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Friday 16 January to 23 January 2021

# Trump impeachment risks bogging down early days of Biden presidency





# See Full page Advt. on Page 19



# Lord Ram belongs to everyone, his teachings still relevant: Baba Ramdev

#### "Ekal Ke Ram", special program organized in New Delhi by Ekal Bharat Lok Shiksha Parishad







#### By India Affairs Desk

everyone. He said that Lord forests standards.

for the upliftment of the poor hygiene. and marginalised.

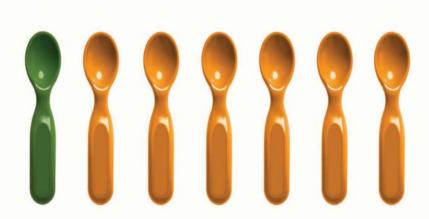
recounted the lessons learnt Ekal attraction towards nature and to impart education. forest and interiors.

social activist Dr Kumar imparted education. The village. Helpless and needy by Great thinker multiple roles like king, father sustainability. 'One village, one overall development of the following the direction shown and son and set high moral teacher and one school' is the principle, Ekal follows to Speaking to newspersons at impart education to tribal 'Ekal Ke Ram' function in the children in forest and interiors. Capital on Sunday, Ramdev Speaking to newspersons in said that Ekal NGO has been Ekal CEO cum secretary doing a commendable job by Bajrang Lal Bangra said that uplifting last man standing in Ekal has been running schools the queue. Ram Dev said that in more than one lakh villages through Ekal, people from all and imparting education on over the world are contributing moral values, health and

Ekal Trustee and chairman Poet Dr Kumar Vishwas who Laxmi Narayan Goel said that has played from the exemplary behaviour commendable role in creating of Lord Ram and Sita in exile awareness about corona virus , lamented that in the global in tribal areas and started pandemic, big and powerful imparting skill development to countries miserably failed to children from August 2020. combat the invisible enemy Ekal Trustee S K Jindal said However he said that world largest NGO's purpose is coronavirus has taught us the making concerted efforts to importance of nature. connect rural and forest areas Inspired by Lord Ram's to mainstream Ekal Bharat lifestyle in exile, Ekal Shiksha Parishad has been imparts education to 28 lakh constantly making efforts to children every year in rural strengthen `Ekal's abhiyan. and forests with minimum The efforts of intellectuals, resources. Lord Ram and his donors and education experts family had developed have helped Ekal run schools

depended on minimum As a social organisation, Ekal resources for sustainability. is committed to the social and 'One village, one teacher and educational empowerment of one school' is the principle, crores of poor and needy in Ekal follows to impart rural and forest areas. Ekal education to tribal children in began its journey from Jharkhand in 1988 when it Ekal Bharat Lok Shiksha opened 60 schools. Today, Parishad organises a special Ekal has more than one lakh programme, 'Ekal ke Ram', schools and around 28 lakh presented by poet cum students every year are

Yog guru Baba Ramdev said Vishwas .Inspired by Lord concept is unique. Ekal children are enrolled for the reformer Swami Vivekanand that relevance of Lord Ram Ram's lifestyle in exile, Ekal opens one primary school in education and trained to help on education and took cannot be ignored in today:s imparts education to 28 lakh one village. There is only one in the development of the schools to students. These context as he belongs to children every year in rural and teacher who teaches 25-30 society and nation. One can schools with minimum students. Besides, primary proudly say with pride that constantly moving ahead in Ram belongs to tribals, resources. Lord Ram and his education, students are Ekal students have been imparting education to these brahmin, dalit and SC and family had developed attraction imparted moral values, contributing significantly in children so that they become ST community. Also, Lord towards nature and depended development, health and the development of nation. bright citizens of this Ram has successfully played on minimum resources for hygiene as they help in the Ekal schools have been country.



#### 1 in 7 children faces hunger.

There's more than enough food in America for every child who struggles with hunger. Help get kids the food they need by supporting Feeding America, the nationwide network of food banks. Together, we can solve hunger™. Join us at FeedingAmerica.org







# Farmers' protest: Youth Congress collects soil for India's map as a tribute

During the campaign from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, the soil will be collected, especially from villages and home towns of the 65 farmers, who have lost their lives during the agitation

(News Agencies)- The mainly from northern India, have soil will be collected, especially agitation against the three farm powerful agribusinesses. laws enacted in September. "Over 65 farmers have lost their "With that soil, we will create a map nationwide campaign titled Ek 50 days agitating in a peaceful Mutthi Mitti Shaheedon Ke and democratic manner. They Naam is expected to conclude are braving extreme weather in Delhi within a month, Youth conditions and have remained Congress president Srinivas BV undeterred by the excessive said. He said the campaign is force used by the central inspired by the historic Dandi government against them," said March of Mahatma Gandhi Srinivas BV.

Youth Congress is collecting soil camped on the borders of Delhi from villages and home towns of from across the country to draw since November 26 to protest the 65 farmers, who have lost their a map of India as a mark of against the laws they say will lives during the agitation. Srinivas respect to those, who have lost weaken their bargaining power BV visited Rajasthan and Madhya their lives in the ongoing farmers' and leave them at the mercy of Pradesh last week to collect the

Launched on January 9, the lives at Delhi borders since past of India, the one built on the ideals Delhi's borders with Haryana, special Parliament session to of Mahatma Gandhi and sacrifices Uttar made by martyrs who laid their Rajasthan. The Congress has ruled states have also passed lives during the freedom struggle also announced countrywide bills bypassing the central of India," said Krishna Allavaru, the protests on January 15 against laws that allow agribusinesses national in-charge of the Youth the three farm laws. Congress. Srinivas BV has A delegation of Congress regulation, permit traders to organised health, blood donation leaders, led by former party stockpile large quantities of campaigns and provided food and chief Rahul Gandhi, on food commodities for scale, against the British salt During the campaign from medicines to the protesting December 24 met President and lay down new contract monopoly. Thousands of farmers, Kashmir to Kanyakumari, the farmers at different places along Ram Nath Kovind to demand a farming rules.



Pradesh

and repeal the laws. The Congressto trade with minimal

# PM Modi greets nation on Magh Bihu, Makar Sankranti and Pongal



Pongal and Magh Bihu. "Many enthusiasm in everyone's life. harvest festival dedicated to the blessed with good health and said in another tweet.

(News Agencies)- Prime congratulations the to

to the Sun deity Surya. The day also marks the start of the sun's northward journey, ushering in longer days.

everyone," PM Modi tweeted.

Makar Sankranti is a festival in the prepared and is first offered to nature and further the spirit of Hindu calendar, dedicated to the the Gods and Goddesses compassion," he said. Magh Bihu Sun deity Surya. The day also followed, sometimes, with an is celebrated with community marks the start of the sun's offering to cows. It is then feasts after the annual harvest northward journey, ushering in shared with the family. longer days.

Minister Narendra Modi on countrymen on Makar Sankranti. out Pongal greetings, said the and brothers. This special With the blessings of Almighty Thursday greeted the nation on My wish is that Uttarayan festival showcases the best of festival showcases the best of may there be brotherhood and the festivals of Makar Sankranti, Suryadev infuse new energy and Tamil culture. Pongal is a four-day Tamil culture. May we be wellness all around," PM Modi

Makar Sankranti is a festival in the Hindu calendar, dedicated

Makar Sankranti greetings to Sun God. To mark the festival, success. May this festival also the Pongal sweet dish is inspire us to live in harmony with takes place."Magh Bihu wishes "Pongal greetings to all, to everyone. May the coming The Prime Minister, while sending especially my Tamil sisters times be filled with happiness.

### Farmers' protest: Govt wants to do politics on farmers' stir, says Shiv Sena

(News Agencies)-Delhi's Pradesh at Chilla and wants to do politics by painting borders with Uttar Pradesh at Ghazipur have remained it as "anti-national". Chilla and Ghazipur have closed for those coming from Farmers fighting for their rights coming from Noida and the opposite carriageway Gandhi there are several alternative commuters. options for commuters.

and Uttar Pradesh continued anti-national: Shiv Sena to remain closed at several Days after the Supreme Court Magh Bihu.

remained closed for those Noida and Ghaziabad while against powerful forces: Rahul

Ghaziabad while the opposite remains open. But there are Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on carriageway remains open. But several alternative options for Thursday extended greetings to farmers protesting against the Govt wants to do politics on central farm laws and netizens of Delhi's borders with Haryana farmers' protest, paint it as the country on the occasion of Pongal, Makar Sankranti and

points on Thursday due to the stayed the implementation of The Wayand MP offered "special ongoing agitation by farmers the new farm laws, Shiv Sena wishes" to the farmers agitating on forces". Youth Congress India as a mark of respect to who have been camping at on Thursday said that the the Delhi borders against the three collects soil for India's map as those, who have lost their lives several borders to demand the Central government does not agriculture laws, stating that "our a tribute The Youth Congress in the ongoing farmers' agitation repeal of three farm laws. want to just end the protest on Kisan-Mazdoors are fighting for is collecting soil from across against the three farm laws Delhi's borders with Uttar the contentious acts, but also their rights against powerful the country to draw a map of enacted in September.





# 'Deep displeasure': India sends a stinker to WHO's Tedros over India's map

The 8 January letter is the third communication to the World Health Organisation in a month, reminding Tedros and his office to fix the maps

(News Agencies)- India has expressed its "deep displeasure" at the World Health Organisation's maps that inaccurately depict boundaries of the country in the map used by the organisation's web portals and asked directorgeneral Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus to immediately replace them with fresh maps, people familiar with the matter said. New Delhi's stronglyworded letter to the WHO is the third in a month. The other two, on 3 and 30 December, were addressed to the WHO director general's office. These communications pointed out that videos and maps including the

accurately reflect India's boundaries.

Last week, India's Permanent Representative to the UN Indra Mani Pandey escalated the request to Tedros Adhanom.

"I write to express my deep displeasure at the inaccurate depiction of the boundaries of India in the maps of various web portals of WHO. In this regard, I draw your attention to our previous messages sent to WHO pointing out similar inaccuracies. I again request your immediate intervention for removal of maps inaccurately depicting the boundaries of India from various web portals of WHO and their replacement with coronavirus dashboard did not accurate maps," Indra Mani

Pandey said in his 8 January letter to Tedros accessed by Hindustan Times

WHO maps show the union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh in a different shade than the rest of India. The Shaksgam Valley spread across 5,168 sq km, Aksai Chin region occupied by blue strips, a shade similar to Chinese territory.

Publishing inaccurate maps of government. India is a criminal offence under A senior government official said

which was illegally ceded by 2016, the government had watched Covid-19 tracker is very power to impose a ?100 crore China in 1954 is shown in light fine. But the proposal, part of a geospatial information law the colour used to depict proposed by the government in 2016, wasn't pursued by the

six-month jail term and fine. In its widely-publicised and closely-

Pakistan to China in 1963, is proposed to raise the jail term to unfortunate. "The government will shown as part of China. The 7 years and give judges the follow up with WHO and all relevant authorities to get the correct maps to be used," he said. The official added that he was confident the WHO chief, who was accused by the US of siding with China to play down the coronavirus disease that was Indian law, punishable with a WHO's use of distorted maps for first reported in China's Wuhan city, would not let politics stand in the way of fixing inaccuracies in the map. The World Health Assembly had, primarily under pressure from the United States, decided in May last year to send a team of experts to China to probe the origins of the disease. The 10-member team of experts was able to land in China on Thursday, seven months after the WHO director-general had committed to the probe. The experts will, however, have to spend two weeks in quarantine before President Xi Jinping's government will allow them to step out of their hotels to start



#### Bird flu: All samples taken from Delhi's Ghazipur poultry market test negative

(News Agencies)-Avian influenza has not preventive measure against the bird flu. different birds -- crows, pigeons, ducks and

been detected in poultry in Delhi, said officials in the animal husbandry department. So far, some ducks and crows have tested positive for the bird flu in Delhi, triggering panic among authorities and civic agencies who shut down several parks in the city and imposed restrictions on sale of chicken. As many as 100 samples were collected from poultry from the

wholesale market in Ghazipur -- which accounts for at least 70% of the total supply across Delhi -- before the market was closed by the Delhi government as a department. As many as 158 samples of



"Result for all 100 samples are negative," said Dr Rakesh Singh, director of Delhi government's animal husbandry

poultry -- were sent to labs in Bhopal and Jalandhar for testing, of which, reports on 108 samples have arrived, said another official in the department who did not wish to be identified. A total of eight samples have tested positive so far. The eight samples were the ones of dead crows and ducks picked up from Sanjay Lake park in Mayur Vihar Phase 2, Dwarka Sector 9 and Mayur Vihar Phase 3.

All ducks in Sanjay Lake were later culled. The samples for which results are awaited include crows, ducks and pigeons, said the

Child rights body pulls up Cong leader for comment on girls' reproductive age



(News

Agencies) - Verma, requesting him to provide National Commission for an explanation within 2 days after news agency ANI tweeted.

requesting him to "provide an 21 from 18?" he said. against minor girls and law,"

demand an increase in minimum women should be made 21, at a statement was in reference to age of marriage for women press conference. "According to empowerment of women by because according to doctors, doctors, a girl is ready for giving them equal legal status a girl is ready for reproduction reproduction by the age of 15. Is that men have in the society, the by the age of 15. "NCPCR the CM a doctor or a scientist? Congress leader's remark was issued a notice to Congress On what basis does he want girls' about women's reproductive leader Sajjan Singh Verma, marriage age to be increased to age,"

The Congress minister responded to MP CM's suggestion that the minimum age of marriage of women should be made 21, at a press conference.

explanation within 2 days giving Madhya Pradesh Bharatiya Agrawal. his comments.

Congress leader Sajjan Singh Singh Chouhan was wrong to minimum age of marriage of minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan's a woman.

said state Rajneesh spokesperson

reasons and justifying his Janata Party (BJP) leaders. It was unfortunate that Congress intention for making such demanded an unconditional leaders continued to insult discriminatory statements apology from the minister over women and the Congress high command remained silent. "This shows the mindset of Agrawal continued his attack, Protection of Child Rights his statement that Madhya The minister responded to MP Congress leaders about women adding that this was despite the (NCPCR) issued a notice to Pradesh chief minister Shivraj CM's suggestion that the in the society. While chief fact that the party is headed by



# Keep room for 10% wastage, don't rush: Centre's advice to states on vaccination

Ahead of the major vaccination drive beginning on January 16, the Centre has asked states to abide by these three rules.

(News Agencies)- As the The emergency vaccination for vaccine doses including 1.1 preparation for the "world's healthcare workers has been crores of Serum Institute's largest vaccination drive", much awaited as several Covishield and 55 lakh of Bharat scheduled to begin from January countries started vaccination last Biotech's Covaxin. The doses 16, is going on full throttle, the year December. The Centre has have been dispatched to all Union health ministry has also urged the states to take into states. Some states have raised warned the state governments of account 10 per cent wastage of complaints that the number of some pitfalls that may take place doses, which is a general doses they have received will not in the initial days. It has been possibility. After the Drug be adequate to cover all their weeks to come, the ministry has process stabilises and moves decided that there will be a Controller General of India on healthcare workers, but the said. Instead of trying to forward. Based on which maximum of 100 beneficiaries at January 3 gave restricted, ministry has said that the accommodate more people than vaccines are being administered, each vaccination session across emergency-use authorisation to procurement was done according recommended per session, the sites will be identified as Covaxin the country. The ministry has two vaccines, preparations were to the database provided by the state governments should (Bharat Biotech) and Covishield advised the states to not on to officially procure them to state governments. Also, this is gradually increase the number of (Serum Institute) sites as organise "unreasonable numbers kick off the vaccination drive. The the initial supply of vaccine doses vaccination sites "in a progressive beneficiaries will have to be of vaccination per site per day". Centre procured 1.65 crore which will be replenished in the manner as the vaccination inoculated again after 28 days.

### Mumbai drug racket: More raids by NCB after arrest of Nawab Malik's son-in-law



The NCB summoned NCP leader and Maharashtra Cabinet minister Nawab Malik's son-in-law Sameer after an alleged online transaction of?20,000 between him and one of the accused was found.

soon after actor Sushant Singh between Khan and Sejnani, however, has got bail.

(News Agencies)-The Rajput's death on June 14. The though NCB officials have not Narcotics Control Bureau which agency has questioned a number revealed the nature of the is investigating into drug rackets of Bollywood celebrities and transaction.On involving Mumbai's high-profile arrested dozens of drug suppliers. Ramkumar Tiwari, one of the including Sameer was summoned by the owners of Mucchad Panwala Bollywood celebrities, carried out NCB after an alleged online shop, a famous pan shop night-long raids on Wednesday transaction of ?20,000 between frequented by Bollywood leader and him and one of the accused was celebrities, was arrested. His Maharashtra Cabinet minister found. NCB on January 9 seized brother Jaishankar Tewari, who Nawab Malik's son-in-law Sameer 200 kilograms of marijuana and is actually known as Muchhad Khan was arrested early on arrested British national Karan panwala, was also interrogated Wednesday. The NCB initiated Sejnani from Khar and two sisters by the NCB officials. Their the probe after WhatsApp chats Rahila and Shaista Furniturewala names cropped up in connection of Bollywood celebrities surfaced from Bandra. The transaction was with Sejnani. Ramkumar Tiwari,

# Rahul Gandhi wishes farmers on harvest festivals, attacks govt

"Harvest season is a time of joy and celebrations. Happy Makar Sankranti, Pongal, Bihu, Bhogi and Uttarayan! Special prayers & wishes for our Kisan-Mazdoors who are fighting for their rights against powerful forces," he tweeted

Rahul Gandhi on Thursday to India on Wednesday night. "Harvest season is a time of joy upcoming forces," he tweeted.

Gandhi, who had left for abroad in March-April this year. on December 27, a day ahead Gandhi has been repeatedly nation.

Former Congress president foundation day function, returned the ongoing farmers' agitation. wished the protesting farmers Later in the day, he will attend government over its affidavit in on the harvest season and for the popular bull taming sport fighting against the "powerful Jallikattu in Madurai on Pongal. forces", an indirect reference to With this, he will also kick off the central government. the party's campaign for the and celebrations. Happy Makar elections in Tamil Nadu, embarrass... Sankranti, Pongal, Bihu, Bhogi where the Congress is in government is embarrassed by and Uttarayan! Special prayers alliance with the Dravida the tractor rally," Gandhi & wishes for our Kisan- Munnetra Kazagham (DMK). Mazdoors who are fighting for Assembly elections are due In its affidavit, the government their rights against powerful in Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, had stated that the disruption of Kerala, Assam and Puducherry the Republic Day parade will be

(News Agencies)- of the Congress party's 136th attacking the government over On Wednesday, he attacked the the Supreme Court against the farmers' proposed parade on Republic Day.

"Martyrdom of more than 60 assembly farmers (annadatas) didn't

an "embarrassment" to the





# OPPO is all geared up to launch the ultimate videography expert, Reno5 Pro 5G, on January 18, 2021, in India

OPPO Reno5 Pro 5G will be power-packed with industry-first AI Highlight Video feature that delivers phenomenal video quality in every light condition, be it day or night. Find out more here!

new year and everyone's ready and leading the charge expectations from 2021 are towards the video revolution, The FDF system is backed by soaring high! OPPO, being the OPPO is all set to establish a the efforts of five global R&D technology leader, has always new benchmark with the launch focused on introducing industry- of its power-packed videography first innovations and cutting-edge expert - the Reno5 Pro 5G - to technologies as per the market empower consumers to 'Live The trends and consumer demands. Infinite'. With the Reno5 Pro 5G, 5G internet technology is almost OPPO is all geared up to take here and is becoming the talk of video quality to the next level. the town. The smartphone From casual users who capture industry is booming with 5G and share personal moments launches. Nearly three in every with their loved ones on social five existing smartphone users media, to professional creators are seeking to upgrade to 5G- who are always looking for a ready smartphones! Not only compact yet highly capable this, video consumption and device to capture on-the-go creation patterns have seen a moments, the OPPO Reno5 Pro significant rise in the last few 5G promises to exceed all years. Today, people love expectations! At the heart of this creating videos of almost revolutionary video marvel is the everything they do. With the industry-leading Al Highlight upcoming 5G smartphones, the Video feature, powered by future will be visual, primarily led OPPO's industry-first Full by short videos. Even in India, Dimension Fusion (FDF) Portrait short video platforms and Video system. The technology mechanisms like Reels, will empower the users to WhatsApp, YouTube and many explore infinite possibilities and other apps and video platforms give the confidence to capture are gaining popularity. Thus, it will videos, no matter what the light Highlight Video feature memories for a lifetime. The whether you are in front of the smartphone videography is going is surely a head turner and will levels in a scene and intelligently able to produce in low-light always be part of your favourite

It's the start of a brand- era. Making consumers future when they see the amazing

quality videos you've captured. teams, and has got 700+ patents globally. The technology is a powerful integration of hardware, flexible software, and smart algorithms, which significantly enhances the video quality and portrait effects. It comprises of and amazing videos.

all the elements which are Night Neverlooked so good! present in the video. Based on Aimed at giving Awesome Clarity



two powerful engines the Quality Ultra Night Video algorithm and What's even more amazing is Enhancement Engine and Live HDR algorithm. During low-that the system will also enhance Portrait Perception Engine. that light and dark-light conditions work simultaneously to deliver such as city nightscapes, light better, brighter, clearer, focused shows, and lit fountains, the Ultra ones or shooting work-related Video Night The two engines work in tandem automatically brightens the conditions the system applies to detect the lighting condition in scene. With this feature you can specially designed filters to which the video is being shot, and surely go out and say that the

this analysis, the FDF System that is Always with You, the Live applies the appropriate algorithm HDR algorithm, detects and which delivers the best possible engages with the backlit scenes like bright neon city lights, to as the back camera at the same Enabling the Al Highlight Video reduce overexposed areas. Once time. Capture the world around feature is as simple as opening activated, Reno5 Pro 5G will the camera and tapping on the automatically optimize every feature to activate it. The AI video you shoot and create infinite feature. Now, it won't matter correct to say that condition is. The Reno5 Pro 5G automatically detects the light results that the camera will be camera or behind it. You will to be the biggest trend in the 5G make your friends envy you, enhances video quality through conditions are truly fantastic. moments!

your everyday videography moments, be it with your loved algorithm videos. Be it bright or dark-light optimize detailing and exposure. Telling both sides of the story, the Reno5 Pro 5G also comes power packed with the Dual-view Video feature. This feature lets you record from the front as well you as well as yourself as part of it, with this astounding new

## Union minister Shripad Naik's health improving: Doctors



(News Agencies)-The Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi,

Naik, 68, continues to be on high flow nasal cannula (HFNC-an oxygen supply system), the official from the Goa Medical College and Hospital (GMCH), where the minister is admitted, told PTI.

minister's health, he said.

