



STAR'S SECRET
Actor Alia Bhatt has shared what she does when she has no one to talk to

112
EMERGENCY NUMBER

INTEGRATED HELPLINE
A single integrated number '112' would soon replace all emergency helpline numbers in Odisha



RACE FOR WHITE HOUSE
Americans cast votes as polls in the US were officially underway to decide who will occupy the WH



I will vote for development, like I've been doing for the past 70 years..

Centre rolls back hike in bank fees

BoB withdraws charges it proposed to levy on services with regard to the number of free cash deposit transactions in a bank account per month

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 3: The Finance Ministry Tuesday said there has been no increase in service charges by any public sector bank (PSB) even as Bank of Baroda decided to withdraw changes made with regard to the number of free cash deposit transactions in a bank account per month.



Bank of Baroda had made certain changes with effect from November 1, 2020, with regard to the number of free cash deposits and withdrawals per month, a Finance Ministry statement said.

The number of free cash deposits and withdrawals has been reduced from five each per month to three each per month, with no change in the charges for transactions in excess of these free transactions, it said.

Bank of Baroda has since informed that in the light of the current Covid-related situation, they have decided to withdraw the changes. Further, no other PSB has increased such charges recently, it said.

In view of the current prevailing COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the economy, it has been decided to withdraw the above circular with immediate effect," the lender said in a statement. Opposition political parties had also protested against the move.

Two sources said it was likely that the charges were rolled-back after government intervention. The Finance Ministry and Bank of Baroda did not immediately reply to an email seeking comment.

Bank of Baroda reported a net profit of 16.79 billion rupees for the quarter ended September, a jump of 128% from the same period a year ago.

Although, as per RBI guidelines, all banks, including public sector banks (PSBs), are permitted to levy charges for their services in a fair, transparent and non-discriminatory manner, based upon costs involved, other PSBs have also intimated that they do not propose to raise bank charges in the near future in view of the Covid pandemic, it said.

With regard to Basic Savings Bank Deposit (BSBD) accounts, it said, no service charge is applicable on the 60.04 crore such accounts, including 41.13 crore Jan Dhan accounts opened by the poor and unbanked segments of society, for the free services prescribed by RBI.

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State bans sale, use of firecrackers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 3: As a preventive measure against a possible spread of Covid-19 during Diwali, the state government has imposed a ban on sale and use of firecrackers between November 10 and November 30.



"Considering the potentially harmful consequences of burning of crackers amidst Covid-19 pandemic and approaching winter, the state government has directed to prohibit the sale and use of firecrackers from 10th to 30th of November, 2020 in public interest," read an order by Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy, Tuesday.

The government has issued this order following the recommendation of the Technical Expert Committee constituted for better management of Covid situation in the state. It is generally observed that elderly persons, children, persons with comorbidities and others develop respiratory problems during winter. Further, the burning of firecrackers will release copious amounts of harmful chemicals like

nitrous oxide, sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide, among others, which have a severe impact on the respiratory health of the vulnerable groups.

Such pollutants can also further aggravate the health conditions of Covid-19 positive persons and suspected persons staying in home isolation, the order said.

Therefore, the government has imposed the ban on firecrackers and advised people to celebrate the festival of lights in a traditional way by lighting of earthen lamps (Diyas), candles and other traditional lighting materials. The government sought cooperation from people to fight the global pandemic and save the lives of the vulnerable population.

SHORT TAKES

5 die in Vienna attack

Vienna: Five people died, including an assailant, and 17 others were wounded in a shooting in the heart of Vienna hours before a coronavirus lockdown started, Austrian authorities said Tuesday. The dead attacker was a 20-year-old Austrian-North Macedonian dual national who had a previous terror conviction. Two men and two women died from their injuries in the attack Monday evening, Chancellor Sebastian Kurz said. The suspected attacker was killed by police. Vienna's hospital service said seven people were in life-threatening condition.

Exports dip 5.4%

New Delhi: After recording positive growth in September, India's exports declined 5.4 per cent to USD 24.82 billion in October on account of dip in shipments of petroleum products, gems and jewellery, leather, and engineering goods. Trade deficit in October narrowed to USD 8.78 billion as against USD 11.76 billion, as imports also fell 11.56 per cent to USD 33.6 billion during the month under review. "India's merchandise exports in October 2020 were USD 24.82 billion, as compared to USD 26.23 billion in October 2019, showing a fall of 5.4 per cent."

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	40261.13 ↑ 503.55
NIFTY	11813.50 ↑ 144.30
DOLLAR	74.52 ↓ ₹0.06
EURO	87.22 ↑ ₹0.30
GOLD	₹51,360 ↑ ₹293
SILVER	₹62,557 ↑ ₹550

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	33.2°C	33.4°C
TEMP MIN	23.4°C	22.0°C
Humidity	91%	72%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Partly cloudy sky	

Coming soon: Another stimulus from Centre

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 3: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will soon announce the next set of stimulus package to boost the coronavirus-hit economy, Economic Affairs Secretary Tarun Bajaj said Tuesday.

The government has issued this order following the recommendation of the Technical Expert Committee constituted for better management of Covid situation in the state. It is generally observed that elderly persons, children, persons with comorbidities and others develop respiratory problems during winter. Further, the burning of firecrackers will release copious amounts of harmful chemicals like

The finance minister last month had announced a slew of measures to spur demand and ramp up capital expenditure.

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1800 266 266 1 (tollfree)

Americans go to polls after 4 tumultuous yrs

AGENCIES

Washington, Nov 3: Americans headed to the polls Tuesday to decide whether incumbent Donald Trump or challenger Joe Biden will be elected President, after a tumultuous four years under the businessman-turned-politician that have left the country as deeply polarized as at any time in its recent history.



Polls opened in some Eastern states at 6 a.m. EST (1100 GMT). The most closely watched results will start to trickle in after 7 p.m. EST (2400 GMT) when polls close in states such as Georgia, though definitive national results could take days if the contest is tight.

Biden, the Democratic candidate and a career politician, has had a strong and consistent lead in national polls. But the Republican Trump is close in enough swing states to possibly piece together the 270 state-by-state Electoral College votes needed to hold on to the presidency, which he won in a surprise 2016 election result despite losing the popular vote to Democrat Hillary Clinton by nearly 3 million ballots.

However, it may be days before the result is known, especially if legal challenges focused on postal ballots are accepted in the event of a tight race. There is also fear about possible unrest. Several cities are boarding up buildings in anticipation of possible protests, including around the White House and in New York City.

The country has also been shaken by nationwide protests over racial injustice against Black Americans. Biden, who has framed the contest as a referendum on Trump's handling of the virus, promised a renewed effort to combat the health crisis.

The country has also been shaken by nationwide protests over racial injustice against Black Americans. Biden, who has framed the contest as a referendum on Trump's handling of the virus, promised a renewed effort to combat the health crisis.

