



THE TIMES OF INDIA

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**TODAY'S
EDITION**

➤ From the Ukraine crisis to who could win Nobel Peace Prize, know what's trending in 'Your Newsroom'
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➤ Know more about Chilika lake, Asia's largest brackish water lagoon, its flora and fauna, through the lens of a young traveller
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STUDENT EDITION
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2022


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WHY ARE OIL PRICES SO HIGH

WHAT

Oil prices are increasing, again, casting a shadow over the economy, driving up inflation and eroding consumer confidence. Crude prices rose more than 15 per cent in January alone, with the global benchmark price crossing \$90 a barrel for the first time in more than seven years, as fears of a Russian invasion of Ukraine grew. Many energy analysts predict that oil could soon touch \$100 a barrel, even as electric cars become more popular and the coronavirus pandemic persists.

WHY

The pandemic depressed energy prices in 2020, even sending the US benchmark oil price below zero for the first time. But prices have snapped back faster and more than many analysts had expected in large part because supply has not kept up with demand.

■ Besides, western oil companies, partly under pressure from investors and environmental activists, are drilling fewer wells than they did before the pandemic to restrain the increase in supply.
■ Industry executives say they are trying not to make the same mistake they made in the past when they pumped too much oil when prices were high, leading to a collapse in prices.
■ Elsewhere, in countries like Ecuador, Kazakhstan and Libya, natural disasters and political turbulence have curbed output in recent months.
■ On the demand side, much of the world is learning to cope with the pandemic and people are eager to shop and make other trips. Wary of coming in contact with an infectious virus, many are choosing to drive rather than taking public transportation.
■ But the most immediate and critical factor is geopolitical. A potential Russian invasion of Ukraine has kept the oil market on edge.

HOW RUSSIA-UKRAINE CRISIS IS IMPACTING OIL

1 Russia produces 10 million barrels of oil a day, or roughly one of every 10 barrels used around the world on any given day

2 Any interruption of Russian shipments that transit through Ukraine, or the sabotage of other pipelines in northern Europe, would cripple much of the continent and distort the global energy supply chain. That's because, traders say, the rest of the world does not have the spare capacity to replace Russian oil

3 Even if Russian oil shipments are not interrupted, the US and its allies could impose sanctions or export controls on Russian companies, limiting their access to equipment, which could gradually reduce production in that country

4 In addition, interruptions of Russian natural gas exports to Europe could force some utilities to produce more electricity by burning oil rather than gas. That would raise demand and prices worldwide


X-PLAINED

WHAT CAN THE UNITED STATES AND ITS ALLIES DO IF RUSSIAN PRODUCTION IS DISRUPTED?

The United States, Japan, European countries and even China could release more crude from their strategic reserves. Such moves could help, especially if a crisis is short-lived. But the reserves would not be nearly enough, if Russian oil supplies were interrupted for months or years.

WHAT IS OPEC DOING?

US President Joe Biden has been urging the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to pump more oil, but several members have been falling short of their monthly production quotas, and some may not have the capacity to quickly increase output

WHAT ABOUT INDIA

In India, domestic oil marketing companies are likely to swiftly raise prices substantially after the elections in order to align domestic prices with international rates and to make up for the losses they may be incurring now. The government had cut duty in November 2021. But higher fuel prices can induce broader inflation, which can affect interest rates and economic recovery

■ Ultimately, high prices could depress demand for oil enough that prices begin to come down. One of the main financial incentives for buying electric cars, for example, is that electricity tends to be cheaper per kilometre than petrol. Sales of electric cars are growing fast in many countries

An 8-year-old writes a book and hides it in cupboard. NOW, IT'S A HIT

When eight-year-old **Dillon Helbig** finished writing his book, 'The Adventures of Dillon Helbig's Crismis', in mid-December, he wanted everyone to read it. The only problem was that he did not have an agent. So, he decided to self-publish. During a visit with his grandmother to the Lake Hazel branch of the Ada Community Library in Boise, Idaho, in US, Dillon quietly deposited his book, signed 'by Dillon His Self', on to a nearby shelf. The 81-page book details adventures that ensue after the star on a Christmas tree Dillon is decorating explodes. Dillon is transported

into a portal and time-travels to the very first Thanksgiving and to the north pole. "Everything about it was a bit crazy," the second-grader admitted. Days later, when Dillon came to check on the book, he noticed it was gone. His mom called the library. It turned out that the Lake Hazel library branch manager, Alex Hartman and his colleagues discovered Dillon's book in the "stories" section and read it.