Goa on Tuesday and reviewed is Minister of State for Defence and Rajnath Singh, who visited the Dharmasthala in neighbouring health condition of Union minister and the GMCH is monitoring the AYUSH.On Wednesday, the GMCH on Tuesday, had said that Karnataka.

conscious

team of AIIMS doctors extubated if required. Naik will be shifted to "There is lot of improvement in Naik (removed the tube inserted New Delhi for further treatment. his health condition and he is to assist him in breathing) and Naik received injuries, while his recovering. He is responding to he was put on HFNC, the official wife Vijaya and an aide died on the treatment," the official said. said. Chief Minister Pramod Monday when their car met with The team from AIIMS arrived in Sawant on Wednesday said Naik accident near Ankola in Uttar and Kannada district while he was the health condition of the Union recovering. Defence Minister returning to home state Goa from

#### Deaf, mute girl's rape, blinding: Bihar officials directed to ensure rehabilitation

Shripad Naik, who is undergoing treatment at a Goa hospital following an accident, has improved and he is responding to the treatment, a senior official from the hospital said on Thursday. Naik, 68, continues to be on high flow nasal cannula (HFNC-an oxygen supply system), the official from the Goa Medical College and Hospital (GMCH), where the minister is admitted, told PTI.A joint team

of the All India Institute of Medical

The state commissioner for persons with disabilities has taken a suo motu cognisance of a deaf and mute 17year-old girl's gang rape and her blinding in Bihar's Madhubani and directed top officials to ensure she gets compensation, protection, treatment, and rehabilitation. He has also sought an action taken report within a week. She is in critical condition and deserves special care," said Shivajee Kumar, the commissioner. It is a heinous



crime and strong action has to be taken in the case. People involved in the case must be identified and arrested and punished.'

Kumar said he tried to talk to the girl's parents but they were inconsolable. "I assured them that no person involved in the case will be spared and the victim will be provided relief and rehabilitation." He added rapists ensured that she will not be able to identify them by blinding her.



### India wants Pfizer to do local study before approval: Official

Serum Institute of India, the local manufacturer of the vaccine developed by AstraZeneca Plc and Oxford University, did a months long local study on more than 1,500 people before seeking and receiving emergency approval on Jan. 3.

vaccine maker, including Pfizer vaccine Inc that has sought emergency- AstraZeneca PIc and Oxford approved a homegrown vaccine use authorisation for its Covid- University, did a months long made by Bharat Biotech ahead 19 shot in India, must conduct local study on more than 1,500 of its inoculation campaign an additional local study to be people before seeking and which starts on Saturday. considered for the country's receiving emergency approval Local media have reported that immunisation programme, a on Jan. 3. senior government official told India, which has reached 10.5 distribute its vaccine in India Reuters. Serum Institute of India, million coronavirus infections - without doing local trials. In

(News Agencies)-Any the local manufacturer of the the second highest in the world developed by after the United States - has also

Pfizer had sought to import and

early December, it was the first says it will raise its monthly company to seek emergency- output to much more than that use approval in the world's now the approval has come. minutes https://cdsco.gov.in/ drugs regulator's website.

is that you have to do a bridging conditions. trial," Vinod K. Paul, who heads A Pfizer spokeswomen had no a government panel on vaccine immediate comment. strategy, said in an interview in The Pfizer vaccine, developed buildina.

the two approved vaccines to States and Britain. states, with a plan to deliver 600

second-most populous country Health officials say they but has not attended generally ask for so-called subsequent meetings called by bridging trials to determine if a Central Drugs Standard Control vaccine is safe and generates Organization, according to an immune response in its citizens whose genetic opencms/opencms/en/ makeup can be different from Committees/SEC of the people in western nations. deliberations released on the There are, however, provisions under New Drugs and Clinical As of now, the pre-condition for Trial Rules, 2019, to waive any vaccine to be implemented such trials in certain

his office near the parliament in partnership with Germany's BioNTech SE, is already being The government has already administered to people in distributed 16.5 million doses of countries such as the United

Ιt million jabs to the most immediately clear if any other vulnerable people in the next six countries had asked for to eight months. Serum Institute similar smaller local trials has stockpiled 50 million doses before approving vaccines

#### 12-year-old gang-raped, set on fire in Muzaffarpur; four booked: Cops

girl was raped by four men and Punjab and returned home on four suspects had first raped the set on fire in Bihar's hearing of the incident, the four minor on December 23, filmed Muzaffarpur district on January forced their way into the house the crime and blackmailed 3, the police said on where she lived and raped her. Wednesday. A first information The men then set her on fire in report (FIR) has been filed the house and disposed of her after raping her once again against the four suspects. The body later, hes alleged. four suspects have been "I returned to Bihar after my elder them," the father alleged in the booked under various sections daughter, who witnessed the complaint. of the Protection of Children incident, called me. She told me (POCSO) Act and the Indian entered my house and gang-Penal Code (IPC), Sahebganj raped my youngest daughter. senior superintendent of police Later, they killed her, setting her Jayant Kant said. A police ablaze in a room in our house, to team is trying to catch the destroy all the evidence. They

Sexual Offences that four men from the village also disposed of her body after According to a complaint filed the incident," the girl's father on Tuesday by the girl's father, alleged in his complaint to the

(News Agencies)- A 12-year-old who works as a daily wager in police. The father alleged that the her into having sex with them. "They killed her on January 3 when she refused to listen to

#### Efforts will continue to make India a truly self-reliant nation: Piyush Goyal

(News Agencies)- Efforts will distribution ministry. continue to make India a truly He noted that the ecosystem self-reliant nation and improve of government, private sector, the quality of life as well as the the institute of company ease of living for its citizens, secretaries, industrial bodies Union minister Piyush Goyal and institutions, among others, said on Wednesday. "We have are all equal stakeholders in the an opportunity to provide future of the country.

sustainable development as the mantra of this country...we have an opportunity to change the image of this country from the past

wider benefit of its... citizens," succeeding," Goyal said.

affairs and food & public corporate governance.

"We are going to

make this country great; we are going to make this country truly a self-reliant nation which serves our people,

where it was full of contradiction, which...improves the quality of full of irregularities to a country life and the ease of living of works honestly, every citizen of India. No power transparently and works for the on earth can stop us from

He was speaking at an event Goyal holds multiple portfolios organised by the Institute of including Railways, and Company Secretaries of India Commerce and Industry. He is (ICSI) for giving away national also in charge of the consumer awards for excellence in



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#### In A Battle Of Unequals, How Mankind Is Hurtling **Towards Complete Isolation And Destruction**

growth and pursuit of wealth and prosperity have alienated ourselves from our Mother Nature. As a result, we have started facing disastrous consequences. We played dangerously too long with nature. Nature is now bouncing back on us. Destruction and over-exploitation of nature have led to climate change, which in turn poses a fundamental threat to almost all the ecosystems. An ecosystem is a geographic area like forest, lakes, deserts and mountains, where plants, animals, and other living organisms, as well as weather and landscapes, exist together. If one component is adversely affected then whole equilibrium gets disturbed of that ecosystem. This is what's has happened with our nature and its constituent ecosystems.

Due to changing conditions in consequent of global warming, wildlife is disappearing at an alarming rate. Species after species are getting extinct from the planet. Weather conditions are becoming more erratic. Everywhere the impact of global warming can be felt. It's the sign of destiny in making for the human race. Even we are seeing the effect of climate change on human aggression. According to a study conducted by University of California, and Princeton University, USA, in the year 2013, shifts in climate were strongly linked to human violence around the world; even relatively minor departures from normal temperatures or rainfall can substantially increase the risk of conflict. We'd never before imagined that climate change could be related to human conflicts

On the one hand, climate change is making a huge impact on our liveable conditions, while on the other, multiple revolutions that we are currently witnessing, is changing the way we think, behave, work and interact with others. We are now living in a noisy and fast-moving world. In a highly materialistic driven world, the vast majority of the population is struggling to be successful, which means trying to accumulate more wealth and material goods, achieve higher status and prestige. They have no time for themselves. In the modern age, the earlier culture of joint family and social cohesiveness is steadily dismantling. The nuclearization of society is happening. People have moved away from joint families and social support system. Consequently, people are getting disconnected from other fellow beings. We have been evolved as a social animal but sadly and increasingly becoming lonely. In recent times, digital technology especially social media has also been making transformational changes in our lives. Instant messaging and sharing of information through videos have deeply intruded into our daily routines. Whatever spare time we had

consumed by social media. Social media like WhatsApp, Twitter, Facebook and other platforms is disrupting our lifestyle. We have started living in a hyper-connected world, at a superficial level, having hundreds and thousands institutionally censured with a second of our friends across the world. We are now too busy interacting with them in this unique double burden of disgrace many different ways. An average adult into history. But the second in India is spending nearly 4 hours on impeachment has also been the most the internet. Teens are on their mobiles rapidly crafted of them all. That is up to 8 to 9 hours. From where are they taking out time?

Due to the increasing use of digital gadgets like mobiles, attention span is reducing. People aimlessly and scrolling continuously smartphones in search of 'interesting content' and while doing so, they get bored. Since they are not doing anything meaningful, they feel their life the vote. Today, rightly cut off from his monotonous and dull. They, therefore, experience empty moments of 'boredom'. It's affecting our mental health in subtle ways. People are becoming restless, anxious and unsatisfactory because of perpetual distractions. We are getting disconnected from our family and close friends. The quality time to relax and be in solitude is decreasing sharply. Increased use of social media is making us more self-centred and prone to

of the most challenging public health and obstruction of Congress, the vote problems. Not even the younger generation -- including school age and college students -- have escaped from this fast-spreading sickness of loneliness. While elderly parents are left alone in their home, the children who were brought up under a caring environment are becoming lonely as not enough attention is now being paid to them. Digital media is distracting them from their studies. When they feel alone, they tend to use mobiles more often and so end up spending more time on digital platforms. Though they are always surrounded by numerous colleagues. they feel isolated from them. They are becoming lonelier even than the older

As we continue to progress, our mental stress at working place as well as in relationships has increased over a period of time. As a result, we have, as a whole, become a highly stressed society. Mental stress is becoming like an endemic in the modern world. Many of our life's situations trigger a stress response in the body, such as unfriendly to hostile working conditions, an overload of work, financial difficulties, and relationship problems within one's family or with a boss or colleagues. We generally don't know how to prioritise work and time efficiently. The majority of us do suffer from mental stress; however, its severity varies from individual to individual.

#### Trump's second impeachment: urgent and necessary

The wheels of justice are slowly We humans in the mad race of economic earlier for personal purposes is being but remorselessly closing in on Donald Trump and his gang. Mr Trump's second impeachment is unprecedented in two extraordinary ways. No other president in American history has been impeachment. Mr Trump must now carry because, unlike its predecessors, it is an urgent response to a clear and present danger to American democracy. Only last week, Mr Trump was still actively using the presidential bully pulpit to promote his lies about the 2020 election result and urge his supporters to march on the US Capitol to challenge social media following and in the wake of a 232-197 congressional vote against him on Wednesday, he is ineluctably becoming a humbled - though never a humble - figure. Mr Trump remained defiant and mendacious in a White House video this week, but he now faces a second Senate trial and the very real prospect, if he is found guilty, of being barred from holding office ever again. This is not the future that Mr Trump planned for himself. A year ago, when Mr Trump Loneliness is emerging as one was first impeached for abuse of power to put him on trial went almost wholly along party lines. This week, in the second impeachment, party loyalty was still very strong, but there were significant shifts and cracks within the Republican party. Ten House Republicans voted with

the Democrats, including the third most senior in the party leadership, Liz Cheney. Several others, notably the party's House leader, Kevin McCarthy, tried to triangulate between a previously unthinkable readiness to denounce Mr Trump and a long-familiar reluctance to stand up to him by voting for impeachment. Nevertheless, the majority of Republicans, who a week ago had also voted to challenge a number of electoral college results, again remained cravenly loyal to Mr Trump.

Yet Mr Trump's grip on the Republican party is slowly beginning to loosen. This is partly because some newly announced sceptics in the party have finally found their voices as the clock nears midnight for the Trump presidency. The most significant of these is Senator Mitch McConnell, the Republican Senate leader, who has worked in lockstep with the Trump White House for the past four years. Recently re-elected for another six-year Senate term, he now hints that he is pleased about the impeachment and may even vote for it in a trial. It is an opportunity that he should give himself, by supporting an early scheduling.

As ever with Senator McConnell, there is political calculation at work here. But he is not alone in that. Democrats were rightly outraged at what happened on 6 January. But their grip on the House was reduced in November and the Senate is evenly balanced, so impeachment may help them leverage fresh support in next year's midterm elections, to which many minds have now turned.

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# ourt-appointed committee a non-star

The only issue over which there is a deadlock is the demand for repeal of the laws. The special committee cannot hear the two sides on this issue. The committee cannot help in this matter. The farmers' unions say the panel's members are pro-laws. They may be right or wrong, but they have expressed their distrust and alleged bias. Evidently, the stay is futile. Whether the court should have transgressed into the deal-brokering domain is another question.

IN an 'extraordinary' order, the Supreme Court has stayed the implementation of the three farm laws passed by Parliament in September last year. It's a stay which records neither reasons nor any finding that the laws are prima facie unconstitutional or that their operation is prejudicial to vital interests. The only justification given is that the farmers have been agitating since long and some have died, and the talks have failed. The other justification is the court's decision to form a four-member committee to hear to give a report to the court in two months. The court has least for the present".



out the farmers' representatives Solicitor General opposed the recused himself. They may be happen and are prolonged, it is and the Central Government and grant of stay. So, for whose benefit right or wrong, but they have for the executive to deal with. was it granted? And for what expressed their distrust and 'purpose of the protest'? The concluded that the stay be Central Government and the purpose of the protest been feature of separation of powers "perceived as an achievement of Prime Minister have repeatedly served? Evidently, the stay is the purpose of such protest, at declared that the laws do not futile. affect the MSP regime and no Whether the court should have Who needed the stay for enabling farmer's land would be taken. The transgressed into the deala compromise? The major only issue over which there is a brokering domain is another agitating unions have rejected the deadlock is the demand for the question. Deals about laws are special committee. Their repeal of the laws. The special essentially in the policy domain counsels absented themselves, committee cannot hear the two of the executive. The laws an indication of sides on this issue. The involve a vital policy translated disagreement. One counsel committee is therefore a non- by Parliament into enactment. appearing for the farmers of some starter. It cannot help in the matter If some affected interests want states said farmers would be of repeal. The farmers' unions say alteration or repeal, that also badly affected (by the laws). The the panel's four members are pro-would be a policy matter for the

alleged bias. How has the

Article 32 is not meant for the court to brush aside the basic and intrude into the executive's domain. Separation of powers is independence of the judiciary; it equally restrains courts from encroaching upon the executive's turf. In embarrassing scenario, a sovereign Central Government is to present its views before the committee regarding repeal of the laws.

The Supreme Court said though Attorney General and the laws, even as one of them has executive to handle. If protests it appreciated the submissions

of the Attorney General opposing the grant of stay, it 'was not powerless' to stay the executive's implementation of the laws. Firstly, there is no difference between stay of the Acts and stay of the implementation of the Acts. This was an illusionary dissection crafted to stay the implementation of the laws. However, no one contended, nor is it my point, that the Supreme Court lacked power. For that matter, even the High Courts have the power to stay the legislation. What the Attorney General contended was that there is a presumption of validity and laws are not ordinarily stayed and no one had pointed out any provision to be ultra vires. The plea related to the exercise of power and not to the existence of power. The Supreme Court has not merely to protect the not said a word about the validity of the laws. It does not examine validity on a prima facie basis. The stay was granted just because there was a prolonged protest going on and the court felt that it should intervene by appointing a special committee. There it clearly transgressed into the executive's zone of negotiation and trampled upon the doctrine of separation of

Notably, Parliament acts with the people's mandate. Therefore. laws are presumed to be valid and the wisdom of the laws is kept by courts outside their ken. Courts do not second-guess the wisdom of policies. Those challenging the laws must make out a prima facie strong case of constitutional invalidity and show serious injury to public interest. But here no one contended and the court did not on its own examine the validity. Yet, the stay was granted solely to aid negotiations. The danger of the above approach is that every time a major law reform happens, there would be protests by those affected, and often large protests accompanied by unfruitful negotiation, and then the court would stay the legislation. The order sets a wrong precedent. Tomorrow, there may be labour law reforms, and workers all over the country in much larger numbers (in several lakhs) may take to the streets to protest. Will they get the same relief?

Rakesh Dwivedi

### U-China agreement catches US off guard

THE conclusion of the German presidency of the Council of the European Union (EU) brought a big New Year's surprise as under Chancellor Angela Merkel's leadership, the EU finally sealed the Comprehensive Agreement on Investment (CAI) with China. This development took place months after plans for a physical summit featuring the EU countries and China in September 2020 were shelved mainly because of lack of progress on significant economic issues.

During the German presidency, a dual approach was adopted. China was sufficiently riled in the UN Security Council to call the end of the German term as good riddance. At the same time, the Chinese were circumspect in their reaction to the German Indo-Pacific policy guidelines which ultimately did not convert into the EU Indo-Pacific policy despite the expectations.

The CAI has ambiguity writ large over it. According to Joerg Wutke, president of the EU Chamber of Commerce in China, there were around 900 recommendations, some of which were accepted and for others they remained hopeful. The biggest gain appears to be the promise of enhanced market



access for EU companies in China. The EU-China trade is about \$1 billion a day, with China being EU's largest import source. The EU is China's second largest trading partner after the US. EU companies expect increased transparency and legal certainty so that there are no roadblocks to expanding their investments. A level playing field is their expectation which they hope will give them a better chance of competing with the stateowned enterprises and avoid the mandatory local partners. A control on extortion of technology for the privilege of operating in China and of subsides to competitor Chinese companies is anticipated. With China accounting for 30 per cent of the current global growth, the EU companies believe that expanded access into that market will ensure a better EU economic performance, particularly job creation. The EU focus is mainly on the services sector at this stage. The manufacturing sector for automobiles, airplanes, chemicals and the like has been doing well, but areas such as education, healthcare, domestic transportation and IT services are also considered important for potential benefits. The deal, seven years in the making, is certainly not the best possible and has been pushed in a hurry, causing anxiety in Washington, where a transition is slowly taking shape. The Biden administration is concerned that even before it could discuss a new transatlantic relationship and its approach to China, Europe has taken its own steps. The EU believes that there was no need to wait for the US which, in any case, already had an arrangement with China that the CAI does not go beyond. The EU asserts that the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) gives Japan, Korea and Australia access to China without discussing sustainability, climate change, human rights or strategic issues.

**Gurjit Singh** 



# Champaran to Singhu: A tale of two satyagrahas

To assuage the protesting farmers, the Centre must suspend the Acts indefinitely, refer demands to the Inter-State Council: and call a Parliament session

Satyagraha has won. And the Supreme Court (SC) has acquired a trust dividend. Never before in the history of India has a protest involving so many lasted so long without flinching, without slackening, without diluting the For it is not over. Satyagraha has on three crucial ingredients of that won its battle on Delhi's recommendations of the tinkathiya system, operating on And beyond the virus risk, can mode of struggle. First, it must be outskirts; it has not yet Swaminathan Committee. about a principle or a programme, triumphed. It would have, if SC The court forming committees to not against any individual. had struck the three laws down, go into the matter has not Second, it must include self- It would have, if the government, reassured the protesters. As they suffering. And third, it must be responding to the stay, had said are constituted, it could not have. non-violent. In staying the three it was repealing the laws. It Besides, other committees set farm laws, the apex court has would have if the government up by earlier SC orders have scrapping of the system. With all stalemate resulting in a flare-up? acknowledged the satygaraha's had said it was going to discuss tended to uphold moral voltage without saying as the demands in a specially government's position on the much. And it has given to the convened meeting of the Inter- issues in question. protesters a moment of State Council with all chief A great example of a successful satyagrahic epiphany. But, as we ministers, and then, of committee needs to be recalled. all know by now, the protesters Parliament - to enact a new After the brave and principled President of India - Rajendra announce a revocation or at the have thanked SC; they have not legislation that fulfils the satyagraha launched by Prasad. How declared their battle over.



aspirations of farmers and acts Mahatma Gandhi in Champaran, committee differ from the ones suspension of the Acts.

the

neglected Bihar, in 1917, against the indigo plantations in that district, the government afford to alienate the British government set up a the farming community ad Champaran agrarian committee. It worked diligently, finding the satyagraha's objectives justified. nation's economy and its social And it recommended the integrity? And without the the the demands of the peasant Responding to the court's orders protesters met, the satyagraha and its chastisement, the ground-level experience of may otherwise not have done. It struggle and success to a future can do the following: One,

just constituted? Gandhi was a member of the committee. There are farm union representatives on the three committees, sure, But are they representative of the aspirations of the protesters? We know they are not.

