



SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU



EARTHQUAKE JOLTS FUKUSHIMA AREA

Tokyo, 13 Feb: A powerful magnitude 7.1 earthquake jolted Miyagi and Fukushima prefectures in the Tohoku region late on Saturday night. The quake, which also felt in Tokyo, where it registered a 4 on the Japanese scale, struck around 11:08 p.m., according to the Meteorological Agency. A tsunami warning was not issued. As a precaution, however, those near coastal areas were advised to move to higher ground as aftershocks could continue. The Hamadori region is home to the quake- and tsunami-hit Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant. There were no reports of abnormalities at the facility, public broadcaster NHK said. The government was setting up a task force to examine the quake. —Courtesy, Japanese Times

Govt reforms will make India top economy: FM

NEW DELHI, 13 FEB

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday said that the Government has been pursuing reforms for achieving sustained long-term growth to make India one of the top economies of the world in the coming decades. Replying to debate on Budget 2021-22 in Lok Sabha, she said the Prime Minister did not lose any opportunity to continue with the reforms and this Budget has set the pace for India to become self-reliant or "Aatmanirbhar". Earlier this month, the Finance Minister presented a Rs 34.5 lakh crore Budget for 2021-22, in the backdrop of the pandemic. The Budget has laid emphasis on increasing capital expenditure, raising allocation for healthcare capacity building and development of agriculture infrastructure, among others, which are expected to have a multiplier effect on the economy. She said her Budget for 2021-22, has provided the highest capex growth of 34.4 per cent by providing more money to railways, roads and defence. Referring to a series of

● Emphasising that sustained commitment to reform is blended in the Budget, she said, "reforms are going to lay a path for India to be one of the top economies of the world in the coming decades"

measures taken to stimulate the economy hit by the pandemic, she said, COVID-19 did not deter the Government from taking up reforms, which are going to be necessary for sustaining long-term goals for this country. Emphasising that sustained commitment to reform is blended in the Budget, she said, "reforms are going to lay a path for India to be one of the top economies of the world in the coming decades." On handling of COVID-19 pandemic, the Finance Minister said, "The death rates are the lowest in the world, active cases have come down...we have actually managed to bend the curve. As a result, the revival of the economy looks a lot more sustainable and this Budget gives necessary impetus." —PTI



PM TO HANDOVER AGRI BUSINESS TO 'TWO FRIENDS'

JAIPUR, 13 FEB

Continuing his scathing attack against PM Modi over the farm laws on his second day in Rajasthan, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday alleged that the Prime Minister wants to "hand over" the entire agriculture business to his "two friends". Gandhi addressed two farmers' rallies at Rupangarh in Ajmer and Nagaur's Makrana. He had addressed farmers' rallies in Hanumangarh's Pilibanga and Sri Ganganagar's Padampur on the first day of his two-day Rajasthan trip on Friday. At the Rupangarh rally, Gandhi said 40% people of the country are stakeholders in agriculture. "It is the business of 40% people, which includes farmers, small and medium businessmen, traders and labourers. Narendra Modi wants to give this entire business to his two friends. This is the objective of the farm laws," he claimed without naming anyone. —PTI

Govt introduces J&K Reorganisation Bill

Bill to take J&K on path of development: Govt

NEW DELHI, 13 FEB

A bill to replace an ordinance to merge the Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) cadre of civil services officers with the Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Mizoram Union Territory (AGMUT) cadre was introduced in the Lok Sabha on Saturday. Introducing "The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2021", Minister of State for Home Affairs G Kishan Reddy said the Government was working to take Jammu and Kashmir on the path to development. He said around 170 Central laws are being implemented in Jammu and Kashmir after abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution that gave a special status to the erstwhile state. "The Government is implementing different development projects and schemes in Jammu and Kashmir; he added. Raising objections on the bill, Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury asked "what was the need to bring an ordinance for this?". He said regularly promul-



gating an ordinance is not good for a parliamentary democracy as an ordinance should be preceded by an emergency situation or any urgency. "Our point of contention is loud and clear," he said, adding after abrogating Article 370, the Government showed a "dream" to the people that they would "make heaven" in Jammu and Kashmir and create jobs there. Introduction of this bill reflects that the Government took the step of abrogating Article 370 without any preparation, Chowdhury alleged.

The Congress leader said Jammu and Kashmir is a sensitive state and the cadre should be comprised of locals and officers having ground knowledge of the realities there. He alleged that militancy is still prevalent in the union territory and people are living in an atmosphere of fear. The Government tried to turn Jammu and Kashmir into a large prison, the opposition leader said, adding they blocked telecommunication services and failed to normalise the situation there. —PTI

STATEHOOD AT RIGHT TIME: SHAH

NEW DELHI, 13 FEB

HM Amit Shah asserted in Lok Sabha on Saturday that the Govt has done more for Jammu and Kashmir since Article 370 was scrapped in Aug 2019 than those who ruled it for generations, even as he assured that the Centre will grant full statehood to the union territory at an appropriate time. Replying to a discussion on the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, he also slammed some opposition members for their claim that the proposed law negates the hopes of the region getting back its erstwhile statehood. The bill to merge the J&K cadre of all-India services officers with the Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Mizoram Union Territory (AGMUT) cadre was later passed by Lok Sabha by a voice vote. —PTI

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