71% POLLING IN BALASORE, 69.9% IN TIRTOL

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 3: Amid Covid-19 pandemic, 71 per cent polling was recorded for bypoll to Balasore Assembly seat while the voter turnout in Tirtol was 69.9 per cent till 6 pm.



Briefing the media here Tuesday evening, Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Odisha, Sushil Kumar Lohani said, as per latest report (till 6 pm), Balasore recorded a polling of 71 per cent and it was 69.9 per cent in Tirtol.

After the return of all polling parties to the headquarters, the exact voting percentage will be ascertained. At 6:45 pm, voting was going on in 30 booths of Balasore and 120 booths of Tirtol, Lohani said. The turnout of voters for the bypolls to two Assembly segments is very encouraging and it is almost equal to the

polling done in the two constituencies during 2019 General Elections. In 2019, the polling percentage in Balasore and Tirtol was 71.29 per cent and 74.09 per cent respectively, he said.

But, a detailed report awaited.

As soon media report surfaced that a police man was distributing voter slips of a particular party in a booth, he was removed from the duty, he said.

Police DG Abhyasa said the bypoll to Balasore Sadar and Tirtol Assembly constituencies was conducted peacefully and thanked the people of these two areas for their cooperation.

Voters boycott bypoll

BALASORE: Upset over lack of development in their village over years, over 400 voters of Nandachaka village (Jangalgher) in Parikhi Panchayat under Balasore Sadar Assembly seat boycotted the by-election Tuesday. The block administration had tied to convince them into voting, but failed to break the resolve of the villagers. They lamented that they have been commuting on a bamboo bridge across a creek over years, but the government did not think of building a bridge.

Woman detained for luring voters with cash

BALASORE: Tension gripped Adivasi Sahi under ward no-1 of Balasore town after some local residents detained a woman accusing her of distributing money in the locality Tuesday. Local residents of Adivasi Sahi first noticed the woman with some of her followers allegedly distributing money among the dwellers in Adivasi Sahi. Suspecting her of distributing money among voters to bribe them as the voting for the by-poll to Balasore Sadar Assembly seat was underway, they confronted her and then informed police. After a while, police reached the spot and rescued the woman. Their preliminary investigation revealed that the woman was a native of Mayurbhanj district. Police have detained her. Sources said, the woman when asked by the angry villagers said she had come to her sister's house. However, the local people were not in a position to buy her claim. They said they wanted to know whether the woman had actually come to her sister's house or to buy votes.

Lady dies on way to cast vote

JAGATSINGHPUR: An elderly woman died of cardiac arrest Tuesday morning while she was on her way to cast her vote at a polling booth in Tirtol Assembly constituency. The woman was identified as Nagari Sethi of Redhua area. The woman was going to the polling booth with her family members when she collapsed. Her family members rushed her to Redhua Community Health Centre. The doctor said she suffered a cardiac arrest. As her condition started worsening Nagari was shifted to Jagatsinghpur District Headquarters Hospital (DHH). However, doctors declared her brought dead there.

Overqualified for job is disqualification: SC

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 3: The Supreme Court Tuesday refused to accept the contention that overqualification cannot be a ground for disqualification as it upheld an order of the Punjab National Bank (PNB) terminating the service of a peon who had suppressed the fact that he was a graduate.

The court noted that the bank had invited the applications for the post of peon by giving a newspaper advertisement in which it was specifically mentioned that a candidate should have passed 12th Class or its equivalent with basic reading/writing knowledge of English and should not be a graduate as on January 1, 2016.



It said that as per the eligibility criteria mentioned in the advertisement, a candidate with a graduate degree was not eligible even to apply.

The bench noted that the bank had invited the applications for the post of peon by giving a newspaper advertisement in which it was specifically mentioned that a candidate should have passed 12th Class or its equivalent with basic reading/writing knowledge of English and should not be a graduate as on January 1, 2016.

The court said that it is for the employer to determine and decide the relevancy and suitability of the qualifications for any post and it is not for the courts to consider and assess.

The bench, however, said that at the same time, the employer cannot act arbitrarily or fancifully in prescribing qualifications for the posts.

The court said it was not imposing costs on Das though his mischievous act had deprived another candidate of the job.

On the ground that Das "deliberately, willfully and intentionally suppressed the fact that he was a graduate, the High Court erred in directing the appellant bank to allow the respondent - original writ petitioner - to discharge his duties as a peon," the court said.

Referring to an earlier verdict of the top court, the bench said the suppression of material information and making a false statement have a clear bearing on the character and antecedents of the employee in relation to his continuance in service. It said, "An employee is expected to give correct information as to his qualification. The original writ petitioner failed to do so. He was, in fact, overqualified and therefore ineligible to apply for the job."

The bench said that Das applied for the post of peon but in his application/bio-data did not disclose that he was a graduate degree holder since 2014 and only mentioned his qualification as 12th pass.

The report, based on a survey, showed that 46 per cent respondents borrowed money primarily to run their households. The survey was conducted among 1,000 re-

spondents across seven cities to understand the borrowing patterns of people during the lockdown, it said. "The impact of the pay cuts or delays was the next big reason why most borrowers resorted to borrowing, 27 per cent of respondents cited repayment of their monthly instalments from the earlier loan as the second-biggest reason behind borrowing."

"About 14 per cent of the respondents borrowed as they suffered job losses," it said. The report also showed that unlike normal times, people during the COVID-19 pandemic had preferred to borrow money from their friends and families as it gave them the flexibility to return the money when the situation normalises and jobs or salaries were restored.

leisure



GAGA'S CANDID CONFESSION ON HER BROKEN ENGAGEMENT

Singer Lady Gaga got candid about her broken engagement with actor Taylor Kinney. She says she loved him so much but it just did not work out. "I was engaged to a man from Lancaster, Pennsylvania. I know, I know, it didn't work out," she said.

'POST-COVID ERA NOT THE TIME FOR MISOGYNISTIC ATTITUDE'

Actress Gabrielle Union feels the post-Covid era will make Hollywood a safer place for women. "This is not the time to be coming with misogynistic or patriarchal (attitude) when we're all just trying to get through a work day healthy and safe," she said.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
accuracy • reliability • trust
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
You are inclined to over-protect your private life, especially regarding relationships. And Ganesh says thrilling stuff is on the cards for you today! You will also make a last ditch effort to complete some pending work.

TAURUS
There are chances that it will be an enormously idealistic and unrealistic day for you, says Ganesh. It is an auspicious day to get your hair groomed. You will possibly begin some beauty treatment and make changes in the way you look today afternoon. Special attention awaits your beloved.

GEMINI
A busy day for you, predicts Ganesh, but it has little to do with work. Today, your mind is in a spiritual mode. You may want to make a few changes to the interiors of your house, mostly to get them in sync with the state of your mind. A romantic evening with your sweetheart in a sumptuous surrounding is likely, says Ganesh.

CANCER
Though the day will spring a lot of challenges, you will be up to it every single time. Your mind will be sharp, and will run like an athlete taking part in a marathon. All you need is a little self-belief. And there will be no stopping you once you set your mind free. You may experiment with the interiors of your house.