**YOUNG
ACHIEVER**

■ Dillon has been awarded the library's Whoodini Award for best young novelist, a category created for him and named after the library's owl mascot ■ The young author has announced that a sequel is in the works, this time about a visit from the Grinch and also featuring Dillon's dog, Rusty ■ He is also writing a book about a jacket-eating closet, based, Dillon said, on a true story from his kindergarten days

Scientists discover supermountains four times longer than the Himalayas

Mount Everest, at its towering height of 8,848 metres, is the tallest in the Himalayan range, but scientists have revealed that there were ranges that stretched across the continent. Longer than the Himalayas, these mountain ranges helped in the evolution of the planet. Researchers have tracked the formation of these supermountains throughout Earth's history.



THE SUPERMOUNTAINS

➤ The first supermountains are being called **Nuna Supermountain**, which coincides with the likely appearance of eukaryotes, organisms that later gave rise to plants and animals ➤ The second that evolved around 650 and 500 million years ago is the **Transgondwanan Supermountain**, which coincides with the appearance of the first large animals and the Cambrian explosion 45 million years later when most animal groups appeared in the fossil record

HOW DID THEY CONTRIBUTE IN THE EVOLUTION OF EARTH

■ Researchers said that when the mountains eroded, they provided essential nutrients like phosphorous and iron to the oceans, supercharging biological cycles and driving the evolution to greater complexity. The supermountains may also have boosted oxygen levels in the atmosphere, needed for complex life to breathe
■ Researchers attribute a decrease in evolution rate on the planet between 1,800 and 800 million years to the absence of these supermountains. This period is known as the **Boring Billion**

NO DIGITAL DETOX: INSTA MAY ROLL OUT NEW FEATURES

Instagram is ramping up things to keep its young user base interested, although only three months ago, it had promised to introduce an app that nudges users to 'take a break' after they had been online for a certain time. A slew of new features are likely to be introduced on the photo-sharing app that ranges from 3-D avatars to screen sharing while video calling, and to giving a better flow to the home feed, by making it chronological. According to a report in Gadgets Now, the app, which is wildly popular in India, and saw the highest number of downloads in the previous year, is currently working on introducing a new feature that would make the users' home feeds more personalised.


TECHAWAY

Instagram is likely to offer two options as a part of this feature. The first one is the 'Following' option, which will allow you to view the content of those you are following on your home feed in a chronological order, and the other option is the 'Favourites' which will allow you to see contents of the accounts you have 'added to your favourites' on your feed. This too shall appear in a chronological order, by default

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ONLINE TOI STUDENT EDITION

A LOT MORE THAN JUST LOVE

Happy Valentine's Day

Celebrate the season of love differently

What to expect

What is the meaning of love

- How the word has moved beyond its traditional association and is all about family, friends, gratitude, self-love, compassion and MORE

Crazy Little Thing Called Love

- Unique and bizarre Valentine's Day traditions from around the world
- Interesting trivia around the Day
- Fascinating love monuments that you didn't know existed

Love in school

- How it is when your friend who gave you confidence, a teacher who gave you hope or a chat with your parents - Love is all that and so much else

Love is success

- How it is when one loves what they do. It changes the way they approach it. Featuring real-life stories of those who converted their passion into success

PLUS : Trivia | Voices | Opinions | Books & Movies And MORE

ONLINE

Celebrate your pet

Share the bond you enjoy with your furry friend with us. Tell us how they make you feel a little more adored everyday with pictures, art and/or video

Be my Valentine, friend

Celebrate your friendship by making a Valentine's card for your friend. We share the best on toistudent.com

Plus

- Art activities
- Your voices

Don't miss the 'Exclusive Edition' on this special occasion

Online activities start from **February 7, 2022 onwards**

MARK YOUR DATE **FEBRUARY 12, 2022**

The World

this week

CAN

sanctions stop Putin's ambitions?



IN THE NEWS FOR

Russia's President Vladimir Putin has accused the US of trying to draw his country into a war in Ukraine. He said America's goal was to use a confrontation as a pretext to impose more sanctions on Russia. Putin also said the US was ignoring Russia's concerns about the expansion of Nato, the Western military alliance which Ukraine is seeking to join. The US and its allies accuse Russia of planning to invade Ukraine, something Russia has repeatedly denied.

YOU SPEAK

Sanctions will not stop President Putin from his ambitions for Ukraine for 3 main reasons: ■ Russia is not excessively dependent on foreign markets. ■ Past sanctions have not been very effective and it may now aggravate the situation.

