halep's last competitive match was at the French Open in early October and she will hope to get some matches under her belt in a WTA 500 event at Melbourne Park to warm up for the hardcourt Grand Slam.

With the Asian swing, including the season-ending WTA Finals, cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic, it was a long pre-season but Halep said she had enjoyed being at home and let her body and mind recover from a stressful year. "I worked a lot on my fitness," Halep said in an email interview.

"I have to take care of my body now more than ever so lots of strengthening exercises and speed work, and from the beginning of December we really stepped up the work on court." AGENCIES

Deadline for IPL player retention is Jan 21

MUMBAI, JANUARY 8

The IPL's governing council has decided that the eight franchises will be allowed to submit the names of their retained players by January 21, league's chairman Brijesh Patel said on Thursday.

Patel and members of the IPL GC recently had a virtual meeting earlier this week where the planning and preparations of the next IPL was discussed at length.

"We will have the players' retention till January 21 and the trading window for the franchises closes on February 4," Patel, the former India Test batsman told PTI while informing that the date of the auction is yet to be finalised.

It is expected that the mini auction that is supposed to be held this year for the existing eight teams will be held in the second or third week of February.

The eight IPL teams enjoy a players' purse of Rs 85 crore and Patel said



that there will be 'no increase of purse' for the 2021 auction.

It is expected that Chennai Super Kings, one team that only had Rs 15 lakh left after the last auction, would release at least two big salaried players in Kedar Jadhav and Piyush Chawla and increase their purse.

Mumbai Indians will probably retain most of its players as it's a very set team and may release a few players here and there to increase their purse from Rs 1.95 crore

Rajasthan Royals have the maximum purse Rs 14.75 crore, followed by

Sunrisers Hyderabad (Rs 10.1 crore), Delhi Capitals (Rs 9 crore), Kolkata Knight Riders (Rs 8.5 crore), and Royal Challengers Bangalore (Rs 6.4 crore). It is learnt that governing council has decided to wait for a month before finalising whether the IPL-14 will be held in India or not.

"The BCCI will wait for a month to see how the COVID-19 situation is in India before finalising the schedule. Everyone wants it to be held in India but we still need to wait for some more time before taking a call," a BCCI source said. PTI

Japan vows to host Olympics even as emergency declared in Tokyo

TOKYO, JANUARY 8

Japan Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga on Thursday vowed to hold the Olympic Games this summer as he declared a state of emergency in Tokyo following the surge in coronavirus cases.

New daily cases of coronavirus in Japan surpassed 7,000 for the first

time on Thursday. About half of that COVID cases come from the national capital area, including a record 2,447 new infections in Tokyo, NHK World reported.

"The rapid spread of COVID-19 across the country has created a situation that could have a serious impact on people's lives and the economy.

Therefore, I hereby declare a state of emergency based on the anti-virus law," NHK World quoted Japan PM Suga as saying.

The Japanese Prime Minister, however, exuded confidence and said the Tokyo Olympics would be staged this summer despite the emergency.

According to NHK



World, Suga further said that the Japanese government hopes to begin vaccinations by late February and said he is determined to hold the postponed Olympics and Paralympics this year.

The Tokyo Olympic games were postponed last year due to the pandemic. The showpiece event will be held from

July 23 to August 8, 2021, while the Paralympics will take place from August 24 to September 5, 2021.

In November last year, the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) Coordination Commission Chair John Coates returned to Japan, for the first time since February 2020, with IOC President Thomas Bach for

the Joint International Olympic Committee, International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and Tokyo 2020 Project Review.

The meetings, held between November 16 and 18, reaffirmed the full commitment of all partners to deliver Olympic and Paralympic Games fit for a post-corona world in 2021. AGENCIES