LEO
A comedy of errors is only funny in hindsight. Anyway, too much practicality is what ruined the world, says Ganesh. So for a change, gear up for an easy and relaxed day. Anything goes today, and having your hair groomed seems to be the best idea you have had in a long time. But amidst all this, do not forget to pay special attention to pending tasks at the workplace. Ganesh foresees you sashaying a new look in the evening!

VIRGO
You are likely to be the goose mother today - violently protective and intensely reclusive. Intense affairs of the heart will materialise amazingly faster than transporter beams from Star Trek do. Procrastination will finally be slain as Ganesh sees an eventful day in store.

LIBRA
The ghosts of 'old lovers past' are in the air. There is every possibility that you might end up reliving an old romantic affair; maybe even get treated to your heart's content by your soul mate. Everything is possible in love. The afternoon may bring with it mixed fortunes. But remember to put on your party hat in the evening. Being a special invitee to a stag party with your mates is always fun. Go have a riot, says Ganesh.

SCORPIO
Today is that day when you make a fine show of your commitment to work and dedication to family. At work, the right job has landed on the right table - yours. At home, cement your place as the quintessential family man, advises Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
Find yourself taking up the Thinker's ponderous posture. Post noon, you may find yourself making plans to rearrange the interior of your home. In the office, your superiors will know your worth and heap appreciation on you, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN
It's rare that while you're engaged in work, slogging to sort out things and prove yourself capable, you simultaneously manage time for the love of your life, and spare some more for recreational activities. Quite a bit of multitasking, but that's what Ganesh has in store for you today.

AQUARIUS
The day begins on a dull note which may disturb and disappoint you. But, all is not wrong as you will receive some unexpected good news by the end of the first half of the day. It may become difficult for you to complete the work before deadlines and maintain the quality of output both, predicts Ganesh, so learn the art of time management.

PISCES
Your energy levels will be at their peak today, and that, coupled with your extraordinary enthusiasm, will give you the momentum you need to implement your plans, says Ganesh. However, major decisions are still likely to be delayed for some reason or the other.



What Alia does when she is alone

MUMBAI: Actress Alia Bhatt has shared what she does when she has too much energy and no one to talk to. "My post pack up routine," she wrote on her Instagram story before explaining. "Hydrate," she wrote along with a clip showing her water bottle as she travelled back to her place in the car. "Look outside the window, whilst subtly promoting best friend's clothing brand," she shared with a clip featuring herself wearing a mask and looking outside the window of the car. In her next Instagram show, she wrote: "Watch the beautiful sunrise and accidentally pap Mr man", and attached a moving video of sunrise. "Do all this while listening to some of my fav songs," she added. The actress also posted the reason behind sharing all the information. "Subject you to this random information since I have got too much energy and no one to talk to," she concluded. On the work front, with uncles in place, Alia has shot for Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Gangubai Kathiawadi in Mumbai.



KIWI ACTOR KARL URBAN THANKFUL TO INDIAN FANS

NEW DELHI: Actor Karl Urban says he is thankful to the Indian audience for loving and appreciating his superhero satire series, *The Boys*. "I would love to make a general shout out (for Indian fans) from not only me, but the entire team at *The*

Boys to thank India for their support," Urban said. "We couldn't be more thrilled that it is a hit in India, and we certainly cannot wait to make more of *The Boys* for you. Thanks again for your support, we really greatly appreciate it," he added. Developed by Eric Kripke, the superhero satire *The Boys* is an ir-

reverent take on what happens when superheroes - who are as popular as celebrities, as influential as politicians, and as revered as Gods - abuse their superpowers rather than use them for good. The show gives a spin to a positive narrative of superhero stories, and shows the fight between good and bad in a new light.

IN HOT SEAT

FIR against BIG B over KBC question



LUCKNOW: An FIR has been lodged against superstar Amitabh Bachchan and the makers of his popular show *Kaun Banega Crorepati* for hurting 'Hindu sentiments'. The answer was Manusmriti. Explaining the answer, Amitabh Bachchan said in Hindi that in 1927, Ambedkar condemned the ancient Hindu text Manusmriti and also burned copies of it to prove a point against caste system. It did not go well with the social media users while Hindu activists accused the showmakers of running the 'leftist propaganda' and hurting 'Hindu sentiments'.

CELEBRATING POWER OF LITERATURE

Iconic Jaipur litfest moves to the US, Canada

The events will bring together Nobel laureates, Pulitzer, Commonwealth and other award-winning speakers to share their ideas and vision on a slew of issues

NEW DELHI: As the world embraces a new digital idiom, the power of books, ideas and discourse is vital and invigorating, as is the importance of ensuring a free flow of knowledge and information, as aficionados in Colorado, Houston, New York and Toronto will discover through online editions of the iconic Jaipur Literature Festival (JLF), famously known as the 'greatest literary festival on earth', in quick succession from November 8 to 29. "The festivals will bring together an extremely diverse palate of global themes while celebrating the unique culture, diversity, energy and beauty



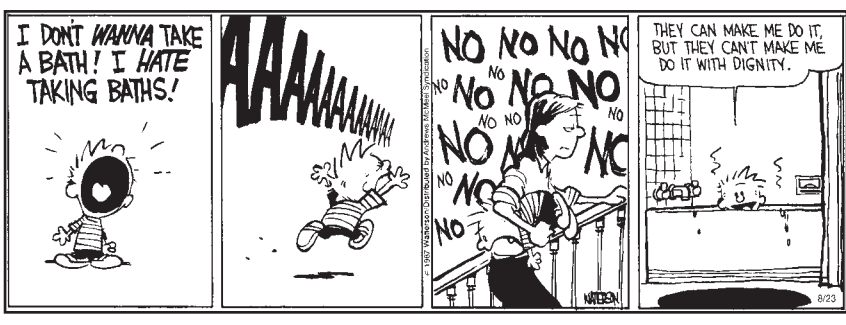
of the host cities, as usual marked by a strong sense of camaraderie, a caravan of ideas, and the magical flow of conversations," JLF producer Teamwork Arts said Monday. The programming will include topics like the COVID-19 pandemic, crime-writing, environment, poetry, international politics, racial equality and discrimination, entertainment and fiction. "The challenges of our changing times have led us at JLF to create and curate an incredibly rich and diverse digital platform" that will "give voice to writers, poets and thinkers as they celebrate books, di-

alogue and debate," JLF co-director Namita Gokhale said. "Literature, ideas and knowledge are at the heart of our every effort to ensure a free flow of knowledge and information, especially in these times," Teamwork Arts Managing Director Sanjoy K Roy said, adding that between them, the four events will bring together Nobel laureates, Pulitzer, Commonwealth and other award-winning speakers to share their ideas and vision on a slew of issues from BLM to the environment, performing poetry to democracy and from music to film.