■ Russia is a nuclear superpower. In the likely case of a full-fledged war, Russia will be able to hold base competently. Also, world power countries like China are more likely to back up Russia's ambitions than Ukraine's.



T NIMISHA, class XI, Flitjee, Hyderabad

WE SPEAK

Experts say it's unlikely the US and its allies would agree to something as sweeping as a complete ban on trade with Russia or an embargo. Rather, industries and individuals probably will continue to bear the brunt of sanctions as the crisis deepens.

The US and its allies have threatened Russia with financial sanctions carrying "severe consequences" if it invades Ukraine

TIMES NIE gives you this fortnight's news capsule - a 360 degree perspective of major events that happened

around the world. But, this is not it. This is a platform to present your news, your way. **OWN YOUR NEWSROOM!**

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WHO

could win Nobel Peace?

IN THE NEWS FOR

Pope Francis, British nature broadcaster David Attenborough, the World Health Organisation and Belarusian dissident Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya are among the nominees for this year's Nobel Peace Prize.

Also among the candidates for the accolades are Greta Thunberg, the Myanmar National Unity Government formed by opponents of last year's coup and Tuvalu's foreign minister

Simon Kofe, last-minute announcements showed on Monday. Thousands of people, from members of parliaments worldwide to former winners, are eligible to propose candidates.

WE SPEAK



Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya

Exiled Belarusian opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya was nominated for the second year running for her "brave, tireless and peaceful work" for democracy and freedom in her home country, said parliamentarian Haarek Elvenes. The Belarusian human rights activist and politician ran in the 2020 Belarusian presidential election as the main opposition candidate after her husband Sergei Tikhanovsky was arrested by Belarusian authorities.



Sir David Attenborough

Attenborough is best known for his landmark TV series illustrating the natural world, including Life on Earth and The Blue Planet. He was nominated jointly with the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, which assesses the state of biodiversity worldwide.



Environmentalists have won the Nobel Peace Prize in the past, including Kenyan activist Wangari Maathai and former US VP Al Gore



Pope Francis

Pope Francis was nominated for his efforts to help solve the climate crisis and his work towards peace and reconciliation, by Dag Inge Ulstein, ex-minister of int'l development.



The World Health Organisation (WHO)

The coronavirus pandemic has been front and centre of people's concerns over the past two years and this year the international body tasked with fighting it, the WHO, has again been nominated.

YOU SPEAK

Even though all the nominees have had a big impact on our society, I think David Attenborough deserves to win the Nobel Peace Prize this year. Most of us know him from his work on the famous broadcast network, BBC, as a presenter but he is also an active environmentalist and has helped in raising awareness for natural preservation. His work has brought about significant changes in climate change, planetary biodiversity, renewable energy and much more. For the better part of 30 years, he has dedicated his life for the advancement of environmental conservation and it should be recognised.

LIKITH L GOWDA, class XI, Vyasa Int'l, B'luru



DID

FM do

enough for education sector?

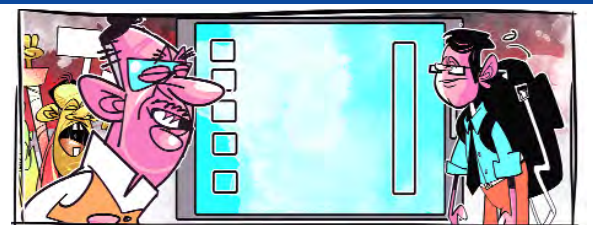
IN THE NEWS FOR

The Union Budget gains applause for digitalization of education and making it accessible at the grassroots level. Still, many believe more could have been done to elevate the quality of education as well.

The sector appreciated the budget being in line with promoting human capital through digital tools such as the 'one class one TV channel' programme proposed under the PM e-Vidya scheme.



WE SPEAK



It laid out a progressive vision the Government holds for capitalizing on India's demographic advantages by suggesting a digital university, creating a conducive environment for inter-university collaborations, and introducing a number of skill development programmes. The Budget has allocated ₹63,449.37 crore to the Department of School Education and Literacy, an increase of about 6.6% over the current financial years.

YOU SPEAK

Rather than focusing on digital revolution in education, the government should bolster the existing public schooling first. Even when students have Internet access, the quality of online education remains poor.

POORNA GHOSH, class XII, Anand Niketan, Ahmedabad

The Budget has focused on bridging the digital divide among students, which will help in killing the 'digital apartheid'. Setting up of virtual labs and digital university will definitely help the sector.