So, what now?

The protesters have said they will not move an inch. This is dangerous. The massing of thousands of un-budging protesters around the national capital at the time of a pandemic poses a dire health hazard. The protesters have so far been impervious to the clear threat of the virus. Unmindful of the risk, they have converged and staved put in the thousands, in close proximity, right where the virus has been virulent. They seem now to be no less unmindful of the risk. Can the government be equally unmindful of the risk to the protesters and to others in contact with them?

infinitum, without unimaginably serious consequences to the ended in success. And it gave government needs to do what it does that very least, an indefinite

# At the mercy of big tech billionaires

India needs stringent data protection laws. It also needs to encourage its tech industry to develop competitive social media products

technology industry has shown us in the first place. The Rohingya Muslim minority in that it is more powerful than world monopolistic powers of these Myanmar. Before this, it enabled leaders. Not only were social companies enabled them to data firm Cambridge Analytica to media companies such as Twitter demand that we accept their acquire 50 million user profiles, and Facebook able to muzzle the terms and conditions or be thereby facilitating the spread of US president, with the help of locked out of online social fear and misinformation by Trump Amazon, they were able to shut discourse. They made and his 2016 election victory. down an emerging competitor. I am themselves the judge and jury Facebook data was also used to not saying that this was not and refused to accept influence the Brexit vote in Britain, justified. President Donald Trump responsibility for the damage did incite violence and cause an they caused. insurrection - while the social Facebook has been at it for I am not saying that this was not media platform, Parler, fanned the years, facilitating the spread of justified. President Donald Trump flames of hatred and facilitated the misinformation on a global did incite violence and cause an planning of atrocities by white scale, nationalists.

same companies now claiming to Nations, which accused the the planning of atrocities by white act in the interest of public safety company of having a nationalists. What is concerning at it for years, facilitating the misinformation by Trump and his

and

The United States (US) of Trump and divided America hatred and genocide against the and, possibly, regional elections in India.

denying insurrection - while the social responsibility for its actions. In media platform, Parler, fanned the What is concerning is that the 2018, it ignored the United flames of hatred and facilitated were the ones that enabled the rise "determining role" in stirring up is that the same companies now



spread of misinformation on a 2016 election victory.

claiming to act in the interest of global scale, and denying public safety were the ones that responsibility for its actions. In enabled the rise of Trump and 2018, it ignored the United divided America in the first place. Nations, which accused the The monopolistic powers of these company of having a companies enabled them to "determining role" in stirring up demand that we accept their hatred and genocide against the terms and conditions or be locked Rohingya Muslim minority in out of online social discourse. Myanmar. Before this, it They made themselves the judge enabled data firm Cambridge and jury and refused to accept Analytica to acquire 50 responsibility for the damage million user profiles, thereby they caused. Facebook has been facilitating the spread of fear and





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# Confused about which health insurance policy to choose? Here are 5 parameters that will make it simpler!

If the year 2020 has taught us anything, it is how to take care of our health. Find out how you can choose the right health insurance policy for yourself.

uncertainty throughout this year, different types of medical As the name suggests, the claim with the fear that coronavirus insurance plans are different. So, settlement ratio is the proportion might infect us or our family compare health insurance plans of insurance claims paid out by members. It's a reasonable fear and take a call based on your the insurer out of the total claims considering over 78 million needs. For example, when you filed during a financial year. The people across the world have are unmarried, it is good to have higher the ratio, the better it is been affected by the COVID-19 an individual health insurance for you because you can be rest virus killing over 1.7 million of plan. However, it would be even assured that all your genuine them[1]. In India also, over 10 better if the chosen plan allows claims would be accepted by the million people have already been you to add another member, insurer. infected by the deadly virus, out perhaps when you get married Cashless of which, almost 1.5 lakh people or have children. So, it is crucial benefits: Last but not the least, have lost their lives[2]. This has to select a plan that suits your your health insurance policy must made a lot of us realise how needs at every stage of your life. offer the benefit of cashless critical it is to safeguard it with a is an important parameter. at network hospitals. A cashless a health ensure plan, among 6,500+ hospitals across the good health insurance policy. Health insurance is not a one-off health insurance policy means treat health insurance plans with term needs. Ideally, your health anything in case of a medical can pick the policy based on your within 60 minutes the seriousness they deserve, at insurance policy must have a emergency. Besides, the larger requirements. least not until some adversity lifelong renewal option, so that the network of hospitals, the Plus, in tune with the times, Bajaj settlement and all your health shakes their lives. What's you can renew it annually, and better it is! important to understand is that go about your life without Why Bajaj Allianz? this financial product protects worrying about anything. There Health insurance plans by Bajaj emergencies. At the same time, But, make sure to check it the right boxes when it comes to procedures, AYUSH treatment, being insured helps you get properly before selecting the these parameters. It offers health ambulance charges or quick affordable rates cashless treatment and quality policy. health care at a reputed hospital. Claim settlement ratio: It's not various individuals or needs - taken care of. It also provides for some great just about the cover that a health starting from addressing critical And if you thought this was all, tax savings!

health insurance policy, you'll be spoilt for choice. There are a plethora of options available today, which might make it difficult for you to select one. That's exactly why the following five parameters will help you make the right choice:

Sum assured: As the name suggests, it is the maximum value that your insurance company would be liable to pay, in case you fall sick and have to make an insurance claim. Any additional expense beyond your sum insured must be incurred by you on your own. Since medical costs are high today, it is important to go for a higher sum assured that can provide protection to both you and your family in times of need.

Type of coverage: Insurance companies have designed different types of health insurance plans for different needs. There are specific ones for women, for critical illnesses, for senior citizens, for individuals, for families and those that offer extended coverage.

We have lived in coverages offered by these settled effectively, and on time.

Now, when you go looking for a important that your claims are for senior citizens, health infinity policies offer:

unwarranted should not be any cap on age. Allianz General Insurance tick all insurance policy offers. It is also illnesses for women, insurance there's a lot more that the with a wide range of Network

significant our health is, and how Renewability: Once again, this claims and quality medical care plan, personal accident plan, and ? Cashless claims facility at over others. Each of these policies country Many people, however, do not investment. It is more about long- you do not have to shell out caters to a specific need, so you ? Cashless claim settlement

> Allianz's policies also cover insurance-related gueries medical expenses pertaining to ? In-house Health Administration COVID-19. Whether it is hospitalisation, day care insurance policies that cater to claim settlements, everything is

? 24\*7 call assistance for claims

Team (HAT) for faster claims processing

? Maximum coverage at

? Easy-to-buy/renew online insurance policies

? Access to sound medical care Hospitals all over the country



# Handling the avian flu crisis

2021 has started with an unprecedented bird flu epidemic in India, causing the death of thousands of wild and poultry birds in 10 states and bleeding the fast-growing poultry industry for a second time over the past year

2021 has started with Migratory birds from faraway Close to 90% of birds, migrating (NIHSAD) confirmed this as it bleeding the fast-growing poultry industry for a second time over the past year. In March-April 2020, the industry was hit by a 68-day lockdown and industries expected to recover the losses during the winter months. Prices of poultry products, the fastest growing segments of the agriculture sector, has dipped by 40-60 % in the past week as bird flu has spread from Pong Dam in Himachal Pradesh and

an unprecedented bird flu countries in the northern through the flyway, visit India's foundsamestrain Avian Influenza epidemic in India, causing the hemisphere such as Mongolia wintering sites and some of (H5N8) in migratory and death of thousands of wild and and Kazakhstan are said to have them may be carriers of various domestic birds. Experts say poultry birds in 10 states and brought the virus to India in the avian diseases. The bird flu preventing bird flu is not possible



More than half of the world's bird virus spread from the cross- Conservation and protection of Rajasthan, where the first Central Asian Flyway (CAF) that domestic ones and eventually to covered under the Convention for cases were reported in the last covers almost the entire Indian the poultry. The Bhopal-based Conservation of Migratory week of December, to Delhi, subcontinent, according to World National Institute for High Species of Animals (CMS) but Madhya Pradesh and Kerala. Health Organization (WHO). Security Animal Diseases their health aspects are not.

spreads through as little research has been done their droppings, on the virus-carrying capability contaminating of migratory birds in CAF. the water bodies However, the spread can be they visit. The contained if there is early sharing death of crows in of information between the 29 Rajasthan, CAF countries. For instance, the M a d h y a first bird flu death in the flyway Pradesh, was reported from the breeding Gujarat and sites in China in October-Uttarkhand and November, indicating that the 24th such instance since 2004. ducks in Kerala show that the disease was coming to India. flu incidents take place in the border migratory birds to the migratory birds and their sites are



# Steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick

**FOLLOW THE STEPS BELOW:** If you are sick with COVID-19 or think you might have it, follow the steps below to help protect other people in your home and community.

#### Stay home except to get medical care

• **Stay home:** People who are mildly ill with COVID-19 are able to recover at home. Do not leave, except to get medical care. Do not visit public areas.



- Stay in touch with your doctor. Call before you get medical care.
   Be sure to get care if you feel worse or you think it is an emergency.
- Avoid public transportation: Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.

### Separate yourself from other people in your home, this is known as home isolation

• Stay away from others: As much as possible, you should stay in a specific "sick room" and away from other people in your home. Use a separate bathroom, if available.



- Limit contact with pets & animals: You should restrict contact with pets and other animals, just like you would around other people.
  - Although there have not been reports of pets or other animals becoming sick with COVID-19, it is still recommended that people with the virus limit contact with animals until more information is known.
  - When possible, have another member of your household care for your animals while you are sick with COVID-19. If you must care for your pet or be around animals while you are sick, wash your hands before and after you interact with them. See COVID-19 and Animals for more information.

#### Call ahead before visiting your doctor

• Call ahead: If you have a medical appointment, call your doctor's office or emergency department, and tell them you have or may have COVID-19. This will help the office protect themselves and other patients.



#### Wear a facemask if you are sick

 If you are sick: You should wear a facemask when you are around other people and before you enter a healthcare provider's office.



• If you are caring for others: If the person who is sick is not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then people who live in the home should stay in a different room. When caregivers enter the room of the sick person, they should wear a facemask. Visitors, other than caregivers, are not recommended.

#### Cover your coughs and sneezes

• **Cover:** Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.



- **Dispose:** Throw used tissues in a lined trash can.
- Wash hands: Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

#### Clean your hands often

- Wash hands: Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

  This is especially important after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- Hand sanitizer: If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.
- **Soap and water:** Soap and water are the best option, especially if hands are visibly dirty.
- **Avoid touching:** Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

#### Avoid sharing personal household items

 Do not share: Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people in your home.



#### cdc.gov/COVID19



# In India's lower judiciary, the absence of in-group b

There is evidence from around the world that judges discriminate in favour of litigants who share their identity. In contrast, we find no evidence of in-group bias by gender or religion in India's lower judiciary.



Much of the debate worse judicial outcomes for Court or high court judges. The proceedings India's 200 million Muslims countries. We asked whether judges. We wanted to test on their cases, depending on

around judicial fairness in Indian women and for Muslims. courts has focused on Supreme Measuring bias in criminal expansive lower judiciary, straightforward. It is not comprising more than 7,000 sufficient to look at conviction district, sessions, and rates for different social groups, subordinate courts, has largely because other inequalities may been missing from this ongoing result in differential outcomes. debate. To fill this gap, we For example, it is hardly examined data on over six surprising, and not evidence of million court cases filed under bias against men, that only India's criminal codes between 23% of individuals charged under 2010-2018 across the country. the penal code are women. Women represent 48% of the Instead, we applied a statistical population, but only 28% of test that has uncovered judicial lower court judges. Similarly, bias in courts in several other represent 14% of the population, women or Muslim defendants on but only 7% of lower court average get different decisions whether these disparities lead to whether their assigned judge is

fact, the legal system explicitly of upward economic mobility. treatment from male judges. prohibits the practice of The 2006 Sachar committee Our study is just one step

same section of the penal code, judicial decisions.

a man or a non-Muslim. This heard by female judges. We did find some evidence that male

lawsuits when their cases are case processes, like delay. We rightly condemned.

test is credible, because neither expected to find the same kind judges are more lenient overall defendants nor prosecutors in of bias in India's district courts. than their female colleagues. the judicial system have much Our own prior research shows But this is not evidence of bias, control over the demography of that Muslim men are worse off because male and female the judge who hears a case. In than Dalits and Adivasis in terms defendants get equally lenient

shopping for judges, noting that reported that Indian Muslims fare toward building a body of it "must be crushed with a heavy worse on every human evidence on the performance of development indicator, are over- the Indian judicial system. We This allowed us to compare two policed, and are often killed in found an absence of in-group defendants who are alike in botched police encounters. bias in one context, but it does every way - of the same gender Given a climate of prejudice, we not rule out other forms of bias and religion, charged under the had reason to suspect bias in in the legal system as a whole. We did not have data to study in the same month, with cases To our surprise, across six in-group bias along caste or heard in the same district court million criminal cases, we found socio-economic lines. We also - whose only difference is that virtually no evidence of in-group cannot rule out unequal one had her case heard by a bias among judges on either treatment of Muslims or women female judge and the other by a gender or religion. Male in the system as a whole. Our male judge. There is evidence defendants did not get better study does not provide any from around the world that outcomes when they were reason to doubt the existence judges discriminate in favour of assigned to male judges, nor did of widespread unfair treatment litigants who share their identity. female judges favour women. in other domains. However, our For example, in Israeli courts, Equally, the judicial outcomes research is optimistic about Arabs whose cases are heard of Muslims were virtually lower court judges, at least with in front of Arab judges get more identical whether their cases regard to this important form of favourable decisions than Arabs were assigned to Muslim or to bias. If district and lower court whose cases come before non-Muslim judges. We found judges display impartiality Jewish judges. In the United similar results whether we toward defendant identity in their States, women are more likely looked at case outcomes (such rulings, they should be celebrated to win sexual discrimination as acquittal or conviction), or at for it, even as other problems are

# Opening the black box of marriage

#### There has been a debate recently over salaries for housewives

housewives. That politicians are serious debate. care work (UDCW) performed for reveals salaries for housewives can compensation is higher than an the home. Courts used various

There has been a debate shake the foundations of award for replacing her services recently over salaries for patriarchy and is worthy of

taking it up is welcome. However, For one, India's courts have the reaction against it derives developed a pathbreaking and partly from an anxiety over robust "wages for housework" commodification of what is seen jurisprudence. My study of cases as a labour of love, namely, a between 1968 and 2021 under woman's unpaid domestic and the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, the her family. Yet, various recognition by courts, including components of women's UDCW the Supreme Court (as recently are already commodified through as January 6), of the UDCW of paid domestic work, sex work, deceased housewives. When care work and surrogacy. Once approached by dependents for we suspend commodification compensation for loss of services anxiety, wages for housework of housewives to the family, (WFH) is neither an outrageous judges have quantified women's idea nor a utopian one. Instead, UDCW to fix a notional monthly a movement for wages for income, multiplied for her housework that goes beyond reproductive lifespan. This UDCW on par with work outside

or for loss of companionship.

The labour of housewives is, thus, compensated alongside that of male workers. Judges drew on constitutional law (Article 15), international human rights law, and feminist economics to recognise UDCW, resulting in significant symbolic and material gains. Some judges glorified maternal altruism, reinforcing gendered expectations of women's labour within hetero-patriarchal marital forms. But other judges spoke of the changing nature of the household where women earned outside the home, even more than their husbands. They put



question of recognition for UDCW women's UDCW upon divorce.

methods to measure pay, to addressing thorny questions including the costs of of redistribution. Importantly, if replacement, the opportunity courts can remunerate men for cost of UDCW, and women's UDCW when housewives die, contribution to marriage as a why not remunerate women for partnership. But they pegged their UDCW when they are alive? compensation to a woman's Indeed, the Supreme Court (SC) motherhood status, number of in 2010 called on Parliament to children, age and educational introduce a community property qualifications generating poor regime (where income and intra-gender redistributive property acquired by either outcomes. Still, courts have spouse during a marriage belong moved beyond the threshold to both partners) to compensate





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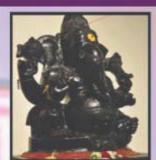
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# At stake, the future of democra

#### The roots of the attack on the Capitol can be traced to an alternative, fact-free, conspiracy theory based narrative, fuelled by technology

The first chapter in the plot was made up of people who popularity has in part fuelled, as that culminated with the siege of shared this conviction, and that well as having been fuelled by, a the United States (US) Capitol by they, ultimately, thought they rise in white nationalism. Racial Donald Trump's supporters on were being patriotic. January 6, 2021 was written over four years ago when, on manifestation of an epistemic appear to have widened during December 4, 2016, a young man crisis. In a November 2017 piece the closing years of the country's armed with an assault rifle in the Vox, journalist David walked into a pizza joint in Roberts described this problem Washington DC. He was led to as "a split not just in what we believe that the basement was value or want, but in who we trust, home to a paedophilia ring, run how we come to know things, by Democratic presidential and what we believe we know nominee Hillary Clinton and her what we believe exists, is true, campaign chief. This was the first has happened and is happening". time the US had come face to face in real life with a virtual cult perception of facts has continued of conspiracy theorists who to spread and grow through the believed that Trump was secretly digital veins and nodes of not just waging a war against elite Satan- the underground internet but worshipping paedophiles in mainstream social media. None government, business and the of the networks are untouched, media. This would later evolve whether it is Facebook, Twitter into what is known as QAnon. or The followers of QAnon now interventions have - as evidenced believe that the 2020 election by the scenes that played out revolution has been free of cost was rigged to stop Trump. In during the congressional almost every media and social confirmation of the election result media video from the Capitol - achieved nothing. Many studies businesses in the history of These echo chambers have QAnon jeopardise the future of

This dangerous split in the YouTube, building, it is clear that the mob have shown that Trump's rise to mankind. Behind this success is grown, trapping more and more democracy.

fault lines have historically run What unfolded then was the deep within the US. But they first black President's term. It was during this time - roughly 2008 to 2014 - when most of the social media platforms crossed the inflexion point in user base to be able to influence physical world conversation. Facebook crossed 200 million users in 2009 and the same year, YouTube reported the billionth time a video was watched on its website. This was not just an American phenomenon - the world went through a digital revolution, with computers being collapsed into smartphones and internet becoming cheaper and faster.

> On the face of it, this digital for the individual, while becoming one of the most profitable



the wonder of the algorithm - people in a perpetual state of computer code that is designed misinformation that often to make sure you spend more instead makes them feel time on a service, helping maximise advertising revenue. biases. Once again, this is not Algorithms do this by exposing users to people and content that they are most likely to engage with, invariably creating echo chambers of thought. A notable example of this is YouTube's nowabandoned recommendations that selective perception of feature that, the company knowledge and belief may pose admitted, could have directed for the world. people to "videos promoting a phony miracle cure for a serious defy a past that unarguably took illness, claiming the earth is flat place, anti-vaxxers threaten a or making blatantly false claims present consumed by a about historic events like 9/11". pandemic, and groups such as

empowered by reinforcing their new. The 2016 US election and the Brexit referendum revealed how ideological and political divisions were becoming harder to bridge. But what is now coming into view is the threat

Today, Holocaust deniers

# Listen to the voice of protesting farmers



recognise the Approximately 55% of the total hectares of land. workforce in India was employed 2019-20 states that the share of marginal farming households

The protesting farmers want agriculture and allied sectors in to be heard. For years, national income has also governments have neglected the declined to 16.5%. Though the agricultural sector, failing to average size of an agricultural abysmal holding was around one hectare conditions under which a in 2015-16, small and marginal majority of our farmers work. The farmers who hold less than two ongoing protests must be hectares of land constitute 86% understood in the backdrop of the of the total holdings. Only 1% of levels of poverty they face. farmers hold more than 10

The average monthly income in agriculture and allied sectors of an agricultural household in (2011 Census). This has declined India is estimated at about little surplus to deal with 10,281. Unlike the corporate concerned about their livelihood. to 42.5%, according to the ?6,500. It varies from Periodic Labour Force Survey approximately ?18,000 in Punjab 2018-19. The Economic Survey to ?3,500 in Bihar. Small and years, they are forced to borrow influence government. Industry for all crops until markets

#### Farmers have low incomes, high debts, and go through great insecurity. The State must continue to support agriculture

agriculture. It is little wonder that marriage, a medical emergency incentives while farmers are only 52% of all agricultural households or education. This is above the seeking Minimum Support in India are indebted - 64% of regular loans they take to buy Prices (MSP). Even that price marginal farmers, with holdings fertilisers, seeds and other inputs. doesn't cater to their of less than one hectare, and 18%, who hold between one to point. The average outstanding farmers are deprived of the two hectares, are in debt. What loan of a farming household is benefits of MSPs. Of over 140 this data suggests is that just over ?1,00,000. Most loans, million farmers, only 8.7 million unremunerative, but is deeply from non-institutional sources at Uttar Pradesh (UP) and linked to levels of poverty in rural India. A National Bank for from 24% to 36%. Since the knew about MSPs before the Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) survey also found that families of small and marginal farmers spent security, farmers are driven to ?6,750 per month on daily non-institutional expenses while their incomes resulting may have been much less.

unremunerative, farmers have - in 2019 alone, the number was contingencies, even in a relatively good year. In most other from local moneylenders to meet and other sectors of the economy become sufficiently competitive.

is not only which account for this debt, are benefit from it. In states such as exorbitant interest rates ranging sanctioning of loans by institutions is a lengthy process, involving demand for collateral sources extreme indebtedness. This also explains Since farming has become the number of suicides by farmers sector, the farming community doesn't have the clout to seeking an assurance on MSPs

earned less than ?2,500 from major expenses such as a family seek exemptions, waivers and Let us look at another data sustenance as 94% of the Karnataka, none of the farmers sowing season, according to a NITI Aayog report. Punjab and Harvana, however, are the biggest beneficiaries. In fact, 85% of the wheat procured in India in 2019-20 came from the three states - Madhya Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana, which is why Punjab's farmers are so The protesting farmers are

# The psychology of Trump's supporters

As President Donald Trump's supporters stormed the United States (US) Capitol on January 6, I wondered if a man I had interviewed at a Trump rally in Pennsylvania was among them.