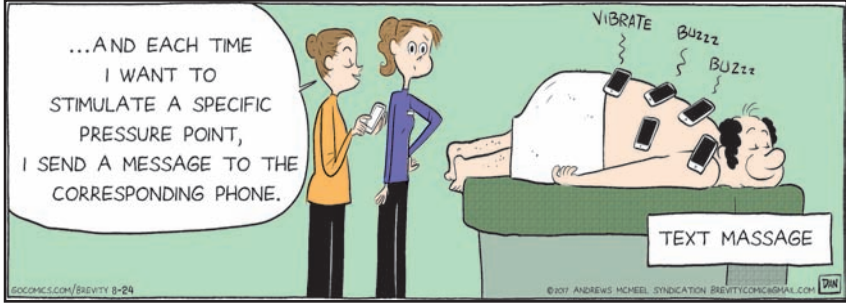
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

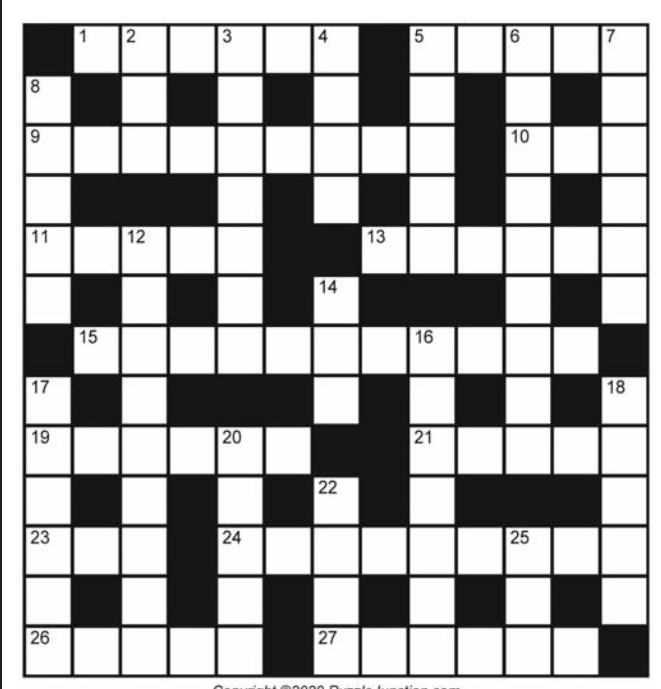


BREVITY



FUN post

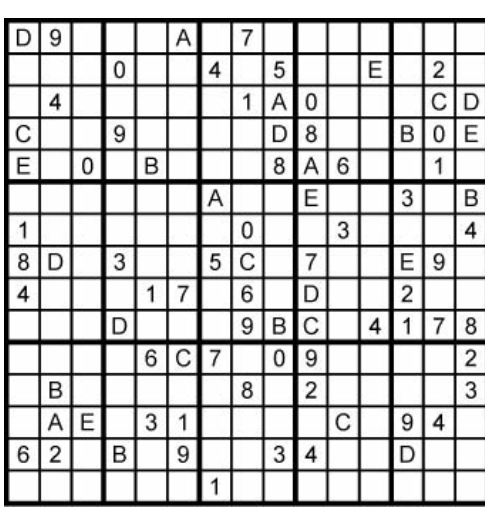
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Irks
 - 5 Sign of life
 - 9 Louvred windows
 - 10 Forty winks
 - 11 Scoundrel
 - 13 Conqueror of Gaul
 - 15 Dentist's office feature (7,4)
 - 19 Fervour
 - 21 Refinement
 - 23 Needlefish
 - 24 Department store event
 - 26 Sprite
 - 27 Coin flips
 - 7 Run out, like a subscription
 - 8 Greenland sight
 - 12 Automobile race (5,4)
 - 14 Aardvark's tidbit
 - 16 Quits working
 - 17 Snag (4-2)
 - 18 Staircase post
 - 20 Family man
 - 22 Hatchling's home
 - 25 Maiden name
- Down**
- 2 Zilch
 - 3 Sumptuous
 - 4 Salon sound
 - 5 Ziti, e.g.
 - 6 Some race-horses (4,5)

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, each row, column and box must contain the numbers 0 to 9 and the letters A to E.



SOLUTIONS



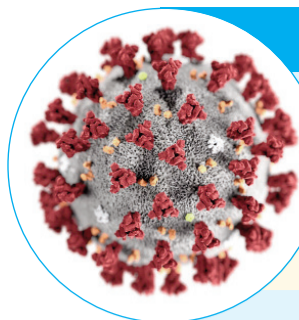
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



FARM WORK

A tractor levels a farmland at OUAT in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	4,75,24,760	3,41,61,979	12,14,157
India	82,66,914	76,01,429	1,23,139
Odisha	2,94,415	2,80,553	1,352

Cong plans stir over Ekamra Kanan land row

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 3: The state unit of Congress, Tuesday, threatened to launch an agitation in the days to come if the government attempts to interfere with Ekamra Kanan farmland and change its original usage pattern.

Party leader Suresh Routray, Tuesday, accused the state government of trying to divert the valuable land, filled with several thousands of trees of different species for some other works. This comes after the state government transferred the ownership of the land from the state Horticulture department to the General Administration (GA) department.



File photo of labourers working at Ekamra Kanan

are also sold in the market. The government has now decided to hand over the land from the Horticulture department to the GA department. We strongly oppose the move. The Congress party is totally against the trade of the land with rich biodiversity."

Routray said, "If the government plans anything to attack the plants and diversity there, we as members of the party would gherao the houses of the Chief Minister and the officials involved in this."

"This government sometimes tries to do business with Bagala Dhamsala and want to lease out many other properties of the state. The government has in the past compromised on many such properties in the state," he said.

He also said that the government had been roping in several government units to capture the land and do business of the areas by playing with the actual nature of such properties. "We plan to launch massive protest against the decision of the government to interfere with the land," he said.

the state government's plan to sell out Ekamra Kanan land for construction of high-rise building by destroying the green cover there. "Ekamra Kanan is spread over 32 acres of land. There are around 30,000 trees. If the trees are cut and sold in the market it may

fetch upto Rs 40 crore. The site is known for varied medicinal plants and home to several birds. Mango, banana and several other species of plants are there. An orchard is there adding to the virtue," Routray said. He also added, "The flowers there are virgin and of high quality. They

If the govt plans anything to attack the plants and diversity there, we as members of the party would gherao the houses of the Chief Minister and the officials involved in this

SURESH ROURAY | CONGRESS LEADER

CWC to monitor water flow in Mandira dam

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 3: For better management of water in Mandira reservoir in Sundargarh district, the Central Water Commission (CWC) has decided to include the dam under its Reservoir Storage Monitoring System (RSMS).

The CWC has recently written a letter to state Water Resources Secretary in this regard. The Commission has sought last 10 years' data of Mandira reservoir from the state government.

Once the dam is included in RSMS, the CWC will monitor the dam on a daily basis and issue weekly bulletin every Thursday. It will also share the information to Crop Weather Watch Group, which will give necessary recommendations for agricultural activities.

At present, the CWC is monitoring the live storage status of 123 important reservoirs across the country including nine from Odisha.