MANAS KAPUR, class XI, Sri Venkateshwar Int'l, Delhi

DO

you think Boris Johnson should quit after 'PartyGate'?



IN THE NEWS FOR

Senior Conservative lawmaker Tobias Ellwood said he would submit a letter of no confidence on British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, saying so-called 'partygate' was distracting the government at a time of international crisis. Johnson is facing calls to resign after weeks of a steady drip of reports alleging his aides, and he himself, had staged and attended parties in his Downing Street office and residence at a time when millions of Britons were under Covid-19 lockdown.

YOU SPEAK

I think Boris Johnson should resign or at least face severe consequences for his actions. Leaders must abide by the regulations laid out for the security of citizens. In fact, in such situations they should be role models for others and cooperate willingly with the protocols.

AVANI PANDIT, class X, Apeejay School, Nerul



WE SPEAK

British PM Boris Johnson will probably hold onto his job for now despite a scathing report about government coronavirus lockdown parties, but his long-term future is out of his hands as police probe claims of rule breaking, analysts said. His position has been hanging by a thread because of the steady drip of revelations since last year.

WILL

'delete all' help?



IN THE NEWS FOR

We all have sent text messages that we have regretted instantly, however, Meta owned WhatsApp allows us to remove unwanted messages through its 'Delete' feature. The extension would help users delete their wrongly sent messages within a longer time frame. The feature would allow group admins to add and manage their multiple WhatsApp groups from a single place.

WE SPEAK

WhatsApp has developed a beta version for Android where the app suggests extending the time limit for 'Delete for Everyone.' ■ In this, the users will get a notification saying 'This message was removed' after a text gets deleted. ■ The date of implementation of the new feature has still not been announced by the app but it will definitely happen soon.

YOU SPEAK

In recent years, WhatsApp has brought in a flurry of new updates and features to make their platform more secure and user-friendly. However, the recent decision to give the group admin the power to delete messages seems to be a bit far-fetched. It is extremely tedious to keep track of conversations and have a concrete record of them, especially when any person can be anonymous and potentially dangerous on an online platform. Yes, but extending the time limit is a good move.

MANEEZA KHAN, class XI, The Heritage School, Kolkata



Virtual annual day and prize distribution ceremony at St Angel's

Annual day and prize distribution ceremony, 'Atmamanthan 2021' was held virtually by **St Angel's School**, Rohini on January 22. The celebration commemorated in a befitting manner at the school premises. Several dignitaries like the founder principal, founder chairman of the school, director and digital head of the school were present. Hardeep Singh Doon, IPS, IGP director, Human Right Commission, Chandigarh graced the occasion as the chief guest. Vikas Sheokand, assistant commissioner of police, Crime Branch, Delhi and Nirupma Krishan, DEEO, Chandigarh attended the event as guests of honour.

The programme started solemnly with the lighting of the lamp by the present dignitaries followed by a prayer song. This was followed by a motivational speech by the founder principal. Mangal Gaan; followed by group song that captivated the hearts of everyone



with its mellifluous rhythm. Taking it further the chief guest also inspired everyone with their words. The event was extended by the reading of annual report by the head of the school, Neelum Singh. The next item on the list, namely the Symphonious Orchestra bore testimony to the outstanding talent of so many students and made the onlookers ecstatic.

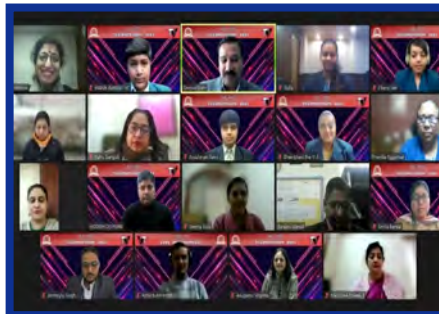
Prizes for the meritorious students were given by the founder principal and founder chairman. The heart of the event was the play, Atma Manthan- self introspection through Krishna's preachings. It touched every soul through the message it gave. Pratima Mukherjee, Headmistress of the school proposed the vote of thanks at the end. The event was concluded with National Anthem.

'ATL Technovision 2021' at Ahlcon

Ahlcon Public School organised its most awaited inter-school mega fest, 'ATL Technovision 2021' on December 23 virtually with great zeal and zest. The programme was graced by the chief guest, Dr Pramila Aggarwal, principal scientist in the Division of Agricultural Physics at Indian Agricultural Research Institute, Delhi.