As President Donald Trump's the close of polling. That was 1,000%."Including violence, I supporters stormed the United weeks before the Capitol assault. pressed him. "Well, uhh ..." States (US) Capitol on January I am hesitant to identify him fully Don't forget, you have a pregnant 6, I wondered if a man I had because I am not sure if he will wife at home, I said to him. Ryan interviewed at a Trump rally in still say the things he did, knowing S still did not say, "No". And Pennsylvania was among them. what happened. "I don't think we're going to lose," he had said when I asked what the law and violate the would come to that. I think we he thought Trump would do if he Constitution and the very would win. But if he wanted to lost. Would he accept defeat? essence of democracy. It was, in stay in office ... I wouldn't be any And concede? Trump had been hindsight, a stunningly prescient more violent than the Left has coronavirus pandemic struck. would address whether he won famously evasive about it multiple preview of what was to follow. times he was asked. "But if he does lose, and he doesn't want "Because I think the Democrats racial injustice protests triggered to go, I will have his back a are evil and insane. ... I don't by the killing of George Floyd, He and his wife were expecting Ryan S was there at the Capitol, 1,000%, a 100,000%. If he told care. I don't want them in power. an African-American man, by a twins. He had done well since, doing the "anything" he had said us to get out in the streets, There is nothing I would not do. White police officer in Minnesota with cryptocurrency. anything. Literally, anything. There's nothing I wouldn't do. If in May 2020. There is nothing I wouldn't do, if Trump calls for the sorts of he decided he wanted to stay in protests, we have been seeing appeared to be in his late 20s, had driven four hours to just seemed convinced Trump "is not office." Ryan S and I spoke on from the Left, anything like that had worked in chemical attend a Trump rally, his first and, going to want to stay in office" if

Why would he say that?

after a long pause, he said, "I Ryan S was willing to break would say this. I don't think it been for the past six months."

Ryan S was referring to the



Living in New York state, which was hit the hardest, he quit so as to not bring the virus home.

Ryan S, a white man who Trump when we spoke, but he remembered Ryan S had October 31, three days before man, I will be behind him manufacturing before the probably the last the president he loses. "He is not that guy."

or lost. He had never been to one before.

On January 6, I wondered if he would if the president asked, Ryan S had already voted for  $\ \mbox{upon} \ \mbox{losing}. \ \mbox{But I} \ \mbox{also}$ 

# Weaning away foreign investment from China Capitalising on emergent geopolitical trends entails working with like-

minded partners focusing on sectors with national security implications



India attracting firms that might

Over the past few years, there firms considering hedging their has been much discussion about risk by investing in alternatives.

The situation had presented be seeking to exit China. Initially, India with an opportunity. these conversations were driven However, there were a few gains. these currents. Shutdowns by changes in the Chinese The economic argument for firms prompted demands for supply economy, such as rising labour to relocate to India remained chain costs, shifting focus towards new weak, despite the size of the redundancies. A wider array of technologies and declining market. This was the case when sectors is now being viewed productivity. There was a sense they could relocate to any of the from a national security prism. that these changes, coupled with East Asian economies of China's pandemic diplomacy survey found that 78.6% of focus on efficiency and improving infrastructure and ease Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia or added to anxieties about the companies in China don't plan to improved of doing business in India, would Singapore, which generally vulnerabilities of dependence on change their investment addressing issues such as make India an attractive option. ranked better than India on any single market, along with the allocations. A European policy predictability and Sino-United States (US) trade metrics such as export basket need to secure one's own Chamber of Commerce in stability, better infrastructure, friction then came as a shot in similarity, wages, investment innovations. Essentially, politics China's survey in February factor market reforms and the arm. The imposition of tariffs climate and institutional has become more important in reported that only 11% of firms human capital development. by US President Donald Trump strengths. In a larger sense, economic decision-making, with were "considering shifting their Efforts in this direction are on Chinese imports began to however, what it underscored was trust and not just efficiency being current or planned investments critical, but unlikely to bear fruit disrupt global supply chains, with that the philosophical threads in critical to the choices of states to other markets." It also said in the near term.

globalisation were fraying. have seen Japan offering financial in China for China. Finally, a Conventional notions of incentives to companies to exit survey of British firms toward the comparative advantage and free China. In the West, there has end of the year said that only 3% trade binding states in a virtuous been talk about trust bubbles and were considering leaving China. cycle of prosperity and peaceful democracies aligning on new This tells us that the allure of the coexistence were being severely technologies. In India, there have Chinese market, its linkages to strained. Three factors amplified been efforts to incentivise firms regional and global supply this dynamic, i.e, China's by easing access to land, chains, supportive policy economic rise coupled with an changing labour laws and offering architecture and access to authoritarian turn in its politics, financial benefits. the populist backlash in the West and intensified geopolitical a mass exodus of foreign firms for Western firms. Politics is competition over emerging from China. It's early days, but important, but economics still technologies.

The pandemic accelerated resilience

the fabric of economic and firms. Consequently, we that most European firms were quality infrastructure among Yet, none of this has meant other factors remain key drivers Japan's subsidy programme has matters. This is why many firms had mixed results. Surveys of appear to be considering a American, European and British China+1 strategy. From an firms over the past year have Indian perspective, there is a revealed that an overwhelming need to devise short- and number of them are unlikely to long-term approaches in order relocate. For instance, AmCham to attract investments. The Shanghai's September 2020 latter, of course, needs to



# India should be wary of Chinese mind game

Withdrawal from the vast Tibetan and Xinjiang military region means little in an era of stand-off weapons and long-range missiles. The Chinese PLA has capacity to deploy troop divisions within a week with metalled roads and optical fibre cables up to the last military post and advanced landing grounds (ALGs) all along the LAC.

A Hong Kong-based English newspaper has quoted Chinese military sources to claim that China has withdrawn 10,000 troops from its "disputed border with India" as Beijing calculated that the chances of conflict in winter are slim. According to the newspaper, all the troops were pulled back in military vehicles so that the Indian side could see and verify. The withdrawal, as per the South armies locked in a stand-off photographic evidence of the points till the since May 5, 2020.



China Morning Post report, newspaper independently, the PLA, with metalled roads to involved troops temporarily movement of 10,000 troops or the last post and advanced deployed from units in the three brigades or one division landing grounds all along the Xinjiang and Tibet military in military parlance cannot be 3,488 kilometre Line of Actual regions. The Indian Army has missed either by satellite Control (LAC), has the capacity March to October 2020 in an Commission is sure that it is also confirmed withdrawal of imagery or by communication to fully deploy within a area of 100-150 square impossible for both sides to fight People's Liberation Army (PLA) intercepts. The troops will have week. According to national training units 1000 kilometres to to be withdrawn either by security planners, the Indian 500 kilometres from the vast vehicles or sent back to their military will continue to be on alert Tibetan plateau without giving barracks by transport aircraft. till such time the PLA does not out any numbers. The Army, As the Tibetan plateau is more restore status quo ante on the however, says that there is no than two million square East Ladakh LAC. They have withdrawal from the friction kilometres and is largely also ruled out any withdrawal of points in East Ladakh with both treeless, there would be Indian troops from the contested activity. Either way, the disengagement and de-While there is no way to verify withdrawal would largely be escalation takes place. What is There is, however, evidence to Army should be wary of such the claims of the Chinese part of the feel-good factor since interesting to note is that the indicate that the PLA's work and mind games.

PLA conducts annual exercises engineering force deployed to at Xaidulla or Shahidullah upgrade infrastructure in Garrison, 94 kilometres from occupied Aksai Chin has moved Karakoram Pass. This pass is back after completion of work merely a stone's throw from last month. to this strategically-located completion of infrastructure work been holding PLA training radars, tanks and multi-barrel exercises annually except for rocket launchers. 2018.In 2020, a division plus The Chinese news report says down to join their comrades in home barracks to rest. the stand-off with Indian Army. The newspaper has also It is still not clear whether these quoted a retired Indian elements have gone back. diplomat, saying that the Similar training exercises take reported Chinese move could agreed place at Phari Dzong across the prompt India to consider a Sikkim border in Chumbi Valley. similar response. The Indian

Daulat Beg Oldi. In the 19th As many as 320 vehicles moved century, Dogra general Zorawar out and some 40-45 temporary Singh had captured all areas up shelters were taken out after the town. Known as Sanshili such as building of roads, winter barracks and located on the shelters for deployed troops and caravan route between Ladakh sophisticated military equipment and Tarim Basin, Xaidulla has like surface-to-air missiles,

PLA troops exercised from that the Central Military kilometres with elements of six in such extremely cold weather mechanised infantry division and in the Himalayas and hence four motorised division coming the troops have been sent to

# Navigating the Minefield of Arab Politics

Despite modern geopolitical realities, changing alliances and reconciliation summits, the real underlying reasons for disputes in the Middle East have not yet been resolved.

In November 2020, the Saudi thousands of its members together with Bahrain, broke mouthpiece on religious affairs, without trial. declaring scholars stated, among other anyone reasons, that the Brotherhood membership seeks to "contest the ruler and sympathies with the Muslim deviate from the ruler" - a crime Brothers. According to punishable by death in Saudi Wikileaks, Frances Fragos Arabia. The scholars' edict, Townsend, assistant to the however, ignored the right of president for homeland security stand up against an unjust ruler. that during a 2006 meeting, Abu In 2013, Egypt's first and only Dhabi democratically overthrown by a coup that win."

suspected Crown Prince elected Mohammed bin Zayed "claimed

Association of Senior Scholars, killed. Today, tens of thousands diplomatic relations. The sogovernment-directed continue to languish in jail called quartet then imposed a blockade on Qatar and even issued a fatwa (religious edict) In 2015, the United Arab attempted a military invasion, Muslim Emirates declared the which was only halted when Brotherhood a terrorist Brotherhood a terrorist Turkey's President Recep Tayyip organization. In the fatwa, the organization, jailing without trial Erdogan rapidly deployed a 200,000 people, ostensibly to Muslim Brothers, recently of military force to Qatar.

or having Incoherence of the Incoherent The Muslim Brotherhood, established in 1928, is older than all of the regimes fighting over it. It had reached power in Tunis, Egypt and elsewhere only an active member of the Saudi- make this up if you were the people, under Islamic law, to and counterterrorism, reported through the ballot box. Like most political parties that mix their political ideology with religion, it has lost the support, if not the that the Saudi and UAE alliance anti-Turkey brigade is crumbling. president, Mohammed Morsi, a that if elections were held in respect, of those who, like this is bombing Yemen in order to The Arab quartet is losing its card-carrying member of the Dubai 'tomorrow' he thought the author, believe the two don't mix. reinstate. Did you get that? Ibn American ally in the face of Muslim Brotherhood, was Muslim Brotherhood would But here is the mother of all Arab Rushd (or Averroes, as he is President Donald Trump and is political ironies. For example, in known by his Latin name) would not sure what to expect from the reinstated the military junta. In Accusing Doha of giving asylum Yemen, Saudi Arabia and the have called this murkiness the incoming Biden administration. the days that followed, Egypt to and funding the Muslim UAE have been carrying out "incoherence of the incoherent." Meanwhile, Iran continues to be saw a bloody purge of the Brotherhood, in 2017, Egypt, brutal airstrikes for the past six. If that is not bizarre enough for as formidable and as unyielding



reinstate the "internationally outlawed as terrorists in Saudi recognized" overthrown by Ansar Allah asylum, protection and funding (Partisans of God, as the Houthi by Riyadh as allies in the war in rebels are officially known). The Yemen. Many of their leaders live Muslim Brotherhood is not only in Saudi Arabia. You couldn't UAE military campaign, but greatest fiction writer. also part of the internationally But Muslim Brotherhood, with the UAE and Saudi Arabia, years that have killed more than you, here is another one. The as ever.

president Arabia, are still given political

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### Visible Cracks in the New American Order

#### Joe Biden will have a kind of majority in Congress but will be faced with a deeply fragmented nation.

officially been designated the 46th for calm. president of the United States. He Biden's performance was dislodged the quintessential credible, but just a bit too political misfit, Donald Trump, Bidenesque. After an effective who, before belatedly agreeing to litany of the noble targets "an orderly transition," had victimized by the ongoing assault, engaged in a truly Satanic battle the president-elect resorted to to overpower the institutions he stale rhetorical clichés. He was elected to defend as he immediately deployed the attempted to install a regime of standard expression Americans permanent chaos.

the 21st century, follows the rules week, when the latest "Karen" of the previous one. His public made headlines by falsely discourse never fails to remind us claiming that a black teenager had of the decorum affected by stolen her iPhone. Accused of politicians in former times. Many racism, she countered: "That's Americans find Biden's adherence not who I am.") to the values of a bygone era Wishing to defend the now sullied reassuring. But the dramatic character of the nation, Biden events that took place on Capitol reached for the same cliché: "The Hill on Wednesday demonstrate scenes of chaos at the Capitol that, in today's political card do not reflect the true America, game, chaos still has a trump do not represent who we are." He card to play and may even have followed this up with his idealized the upper hand.

stepped up to deliver a calm, respect, tolerance. That's who we realistic and responsible address are. That's who we've always to the nation. At the same been." moment, Trump, bunkered in the Today's Daily Devil's Dictionary White House, was deviously definition: maneuvering the forces of Whowe are:

trot out whenever something Biden is a skilled 20th-century shameful occurs: "That's not who

vision of the nation's identity: As the panic was raging, Biden "America's about honor, decency,

Joe Biden has now darkness while appearing to call The imaginary self-image or ideal ego that Americans believe they must affirm when their actions reveal the true ambiguity of their character.

Contextual Note

Joe Biden's public discourse has always been fraught with problems. He sounds reassuring but rarely convincingly sincere. In the past, he has been guilty of flagrant plagiarism. The young man who overcame his stutter politician who, two decades into I am." (We heard it only last may have perceived the risk of launching into unprepared discourse. He eventually learned to avoid danger by limiting his plagiarism to one of two things: either resorting to anonymously source and generally meaningless ideas, like "that's not who we are," or plagiarizing himself by obsessively repeating what he deems his wisest and sincerest sounding pronouncements.

> In his speech on Wednesday. Biden predictably signaled the denouement of the drama on Capitol Hill with his now inevitable self-quotation: "There's never been anything we can't do, when we do it together." This has been going on for at least two years, inciting us to mention this rhetorical tic in



October 2019, then in August and "God bless America. God protect seconds after his first self- are who we are." citation: "There's never, ever, ever. ever, ever been a thing we've tried to do that when we've done it together, we've not been able to do it."

The first problem with this supposedly profound thought is that it is demonstrably false. For example, the US hasn't managed to win a war in many decades, though not for lack of trying (and producing millions of victims). The nation hasn't managed to eradicate racism or slow down growing wealth and income inequality, but that may be because it has never really tried. Those familiar with any of Biden's speeches expect it to end with several columns starting in another predictable locution: a Russian tool.

November this year. On our troops." Why this insistence? Wednesday, he even insisted on Does Biden really think that repeating it a second time, with militarism defines the nation? It's added emphasis, only a few as if his message is, "The troops

> As president, if Biden really wishes to protect the troops, he could simply decide to bring them back from places like Iraq and Syria, where they have accomplished nothing, even while "doing it together." In the meantime, the locals have requested repeatedly that those troops return home. But as an establishment Democrat, Biden prefers to delegate to God the task of protecting the soldiers' lives because his task is to put them in harm's way. In her failed primary campaign, Tulsi Gabbard, who served in the Middle East, made that point repeatedly. It led to Hillary Clinton accusing her of being

**Historical Note** 

American history tells a story somewhat different from Biden's about "who we are." To defend their aggression, some of the protesters remembered their school history lessons about the Boston Tea Party and the Revolutionary War. They could have reasonably countered with "This is who we are and always have been." Biden believes he can return the nation to its true identity, as a nation of decency, order and peace. In reality, the US has never sought stability, order and peace. Throughout its history, it has used disorder and "creative destruction" for the purpose of conquest and growth. Whether it was the capture of Africans to serve as slaves, the genocide of Native Americans or the more recent implanting of hundreds of military bases across the globe, the essential ingredient of order, as applied by American governments, has of a banker who launched his the working class when he headline: "Sen. Josh Hawley have now decided to rebrand as always been founded on the assertive use of force.

# eath of an Insurrection Salesma

Josh Hawley, the Republican senator from Missouri, formerly a rising star in his party, gambled dangerously with what he believed was the considerable political capital he had accumulated thanks to his image of a populist - a conservative fighting for the cause of the people. In recent weeks, Hawley even teamed up with Bernie Sanders in his crusade to get Congress to issue a \$1,200 check to every American. Hawley's strategy was clear: He diplomas from Stanford and Yale monopolies that dominate not just was positioned as the youthful heir to Donald Trump's legacy, a free from his status as a captive Republican capable of resonating Like Trump, though clearly better with the vibes of the working educated, Hawley is a calculating class.

his image than to demonstrate his elite he represents and the election, his misunderstanding of



serious privileged of the cultural elite he hails from. egoist and a faux populist.

What better way to consolidate To bridge the gap between the unbending loyalty to a waning and working class he hoped to the movement he was hoping to helpless Donald Trump? The seduce, Hawley made one calculation made sense on the gamble too many. He earned purely strategic level. But the son quite a few brownie points with NBC summed it up with this career as a lawyer thanks to challenged some of the becomes a pariah on Capitol Hill."

will always be unlikely to break the US and international economy, but also its political culture. But when he decided to prove his commitment to the enthusiasts who regard Trump as the messiah by backing and actively promoting Trump's refusal to concede the and seduce caused his strategy to explode in his face.

Things quickly got worse. The publisher Simon and Schuster has canceled the publication of Hawley's book, "The Tyranny of Big Tech," which was intended to bolster his position as a bold reformer. Hawley, a constitutional lawyer and former attorney general of Missouri, feels morally offended. He has promised to take this profound injustice to court. He sees it not only as a violation of his constitutional rights under the First Amendment but also as proof that the nation has succumbed to the forces of evil and become the dystopia described by George Orwell in his 1949 novel. "1984."

In his tweet denouncing Simon Schuster Hawley complained: "This could not be Orwellian. I was more representing my constituents, leading a debate on the Senate floor on voter integrity, which they



#### 12 police officials dismissed for negligence in protecting Hindu temple from vandalisation in Pak

Pakhtunkhwa provincial government in Pakistan has dismissed 12 police officials following an enquiry report that found them guilty of "negligence" in protecting a Hindu temple in the province, which was torched by a mob led by members of a radical Islamist party. The

government also forfeited one-year service of 33 police officials in connection with the incident.

The temple in Terri village in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Karak district was attacked on December 30 by the mob after members of the Hindu received community

permission from local authorities to renovate its decades-old building. The mob demolished the newly constructed work alongside the old structure. Deputy Inspector General of Police, Kohat Region, Tayyab Hafeez Cheema had appointed Superintendent of Police (Investigation Wing) Zahir Shah as enquiry officer to probe the incident and submit its report within a week's time. Shah conducted the probe against 73 police officials and recommended to dismiss 12 of them from service on charges of negligence

(News Agencies)- The Khyber and irresponsibility in the discharge of their official duties."Keeping in view the available record and facts on file, perusal of enquiry papers and the recommendations of the Enquiry Officers, they are found guilty of the charges. They show cowardice, negligence, and irresponsibility in the discharge of their official

> obligations. They failed to protect the Hindu Temple which caused disrepute for the Police department in the eyes of the general public," the report said. The report recommended forfeiting one-year regular service of 33 police officials. The officer also recommended writing to the Superintendent of

Police, Frontier Reserve Police, Kohat for minor punishment to the remaining 28 personnel. The 12 police officials dismissed include the station house officer (SHO) and assistant sub inspector of Terri Police Station. The report said that the mob, under the supervision of Maulana Shareef, assaulted the Hindu Temple in Terri, wherein the mob burnt the said temple and damaged it without any interruption as a result of which a complaint under various sections was filed in the Terri police station.

#### Pakistan records biggest jump in Covid-19 cases in nearly a month



(News Pakistan's Covid-19 positivity December 18 last year when rate on Thursday jumped to a NCOC reported 3,179 infections. record 7.4 per cent in the past Active cases have risen to 24 hours, the highest since 33,869 with at least 2,410 December 17 as the country patients under critical care across recorded 3,097 new infections. the country. Meanwhile, 46 Data issued by the National people succumbed to the virus, Command and Operations taking the national death toll to Centre (NCOC) showed that 10,818. 1,769 people tested positive for Over 29,743 cases have been Pakistan's single-day tally The News International reported.

Agencies)- crossed the 3,000-mark was on

Covid-19 across Sindh on reported across the country January 13, reported The News since the beginning of the new International. The last time year while 642 people have died,

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- · Do not touch your face with unwashed hands.
- Do not shake hands. Instead wave or elbow bump.
- · Monitor your health more closely than usual for cold or flu symptoms.