'112' all-in-one helpline number in state soon

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 3: The state government is mulling to launch an emergency response support system (ERSS) replacing all the emergency helpline numbers with a single integrated number '112'.

The Odisha Police has recently invited bidders to register their particulars in the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) portal in which the state police will put the details of the bid to hire vehicles and call centre executives for ERSS.

As per the notification, altogether 198 call takers would be appointed at ERSS call centre and 236 vehicles earmarked to attend the calls received through ERSS mobile app, 112 number or online through the ERSS website. Speaking to **Orissa POST**, a top police source revealed that the system will be launched in the state soon. The cit-

MEETING EMERGENCY

Altogether 198 call takers would be appointed at ERSS call centre and 236 vehicles earmarked to attend the calls received through ERSS mobile app, 112 number or online through the ERSS website

izens in distress will not be required to remember different helpline numbers like 100 (police), 101 (fire and rescue) and 108 (ambulance), 181 (woman and child-care) during the time of distress. The person in distress can get response in real-time with coordinated efforts of all the emergency services through ERSS call centre by simply dialing the integrated number 112

ply dialing the integrated number 112. A call centre with digital map and all the advanced tracking systems will be established under ERSS jointly funded by the state and union government."

Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh had already launched the nation-wide ERSS in 16 states and union territories (UTs) across the country in February 2019.

The states and UTs where the services have been launched include: Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Puducherry, Uttarakhand, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Jammu and Kashmir, Gujarat, Lakshadweep, Andaman, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu. ERSS will address all the emergency signals received from citizens in distress through various mediums like voice call, e-mail, SMS, panic SOS signal, ERSS web portal.

CLEANLINESS DRIVE



Workers removing plants and algae from Bindusagar tank in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

OP PHOTO

Ganja transported through luxury cars seized; 2 held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 3: The Commissionerate Police has arrested two drug peddlers and seized 14kg cannabis from the outskirts of the city here.

The accused were identified as Satish Kumar Pradhan alias Litu, 32, of Khajuripada area in Kandhamal district and Susanto Kumar Sahoo alias Babu, 32, of Belabahali under Ghasipura police limits in Keonjhar.

While Pradhan has been staying at Brahmeswar Patana area in Badagada here, Sahoo is residing in Sahid Nagar area of the Capital city. According to sources, the PCR staffers of Sahid Nagar police intercepted two luxury cars on suspicion after detecting packed

The arrested duo had sourced the contraband from Kandhamal to sell them in Capital city

sacks inside the vehicles while patrolling along river Kuakhai, at Bankuala.

Upon search, the cops later found the sacks containing various prohibited cannabis plant parts.

The accused revealed during interrogation that they had sourced the seized contraband from Kandhamal to sell them in Capital city. The cops have also seized one white Volkswagen car (OR 02 BS 1400) and a blue colour Hyundai Venue car (OD 02 BL 6632) from their possession.

Green activists hail ban on sale of firecrackers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 3: Environment experts and activists Tuesday welcomed the decision of the state government to ban sale and use of firecrackers from November 10 to 30.

As per survey by some researchers recently, increased particulate matter (PM) 2.5 levels in the air due to bursting of firecrackers can worsen Covid-19 crisis.

This is particularly important in the context of the upcoming Deepavali celebrations, when air quality goes for a toss.

According to environment activist Shweta Agrawal, "Ideally, crackers should be banned during the period from Deepavali to New Year's Day. In 2019, air pollution caused 6.67 million deaths

worldwide. Medical experts have already issued the warning that "winters are going to be tough for us, rising air pollution combined with coronavirus infection and lung complications can possibly lead to serious consequences."

This year has already been very difficult for all, now people have to make a right choice how they really want to celebrate the festivals, she added.

Activist Sudarshan Chhotoray said, "Yes, it is a good decision use of crackers will jeopardise public health. It's more important now during coronavirus pandemic to keep away from these chemical fires as smoke releasing from these crackers would spread infections further."

Water conservation expert Ranjan Panda said, "Pollution,



File photo of a cracker shop in Bhubaneswar

cold and Covid-19 could be a deadly mix. We have seen how festivities can make people irresponsible to a large extent. It is said that Covid-19 situation in Kerala worsened due to Onam celebrations. The same in West Bengal is

attributed to Dussehra. If we don't learn our lessons right, we will end up in a dangerous zone." Environment scientist Jaya Krushna Panigrahi said, "In this scenario, when the whole world is struggling with the coronavirus

PREVENTING COVID EXPLOSION

As per a survey by some researchers, increased particulate matter (PM) 2.5 levels in the air due to bursting of firecrackers can worsen Covid-19 crisis

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It is said that Covid-19 situation in Kerala worsened due to Onam celebrations

'Disrespect' to Abadha riles locals; FIR lodged

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, Nov 3: An FIR was lodged with Singhadwar police here, Tuesday, in connection with alleged disrespect to Mahaprasad by some devotees at a temporary counter near Srimandir, Monday.

Shreejagannath Bhakta Parishad, a local outfit, lodged the FIR and sought legal action against the devotees concerned and the government employees who have been assigned the task of managing the temporary counters for Mahaprasad sale.

As per the complaint, Srimandir, the abode of Lord Jagannath, has been shut for devotees since March this year due to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, rituals of the 12th century shrine are being performed by the servitors without any interruption.

The Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) and the Puri district administration have made special arrangement for sale of Mahaprasad in the ongoing holy month of Kartika. Two temporary counters have been opened at the North and South gates of the shrine for Mahaprasad sale.

The authorities concerned have put up some chairs for the devotees at the temporary counters. However, the devotees have been prohibited to partake the temple delicacies at



Some devotees were allegedly partaking Mahaprasad sitting on the chairs and without removing their shoes

the makeshift counters, said the complainant.

"Some devotees were seen partaking Mahaprasad while sitting on the chairs at the makeshift counter near the North gate of Srimandir Monday in violation of Srimandir tradition. The devotees even did not remove their shoes before partaking Srimandir delicacies. This is nothing but disrespect to Lord Jagannath's Mahaprasad," added the complainant.

As per tradition, devotees can partake Mahaprasad from Banana plant leaves by sitting on the ground, said a servitor.

State Board for Wildlife reconstituted

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 3: The State Board for Wildlife was reconstituted Tuesday While Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik is the chairperson of the Board, Forest & Environment Minister Bikram Keshari Arukha is the vice-chairman.

Legislators Ramesh Chandra Sai, Raj Kishore Das and Dhruva Charan Sahoo, Bangalore-based Asian Nature Conservation Foundation professor R Sukumar, Saroj Kumar Pattnaik from Nature & Wildlife Society of Odisha, Rajani Kanta Jena from Save Elephant Foundation Trust and former IFS officers PR Mohanty and Anup Kumar Nayak have been nominated as members of the Board.

Many others including Forest & Environment secretary, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF), ST & SC Development Secretary, Managing Director of Odisha Tourism Development Corporation Ltd (OTDC), ADG (Crime Branch) will act as members of this Board.