'Technovision 2021' encouraged the students to participate in the learning based activities, promoted healthy competition and created an atmosphere wherein the students contributed to scientific advancements. ATL fest included four events, 'Ingenious', 'Code the Future', 'Game Jam' and 'Artificial Expedition'.

The events were adjudged by a battery of distinguished judges from across the nation. School principal, Dr Deepak Raj Singh Bisht congratulated all the winners for their wonderful projects and encouraged all the participants to keep themselves abreast with the ever changing dynamic technology. He also appreciated the earnest endeavours of Dr Sunita Ramrakhi and her entire ATL team for the resounding success of 'Technovision 2021'.



Times NIE-IMS Learning's webinar today

Times NIE in association with **IMS Learning** will hold a webinar on the topic **New Education policy- Study Pattern and effective learning strategy** on February 9, 4 PM onwards. Everyone is invited to attend the thought-provoking session including vice principals, headmistresses and English HODs of schools.

The panelist for webinar will be, Professor Balaram Pani, Dean of Colleges, University of Delhi, Professor Hrushikesh Senapati, Director, NCERT, New Delhi and Kamlesh Sajani, Managing Director, IMS Learning.



Date: Wednesday, February 9 2022
Time: 4:00 PM onwards
Platform: Zoom Meetings

Panoramic performances mark annual day at DPSG

DPSG, Palam Vihar celebrated its annual day virtually on the theme 'Dances of India' on February 5. The program commenced with a welcome address by the school captain Nasmitha Yadav, followed by the invocation by the school choir.

The guest of honor for the day was chairman, DPSG Schools, Om Pathak. School principal Srividhya Sridhar lit

the lamp of knowledge to begin on an auspicious note and presented the Annual School Report for the academic session 2021-22.

The vice-chairman of the DPSG group of schools Anshul Pathak in his address acknowledged and appreciated the performances of the students.

The cultural extravaganza unfolded with the Ganesh Vandana performed in the classical

dance form of Kathak. A medley of performances on varied dance styles from different States such as 'Bhangra' from Punjab, 'Rouf' from Kashmir, and 'Kara Kattam' from Tamil Nadu.

A vibrant performance by pre-primary students on a Goanese number and 'Dandiya' and 'Garbha' by the primary wing transported the audience to the heart of Gujarat.

The school choir sang the school song as part of the closing ceremony followed by the inspiring address by Om Pathak. The event concluded with the vote of thanks by the school captain.

Gurkiran shines in International Conference

Gurkiran Kaur, a student of XI, **St Mark's School**, Meera Bagh participated in 'EWASH 2021', the international conference on environment, water, agriculture, sustainability and health, organised by Save the Environment Society (an ngo) and Hindu College, University of Delhi.

The two day conference aimed at bringing together educators, scholars, experts and students to exchange knowledge and ideas



pertaining to environment, water management and global health issues; and had interesting contests for students.

Gurkiran Kaur participated in three contests, 'Chem-Meme', 'Pictionary' and 'Guess Who'. She won the first runner up position in 'Pictionary' in which contestants had to make a self-explainable drawing on 'Skip a straw and save a tree'. In 'Chem-Meme' participants had to make a meme on chemistry in which Gurkiran won a consolation prize.

Student Corner

PRANATI GARG, class I, Galaxy, Vivek Summit Patel Nagar



PAKHI KHANNA, class VI, Vivek Summit Patel Nagar



2022- A year of new hope

2021 has now come to an end, It was a year full of twists and turns and not our good friend. We all had very high expectations for it, It crushed all of them bit-by-bit. Corona cases kept on increasing, Deaths all around seemed to be unceasing. Gamma, Delta and Omicron are variants of corona that came in this year,

They were the harbingers of disease and fear. Let's hope that this new year is better than the last, And all the people who are unwell become healthy fast. Can't wait to get back to school, Offline is any day better, Online isn't cool!

MANNAT KOHLI, class VII, G D Goenka Public School, Dwarka

Basant Panchami celebration at LAKMS

LT Atul Katarya Memorial School celebrated Basant Panchami both physically and virtually on February 5.

Basant Panchami, is a Hindu festival that is celebrated to worship Goddess Saraswati. Strictly observing all the pandemic protocols, the ceremony began with Gayatri mantra sung together by the students and staff gathered at the reception

for a short ritual followed by 'Saraswati Vandana.' Flowers were offered to Goddess Saraswati and blessings were sought by lighting the lamp.