#### STAY HOME IF SICK

- · Stay home and call your doctor if you have symptoms like coughing, shortness of breath, fever, sore throat.
- · If you do not feel better in 24-48 hours, seek care from your doctor.
- If you need help getting medical care, call 311.
- NYC will provide care regardless of immigration status or ability to pay.



#### PROTECT THE MOST VULNERABLE

- · If you have chronic conditions like lung disease, heart disease, diabetes, cancer or a weakened immune system, avoid unnecessary gatherings and events.
- If you have family or friends who have one of these conditions, do not visit them if you feel sick.



#### REDUCE **OVERCROWDING**

- · Consider telecommuting.
- Stagger work hours, starting earlier or later.
- Walk or bike to work, if possible.
- If the train is too packed, wait for the next one.







#### Team Pelosi: Democrats who will argue the case for Trump's impeachment

#### The House Speaker has tapped nine of her most trusted allies to argue in favour of impeachment.

(News House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has were also victims, and so whether tapped nine of her most trusted it was those who voted in the allies in the House to argue the House last night or those in the that," said Rep. Madeleine Dean, case for President Donald Trump's Senate who will have to weigh in D-Pa., one of the managers. "That impeachment. The Democrats, on this, you don't have to tell all of whom are lawyers and many anyone who was in the building of whom have deep experience twice what it was like to be None of the impeachment investigating the president, face terrorized," said California Rep. managers argued the case in skeptical Senate Republicans to managers. convict Trump.

for "incitement of insurrection" - will send the article of was approved by the House on impeachment to the Senate. It Wednesday, one week after a could be as soon as next week, violent mob of Trump supporters on President-elect Joe Biden's invaded the Capitol. At the time, first day in office. lawmakers were counting the The managers plan to argue at country. votes that cemented Trump's trial that Trump incited the riot, election defeat.

seats as rioters beat on the doors Senate jurors.

It is unclear when the trial will start. A single article of impeachment - Pelosi hasn't yet said when she

delaying the congressional As members of the House who certification of the electoral vote were in the Capitol when it was count by inciting an angry mob attacked - several hiding under to harm members of Congress. Some of the rioters were recorded of the chamber - the Democrats saying they wanted to find Pelosi are also witnesses to what they and Vice President Mike Pence, charge is a crime. So are the who presided over the count. Others had zip ties that could be

Agencies)- "This is a case where the jurors used as handcuffs hanging on their clothes.

> "The American people witnessed amounts to high crimes and misdemeanors."

the arduous task of convincing Eric Swalwell, one of the Trump's first impeachment trial acquitted the president on charges of abuse of power and obstruction of justice. The House impeached Trump in 2019 after he pressured Ukraine's president to investigate Biden's family while withholding military aid to the

> Colorado Rep. Diana DeGette, another manager, says the nine prosecutors plan to present a serious case and "finish the job" that the House started.

> A look at Pelosi's prosecution team in Trump's historic second impeachment:

**JAMIE** RASKIN,



last year, when the Senate Pelosi appointed Raskin, a former what gives him strength to take constitutional law professor and on this burden that he now prominent member of the House carries is knowing that this is Judiciary Committee, as lead something that would be manager. In a week of dramatic enormously meaningful to his events and stories, Raskin's son." stands out: The day before the REP. DIANA DEGETTE, Capitol riots, Raskin buried his 25year-old son, Tommy, after he DeGette, who is serving her 13th killed himself on New Year's Eve. You would be hard pressed to find a more beloved figure in the one of Pelosi's go-to allies. The Congress" than Raskin, says House Intelligence Committee over the House during the first Chairman Adam Schiff, who was impeachment vote in 2019. the lead manager during Trump's DeGette said Pelosi trusted her first trial. He worked closely with to do it because she is "able to Raskin on that impeachment to control the passions on the investigation. "I know that part of floor."

COLORADO

term representing Denver, is a former civil rights attorney and speaker picked her to preside

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# Capitol Hill riots: More than 100 individuals arrested for violence, says

"We're also monitoring an extensive amount of concerning online chatter ahead of President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration on January 20," agency director Director Christopher Wray said.

(News Agencies)- US security agencies have arrested more than 100 individuals for their criminal activities in last week's siege of the Capitol and are Wray also said that law individuals who may have an eye monitoring "an extensive amount" enforcement was aware of and toward repeating that same kind of concerning online chatter" ahead of President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration on January 20, FBI Director Christopher Wray said. The violence on January 6 by outgoing President Donald Trump's supporters temporarily halted the counting of Electoral College votes and resulted in the deaths of five individuals, including a police officer.

"We and our partners have already arrested more than 100 individuals for their criminal activities in last week's siege of the Capitol and continue to pursue countless other related investigations," Wray said during a meeting with Vice President Mike Pence.

"And those help not only prevent those individuals from any effort to repeat that kind of activity but

might be inclined to try to engage in that activity," he said.

also should serve as a very stern having to sift through "what's warning to anybody else who aspirational versus what's intentional."

The FBI, he said, is looking at monitoring "an extensive amount of violence that was seen at the of concerning online chatter" Capitol Hill last week."I mean, added that authorities were suspects. So we know who you he said.



ahead of President-elect Biden's from January 6 alone, we've are, if you're out there, and FBI It was Wray's first public

inauguration next week, but already identified over 200 agents are coming to find you," appearance since rioters stormed the Capitol.

#### Trump administration takes final swipe at China days before Biden's inauguration

at China and its biggest firms Thursday,

imposing sanctions on officials and in the South China Sea and China, Washington's strategic rival in Asia, days before Senior U.S. officials told reporters

(News Agencies)-The office on Wednesday. The Biden CNOOC restrictions will not apply which forces American investors Trump administration in its transition team did not to crude, refined fuels and liquid to divest holdings of the waning days took another swipe immediately respond to a request natural gas and do not apply to blacklisted firms by Nov. 11, for comment.

enterprises, officials of the South China Sea. companies for alleged misdeeds Chinese Communist Party and Nine Chinese firms were added Foreign Ministry comments China Sea claims.

existing joint ventures with 2021. Executives of state-owned CNOOC that do not operate in the

military, along with oil giant to the Pentagon's list of accusing Washington of imposing an investment ban on CNOOC will face new restrictions companies with alleged ties to "pinning political and ideological nine more firms. The moves will for allegedly using coercion the Chinese military, including labels on economic and trade further increase tensions with against states with rival South planemaker Comac and phone issues and exploiting its state maker Xiaomi Corp.

President-elect Joe Biden takes on a call Thursday the new to a new U.S. investment ban national security."

ਪੈਜਾਬੀ ਨੱਜਵਾਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਵਿਦੇਸ਼

ਪੰਜਾਬ. ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀਅਤ ਦਾ ਤਰਜ਼ਮਾਨ

PUNJABI DUNIYA

In its response, the Chinese embassy referred to Jan. 7 power to crack down on foreign Those companies will be subject companies, under the pretext of

Weekly



एलोन-ए-ज

ਮਾਰਨ ਲਈ ਖਰਚੇ 27000 ਕਰੋੜ



ਭਾਰਤ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੇ ਖਾਲਿਸਤਾਨ ਲਿਬਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਫੋਰਸ ਤੇ ਪਾਬੰਦੀ ਲਾਈ

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ਨਵੇਂ ਸਾਲ ਮੌਕੇ ਅਮਰੀਕੀ ਫੌਜ ਨੇ ਬਬ



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### <sub>आईएस में शामिल हुई महिला को</sub> अमेरिका ने एंट्री देने से किया इंकार



# Kashmir situation of 'great concern': UK minister

Responding to an hour-long debate in the Westminster Hall of parliament on the 'Political situation in Kashmir', minister for Asia Nigel Adams called on the Indian government to lift remaining restrictions on assembly and communications in the valley.

(News Agencies)-The Boris The Indian high commission serious human rights concerns Johnson government on refuted allegations in a in both India-administered and Wednesday reiterated the UK's statement issued after the Pakistan-administered Kashmir. long-standing position that the debate, adding that since the This has been confirmed by the issue of Jammu and Kashmir is administrative reorganisation of UN high commissioner for for India and Pakistan to resolve, Jammu and Kashmir in August human rights in his report". that London has no role, but said 2019, "it is well on the path of He added: "The situation in Indiathe current situation in the valley good is of "great concern."

in the vallev.

Party, with most of them people". Kashmir.

governance accelerated development".

debate in the Westminster Hall situation in Kashmir elicits very situation in Kashmir', minister for concern to this government. I Asia Nigel Adams called on the want to stress that the Indian government to lift government's policy remains remaining restrictions on stable, it is unchanged, we and the Democratic Unionist the wishes of the Kashmiri weeks.

to not acknowledge that there are raised Kashmir with his issues are often raised with New available to all".

and administered Kashmir has been a particular concern to many here Responding to an hour-long Adams said: "Undoubtedly, the today including as well this government, particularly since of parliament on the 'Political strong feelings and is of great the revocation of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution in 2019". The UK government, he said, welcomed the recent release of former chief ministers Farooq assembly and communications continue to believe that this is for Abdullah, Omar Abdullah and India and Pakistan to find a Mehbooba Mufti, and noted that Speakers in the debate included lasting political resolution to the several restrictions had been

Adams said: "We repeatedly highlighting reported incidents of "It is not appropriate for the UK raise our concerns about alleged human rights violations government to prescribe a detentions and restrictions with in Jammu and Kashmir as well solution or act as a mediator in the Indian government. The



visit to New Delhi last month". "The situation in Kashmir extended an invitation to British

remains an important issue for MPs to discuss all India-related the government. We continue to issues so that they have talk frankly to the governments authentic and factual information. of India and Pakistan about our human rights concerns and for them or their constituents. all remaining restrictions on India- It said: "It is not the policy of India as soon as possible".

Tuesday, MPs highlighted Government and Christians and religious misperceptions

counterpart, including during his Delhi. Noting the debates, the Indian high commission including issues of concern to

administered Kashmir to be lifted to take undue interest in internal discussions within a foreign India was the focus of debates parliament. High Commission of MPs from Conservative, Labour situation that takes into account relaxed in recent days and in the Westminster Hall for the India is engaging with all second day on Wednesday. On concerned - including the UK alleged persecution of Muslims, Parliamentarians to avoid minorities in the country, with misinformation by making as in Pakistan-Occupied this regard but it would be wrong foreign secretary (Dominic Raab) Adams assuring MPs that such authentic information about India







# 'At 6 pm, life stops': Europe uses curfews to fight coronavirus



(News Agencies)-As the wan Champagne producer Alexandre winter sun sets over France's Prat. Trying to fend off the need Champagne region, the for a third nationwide lockdown countdown clock kicks that would further dent Europe's in.Laborers stop pruning the vines second-largest economy and as the light fades at about 4:30 put more jobs in danger, France pm, leaving them 90 minutes to is instead opting for creeping come in from the cold, change curfews. Big chunks of eastern out of their work clothes, hop in France, including most of its their cars and zoom home before regions that border Belgium, curfew.Forget about any after- face 6 pm-to-6 am restrictions work socializing with friends, on movement. after-school clubs for children or The rest of France could guickly doing any evening shopping follow suit, losing two extra hours beyond quick trips for essentials. of liberty that have been just Police on patrol demand valid enough for residents to maintain reasons from people seen out bare-bones social lives. and about. For those without Until a couple of weeks ago, the them, the threat of mounting fines nightly curfew didn't kick in until curfew-breakers increasingly making life outside Customers still stopped to buy of the weekends all work and no bottles of his family's bubbly

6 p.m. coronavirus Germany, Switzerland and Italy,

is 8 pm in Prat's region, the Marne. play."At 6 pm, life stops," says wines on their way home, he

Big chunks of eastern France, including most of its regions that border Belgium, Germany, Switzerland and Italy, face 6 pm-to-6 am restrictions on movement.

said. But when the cut-off time was advanced to 6 pm to slow viral infections, the drinkers disappeared.

"Now we have no one," Prat said. The village where retiree Jerome Brunault lives alone in the Burgundy wine region is also in one of the 6 pm curfew zones. The 67-year-old says his solitude weighs more heavily without the opportunity for early evening drinks, nibbles and chats with friends, the so-called "apero" gettogethers so beloved by the French that were hurried but still feasible when curfew started two hours later

"With the 6 pm curfew, we cannot go to see friends for a drink anymore," Brunault said. "I now spend my days not talking to anyone except for the baker and some people by phone."

Imposing a 6 pm curfew nationwide is among options the government French considering in response to rising infections and the spread of a particularly contagious virus variant that has swept across virus deaths have soared.

seen over 69,000 confirmed virus working or commuting. deaths.

transmission example in private homes," French government spokesman slow new Covid-19 cases. Gabriel Attal says.

French have a 10 pm to 6 am started to flare.

Britain, where new infections and curfew while in Belgium's Dutchspeaking region, the hours are Prime Minister Jean Castex midnight to 5 am. People out could announce a curfew between 8 pm and 5 am in extension Thursday evening, as Hungary must be able to show well as other restrictions, to fight police written proof from their the virus in a country that has employers that they are either

There are no curfews in Bulgaria, An earlier curfew combats virus Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, "precisely Finland, Ireland, Lithuania, Malta, because it serves to limit social Sweden, Poland or the interactions that people can Netherlands, although the Dutch have at the end of the day, for government is thinking about whether imposing a curfew would

In France, critics of the 6 pm Overnight curfews have become curfew say the earlier time the norm in swaths of Europe actually crams people together but the 6 pm-to-6 am curfew more after work, when they pile in 25 regions of eastern onto public transportation, clog France is the most restrictive roads and shop for groceries in a anywhere in the European narrow rush-hour window before Union's 27 nations. Others they must be home. Women's countries' curfews all start rugby coach Felicie Guinot later and often finish earlier. says negotiating rush-hour The curfew in Italy runs from traffic in Marseille has 10 pm to 5 am, as does the become a nightmare. The city Friday night to Sunday in southern France is among morning curfew in Latvia. the places where the more Regions of Belgium that speak contagious virus variant has

# Search itensifies for black box of doomed Sriwijaya Air Flight

transport ministry ordered the nation's airlines to inspect their older, so-called classic Boeing Co. 737 aircraft following Saturday's crash of a Sriwijaya Air passenger jet with 62 people on board.

(News Agencies)-Indonesia's practice nation's airlines to inspect their and 500 jets all fall under the disappeared from radar. older, so-called classic Boeing classic series. Indonesian The retrieved flight-data recorder Co. 737 aircraft following airlines that fly those include is "in relatively good shape," Saturday's crash of a Sriwijaya Citilink, Nam Air, Deraya Air Taxi, Indonesia's Air passenger jet with 62 people Xpress Air, Jayawijaya Transportation Safety Committee on board. The cause of the crash Dirgantara, My Indo Airlines, Chairman Soerjanto Tjahjono isn't yet known -- divers are still Trigana Air and Tri-MG Intra Asia said Wednesday. The box is trying to retrieve the cockpit voice Airlines, according to data from being dried out and the contents occurred, but investigators from that a preliminary report will recorder from the wreckage in the planespotters.net. Java Sea. The flight-data recorder Sriwijaya Flight 182 plunged into days, he said. identification, along with parts of service only on Dec. 20, after was nearly 27 years old.

operate in Indonesia," Adita Pontianak on the island of Federal

"This is a preventive action on the coronavirus pandemic.

message. "It is a common noticed it wasn't on its assigned country in which the crash investigation and notify them work.

other track and radioed the crew. transport ministry ordered the countries."Boeing 737-300, 400 Within seconds, the aircraft

> National should be downloaded within five the nation where the plane and be available 30 days after the

was recovered Tuesday. Rescue the sea shortly after taking off The U.S. National Transportation workers have been bringing in from Jakarta at 2:36 p.m. on Jan. Safety Board is sending a team bags of human remains for 9. The aircraft had returned to of technical experts to assist the Indonesian government's probe the Boeing 737-500 plane, which spending nine months in storage into the crash. They'll be joined due to the downturn caused by by representatives of Boeing, engine maker General Representatives from the work during storage and when similar types of aircraft that The plane was traveling to Electric Co. and the US NTSC and Sriwijaya Air met they are brought back into Irawati, a spokeswoman for the Borneo. Four minutes after Administration. Air-accident first time on Wednesday to function properly, fuel isn't transport ministry, wrote in a text takeoff, air-traffic controllers probes are typically run by the provide updates on the contaminated and all systems



its components were built can date of the crash, the airline said participate. Indonesia granted in an emailed statement. waivers allowing them to enter The Covid-19 pandemic has said Tuesday.

the country despite its forced airlines globally to park coronavirus travel ban, a fleets due to a lack of demand person familiar with the matter and border restrictions. Aircraft require specific maintenance Aviation with victims' families for the service to ensure that engines



# Turkey says turning back on S-400s 'problematic', seeks US dialogue

"It is a very problematic situation to turn back from the point we have come to. We invite (the United States) to distance themselves from threatening language such as sanctions," Turkey's defence minister Akar told journalists in Ankara.

Turkish Defence Minister Hulusi three other employees last a challenging time in the fraught Akar said it would be "very month following its acquisition of problematic" for Ankara to turn the S-400s.

Agencies)- (SSB), its chief Ismail Demir and The sanctions were imposed at

back on its purchase of Russian "It is a very problematic situation S-400 defence systems but to turn back from the point we on Jan. 20, replacing Donald expressed hope that a dispute have come to. We invite (the Trump. Biden has been critical with the United States on the United States) to distance of President Tayyip Erdogan's issue could be resolved through themselves from threatening policies in the past. dialogue. Akar also reiterated language such as sanctions." that Turkey was in talks with Akar told journalists in Ankara. Russia on obtaining a second "We want the solution of necessity because it was consignment of the S400 defence problems through dialogue. If the unable to procure air defence systems. Washington slapped US side wants a solution, a systems from any NATO ally sanctions on NATO ally Turkey's solution could be found with work on Defence Industry Directorate on the technical level," he said. terms. Washington says the S-

relationship between Ankara and Washington. President-elect Joe Biden is set to take office

Turkey has defended its acquisition of the S-400s as a satisfactory



400s pose a threat to its F-35 Turkey rejects this and says Sfighter jets and to NATO's 400s will not be integrated into broader defence systems. NATO.

#### China ends 2020 with record trade surplus as pandemic goods soar

#### The bumper year also underscores China's role as the fulcrum of global supply chains even as political tensions with the US and other trading rivals simmered.

China's export boom continued while its trading rivals were SA in Hong Kong. into December, pushing the hobbled. That export momentum The trade data showed surging trade surplus to a record high in is expected to keep going even demand across the board: the month and bolstering what as vaccines are rolled out to " is already the world's best- tame the virus spread and allow dollar terms in December from performing major economy. industrial production to recover a year earlier -- softer than Fueling the shipments surge is in the US and Europe. insatiable global appetite for The bumper year also expansion -- while imports rose work-from-home technology and underscores China's role as the 6.5%, both beating economists' health care equipment as Covid-fulcrum of global supply chains expectations 19 continues to surge in many even as political tensions with " places around the world. the US and other trading rivals \$78.2 billion for the month was Demand is so strong that's it's simmered. contributing to a bottleneck at "The biggest takeaway is that median estimate in a Bloomberg ports as manufacturers complain China's exports have remained survey of economists. For the of a shortage of shipping surprisingly resilient despite the full year, the trade surplus containers and surging costs. return of the second wave in reached \$535 billion, a 27%

Early control of virus cases last major economies," said increase from 2019 and the year allowed China's factories to Michelle Lam, Greater China highest since 2015

Agencies)- capitalize on global demand economist at Societe Generale

Exports grew 18.1% in November's bumper 21.1%

The trade surplus of higher than the \$72 billion



may remain strong in the next recovers, he added.

Exports to the US few months with the recent surged 34.5% in December from surge of Covid infections in the a year earlier, while imports of US and Europe," said Ding American goods rose 47.7%, the Shuang, chief economist for most since January 2013. Click Greater China and North Asia at here for breakdown of China's Standard Chartered Plc in Hong exports by country, and here for Kong. That outperformance will imports -For the full year, the inevitably wane as the virus is trade surplus with the US was controlled in big markets \$317 billion, 7% higher than in including the US and Europe 2019 "Demand for China's goods and industrial production

## US stands by Taiwan, envoy says after cancelled trip

Wednesday following a call with Tsai. Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen, "We discussed the many ways week got scrapped.

island as its own territory.

(News Agencies)-The administration. Craft, who is due PRC obstruction, "Craft added, and always will, the US assumes the presidency next of China.

after her own trip to Taipei this Taiwan is a model for the world, as demonstrated by its success Craft's planned visit had come in in fighting Covid-19 and all that Craft's visit would have been the teeth of strong objections Taiwan has to offer in the fields highly symbolic as Taiwan is not from China which views the of health, technology & cuttingedge science," she said.

But the trip was cancelled by the "Unfortunately, Taiwan is unable has the right to speak for Taiwan State Department as part of a bar to share those successes in UN on all travel ahead of the venues, including the World transition to the incoming Biden Health Assembly, as a result of government rejects.

United States stands by Taiwan to leave the role when Joe Biden referring to the People's Republic

ambassador to the United week, wrote on Twitter that it was I made clear to President Tsai Nations Kelly Craft said on a "great privilege" to speak with that the US stands with Taiwan and always will, as friends and partners, standing shoulder to shoulder as pillars of democracy.'

> a UN member due to China's objections. Beijing says only it on the world stage, something Taipei's democratically-elected



Tsai told Craft that Taiwan would support keep pushing for access to the presidential office said. United States would continue to good and an important partner.

this,

United Nations and U.N.-related "We will continue to let the world meetings, and hoped that the know that Taiwan is a force for



### Trump impeached again, this time with bipartisan support

The US House of Representatives voted 232-197 to pass the resolution impeaching him, with 10 Republicans joining Democratic lawmakers to deliver the president a historic rebuke for inciting a mob of supporters to storm the US Capitol on January 6 to prevent a joint session of Congress from certifying President-elect Joe Bien's election victory.