The panel, which has tenure of three years, was reconstituted as per the provisions of Section-6 of the Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act, 2002 read with Section-7 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

INDUSTRIAL PURPOSE

Nod for road-cutting to be granted online

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 3: In an aim to ensure proper restoration of roads being damaged for industrial projects, the state government has issued a standard operating procedure (SOP) in this regard.

Now, all applications received will be dealt through online system (Go Swift or its successor if any). No manual process will be followed for granting road-cutting permission to industries and public utilities.

As per the SOP, after successful registration on the online portal, the applicant will have to log in with his/her credentials and apply for road cutting permission by submitting some personal data along with road identification on GIS map and road-cutting plan.

Field-level officials will conduct a verification to make assessment for licence fees and estimation of restoration charges. After that permission will be granted.

The Works department has fixed 45 days to provide permission to industrial units for this purpose.

'Nagarjuna Besha in 2021 too'

Puri: Devotees of Lord Jagannath are going to miss the opportunity to witness the rare 'Nagarjuna Besha' ritual in 2020, owing to the Covid-19 pandemic. The ritual will take place November 27. If the world was not battling the Covid-19 pandemic, lakhs of devotees would have thronged Puri to catch a glimpse of the trinity donning the 'Nagarjuna Besha'. But due to the prevailing Covid-19 situation, 'darshan' of the deities is not allowed. However, the good news is that the deities are likely to don this rare attire in 2021 as well. According to Jagannath culture expert and senior servitor Sarat Mohanty, the astrologers have predicted that the deities will don the warrior attire November 15, 2021 as well.

Khurda surpasses Ganjam in nCoV fatalities

ODISHA WITNESSES 1,201 FRESH NOVEL CORONAVIRUS CASES AND 12 FATALITIES IN 24 HOURS

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Nov 3: State's novel coronavirus disease (Covid-19) case load mounted to 2,94,415 as 1,201 more people tested positive for the infection Tuesday, while 12 fresh fatalities pushed Odisha's coronavirus death toll to 1,352, an official of Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said.

As many as 697 new cases were reported in quarantine centres, while 504 infections were detected during contact tracing, said the official. Khurda district, under which Capital city Bhubaneswar falls, reported the highest number of fresh cases at 132, followed by Mayurbhanj and Jagatsinghpur (73 each), the official said.

Three fresh fatalities were reported in Khurda district, two in Dhenkanal and one each in Nuapada, Sundargarh, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Bhadrak, Balasore and Kalahandi districts.

Khurda district has so far reported the highest number of coronavirus fatalities at 234, followed by Ganjam (230) and Cuttack (113), the H&FW department official said,



A police personnel donates plasma in Bhubaneswar (PHOTO: @CPBBSRCTC)

adding that as many as 53 coronavirus patients have died in the state due to other ailments so far.

The state has so far tested 46.87 lakh samples for Covid-19, including 42,080 Monday, the official pointed out.

Meanwhile, a sero survey has started in Cuttack city which will

cover 25 wards in the first phase till November 5 to find out antibody among the residents.

Meanwhile, the recovery count of Odisha crossed 2.8-lakh mark as 1,462 more Covid-19 patients recovered from the disease Tuesday. The recovered cases in Odisha now stand at 2,80,553. A maximum of

ODISHA & CORONAVIRUS

Khurda district reported the highest number of fresh cases at 132, followed by Mayurbhanj and Jagatsinghpur (73 each)

Three fresh fatalities were reported in Khurda, two in Dhenkanal and one each in Nuapada, Sundargarh, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Bhadrak, Balasore and Kalahandi

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Odisha has so far tested 46.87 lakh samples for Covid-19, including 42,080 Monday

173 Covid-19 patients from Khurda district recuperated followed by 128 from Cuttack, 104 from Kendrapara, 77 from Sundargarh, 72 from Angul, 65 from Boalangi, 56 from Puri, 54 from Balasore, 54 from Jharsuguda, 53 each from Barghar and Jagatsinghpur and 47 from Nabarangpur; the H&FW department said.

Bike lifting gang busted in Cuttack; five nabbed

PNN & AGENCIES

Cuttack, Nov 3: The twin city Commissionerate Police Tuesday claimed to have busted a bike lifting gang with the arrest of five of its members and seizure of 22 two-wheelers from them.

According to a senior Badambadi police official, they busted the gang while investigating into the theft of a motorcycle from Bhartia Tower in Badambadi area October 14.

The accused were identified as Kunjabihari Nayak alias Rinku, 25, Soumendra Das alias Silu, 21, Suryakanta Khatua alias Dalia, 19, Taju Khan, 45, and Niranjana Behera alias Kalia.

While Silu and Rinku committed the theft others were arrested for receiving the stolen two-wheelers.

"During investigation it was found that Rinku and Silu had stolen the motorcycles from Bhartia Tower. During interrogation, they admitted to have stolen several motorcycles from different parts of Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Khurda, Tirtol, Kendrapara Sadar, Nayapalli



The gang was busted during an investigating into theft of a motorcycle from Bhartia Tower in Badambadi area

and Jatni areas and have sold them to the people after changing the registration plates.

Several cases were pending against Rinku, Silu and Kalia at various police stations across the state.

"A probe is underway and we're trying to ascertain their modus operandi. We've also intensified night patrolling and frequent checks to curb such incidents," the senior official said.

Earlier, the Commissionerate Police had busted another bike lifting gang October 24 while investigating into the theft of a pick-up van under Jagatpur police limits. Five persons, who were members of the

bike-lifting gang, were arrested and 35 stolen two-wheelers were recovered from their possession following a raid in Keonjhar.

Meanwhile, the Cuttack deputy commissioner of police (DCP) took to the Twitter to share the details of the recovered 22 two-wheelers so as to help the vehicles' owners identify and claim their two-wheelers.

"Uploaded here the type, regn, engine, chassis & ownership details of 22 recovered bikes at Badambadi ps for facilitation of citizens to identify their bikes stolen. Post us the documents of proof in our whatsapp helpline 8763068167 or contact IIC 9438371303 for follow up at our end (sic)," the DCP tweeted.

Union Minister reviews Jal Jeevan Mission progress

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Nov 3: Union Minister of Jal Shakti Gajendra Singh Shekhawat Tuesday reviewed the progress made under Jal Jeevan Mission, a flagship programme of the Union government for providing tap water connection in every rural household by 2024.

The Union minister chaired a virtual conference with all states/Union territories ministers in-charge of rural water supply and discussed various issues such as planning, implementation and progress made so far as well as the way forward so that the remaining households in villages get tap water connections at the earliest.

According to the ministry, around 15 per cent of the rural households have been provided tap water connections in Odisha and around nine per cent of them got tap water connection after the launch of Jal Jeevan Mission. It has been further stated that all rural households in the state will get tap water connections by 2024.

Addressing the gathering virtually, the Union minister complemented States/UTs for the exemplary work carried out by them during the lockdown period in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic to provide tap connections to rural households.