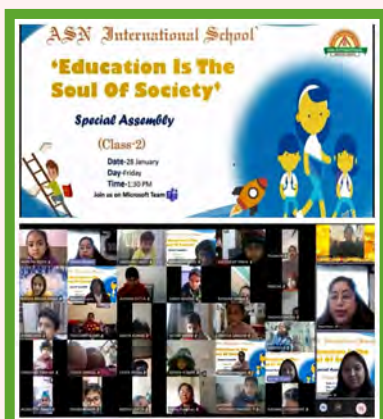
Director Sumitra Katarya extended heartfelt wishes on the occasion to students and staff

and encouraged them to value their studies. Addressing the students and teachers assembled at the function honourable principal Anshu Nakra exhorted the students to inculcate value and ethics and lead a virtuous life and motivated the students to achieve great success in all their endeavours and wished that goddess Saraswati may bring a huge wealth of knowledge for them.

EDUCATION: THE SOUL OF A SOCIETY

To emphasise the value of education, a special presentation 'Soul of our society' was presented by class II students of **ASN International School**, Mayur Vihar, Phase I on January 28.

The assembly commenced with a prayer song followed by a small skit on education wherein the students shared their thoughts about education being the fundamental right of all and not the privilege of some.



The presentation also featured the lovely memories of going back to school with the song 'School chale hum'.

In the end, the head mistress Shivani Khanna addressed teachers, students, and parents for their immense support and earnest hard work.

It was undoubtedly a result of the immense efforts put together by students and their teachers. It once again proved that when students and teachers and parents work together, they surely create masterpieces.

A PLACE OF SERENITY

If somebody asks me to describe Chilika Lake, then it has to be described as the place of serenity. Chilika Lake is Asia's largest brackish water lake. It is located in the coastal region of Odisha state at a distance of 100 Km from Bhubaneswar and 49 KM from Puri.

This huge area of water stretches as far as we can see from our eyes. I was lucky enough to visit there along with my family long back. One thing you need to consider before going there is, that don't go there if you are looking for some adventure. All you can do is relax and live the moment with our beautiful

nature. This place is more than beautiful and too good to be true. Chilika Lake is well-known for its migratory birds coming from distant places during the winter season. It is also famous for fishing and a popular picnic spot for locals residing around the place.

As I reached there, I could see a group of fishermen setting nets for their catch and hawkers selling various commodities on boats. I also had those typical glimpses of life

in the region of Odisha. We rented a boat along with a boatman, it was very exciting, and it became colder as we moved ahead. We passed many small islands and saw various species of birds.

The boatman said that if we were lucky enough we would see Dolphins as well, but sadly, we couldn't spot any dolphin. As it was getting evening and the sun was about to touch the sea level, I could see the prism of colours. The dark blue sky with the coral red sunset complimented each other well.

VARSHINI PINAPALA, class XI, Chaitanya Public School, Visakhapatnam



Urban life is better than the rural life

It is hard to say whether a particular style of liking is better for any single person, but we all know and it is clear that for the growth and expansion of civilisation urban centres are exchanged where most education and research happens. It is also where more people proportionally rise out of poverty compared to the rural area. Be it infrastructure, or any other facilities like water, electricity and sanitation, urban areas are well equipped and life in a city is more comfortable for obvious reasons. Education is of good quality and thus more people from urban areas are better qualified. Moreover, medical facilities are of excellent quality compared to the rural area. There is no caste system or discrimination and thus everyone stands an equal chance to do well in whatever field they opt for.

FOR



B SARAN, class VIII, Chitturi High School, Vijayawada

DEBATE

In all the hustle and bustle of city life, we tend to overlook things that last and truly matter to us. We overlook relationships, the environment, nature, etc and we happily waste our time seeking growth and running behind materialistic things and call it a 'living better life'. Far from the hustle of the cities, villages do have a charm of their own. The air is pollution-free and the environment peaceful. However, living in a village is not as hard as it may sound. People in villages are very hardworking, which automatically contributes to a healthy lifestyle, unlike cities. Food that goes to cities comes from rural areas. Moreover, people living in the city fancy this kind of tranquil and peaceful environment. One thing to remember, unlike earlier days, the government has improved the hospital facilities in rural areas as well.

AGAINST



D RUTVIKA, class VIII, Chigurupati Sri Krishnaveni School Poranki, Vijayawada

INDIA BEGIN NZ SERIES WITH ONE OFF T20

WITH FOCUS FIRMLY ON ODI WORLD CUP

The Indian women's cricket team will get to fine tune its ODI World Cup preparations in a six-game limited overs series against hosts New Zealand, beginning with the one off T20 on Wednesday. The one off T20 is scheduled ahead of the five ODIs starting February 12. Though the team will be looking to win, it will also be approaching the 20-over game to get used to the conditions with the bigger goal for World Cup in mind. To reduce the COVID-19 threat, all games have been moved to the scenic Queenstown. The Indian squad arrived here after completing a 10-day quarantine in Christchurch.