Trump on Wednesday became impeachment official. support this time.

The US House of Representatives vict the president or acquit him. Richard Nixon had escaped bevoted 232-197 to pass the reso- But there are no timelines on coming the third in 1973 by relution impeaching him, with 10 when that will happen. Republicans joining Democratic Republicans, who control the lawmakers to deliver the presi- chamber, have no plans of recalldent a historic rebuke for inciting ing it from recess till January 19. a mob of supporters to storm the Democrats take charge of the US Capitol on January 6 to pre-Senate then, and Trump's trial is vent a joint session of Congress likely to take place after he had sight and disengaged since Janufrom certifying President-elect left office, and Biden will be in any 6, except for a trip to Texas Joe Bien's election victory.

is above the law, not even the again in 2024. president of the United States, Trump joined a tiny group of imthat Donald Trump is a clear and peached US presidents on Depresent danger to our country," cember 18, 2019, when the ac-House Speaker Pelosi said be- tion was taken on him for misus-

(News Agencies)-Donald peachment to make the second force a foreign nation — Ukraine

Senate for a trial, to either con-

White House, A conviction will "Today in a bipartisan way, the disbar Trump from holding federal House demonstrated that no one office, imperilling his plans to run

- to investigate a political rival, the first American president to be The House will now transmit the Biden. The two impeachments impeached twice, with bipartisan article of impeachment to the before were of Andrew Johnson in 1868 and Bill Clinton in 1998. signing before the House voted. In just 19 months since the first, Trump had earned himself an unprecedented second impeach-

Trump has been largely out of and has not reacted to the impeachment till late evening. But he released a video message denouncing the attack on the Capitol. "I want to be clear; I unequivocally condemn the violence we saw last week. Violence and vandalism have absolutely no fore signing the article of im- ing the powers of his office to place in our country and no place



in our movement," he said, and expected to grant. Questions are went on to appeal for peace, in being asked if he will pardon himthe wake of heightened security self, his adult children, Personal warnings about armed protests lawyer Rudy Giuliani or anyone between now and Biden's inau- else. President-elect Biden, who guration.

the impeachment or the Senate that led to his impeachment, said, trial up next.

now, thus, on pardons that he is dent accountable.

has sought to stay above Trump's Trump did not utter a word about efforts to overturn the election "Today, the members of the Though Trump still has seven House of Representatives exermore days left of his term, he cised the power granted to them appears to have largely checked under our Constitution and voted out of governance. All eyes are to impeach and hold the presi-

### China denies entry to 2 WHO members for probe, cites Covid-19 test report



(News Agencies)-China ings in Singapore, according to on Thursday denied entry to two Bloomberg. They are a part of World Health Organisation the WHO team which is visiting (WHO) mission team members China to investigate the origins

who had tested positive for Covid- The experts will begin their work

Bloomberg reported.

plane to Wuhan.

"The international team of 13 sci-

(Covid-19). The two members, arrived in Wuhan, China, today. tweeted.

The two members, who had tested positive for Covid-19 antibodies in blood-based serology tests on their way to Wuhan via Singapore, were stopped from boarding their plane to Wuhan.

19 antibodies in blood-based se- immediately during the 2 weeks rology tests on their way to quarantine protocol for internastopped from boarding their in a tweet on Thursday.

"Two scientists are still in They had tested negative for Singapore completing tests for Covid-19 in swab tests, Covid-19. All team members had multiple negative PCR and antibody tests for Covid-19 in their entists examining the origins of home countries prior to travelafter they failed Covid-19 screen- of the coronavirus disease the virus that causes Covid-19 ing," the global health body

A global team of scientists led by the World Health Organization arrived in China's cen-Wuhan via Singapore, were tional travelers," the WHO said tral city of Wuhan, where Covid-19 first surfaced in late 2019, to investigate the origins of the pandemic, state television said on Thurs-

> The team will spend about a month in the city, including two weeks in quarantine.

### Mexico, Central America cite Covid-19 concern over migration

Over the last year, authorities in Mexico, Guatemala and Honduras have turned back or stopped migrant caravans seeking to reach the US border, in some cases demanding they show visas or negative coronavirus tests.

health risks of Covid-19 among during the health emergency." documents.

on the basis of the perceived coronavirus tests.

Wednesday that it and 10 other exposure of irregular migrants to migration.

Mexico, Guatemala and forced to emigrate. The statement by the 11-member Honduras have turned back or The regional conference includes

(News Agencies)-The risks of the pandemic. The group The group expressed its support Mexican government said "expressed concern over the for "safe, orderly and regulated"

countries in North and Central situations of high risk to their The group has also stressed the America are worried about the health and their lives, primarily need to improve conditions in southern Mexico and Central migrants without proper Overthe last year, authorities in America, so people won't feel

Regional Conference on stopped migrant caravans the United States, Canada, Migration suggests that Mexico seeking to reach the US border, Belize, Costa Rica, Honduras, and Central America could in some cases demanding they México, Nicaragua, Panama, El continue to turn back migrants show visas or negative Salvador and the Dominican Republic.





# Farm laws stir: 'Will not talk to SC-appointed committee,' reiterates farmers' union

the farm laws for more than 50 days now, met the government for the ninth time on Friday to discuss the farm laws. However, both sides failed to reach a resolution as farmers remained firm on their demands The next round of talks will take place on January 19 at 12pm, Union agriculture minister Narendra Singh Tomar informed the media after the talks.

The government also suggested farmers form an informal group later be discussed further at the of people who can understand



to finalise proposals detailing formal talks. "We suggested the laws better and prepare some laws which has been refused Commodities (Amendment)

what are farmers' expectations has offered to the Union agriculture minister (MSP)

their expectations, which can they can form an informal group concrete proposals, detailing by the government. Instead, it Act, 2020.

and what clauses are problematic amendments. They are also for them, which the government demanding a legal guarantee can consider with an open mind," on the minimum support price system procurement of their crops.

Tens of thousands of farmers, Farmers are protesting against mainly from Punjab and Harvana, Farmers' Produce Trade and are protesting at various borders Commerce (Promotion and of Delhi against the farm Facilitation) Act, 2020; the legislation enacted by Farmers Empowerment and Parliament in September last Protection) Agreement on Price year. They are demanding a Assurance and farm Services complete withdrawal of the Act 2020 and the Essential

### Don't ignore this headline: The pandemic is getting worse. What happens next is up to you



Many hospitals are now than 6 feet away from the person filled beyond capacity, meaning who is infected or after that person even those without Covid-19 -- has left the space," the CDC said. say, car accident victims -- might Socializing indoors with anyone not get immediate care.

4,462 Covid-19 deaths were with multiple friends indoors can reported in just one day, according to Johns Hopkins.

crashing, killing everyone on

Why is this happening?

down due to pandemic fatigue. And many of those who are sick of taking precautions are getting can pass along the virus without sick.

Now that the weather is colder, more people are socializing 50% of all infections are indoors. And the coronavirus transmitted from people who primarily spreads during close aren't showing symptoms. contact with others through "This means at least half of new respiratory droplets -- produced infections come from people likely when someone talks, coughs, unaware they are infectious to sings or even breathes.

"linger in the air for minutes to asymptomatic and hours." the US Centers for symptomatic spread?And just to infect people who are further triggered new waves of infections,

outside your bubble -- even just -- On January 12, a record-high one friend -- is risky. Gathering be dangerous.

"If you go to a party with five or A Boeing 747 can carry about 400 more people, almost certainly passengers. That means in one there's going to be somebody with day, US deaths from Covid-19 Covid-19 at that party," said Dr. were on par with 11 jumbo jets Peter Hotez, dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine at Baylor College of Medicine.

One reason why the coronavirus People are letting their guard spreads so easily is because people can be contagious without knowing they're infected -- and looking or feeling sick.

The CDC estimates more than

others," the agency said.

Sometimes, viral particles can What's the difference between Disease Control and Prevention like doctors predicted, holiday said."These viruses may be able travel and gatherings have

across the country.

Fallout from the holidays could still ripple across the United States for weeks to come.

"It takes two to three weeks for need the hospital after they've gotten the virus," said Dr. Anish Mahajan, chief medical officer at the Harbor-UCLA Medical Center. new variants are common. Even though Christmas was less But scientists advising the UK people can get their first dose than three weeks ago, "we're already full."

"We don't have any more ICU capacity," Mahajan said. "All of the hospitals in the region are putting ICU patients in unusual places in the hospital just to find room for them."

Some patients have been put in hospital break rooms, parking garages and gift shops.

Then there are newly identified

New for 2021: The United States has confirmed at least 76 cases of a highly transmissible variant of the coronavirus that was first detected in the United Kingdom. Those US cases were found in 12 states: California, Florida, Minnesota, New York, Colorado, Connecticut, Maryland, Texas, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Wisconsin and Georgia, according to CDC data posted Wednesday.

But the real numbers could be much higher because the United States lags behind dozens of other countries in the proportion of Covid-19 cases that are analyzed through genetic sequencing.And collected from patients, analyzed and then posted to an international database to find new variants.

hospitalizations and deaths Earlier this month, a CDC official And the two vaccines a target of 6,500 per week.

Understanding the genetic person. patients to get sick enough to makeup of a virus and how it The federal government changes is critical to ensuring recently said it will stop holding vaccines remain effective.

All viruses mutate over time, and

government have estimated that faster. the variant could be up to 70% When can you get vaccinated? more effective at spreading than It depends on your health, job

While it may be more transmissible, there's no evidence this variant first detected in the severe disease, the CDC said.

United Kingdom isn't the only one causing concern.

A variant first detected in South be able to escape some of the vaccine antibodies produced by a Covid-19 vaccine.

That strain was first spotted two months ago in South Africa and has been found in 12 countries. As of Thursday, it has not been detected in the United States. Why can't we all get vaccinated soon?

The vaccine rollout is happening more slowly than expected. The Trump administration initially said it aimed to vaccinate 20 million people by the end of 2020. That didn't happen. Not even close. As of Thursday States, according to the CDC. Hotez said.

said the agency plans to double distributed in the United States the number of samples it right now -- from Pfizer/ sequences by mid-January -- with BioNTech and Moderna -require two doses for each

> back doses kept in reserve -intended to help guarantee second doses -- so more

and where you live.

In the coming weeks and months, the US Food and Drug Administration might grant UK is deadlier or causes more emergency use authorization to other vaccines -- such as But the strain first detected in the those from Johnson & Johnson and AstraZeneca.

But either way, millions of Americans will have to wait Africa has been shown it might months before getting a

> What all this means for you If you want to get life closer to normal (and more quickly), it's time to double down on safety

Wear a mask in public and every time vou're around someone who doesn't live with you. If there's a chance for infection within your home, wear a mask at home, too.Don't count on a negative test result as a way to "safely" see friends or relatives. You can test negative but still be infected and contagious. Keep social distancing. Wash your hands the United States ranks 61st in morning, about 10.2 million frequently. And don't think you're how quickly virus samples are vaccine doses had been invincible -- even if you're young and administered, out of roughly 29.3 healthy."We see severe illness million doses that have been among healthy, young adults with distributed across the United no apparent underlying causes,"



# Here's what's in Biden's \$1.9 trillion economic rescue package



children over the age of the payments, along with two key 17. It would also include pandemic households mixed immigration status, after the first round of \$1,200 checks left out Pandemic Social Security Numbers.

Enhanced unemployment aid a week, from the \$300 weekly to December. He would also extend affected by the pandemic.

unemployment programs, through September. This applies to those in the Emergency the spouses of undocumented Unemployment Compensation immigrants who do not have program who have exhausted their regular state jobless people with federally-guaranteed on child care for children under payments and in the Pandemic Biden would increase the federal Unemployment Assistance boost the jobless receive to \$400 program, which provides benefits the self-employed, enhancement contained in independent contractors, gig Congress' relief package from workers and certain people

additional 11 weeks of support in women, infants and children made fully refundable. the December package, which secure food, and give US will last until March.

moratorium

in rental assistance for low- and laid-off restaurant workers. who have lost jobs during the child tax credits provided in December.

Another \$5 billion would be set to pay their utility bills. Biden is also calling for \$5 billion to help at risk of homelessness.

The plan would extend the federal mortgages to apply for age 13. forbearance until September 30. Help for the hungry

Biden would extend the 15% increase in food stamp benefits through September, instead of territories \$1 billion in nutrition

pandemic. That's in addition to The plan calls on Congress to the \$25 billion lawmakers create a \$25 billion emergency fund and add \$15 billion to an existing grant program to help aside to help struggling renters child care providers, including family child care homes, to pay for rent, utilities, and payroll, and states and localities assist those increased costs associated with experiencing the pandemic like personal protective equipment.

It also proposes expanding the insurance. eviction moratorium, set to expire child care tax credit for one year He wants to increase and expand

> A temporarily increase of tax credits

Biden wants to boost the Child Tax Credit to \$3,600 for children under age 6 and \$3,000 for those having it expire in June. He would between ages 6 and 17 for a

Lawmakers only provided an invest another \$3 billion to help year. The credit would also be

And he proposes to raise the maximum Earned Income Tax Rental assistance and eviction assistance. And he would partner Credit for a year to close to with restaurants to provide food \$1,500 for childless adults. The plan would provide \$25 billion to needy Americans and jobs to increase the income limit for the credit to about \$21,000 and moderate-income households More money for child care and expand the age range of eligibility to cover older workers.

> Both of these are aimed at supporting low-income families, including millions of essential workers.

Subsidies for health insurance premiums

Biden is also calling on Congress to subsidize through September the premiums of those who lost their work-based health

at the end of January, to so that families will get back as the Affordable Care Act's September 30, as well as allow much as half of their spending premium subsidies so that enrollees don't have to pay more than 8.5% of their income for coverage -- which is also one of his campaign promises. (The law is facing a challenge from Republican-led states that is currently before the Supreme Court.)

> Also, he wants Congress to provide \$4 billion for mental health and substance use disorder services and \$20 billion to meet the health care needs of veterans. Restoration of emergency paid leave

> The plan would reinstate the paid sick and family leave benefits that expired at the end of December until September 30.

> It would extend the benefit to workers employed at businesses with more than 500 employees and less than 50, as well as federal workers who were excluded from the original program.

Under Biden's proposal, people who are sick or quarantining, or caring for a child whose school is closed, will receive 14 weeks of paid leave. The government will reimburse employers with fewer than 500 workers for the full cost of providing the leave.

More assistance for small businesses - The plan calls for providing \$15 billion to create a new grant program for small business owners, separate from existing Paycheck proposes making a \$35 billion investment in some state, local, tribal, and non-profit financing programs that make low-interest loans and provide venture capital to entrepreneurs.

# **Dutch Rutte government resigns** over child welfare fraud scandal

time a Dutch government has Last year the tax office admitted around •48,000 (£42,000). She inevitable once the opposition resigned en masse in a gesture that 11,000 people were tried to explain to the authorities Labour leader Lodewijk Asscher of collective responsibility. In subjected to extra scrutiny that mistakes had been made resigned on Thursday in response 2002, the cabinet stood down simply because they had dual but officials then started to the scandal. Mr Asscher was after a report criticised ministers nationality. This confession has withholding not just childcare social affairs minister under the and the military for failing to reinforced the widely held belief prevent the massacre of Muslims among many ethnic minorities in at Srebrenica during the Bosnian the war seven years earlier.

What went wrong?

Parents were branded fraudsters by those in power. over minor errors such as But while being seen as the signatures thousands of euros given by the failure - the mass resignation childcare, with no means of self-preservation by the Rutte it, "steamrolled" by the system. week. What the wrongly accused Families were left in a state of parents say people". Relationships could be as high as 26,000. tax officials.

Netherlands

discrimination against them is institutionalised and perpetuated

on responsible, honourable paperwork, and erroneously response - sacrificing power in forced to pay back tens of an admission of government government to offset the cost of could be interpreted as an act of redress. They were, as one junior government that avoids the minister who resigned in prospect of losing a noconnection with the scandal put confidence vote by MPs next

allowances but other benefits previous Rutte coalition

Her rent went into arrears and energy companies refused to provide a regular supply. Eventually she lost her job and could not find another as she was seen as a fraudster. Her However, victims of the childcare relationship with her child broke down as the pressure took its

"Rutte says he thinks it's terrible, but he's not the one who had to pay up... This shouldn't happen in the Netherlands - I've been mother, Nazan Aydin, told NOS. What happens next?

demands to pay tax authorities resignation, it was seen as done to the parents".

government.

Mr Rutte heads a four-party centre-right-liberal coalition and his party leads the latest opinion polls, ahead of far-right leader Geert Wilders.

allowance scandal who had to repay large sums paid out in benefit have this week filed a formal complaint against several current and former ministers.

Compensation to the tune of at

least •30,000 (£26,000) each is labelled a fraudster," another to be paid out to parents who were wrongly accused, but many have argued it is not enough. ruin, by a state apparatus that The scandal began in 2012 and Mr Rutte's liberal VVD party is Ahead of the government's became "the enemy of the the number of parents involved performing well in the opinion decision to step down, Sigrid polls, so the 17 March election Kaag, the leader of the liberal Protection Program.It also disintegrated under the pressure, Some openly called for the could see another Rutte-led D66 party said it was homes were lost, mothers have government to step down, saying administration. He has already "important to be politically spoken tearfully of the financial they had lost faith in the ability led three governments since accountable and to take and psychological anguish they of the cabinet to clean up the 2010. Although he initially responsibility for the content suffered after being targeted by system. One mother faced opposed the cabinet's of the report and for the injustice





Washington on Thursday 2020 election. headed into a militarized virtual The Senate resumes full session they can focus on the crises national guard troops. States Senate, there will be a lockdown ahead of next week's on the eve of the inauguration facing inauguration.

protests being planned following the pro-Trump mob's deadly attack on the US Capitol last week, some Republican members of Congress who voted for the unprecedented second impeachment of the president fear they are in personal danger. Peter Meijer, a Michigan Republican who voted along with the Democratic majority in the House on Wednesday to impeach Trump, on the charge of incitement of insurrection after he encouraged the riot in a futile attempt to overturn his election defeat by force - said some of his colleagues were hiring armed escorts and acquiring body armor out of fear and Kamala Harris as his vice- "I hope that the Senate have to join the Democrats. for their safety.

article of impeachment - Biden takes office next Biden's inauguration events could give other senators the Andrew Johnson in 1868 essentially the charge against. Wednesday, after the Senate have already been scaled back, cover they needed to follow suit, were impeached by the House Trump – to the Senate for trial. majority Trump was acquitted at his first McConnell, rejected Democratic risks of spreading infection Trump deserved it but feared a Richard Nixon resigned in 1974

facing a bitter charged with abuse of power there was no way to finish it building, where the swearing-in impeachment trial in the US and obstruction of Congress, before Trump leaves office. Senate threatens to cast a stemming from his request that Biden, meanwhile, has urged by marauding rioters invading shadow over the earliest days of Ukraine investigate Joe Biden Senate leaders to avoid an all-the US Congress last week, Joe Biden's presidency, as and his son Hunter ahead of the consuming trial during his first is now fortified by fencing,

events on 20 January to install administration. With warnings of more violent Biden as the 46th US president

his



president.

safety, that's something that entangle Biden's urgent efforts responsibilities crisis and vaccination chaos. There is no schedule yet for There is no real prospect of first place among lords of caucus that he would vote to impeachment. Three - Trump in when the House may present the Trump being ousted before misrule

leader,

"When it comes to my family's A swift impeachment trial would with their constitutional crucial. At Trump's first "after seeing what happened last we've been planning for, to have his cabinet choices impeachment while also Republicans voted in favor of last four years - now all of a preparing for, taking appropriate confirmed by the Senate and fire working on the other urgent charging him and all sudden they're circling the measures," Meijer told MSNBC. up his agenda to tackle the business of this nation," Republicans in the Senate voted wagons and it threatens to make "Our expectation is that raging coronavirus pandemic as Biden said in a statement on to acquit him except for Utah's him a martyr." somebody may try to kill us," he well as the related economic Wednesday night. Second Mitt Romney. impeachment puts Trump in If McConnell signaled to his removed from office via

The prospect of Donald early last year after being Republican-led chamber, saying The west front of the Capitol are far from resolved. occurs and which was overrun Chuck Schumer, set to become days in the White House so that barriers and thousands of impeachment trial in the United incoming Soldiers have been sleeping vote on convicting the president sprawled in the marble corridors for high crimes of the complex.

> isolated at the running again." according several reports. 100-member worse. chamber would

leadership will find a way to deal McConnell's vote would be who were displeased with Trump on impeachment, no House

Mitch due to security concerns and the if they believed privately that but acquitted by the Senate. impeachment trial in the Senate calls for a quick trial in the during the Covid-19 pandemic. backlash from voters.On rather than face impeachment.

Wednesday, McConnell released a note to Republican senators in which he did not deny that he backed the impeachment push, the New York Times reported. The leader said that he had "not made a final decision on how I will vote, and I intend to listen to the legal arguments when they are presented to the Senate".

McConnell and some other senior Republicans may see conviction as a way to prevent Trump being a liability to the party in the future, and therefore an opportunity.

If Trump is already out of office by the time of the trial, historical precedent suggests the Senate could disqualify him from holding office in the future with only a simple majority vote.