The minister said that National Jal Jeevan Mission presented the progress in all States/UTs and urged them to speed up the implementation to accomplish the goal of the mission in a time-bound manner so that every rural household gets tap water connection in rural homes.

"Providing good quality of water to Households will lead to improvement in the health indices. The mission not only aims to provide safe water to all but also creates employment opportunity for local people in rural areas. Skilled manpower in every village i.e. plumbing, masonry, electrical, pump operator, etc. are required, for which training is being imparted," the minister said.

SPACE CRUNCH



Hundreds of seized vehicles parked in front of Badambadi police station in Cuttack narrows down the road much to the inconvenience of the road users, Tuesday

RD VARSITY'S TOPPERS' LISTS DECLARED

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 3: Ramadevi Women's University, Tuesday, announced department-wise toppers' lists of both postgraduate (PG) and undergraduate (UG) examinations. The toppers' list was announced following repeated demands from the student's union.

Sushree Subhasmita Nayak of Chemistry department has emerged as the Best Graduate in UG with 9.37 CGPA.

Sushree Subhasmita Nayak of Chemistry dept has emerged as the Best Graduate with 9.37 CGPA



Forest guard held for accepting bribe

Bhubaneswar: Vigilance sleuths Tuesday claimed to have arrested a forest guard-cum-member secretary of Vana Surakhya Samiti (VSS) for demanding and accepting illegal gratification of Rs 36,000. Vigilance sources said Madhusmita Mohapatra, the accused, was arrested while accepting bribe from one Parshuram Miridha to process bill for construction of VSS building and execution of plantation work in Beherani Basa by members of VSS under Odisha Forestry Sector Development Project I and II.

Padayatra for coastal highway Nov 15

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, Nov 3: Members of a joint action committee are all set to take out a Padayatra (march) from the Holy city here to Bhubaneswar November 15 to press for the early execution of a coastal highway project in Odisha under the Bharatmala scheme of the Union government.

The committee claimed that the coastal highway project is yet to be executed in Odisha even though an announcement in this regard

was made six years ago. "We will submit a memorandum in this regard to the Prime Minister through the Governor of Odisha and the Chief Minister November 16. A Satyagraha (dharna) would be organised at the regional office of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change at Chandrasekharpur in Bhubaneswar November 17," Tuna Swain, convener of the joint action committee. Swain claimed that the proposed coastal highway will boost transport,

tourism and business sectors in the coastal districts of Odisha. This apart, the coastal highway will help the district administrations to manage calamities like cyclones, Swain said. "The state government has given its approval for the Digha-Satapada stretch of the proposed coastal highway. However, the Ministry of Environment and Forest is yet to give its nod to the project. We urge the Prime Minister to intervene into the issue at the earliest," Swain added.

History-sheeter found dead

POST NEWS NETWORK

Khurda, Nov 3: Body of Sheikh Suleman, a history-sheeter, was found dumped on the roadside at Chhanagiri village under Jankia police limits in Khurda district Tuesday morning.

Some local people spotted the body lying by the roadside in the morning before they informed the Jankia police who reached the spot and recovered the body for post-mortem. The cops have launched an investigation into the incident.

Even as the reason behind the death is yet to be established, the cops suspect Suleman was murdered over a past enmity. He had several criminal cases pending against him.

According to local residents, since he had criminal antecedents, he had developed enmities with many. In order to settle an old score, some of his enemies might have murdered him somewhere else and then dumped the body by the roadside. The police have detained two persons in this connection, it was learnt.

POWER TARIFF HIKE FLAYED



People under the banner of INTUC launch a three-day protest near ADM office in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday, condemning the recent power tariff hike among other issues

DHENKANAL RAT HOLE MINING

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 3: A complaint has now been filed before the State Pollution Control Board (SPCB) and the State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA) against alleged rat hole mining in different patches of Dhenkanal for highway expansion.

It is also alleged that several trees have also been felled for the purpose of collection of morrum and other works

It has now been reported that for the expansion of the National Highway (NH)-53 several truckloads of morrum (a mineral) are illegally lifted by some contractors

Plaint filed before SPCB, SEIAA



engaged for construction works along the highway.

The aggrieved villagers from the area have alleged that such practices can lead to making of death traps for living organisms. "We are bringing this important issue in the larger public interest of loss of

state revenues, blatant violation of laws and environmental degradation,"

"because of the rat hole mining in different patches leading to more abandoned sites without responsibility of reclaiming those patches which in long run will be

a death trap for stray animals and people passing through these areas, felling of hundreds of Sal Trees and making the area more vulnerable to felling," the plaint said.

As per laws morrum, a Minor Mineral cannot be lifted from any source without environment clearance from State Environment Impact assessment Authority, Approved Mining Plan and Consent from SPCB. It is also alleged that several trees have also been felled for the purpose of collection of morrum and other works.

The complaint claimed that such activities were in gross violation of the state and central laws and against several orders of the Supreme Court. The district administration, SPCB and SEIAA have now been asked to intervene and act on the issue.

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Swabhiman Anchal will have another BSF camp

TO DEAL WITH LEFT WING EXTREMISM, BSF HAS BUILT ITS CAMPS AT HANTALGUDA, JANTURAI AND DARLABEDA



Representative pic

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri/Chitirkonda, Nov 3: In a bid to boost security in Swabhiman Anchal under Chitirkonda block in Malkangiri, construction of a new BSF camp has started amid tight security at Gorasetu in Panaspur.

Barbed wires have been raised around the BSF camp.

It may be noted here that this cut-off area was once a hotbed of Maoists. To deal with left wing extremism, BSF has built its camps at Hantalguda, Janturai and Darlabeda. Thereafter, a police station had been set up at Jodamba.

Now, after Swabhiman Setu was

made functional, the cut-off area has been witnessing development activities in a paced manner. People have turned off their support to the left wing ultras, sources said.

However, at times, ultras make their presence felt by carrying out sporadic small attacks like planting tiffin bombs and firing at police.

Last week, ultras had killed a villager of Pujariguda. And thereafter, ultras had assaulted two other people in the area. To ensure safety and security of the people, the BSF has set up another camp in the area, sources said. The BSF camp will keep away the ultras from the area so that development work will be taken forward.

Farmers' fury against new farm laws

FARMERS OF 10 WESTERN ODISHA DISTRICTS PLAN AGITATION NOVEMBER 5

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bargarh, Nov 3: Resistance against the passage of three farm laws by the BJP-led NDA government at the Centre has intensified in western parts of the state with farmers warning of a massive agitation November 5, a report said.

The western districts are known as the rice bowl of the state.

Taking a cue from their Punjab and Haryana counterparts, the farmers in all the 10 districts of Western Odisha, under the aegis of 'Paschim Odisha Krushak Sangathan Samanwaya Samiti', will stage an hour-long road blockade in every district to highlight their dissatisfaction against the new farm laws. They have threatened to block the State and National Highways in the region on the day slated for their stir.