MITHALI NOT PLAYING

ODI skipper Mithali Raj, who won't be playing the T20, said on Tuesday all the six games will be used to figure out their core players who will feature in the ICC event in March-April.

"It is a different format. The team will be looking forward to winning the game. Having said that, this T20 will also give a fair idea about the wickets, how the players are coping with an open ground," Raj said in a virtual media interaction referring to the windy conditions.

LOOKING TO LEAD

T20 skipper Harmanpreet Kaur, who ended her lean run with the bat with a successful Women's Big Bash League, will look to lead from the front on Wednesday. Though workload management has

gained significance in COVID times, Mithali made it clear that it will be a secondary issue for them in the six games as it is important for fast bowlers to get used to the conditions. "It will take them at least two or three games to get used to the conditions," she said.

PUTTING IN OUR BEST

"We are here to use this series as preparation for the World Cup because it is the best way we get to know about the wickets and composition we will have next month. We want to put in our best standard of cricket so the team derives a lot of confidence when we get into the World Cup.

New Zealand skipper Sophie Devine also stressed on testing out a few players in the series against India. Both teams are sailing in the same boat as far as finalising their combinations are concerned.

SLEEPING GIANTS

On the eve of the game, Devine called India the "sleeping giants" of women's cricket and said playing them will be an ideal preparation for the ICC showpiece. "It is an interesting one (how to approach the series). It is about getting that balance right; the results are important but building momentum into the World Cup is going to be extremely important.

"We also know this is an opportunity to test people out in different positions. Whether the results go our way or not we want to play the style we want to play. We want to be attacking and play to our strengths." The series will be played without spectators due to the COVID-19 threat. **PH**



We play to win but I look forward to giving some game time to the core players. It is important they find their rhythm before the World Cup.

MITHALI RAJ



T20 skipper Harmanpreet Kaur, who ended her lean run with the bat with a successful Women's Big Bash League, will look to lead from the front on Wednesday

Photo: GETTY IMAGES

SQUADS:

INDIA: Harmanpreet Kaur, Smriti Mandhana, Shafali Verma, Yastika Bhatia, Deepti Sharma, Richa Ghosh, Sneha Rana, Pooja Vastrakar, Meghna Singh, Renuka Singh, Taniya Bhatia, Rajeshwari Gayakwad, Poonam Yadav, Ekta Bisht, Simran Bahadur, Sabbhinini Meghana.

NEW ZEALAND: Sophie Devine (captain), Amy Satterthwaite(vc), Suzie Bates, Lauren Down, Maddy Green, Brooke Halliday, Hayley Jensen, Fran Jonas, Jess Kerr, Melie Kerr, Frankie Mackay, Rosemary Mair, Katey Martin, Hannah Rowe, Lea Tahuhu.

SINDHU, MIRABAI TO GET TOP HONOUR

Sindhu, Mirabai among five nominees for BBC Indian Sportswoman of the Year award

Two-time Olympic medallist badminton star P.V. Sindhu and Tokyo silver winner weightlifter Saikhom Mirabai Chanu were among the five nominees for the BBC Indian Sportswoman (ISWOTY) of the Year award announced on Tuesday.

Besides Sindhu and Mirabai, star golfer Aditi Ashok, multiple medal winner at Tokyo Paralympics in shooting Avani Lekhara, Tokyo bronze winner boxer Lovlina Borgohain were the other three nominees, shortlisted by a distinguished jury of sports journalists, experts and sports writers.

Hard work pays off

"Success doesn't come easy, it's not just few months of hard work, but years of hard work. Every day is a process, that's how you come up to a certain level," Sindhu, who won a bronze at Tokyo Olympics to go with her silver five years ago at Rio de Janeiro, said in a release.

Online voting for the award will remain

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Good year

Aditi Ashok, who finished fourth place at the Tokyo Olympics said: "I am grateful and thankful because this was a good year for me, and I

had some great performances. I am happy that golf is becoming more popular in India."