But the legal details and what would happen, including if Trump attempted to pardon himself in his last days in the White House,

The Senate Democratic leader, majority leader when Biden takes office, said that no matter the timing, "there will be an misdemeanors, and if the Trump himself is president is convicted, there will increasingly be a vote on barring him from

White House and The Florida Republican senator "in self-pity mode", Marco Rubio has warned, to meanwhile, that impeachment process risks Under the US making Trump a martyr to his constitution, a two- diehard supporters.

thirds majority is Rubio told NBC he thought needed in the Trump bore some responsibility Senate to convict for the attack on the Capitol, Trump, before or which happened on the day both after he leaves chambers of Congress were office, meaning at meeting in order to certify Joe 17 Biden's victory, but that putting Republicans in the Trump on trial could make things

> "It's like pouring gasoline on fire," he said, noting that some week, sort of reckoning with the

No US president has ever been convict Trump this time, that 2019, Bill Clinton in 1998 and





House inciting a violent insurrection January. against the government of the "The president of the United Capitol, a historic condemnation in a statement. that makes him the only Kevin McCarthy, the House In a statement, Biden said the month, "there will be an high crimes and misdemeanors. After an emotional day-long debate in the chamber where lawmakers cowered last week as rioters vandalized the Capitol, 10 House Republicans joined Democrats to embrace the constitution's gravest remedy after vowing to hold Trump to account before he leaves office next week.

The sole article of impeachment charges the defeated president with "inciting an insurrection" that led to what the House speaker, Nancy Pelosi, said would be immortalized as a "day of fire" on Capitol Hill.

The president, Pelosi said, unprecedented impeachment. Among them was Cheney, George W Bush's vice- bipartisan she issued an unsparing presidency. statement announcing her The House was prepared to

of "never been a greater betrayal by after Wednesday's vote. In a verdict.If convicted, it would then Washington's most powerful Representatives on Wednesday a president of the United States" statement, the Senate majority require only a simple majority to Republican his view could make impeached Donald Trump for than Trump's conduct on 6 leader, Mitch McConnell, said

United States a week after he States summoned this mob, encouraged a mob of his assembled the mob, and lit the supporters to storm the US flame of this attack," said Cheney

American president to be Republican leader, attempted to House had exercised its power impeachment trial in the United charged twice with committing carve a middle path for his to

there was "simply no chance" of concluding a trial before Trump leaves office, ensuring that the presidency.

"hold the

disqualify him from ever again holding public office.

"Make no mistake," said New York senator Chuck Schumer, affair would begin during the who will become the majority inaugural days of Joe Biden's leader when his party takes control of the chamber later this president States Senate; there will be a

it easier for others in his party to turn against the president.

In a letter to colleagues on Wednesday, McConnell said he had "not made a final decision on how I will vote, and I intend to listen to the legal arguments when they are presented to the

The deadly assault a week ago came as the House and Senate were in session to certify Biden's in November's presidential election, a result Trump refused to accept. Five people died during the siege, including a police officer.

"We are debating this historic measure at an actual crime scene, and we wouldn't be here if it weren't for the president of the United States," said Jim McGovern, a Democratic congressman Massachusetts and the chair of the rules committee, opening Wednesday's session.

All around as members argued the merits of impeaching a defeated president were reminders of the the destruction wrought by rioters the first occupation of the US impeachment while also working be a vote on barring him from Capitol since British troops burned the building during the war

The building lawmakers call the Republican and daughter of Dick proceedings was the most most will not include premature Republicans would break with People's House, poorly presidential removal from office, the Senate Trump, two have called on the defended last Wednesday, had president. Though she did not impeachment vote in US history, trial would not be entirely president to resign, and the New been turned into a fortress, York Times reported that protected by thousands of member body are required to McConnell believes the president national guard troops and with convict a president, meaning 17 had committed impeachable metal detectors stationed support for impeachment, in immediately transmit the article Republicans would have to join offenses. McConnell's souring on outside the chamber doors. which she said that there had of impeachment to the Senate Democrats to render a guilty Trump is significant, because as Some Republicans rebelled



represented a "clear and present caucus. He said Trump "bears accountable", and that he hoped vote on convicting the president danger to the nation we all love". responsibility" for Wednesday's The final count was 232 to 197, attack, while warning that way to deal with their misdemeanors; and if the with 10 members of the impeachment would "further fan constitutional responsibilities on president is convicted, there will president's party supporting his the flames of partisan division". second As an alternative, he proposed a censure.

rise to speak on Wednesday, a stunning end to the Trump symbolic. Two-thirds of the 100-

"the Senate leadership will find a for on the other urgent business of this nation".

high crimes running again."

While it is currently considered of 1812. Liz Cheney, the No 3 House The result of the lightening-fast Though consequences for Trump unlikely that enough Senate



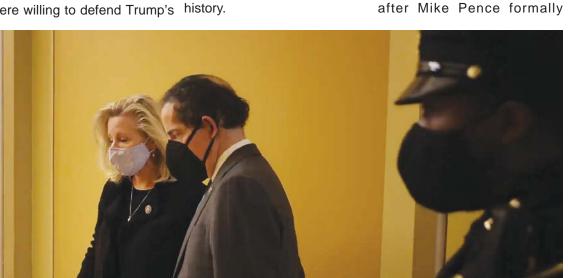
against the new safety protocols, persuaded Trump to record the of key swing states that Biden congressman who will serve as likely to further divide the evading the security check.

language at a rally immediately were willing to defend Trump's history. before the mob marched on the Capitol "totally appropriate". Efforts to hold him accountable were nothing more than a "continuation of the greatest witch-hunt in the history of politics", he said.

After his impeachment, Trump released a video statement belatedly condemning the violence and appealing to his supporters for calm ahead of Biden's inauguration next week - remarks lawmakers implored him to make during the hourslong siege of the Capitol.

"There is never a justification for violence, no excuses, no followers to "ease tensions and But those who oppose calls for bipartisanship, power by invoking the 25th Democratic calm tempers".

"Mob violence goes against rushed everything I believe in and proceedings. everything our movement stands "I can think of no action the violence," he said.



for. No true supporter of mine House can take that is more could ever endorse political likely to further divide the the assault on the Capitol. chief of staff Dan Scavino, had week to reject the electoral votes Democratic

election victory and voted to overturn the results of a deemed unfit to perform his job. democratic election even after Few Republicans were willing to

The Washington Post reported Cole, a Republican of these people would not be trying oppose impeachment objected to the 25th amendment to the US that Trump's daughter Ivanka and Oklahoma, who was among to destroy our government and the rushed nature of the constitution, which allows for her husband Jared Kushner, the more than 120 House kill us if we just weren't so mean proceedings. along with Pence and deputy Republicans who voted last to them," said Jamie Raskin, a "I can think of no action the president deemed unfit to

removal of a sitting president

Maryland House can take that is more perform his job.

video in order to boost his support won, despite officials at every the lead impeachment manager. American people," said Tom A remorseless Trump on among Republicans likely to level calling November's vote the The House proceeded with Cole, a Republican of Oklahoma, Tuesday called his inflammatory desert him. Few Republicans most secure election in US impeachment on Wednesday who was among the more than 120 House Republicans who voted last week to reject the electoral votes of key swing states that Biden won, despite officials at every level calling November's vote the most secure election in US history. Democrats were incensed by calls for bipartisanship, particularly from Republicans who refused to recognize Biden's election victory and voted to overturn the results of a

"It's a bit much to be hearing that these people would not be trying to destroy our government and kill us if we just weren't so mean exceptions," he said, asking his incendiary behavior last week. Democrats were incensed by rejected calls to strip Trump of to them," said Jamie Raskin, a impeachment objected to the particularly from Republicans amendment to the US congressman who will serve nature of the who refused to recognize Biden's constitution, which allows for the as the lead impeachment manager.

democratic election even after

the assault on the Capitol.

The House proceeded with impeachment on Wednesday after defend Trump's incendiary Mike Pence formally rejected calls American people," said Tom "It's a bit much to be hearing that behavior last week. But those who to strip Trump of power by invoking the removal of a sitting

### Twitter chief says Trump ban was right decision but sets 'dangerous precedent'

Jack Dorsey, the chief executive of Twitter, has said that banning Donald Trump from the platform was the "right decision" but that it sets a dangerous

Speaking out for the first time since the social network took the remarkable step of permanently suspending the president's account following a violent attack on the US Capitol, Dorsey said the company faced "an extraordinary and untenable circumstance, forcing us to focus all of our actions on public safety". "I do not celebrate or feel pride in our having to ban @realDonaldTrump from Twitter, or how we got here," Dorsey admitted on Wednesday in an extended Twitter thread. "I feel a ban is a failure of ours, ultimately, to promote healthy conversation. And a time for us to reflect on our operations and the environment around us.'

Dorsey said that it was the right decision for the company but that such actions "fragment the public conversation". "They divide us," he continued. "They limit the potential for clarification, redemption, and learning. And sets a precedent I feel is dangerous: the power an individual or corporation has over a part of the global public conversation." Last week Twitter



suspended the president, who was impeached for the second time on Wedneday for inciting a mob of his supporters, due to "the risk of further incitement of violence". The decision comes as other big tech companies, including Facebook, Reddit, Pinterest, and YouTube have suspended Trump's accounts temporarily and in some cases permanently over the attack.

Silicon Valley has faced a reckoning over its role in spreading disinformation and serving as a platform for planning the insurrection. For years, Dorsey has platform, arguing it began to flag tweets from Trump for misinformation. disable the ability when adding commentary, and in some cases removed tweets

that appeared to incite violence. Twitter had also in the months surrounding the US presidential and misinformation.

Still, it faced criticism for failing to address the growing danger posed by Trump's account, which boiled over after the president incited a mob to storm the Capitol building on 6 January. Following the violent events, which left five dead, explanation or justification for the mob

r e s i s t e d while continuing to push a false narrative moderating high- that the election was not legitimate, profile users of the saying: "These are the things and events that happen when a sacred landslide that the public has election victory is so unceremoniously the right to hear and viciously stripped away."

from newsworthy On Friday, Trump's account was figures.But in 2020 permanently suspended. The president frantically jumped from account to account, attempting to tweet from @POTUS and his campaign account @TeamTrump before those outlets were to retweet except restricted for him as well.

> Twitter explained its reasoning for removing Trump in an extensive blogpost on Friday evening. It said tweets from Trump could easily be interpreted as encouragement or justification to "replicate the violent acts that took place on January 6, 2021".

elections tested a number of policies Dorsey underscored in his tweets a need to limit the spread of hate speech for a new "open decentralized standard for social media". "It's important that we acknowledge this is a time of great uncertainty and struggle for so many around the world," he said. "Our goal in this moment is to disarm as much as we can, and ensure we are all building towards greater Trump tweeted what appeared to be an understanding, and a more peaceful existence on earth."

# Washington DC braces as thousands of National Guard move in for inauguration day

started to move into Washington en masse in an attempt to prevent violence in the run up to the inauguration of Joe Biden next week.

As Congress acted to impeach Donald Trump on Wednesday and the president urged his supporters to shun violence, the National Guard started to deploy 20,000 troops in the US capital. At Trump's inauguration in 2016, the figure was about 8,000.

The National Guard are on a 24hour watch in the US Capitol after last week's violence, with offduty members catching naps in hallways and below the bust of General George Washington.

Riot shields and gas masks were piled in the hallways, with large numbers of Guard members in fatigues and



according to the city's acting for, and it is not what America in the spilling of American blood," police chief Robert Contee.

statement: "In light of reports of

more demonstrations, I urge that

there must be no violence, no

lawbreaking and no vandalism of

any kind. That is not what I stand

stands for.'

New fencing and other security

gone up around the building, a global have been taken. symbol democracy. metre) high fence has been erected around the Capitol, office buildings that surround it.

measures have also

oads near the The preparations continued as Capitol have been closed, and

Trump said in in a White House the National Park Service has closed the Washington Monument to tours. Mayor Muriel Bowser has asked visitors to stay

said US Representative Hakeem Jeffries, a Democrat from New York. "And that's extraordinary security measures

"Officers were brutally beaten. A The attackers wanted to seven-foot (two- assassinate Nancy Pelosi, hang Mike Pence, and hunt down sitting members of Congress. That's insurrection. That's with metal barriers sedition. That's lawlessness. and National Guard That's terror," he said.

troops protecting Washington's subway system the congressional said it would close 13 stations from Friday through to 21 January - including Union Station, a major transit hub. It is also closing the three busiest downtown stations.

Steve Dickson, the head of the Federal Aviation Administration, on Wednesday signed an order vowing a "zero-tolerance "The attack on the Capitol was a approach" to any disruptive air violent insurrection that resulted passengers after some Trump

flights after the Capitol rampage. The order will last until 30 March. Home-sharing giant Airbnb and subsidiary HotelTonight were cancelling all reservations in Greater Washington during the inauguration week.

National Guard troops have been frequently used by states to help law enforcement quell protests over the past year. However, the decision to arm them at the Capitol highlights fears about the threat of further violence in the days leading up to the inauguration.Officials have said it is important for the troops to be armed for their self defence and that they are still playing a supporting role to law enforcement officers. However, two officials said some National Guard troops were deputised as Capitol Police officers to carry out law enforcement functions if

"The Capitol has responded in an appropriate way to meet the nature of the severe security threat that is being posed by domestic terrorists and white supremacists," said Jeffries. He said the National Guard already had been considered as part of the security bubble for the inauguration but, based on the events of last week, the security had been ratcheted

Acting US attorney general Jeffrey Rosen warned against further attacks and urged the public to come forward with tips about potential attacks and threats before the inauguration, including "attempts to forcefully occupy government buildings".



carrying rifles stationed around the exterior of the building.

Troops have been present at the seat of Congress since at least Friday but more were due to arrive before inauguration day,







# Rupee slips 3 paise to 73.18 against US dollar in early trade



flat note and depreciated by 3 73.18 against the US dollar, paise to 73.18 against the US registering a fall of 3 paise over dollar in opening trade on its previous close. Thursday tracking the muted On Wednesday, the rupee had At the interbank forex market, American currency.

The rupee opened on a the domestic unit opened at

opening in domestic equities. settled at 73.15 against the remained cautious and await benchmark Sensex was trading per cent to USD 55.88 per

"FPI flows into the domestic President-elect Joe Biden will 49,344.60, and the broader NSE equity markets could lift outline his plans for massive Nifty fell 44.60 points to sentiments," Reliance fiscal

presence could cap gains". Meanwhile, the dollar index, The euro, the sterling and the shares worth ?1,879.06 crore currencies, rose marginally by Asian trade. 0.04 per cent to 90.39.

Traders said

stimulus.Market 14,520.25. Securities said in a research participants are also looking for Foreign institutional investors note and added that "RBI's cues from the speech from Fed were net buyers in the capital Chief Jerome Powell tonight.

At the interbank forex market, the domestic unit opened at 73.18 against the US dollar, registering a fall of 3 paise over its previous close.

which gauges the greenback's Japanese yen were flat against on a net basis strength against a basket of six the US dollar this morning in Wednesday, according to

investors front, the 30-share BSE global oil benchmark, fell 0.32 the US stimulus details as 147.72 points lower at barrel.

market as they purchased provisional exchange data.

On the domestic equity market Brent crude futures, the

### India's medium-term growth to slow to around 6.5% after initial rebound: Fitch

India's economy had been losing momentum even ahead of the shock delivered by the Covid-19 crisis. The rate of GDP growth sank to a more than ten-year low of 4.2 per cent in 2019, down from 6.1 per cent the previous year.

suffer lasting damage from the economic impact had been much recession. coronavirus crisis and after an more severe. state of the financial sector - will strict national lockdowns. keep the level of GDP well below Further, a 7.5 per cent decline in its pre-pandemic path," it said in GDP in the following quarter commentary on the Indian pushed Asia's third-largest year period FY21 to FY26 to 5.1 economy.

Fitch said India's coronavirusinduced recession has been among the most severe in the world, amid a stringent lockdown and limited direct fiscal support. The economy is now in a recovery phase that will be further supported by the rollout of vaccines in the next months.

"We expect gross domestic product (GDP) to expand by 11 per cent in FY22 (April 2021 to March 2022) after falling by 9.4 per cent in FY21 (April 2020 to March 2021)," it said.

India's economy had been losing momentum even ahead of the shock delivered by the Covid-19 crisis. The rate of GDP growth sank to a more than ten-year low of 4.2 per cent in 2019, down from 6.1 per cent the previous year.

The pandemic bought a human and an economic catastrophe for India, with nearly 1.5 lakh deaths. Though the deaths per million are significantly lower

initial strong rebound in FY22 GDP in April-June was 23.9 per recovery will be slow. "Supply-(fiscal year ending March 2022) cent below its 2019 level, side potential growth will be growth will slow to around 6.5 per indicating that nearly a quarter reduced by a slowdown in the cent a year over FY23-FY26, of the country's economic activity Fitch Ratings said on Thursday. was wiped out by the drying up "A combination of supply-side of global demand and the sharply and is likely to see only scarring and demand-side collapse of domestic demand a subdued recovery." constraints - such as the weak that accompanied the series of This, it said, will weigh on labour

The Indian economy will than in Europe and the US, the economy into an unprecedented

Fitch said the medium-term rate of capital accumulation investment has recently fallen

productivity, lowering its projection of supply-side potential GDP growth for the six-

per cent per annum compared to GDP per capita over the last 15 our pre-pandemic projection of 7  $\,$  years. But investment has fallen per cent."Our historical analysis sharply over the last year and

growth in labour productivity and of recovery," it said.

of India's growth performance the need to repair corporate highlights the key role played by balance sheets and firm a high investment rate in driving closures will weigh on the pace

## Sensex drops over 150 points in early trade; Nifty tests 14,500

The 30-share BSE index was trading 154.21 points or 0.31 per cent lower at 49,338.11.

Equity benchmark Sensex dropped over 150 points in early trade on Thursday led by heavy selling in indexheavyweights Infosys, HCL Tech and Asian Paints. The 30share BSE index was trading 154.21 points or 0.31 per cent lower at 49,338.11.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty fell 47.45 points or 0.33 per cent to 14,517.40 in opening deals. According to traders, profitbooking at higher levels is keeping benchmark indices volatile.

HCL Tech was the top loser in the Sensex pack, shedding around 4 per cent, followed by Infosys, Tech Mahindra, Asian Paints, UltraTech Cement and Bajaj Finance.



On the other hand, IndusInd Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) Bank, ITC, L&T, Bajaj Auto and were net buyers in the capital Kotak Bank were among the market as they purchased gainers

In the previous session, Sensex ended 24.79 points or 0.05 per cent lower at 49,492.32, while Nifty inched up 1.40 points or 0.01 per cent to its fresh closing net profit at ?5,197 crore for the president-elect Joe Biden's record of 14,564.85.

shares worth ?1,879.06 crore on Wednesday, as per exchange data.On the earnings front, Infosys on Wednesday posted a 16.6 per cent rise in consolidated December 2020 quarter, and administration.

increased its revenue growth guidance for FY21 to 4.5-5 per cent on the back of large project wins and strong deal pipeline.

"We believe underlying strength of the market remains intact and any correction in the market will be bought out. Sustained recovery in key economic data for Dec'20, better-than-expected 3QFY21 corporate earnings so far and upbeat management commentaries continue to augur well for the market," said Binod Modi Head-Strategy at Reliance Securities.

US stocks mostly finished marginally higher as investors remained focused on higher fiscal stimulus from US



# Gujarat unveils new tourism policy focus on 'high priority' areas



The Gujarat government on Tuesday announced its new tourism policy for 2020-25 with special focus on attracting new investments in the state's "high priority tourism centres" by offering lucrative incentives to entrepreneurs. Unveiling the policy here on Tuesday, Chief Minister Vijay Rupani said tourism projects, such as hotels and resorts, which would come up in these high priority centres will qualify for subsidies on investment and other incentives.

Some of these high priority Somnath. Porbandar, Junagadh and Dang districts. Some specific talukas of other districts, such as Dhari in Amreli and Dabhoi in Vadodara, are also included in the list of high priority tourism centres.

"Instead of focusing on the entire state, our aim is to develop tourism infrastructure in these high priority areas. Under the new policy, incentives will be given where it was needed the most," Rupani said.

"Some of the new avenues which we are targeting are



centres are Kutch, Devbhumi- tourism," he said. Under the in the designated high priority crore, there is no cap on adventure sport equipment, Dwarka, Narmada, Gir- policy, the government will give centres.



beach tourism, caravans and subsidy of 20 per cent on capital While minimum experience-based investment for setting up a hotel investment required is ?1 seating capacity of over 2,500 document said.

maximum investment, which said the policy document. excludes the cost of land, as per the policy document.

amusement parks in these a priority centres, the subsidy registered hotel. Rupani said will be 15 per cent for an to guide foreign tourists investment in the range of ?50 arriving in Gujarat, the state crore to ?500 crore.

this avenue, the state at government will provide land on international airport. To lease, in addition to the 15 per promote rural tourism, fair cent subsidy, for projects of organisers will get an more than ?500 crore proposed assistance of ?5 lakh per investment, according to the year to organise "all inclusive policy. Other tourism projects annual fairs and festivals which would be eligible for 15 showcasing indigenous per cent subsidy on investment culture, dance, handlooms are - convention centres with a and handicrafts", the policy

people, NABH-accredited wellness centres, tourism hospitality and training centres, tents, cottages and container accommodation.

To encourage caravan rental services, the government has announced to give 15 per cent subsidy on investment up to ?10 lakh, for starting such projects in high priority centres.To encourage new investment in the adventure tourism sectors, entrepreneurs will be offered 15 per cent subsidy, with the limit of ?15 lakh, for buying various Under the new policy, foreign

tourists will be offered a 5 per For setting up theme parks or cent discount if they stay at state government tourism department will set To attract large investments in up a dedicated tourism desk the Ahmedabad





stigma surrounding miscarriage descriptions of the medical and through a devastating grieving and coping with those emotions, process. But for some, the social aspect, and family US. Instagram has emerged as a tool identity. to cope with such distress, a "I find it endlessly fascinating qualitative research study on "The extent to which this loss study says.

journal Obstetrics & Gynecology, things that they hadn't even told "What surprised me the most their grief is a blind spot for must follow," she added.