The awards ceremony will also honour a legendary sportswoman with the BBC Lifetime Achievement award, and a young female player will be named as the BBC Emerging Player of the Year. **PH**

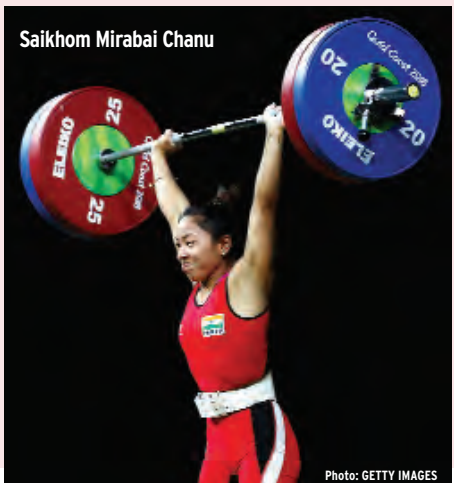


Photo: GETTY IMAGES

ATHLETIC BILBAO DEFEATS ESPANYOL 2-1 TO MOVE CLOSER TO EUROPEAN SPOTS

Athletic Bilbao moved closer to the European qualification places in the Spanish league after beating Espanyol 2-1 on Monday.

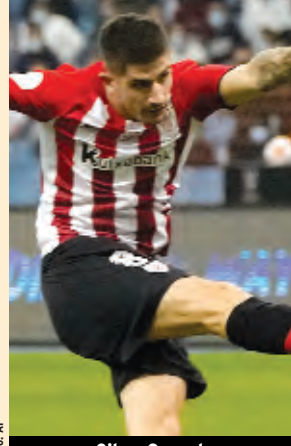


Photo: AP

Oihan Sancet

Oihan Sancet and Inigo Martinez scored in the first half to lead Athletic to the home victory that left it one point behind seventh-placed Real Sociedad. Athletic was four points behind fourth-placed Barcelona in the final Champions League spot.

It was the second consecutive league win for Athletic, which last week eliminated Real Madrid in the quarterfinals of the Copa del Rey. It will host Valencia on Thursday in the first leg of the semifinals.

Espanyol, which took the lead with a goal by Tonny Vilhena in the third minute at San Mames Stadium, stayed 13th in the league standings. It hasn't won five straight games in all competitions, including the last four in the league. **AP**

QUIZ TIME!

Q1: In what year was the Premier League started?

- a) 1992 b) 1985
c) 1900 d) 1970

Q2: Who scored the first ever Premier League goal?

- a) Cristiano Ronaldo
b) Brian Deane
c) Pele
d) Neymar

Q3: When did England win the men's FIFA World Cup?

- a) 1992 b) 1980
c) 1903 d) 1966

Q4: What was Muhammed Ali's real name?

- a) Mike Tyson
b) Tyson Fury
c) Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr.
d) Holyfield

Q5: How many rugby players make the starting lineup of a team in Rugby Union?

- a) 20 b) 15
c) 19 d) 16

Q6: What sport does Tom Brady play?

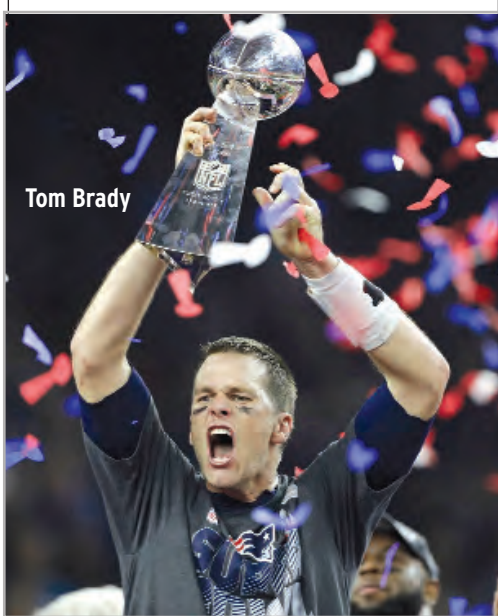


Photo: AP

- a) Football
b) Cricket
c) Tennis
d) Table Tennis

Q7: Who won the men's single gold in tennis at the 2012 Olympics?

- a) Rafael Nadal
b) Andy Murray
c) Novak Djokovic
d) Andre Agassi

Q8: How far is a marathon race?

- a) 26.2 miles

- b) 15.5 miles
c) 18 miles
d) 17.9 miles

Q9: Who won the first men's FIFA World Cup?

- a) France
b) Spain
c) Uruguay
d) Czech Republic

ANSWERS: 1. a 1992 2. b Brian Deane
3. d 1966 4. c Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr.
5. b 15 6. a Football 7. b Andy Murray
8. a 26.2 9. c Uruguay