The findings are based on a University.

Despite its common found that the content posted by their partners or families," says was how many women and occurrence, there is still a lot of Instagram users included rich Dr. Riley. "But this is how their partners identified as powerful this community is," said parents after their miscarriage and many women find that their physical experiences of Amy Henderson Riley, Assistant and how the miscarriage lasted emotional and psychological miscarriage, and the emotional Professor at the Jefferson into their family identity after needs are unmet as they go spectrum of having a miscarriage College of Population Health, a successful pregnancy," said Thomas Jefferson University, Rebecca Mercier, Assistant Professor at Thomas Jefferson

that women are opening up to 200 posts of text and pictures affects women and their The study, published in the essentially strangers about shared by Instagram users. families, and the longevity of theoretically grounded research

clinicians," Mercier said.

These personal accounts also provided insight into patients' perspectives of typically defined experiences.

For example, in the clinic, the typical definition of recurrent pregnancy loss is after three pregnancies. However, the researchers found that many patients who had had two or more miscarriages identified with having recurrent pregnancy loss. "I'm hoping that this study will encourage clinicians to point patients to social media as a potential coping tool, as well as to approach this subject with bereaved and expecting parents with more respect and empathy," Mercier said.

Social media is becoming a common avenue for patient testimonials. For example, the short video-sharing platform TikTok has recently become a home for some users to make videos sharing their personal health struggles.

"As far as we know, this is the first study to look at the intersection of Instagram and miscarriage," Riley said.

"But this is a drop in the bucket. Social media platforms are evolving rapidly and a

# Our ancestors learnt to smile so that they can have sex



forefathers were way smarter humans than us when it came to wooing themselves after they split from the opposite sex for mating. their extinct relatives -According to a new study, Neanderthals and Denisovans -Neanderthals learnt how to smile approximately 600,000 years and make expressive faces in ago, reported sciencemag.org of BAZ1B is missing in people "BAZ1B" is the gene which genes, they found that in order to attract less-aggressive citing the study that was mates.

Researchers from the University Advances. of Milan focused on genetic Giuseppe Testa, a molecular friendliness. behaviour finally led to the "self-cells. domestication" of ancient Most people carry two copies of humans.

Believe it or not but our The study suggests that modern domesticated published in the journal Science

samples from Neanderthals, biologist at University of Milan in Genetic data was gathered from breeding patterns of some This suggests natural selection which showed that gene Italy, and colleagues knew that mutations might have led one gene, BAZ1B, plays an humans to "self-select less important role in orchestrating one Denisovan. aggressive mating partners". This the movements of neural crest

this gene. Significantly, one copy



impairments and extreme

These two groups of prehistoric ancestors lived around the same time and there is even evidence to suggest they interbred.

with Williams-Beuren syndrome, allows dogs to make their eyes modern humans, those genes a disorder linked to cognitive expressive in a way wolves cannot, reports NYPost.

"It is thought that selected own. human stem cells taken from the Neanderthals led to the was shaping them. remains of two Neanderthals and BAZ1B gene and could have According to The Sun, Williamscontributed to Homo sapiens Beuren syndrome causes developing distinctively humans to have what same expressive faces".

hundreds of BAZ1B-sensitive and a small nose.

had accumulated loads of regulatory mutations of their

people perceive as a welcoming When the researchers looked at expression with a wide mouth



#### Master movie review:

### Vijay delivers a largely entertaining star vehicle

Master movie review: With both Vijay and Vijay Sethupathi in top form, Lokesh Kanagaraj's film makes for a perfect festival release.

Master

Director - Lokesh Kanagarai

Malavika Mohanan, Shanthanu punch. If you're wondering how a heavy Petta hangover. Like Bhagyaraj, Arjun Das Lokesh one blow can be so fatal, there's Rajinikanth's last film, Master is Kanagaraj is fast growing into a nice reason behind it, which also set in a college campus. In one of the most exciting makes it believable. The first 15- both these films, the hero filmmakers in Tamil cinema. After 20 minutes are spent on becomes a sort of messiah proving his mettle with films such establishing Bhavani's character, figure for the students. While as Maanagaram and Kaithi, and the story of how he built his there are other similarly themed Master does, however, suffer from very subdued lead character and which worked even though they empire with young criminals from films from the past, the didn't feature stars, Master is a juvenile home. Just when one comparison with Petta makes blue commercial cinema with almost become almost invincible, released recently. one of the industry's biggest in comes JD (Vijay) - a hip, laid- Lokesh leaves his signature in stars, Vijay. He proves himself back professor with a drinking quite a few places, but Master figure for the students. While while performing his scenes. to Vijay's fans more than the signature in quite a few places, Thankfully, it isn't one where director's own. In spite of some but Master still feels like a Vijay Vijay's character is screaming minor flaws, like the long-drawn film. Thankfully, it isn't one where heroism - which is the case with second half, Master is a largely Vijay's character is screaming most of his movies. We get a released recently. entertaining Vijay vehicle, heroism - which is the case with very subdued lead character and anchored by a terrific central most of his movies. We get a it's refreshing to see Vijay deliver performance and an equally good very subdued lead character and a laid-back performance. He supporting act by Vijay it's refreshing to see Vijay deliver plays a guy with a serious Sethupathi.

on Sethupathi's antagonist, drinking problem and it almost while performing his scenes.

Bhavani, and it sets him up as feels like Vijay was tipsy even an almost mythical villain who while performing his scenes. Cast - Vijay, Vijay Sethupathi, can kill anyone with a single Masterdoes, however, suffer from Master opens with the spotlight plays a guy with a serious feels like Vijay was tipsy even heroism - which is the case with more sense because it was



a laid-back performance. He drinking problem and it almost Vijay's character is screaming comparison with Petta makes most of his movies. We get a released recently.

a heavy Petta hangover. Like it's refreshing to see Vijay deliver Rajinikanth's last film, Master is a laid-back performance. He Lokesh's maiden attempt at true- gets the feeling that Bhavani has more sense because it was also set in a college campus. In plays a guy with a serious both these films, the hero drinking problem and it almost becomes a sort of messiah feels like Vijay was tipsy even yet again, even if Master panders problem. Lokesh leaves his still feels like a Vijay film, there are other similarly themed Master does, however, suffer from films from the past, the a heavy Petta hangover. Like comparison with Petta makes Rajinikanth's last film, Master is more sense because it was also set in a college campus. In both these films, the hero Lokesh leaves his signature in becomes a sort of messiah quite a few places, but Master figure for the students. While still feels like a Vijay film. there are other similarly themed Thankfully, it isn't one where films from the past, the

#### Pieces of a Woman movie review:

### Simply brilliant, if you can get over Shia LaBeouf's problematic presence



Pieces of a Woman Director - Kornel Mundruczo Snook, Ellen Burstyn

prologue. In hindsight, downhill because of a last minute setis the only direction it could've back. gone in. This isn't because the She seems competent enough, rest of the film is poor, but only though. Her voice has a calming because that opening is effect on the agitated Martha, and outstanding.

LaBeouf, as they prepare for a if you were in charge of the fries

home birth. The drill is in place, the music carefully picked out, Cast - Vanessa Kirby, Shia and the midwife on her way. LaBeouf, Molly Parker, Sara Played by Molly Parker, Eva wasn't the couple's first choice, Pieces of a Woman peaks in its but had to be summoned

she seems to be following 'a' rule We're introduced to Martha and book. But 'competent enough' Sean, a young couple played by doesn't cut it when you're a Vanessa Kirby and Shia midwife. Heck, it wouldn't cut it

Vanessa Kirby's astonishing central performance. section at a McDonald's. Across 30 nerve-shredding having an anxiety attack, I observations about how men and

Sean go from nervous breathing exercises. baby begins showing signs of distress on its way into the world. The heartbeat that was loud ago disappears as the scene unfolds, in real-time.

It's a brutal opening act -- an storytelling that not only transports you into the same room as the characters, but in a hope for. As difficult as it can get By definition, the situation in the

black, 30 minutes had gone by. grieve. Pieces of a Woman screen.

Relieved and at genuine risk of makes

Pieces of a Woman movie review: Look beyond Shia LaBeouf's problematic presence, and the film has a lot to admire -- especially

Kirby is all it can realistically all the more uncomfortable.

minutes, we watch in paused the film (thanks, Netflix), women tackle trauma differently. helplessness as Martha and and performed a series of quick While Sean has emotional outbursts and suffers a relapse, excitement to sheer terror, as the Little did I know that the movie Martha clinically tries to take would deflate like a spluttering back control of her crumbling life. balloon, too. It had set the bar Nearly as harrowing as the too high for itself, and had it, by childbirth scene is an incident enough to fill the room minutes some miracle, managed to involving sexual abuse that sustain that level of intensity for unfolds around midway through another hour-and-a-half, it the film. That the abuser is played would've been the movie to beat by LaBeouf, who was recently astounding piece of visual at the Oscars. But as it stands, accused of similar behaviour by a nomination for the excellent a former partner, makes matters

way hands you a towel and a pair to watch Martha, especially in a prologue is such that even if of gloves and demands, "Do couple of scenes, it is impossible everything were going according to take your eyes off her. She to plan, it would still be wrought Director Alfonso Cuaron filmed a internalises her pain, which leads with tension. The rest of the film similar scene in Roma, but that many, including Sean, to arrive traces the aftermath of the was four minutes long. When at harsh judgements about her, tragedy, in a narrative that is as Pieces of a Woman finally cut to as if there are wrong ways to fractured as the relationships on

Priyanka

Chopra



### Priyanka Chopra is excited as The White Tiger makers send her name for awards season in Best Supporting Actress category

Priyanka Chopra has

shared a 'For Your

Consideration' leaflet (sent

to various film awards

groups) by The White

Tiger team. It championed

her in the Best Supporting

Actress category.

Actor Priyanka Chopra is excited about her upcoming Netflix movie, The White Tiger. On Wednesday, she took to Instagram to share pictures and videos of the screener package she had received for the movie. Also attached with the screener was a 'For

Your Consideration' leaflet, asking awards academies, associations and t h e r organisations to consider the film and its team for the

upcoming

awards season. Priyanka's name was submitted in the Best Actress in a Supporting Role while her co-star Rajkummar Rao's name was submitted in Best Actor in a Supporting Role category. The film's lead, Adarsh Gourav, was championed for the Best Actor in a Leading Role category while Divine and others were asked to be considered in the Best Original Song category for their song, Jungle Mantra. Director Ramin Bahrani and multiple others' names have

also been submitted in different categories.

Sharing the leaflet on Instagram Stories, Priyanka added by fire effects and wrote, "And then I saw this!!" Adarsh, too, reposted her video on his Instagram page. Rajkummar, meanwhile, shared a picture of a large billboard, bearing the film's poster in New York City. The White Tiger opened to largely

positive reviews last week. It released in select theatres in the US and will start streaming on Netflix on January 22. Based on the Man Booker Prize-winning novel by the same name, it is being called among the few frontrunners this awards season. Priyanka also celebrated the success of her other film, We Can Be Heroes, on Instagram. The film has once again gained the number 1 spot on Netflix. Directed by Robert Rodriguez, the film starred Priyanka in a negative role.

#### Bhumi Pednekar shares pic with Rajkummar Rao as Sumi and Shardul from Badhaai Do



Bhumi Pednekar and Rajkummar Rao have been shooting for their film, Badhaai Do. Bhumi shared a picture with her co-star from the

film's set while both were in character. Sharing the picture, she wrote: "Do mastane chale zindagi banane, Bande sayane aur naam ke deewane #SumiAurShardul #BadhaaiDo @rajkummar\_rao (two happy souls are out to live their lives, both clever and somewhat romantic)." The picture showed Rajkummar sporting a thick moustache, while Bhumi

A c t o r s looked pretty in a pink kurta. Both were lying on their backs and Bhumi covered herself with a light blanket. Some of their industry colleagues reacted to the picture. Dia Mirza wrote "Cuties! Dono," followed by a heart emoji, while Jackky Bhagnani wrote "can't wait". Another Instagram user said: "Two powerhouse actor bahut maza ayega to see @rajkummar\_rao n @bhumipednekar together... Jaldi shoot karo aur release karo."Bhumi also shared a picture of a massive set being prepared. Earlier this month, the team of Badhaai Do began shooting for their film.

#### Hina Khan completes 12 years as an actor: 'It has been overwhelming'

Twelve years back, Hina overwhelming and I am grateful to we have achieved. "Since her film matter." Content is the king television, with her very first show best experiences in life through she became a household name. more special is her bagging the And then came visiting the Best Actress award at Bollywood debut with Hacked gushes, "The feeling is amazing, last year. As she hits this overwhelming and I am filled with elated Khan says, "The journey honour. Our work getting has been amazing! When I look recognised on an International back at where I started off from level is definitely a huge

Khan started her career with God for giving me some of the career is clearly panning out well, for me so whatever I are more Bollywood projects on choose to take upon turning out to be so popular that these 12 years."What makes it the horizon in the near future, we an artsy film or a fullask. Kha says, "Hacked was my fledged commercial first commercial film in 2020, and film - the content has Cannes film festival in 2019 with Montgomery International Film the entire experience of working to be appealing and her film Lines, and she made her Festival Lines. The 33-year-old on the project was amazing! I do interesting. have another film coming up Hence, taking a soon, but I will only be able reveal step forward into milestone in her career, an gratitude for such a prestigious details about it later. "The actor films adds that she isn't going to Lines was differentiate between projects on one of the the basis of whether it is a masala b to where I am now, all that I have achievement for our entire team entertainer or content driven and decisions experienced has been very and we are all ecstatic about what it's only content that would I took





#### Demi Rose sets pulses soaring as she shares VERY busty snaps while going braless in a pink ski jacket

She has been been sharing sensational The lingerie model recalled: 'I was snaps as she documents her stay in Ibiza. And Demi Rose was sure to set pulses soaring as she went braless in a bright pink ski jacket from PrettyLittleThing in sultry snaps she

shared via Instagram on Wednesday. The model, 25, put on a very busty display in the ensemble as she wore the coat unzipped to show a generous glimpse of her cleavage.

Demi added a chic flair to her ensemble by wearing a fluffy white headband to perfectly complement the winter season attire. Her brunette locks were pulled into half-up twin pigtails, while she wore a light palette of make-up to accentuate her pretty features. The model is currently spending

lockdown in Es Vedra in Ibiza and has been posting positive mantras amid the coronavirus pandemic. Demi recently shared: 'I woke up. I have clothes to wear. I have running water. I have food to eat. Life is good. I am thankful.' The brunette recently opened up to MailOnline about how she shot to stardom at the age of 14 after being bullied in school.

bullied in school, I wanted to make friends outside of it so I ended up spending a lot of time

'I was even interested in

virtual reality as a kid, I was always on the computer and MySpace came around and I found my calling.' The Instagram star

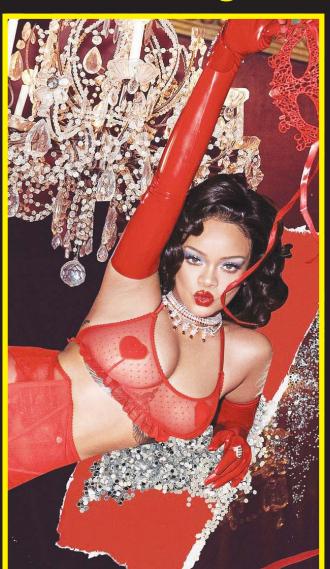
experienced her first taste of fame when pictures of her on the beach as a young teenager went viral on the social media platform.

Demi added: 'I only ever got Instagram because someone made a fake profile of me on there with 3,000 followers and I was really envious.'I was like. "wow. how can

someone using my pictures get that much?" And then I started an account and it went from there. 'From the age of 18, the bombshell - who currently boasts more than 15.6m followers signed with a modelling agency and her career went from strength to strength.



## Rihanna sets temperatures rising as she shows off her curves in red-hot lingerie for Savage x Fenty's Valentine's Day line



new beau A\$AP Rocky in recent suspenders in the image.

for Valentine's Day a month early silver bracelets.

new photos to her Instagram Wednesday.

The 32-year-old We Found Love singer was decked out in scarlet as she promoted her upcoming 'Valentine's Day VIP box' from her Savage x Fenty lingerie label Unlike the steamy

boudoir-style photos she often poses for to advertise her lingerie, Rihanna opted by a dizzying set This time, she wore sheer panties

One featured her in closeup, showing off her shoulder-length raven curls and her elegantly made-up face with blood-red lips. 'Heart/Eyes,' she captioned the

The 5ft8in beauty wore a lacy red 'Crushin' on u,' read one photo in Valentine's Day VIP box.

She has been seen halter-style bra with mesh pasted-on text. spending plenty of time with her covering her chest and connected

She added some extra sparkle toned tummy. And her new romance seems to with a thick diamond necklace have gotten Rihanna in the mood around her throat and multiple

after she shared some steamy 'Valentine shenanigans,' she photoshoot with the pop superstar.



laying out suggestively.

of collages featuring multiple and suspenders with thigh-high red that nearly reached to her shoulders.

She wore a bralette with a ruched fringe covering her tattoo and her modesty.

'You're not my only Valentine,' read another featuring a closeup of her

Accompanying the collages was a short video featuring behind-thescenes footage from the

> Following some quick inserts of the room with lingerie littered across it, Rihanna appeared in closeup as she teased her gorgeous curls while wearing the sheer bralette. She put on a sultry face while lying on the bed in another shot and holding a

captioned another collage of her strand of red satin ribbon. The Work singer then changed into her mesh bodysuit and got down on all fours while glancing suggestively into vinyl boots and matching gloves the camera. She turned around to highlight her fit figure and her pert derriere in a thong, which had additional coverage from the body suit.Despite her steamy promotion, heart-shaped pasties to preserve her Savage x Fenty website didn't yet have any information on her



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#### Here's what's in Biden's \$1.9 trillion economic rescue package

(SAI Bureau)stimulus 📑 Bigger checks. More aid for the unemployed, the hungry and those facing eviction. Additional support for small businesses, states and local governments. Increased funding for and vaccinations testing.

These are key parts of a \$1.9 trillion proposal that President-elect Joe Biden unveiled Thursday evening. Billed as the American Rescue Plan, the package augments many of the measures in Congress' historic \$3 trillion coronavirus relief bill from March and in the \$900 billion legislation from December, which was scaled back to garner



support from Senate Republicans. Now that Democrats control both chambers and the White House, Biden is pushing for the big steps he says are needed to address immediate needs and control the coronavirus pandemic. He also plans to lay out an economic recovery plan in coming weeks that aims to create jobs and combat the

climate crisis, among other measures Here's what's in the American Rescue Plan: Beefed-up stimulus payments The plan calls for sending another \$1,400 per person to

eligible recipients. This money would be in addition to the \$600 payments that were approved by Congress in December and sent out earlier this month -- for a total of \$2,000.

The new payments would go to adult dependents that were left out of the earlier rounds, like (Contd on page 30)

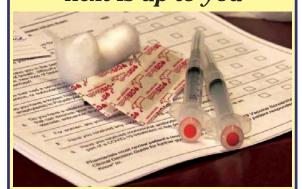
#### Farm laws stir: 'Will not talk to SC-appointed committee,' reiterates farmers' union



(SAI Bureau)- Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) on Friday reiterated its stand on the committee constituted by the Supreme Court to resolve the standoff between the farmers and the government over the three farm laws. Speaking after the ninth round of talks with the government, BKU spokesperson Rakesh Tikait said, "We will not go to the committee constituted by the Supreme Court. We will talk to the central government only". "Our demands of repealing of the three farm laws and MSP guarantee remain," Tikait added. Farmers, who are agitating against

(Contd on page 30)

#### The pandemic is getting worse. What happens next is up to you



(SAI Bureau) -Despite hopes of widespread vaccinations this year, experts warned the start of 2021 would be a very rough time in this pandemic.

It turns out the first two weeks have been abvsmal.

The United States just shattered its all-time records for the most Covid-19 infections hospitalizations and deaths reported in one day: -- On January 2, a record-high 302,506 new infections were reported in one day, according to Johns Hopkins University. That's an average of 3.5 people getting infected every second. -On January 6, a record-high 132,447 patients were hospitalized with Covid-19, according to the Covid Tracking Project.

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# Dutch Rutte government resigns over child welfare fraud scandal

stepped down after thousands of families were wrongly accused of child welfare fraud and told to pay money back.Families suffered an "unparalleled wrong", Dutch

MPs decided, with tax officials. politicians, judges and civil servants leaving them powerless. Many of those affected were from an immigrant background and hundreds were plunged into financial difficulty. Mr Rutte submitted the cabinet's resignation to the king. "Innocent

people have been criminalised and their lives ruined," he cabinet's resignation was merely symbolic, Mr Rutte then told reporters, adding that responsibility for what was adamant that it was not. 2This is not the first had gone wrong lay with the cabinet. "The buck stops

(SAI Bureau) - Mark Rutte's government has here." The "unanimous" decision, taken at a cabinet meeting in The Hague, comes at a key moment in the Covid-19 pandemic. The Netherlands has gone into lockdown and ministers have been considering stiffer

measures to halt the spread of

The government will stay on in a caretaker role to tackle the pandemic until parliamentary elections in March but Economics Minister Eric Wiebes has quit with immediate effect for his role in the scandal. Asked whether the

(Contd on page 30)