Similarly, the farmers will come wearing black badges to the mandis to sell their paddy stocks November 9, the day paddy procurement starts in Bargarh district. Farmer leaders termed the new farm laws 'anti-farmer' and 'a well planned conspiracy to do away



Members of 'Paschim Odisha Krushak Sangathan Samanwaya Samiti' hold a press meet in Bargarh, Tuesday

with agriculture and the farmers'. They also termed the passage of new farm laws an 'example of corporatisation of agriculture'. This was stated here by farmer leader Lingaraj, the convener of 'Paschim Odisha Krushak Sangathan Samanwaya Samiti' at a press meet held at the Samata Bhawan in the town, Monday.

Addressing the press conference, Lingaraj explained in details how the farmers are going to be exploited through the new farm laws. "We have decided to oppose the new three farm laws of the Centre

The farmers demonstrated at the Padampur sub-division recently."

"The all India farmers' body has given a call to stage protest November 5 by taking to the streets. Hence, we, the farmers of eight districts, will stage a road blockade from 11 am to 12 noon on the day across western Odisha amid the pandemic protocols," he added.

Another convener Ashok Pradhan alleged that the new farm laws have been brought to serve the interest of the capitalists and rich and demanded its withdrawal. Moreover, he demanded to implement the

The new farm laws have been brought to serve the interests of the capitalists and rich. We demand implementation of the Swaminathan Commission report and loan waivers to the farmers

ASHOK PRADHAN | CONVENER, FARMERS' ASSOCIATION

The new farm laws will help farmers prosper... These will help make Atmanirbhar Bharat a reality

PRADIP PUROHIT | BJP LEADER

procurement in next season. According to a resolution adopted in the meeting of state-level paddy procurement committees, farmers of non-irrigated areas can sell 12 quintal paddy per acre of land and that of irrigated areas will sell 19 quintal per acre of land. The leaders demanded this decision should be taken at the district-level.

On the other hand, the BJP defended the farm laws as historic at a press meet held in the town. The Saffron party leaders argued that the farm laws will immensely benefit the farmers.

Senior BJP leader Pradip Purohit said the new farm laws will help farmers prosper with double income and infrastructural development. "This will help make Atmanirbhar Bharat a reality." "The farm laws have abolished the middlemen, who used to fleece the farmers. No companies will encroach upon the farm lands. The farmers are now free to sell their produce to the mandis or to outside parties if they are earning double profit," he added.

He urged the opposition leaders not to mislead the farmers.

Housing scheme beneficiaries waiting for the last instalment

POST NEWS NETWORK

Janhapanka, Nov 3: The state and central governments have launched scores of housing schemes like Biju Pucca Ghara Yojana and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, but alleged irregularities have marred their effective implementation in Boudh block, a report said.

Four years have passed since some housing units in Padmanpur panchayat were completed. Beneficiaries have not yet received the final instalment of their housing fund, it is alleged.

Reports said Souri Bagh, a woman of Damodarpur, Samari Nayak, Phagurni Sandh and Mohan Bagh of the same village were sanctioned houses under the housing schemes in 2016-17.

All of them have received funds in three phases according to the stages of house construction. They got their house construction completed four years ago, but the last instalment of Rs30,000 to each has not been provided to them, they allege.



Representative pic

4 YRS HAVE PASSED SINCE SOME HOUSING UNITS IN PADMANPUR PANCHAYAT WERE COMPLETED

THE BENEFICIARIES CONSTRUCTED THE HOUSES WITH MONEY FROM LENDERS AND NOW THEY WAIT FOR THE FINAL INSTALLMENT TO CLEAR THEIR DUES

Besides, their wages of Rs16,000 has not been cleared, they alleged.

Though they have been queuing to the block office, it is of

no use. They made the houses by borrowing funds from others. If the final instalment is provided, we can pay off the borrowings, they said.

Contacted, panchayat executive officer Gokul Bhoi cited a different reason - wrong entry of the name of their panchayat.

"Names of the beneficiaries have been wrongly entered in Biramchandrapur panchayat under Harbhanga block. The issue has been sorted out. Their fourth instalment of their funds will be cleared soon," he added.

College principal held for misbehaving with female colleague

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, Nov 3: Police Tuesday arrested the principal of Sunabeda Junior Women's Science College in Sunabeda here for allegedly misbehaving with a female computer operator of the college.

As per the complaint, the accused, identified as Pabitra Kumar Bedant, had been harassing the computer operator. On several occasions, he had also tried to touch her inappropriately. She had turned down his repeated sexual advances in the past. In spite of this, he had been sending inappropriate messages on her mobile phone.

The victim further alleged in her complaint that Bedant had been paying Rs5,000 per month as her salary when her actual salary is Rs10,000. Bedant had often threatened to fire her if she did not agree to his proposals.

On the basis of the complaint, Sunabeda police arrested Bedant under several sections of IPC.

A detailed investigation was underway.

HARIHAR JORA IRRIGATION PROJECT

Farmers have been paying water-cess but no water supply in command area

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sonepur, Nov 3: Harihar Jora irrigation project in Birmaharajpur sub-division of Subarnapur is a lifeline for agriculture activities, but it has been futile for farmers in the command area. Reason: Concrete restoration of its canals has not been completed till date.

Now, all farmlands in the command area are deprived of water.

Reports said this irrigation project was set up for 81 villages under this sub-division in 1997-98. Since then, people of nine panchayats in Birmaharajpur and Ullunda blocks used to be happy after getting adequate water.

Farmers lamented that the concrete works of the canals have not yet been completed. Not a single drop of water is available in the command area, said a vexed farmer. "We are paying water cess, but water is not available. Water shortage for Rabi crops is worsening. The administration and the government have paid little heed to our problems." Since 1997, the government has not provided funds for maintenance and upgradation of the dam. For lack of maintenance, the spillway of the dam and its canals fell into bad shape.

As a result, farming activities were affected for short supply of water. Irrigational coverage was reduced from 9,450 hectares to 6,950



All farmlands are being irrigated in the Kharif season. There is problem in Rabi season. The department has received administrative approval of Rs2.85 crore for restoration of the road, lighting and gallery works

DILIP PATRA | EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, TEL IRRIGATION PROJECT

water did not reach," the farmers pointed out. Three years ago, Rs61 crore was sanctioned for the renovation and upgradation of the project. But works are allegedly being botched up. The road on the dam has been in bad shape while lighting facilities have not been done. People have to suffer a lot.

Dilip Patra, executive engineer of the Tel irrigation project, however, asserted that all farmlands are being irrigated in the Kharif season. "There is problem in Rabi season." The department had got administrative approval of Rs2.85 crore for restoration of the road, lighting and gallery treatment, he added.

hectares in Kharif season while its irrigational capacity was limited to 1,600 hectares in Rabi season.

"In the last 22 years, farmers have not been able to draw as much benefit as was expected from this irrigation project. Crops being raised in the farmlands in the tail end of the project were affected when

EVICITION DRIVE



As part of an eviction drive, a cabin is being removed from roadside in Angul town, Tuesday

OP PHOTO

Migratory birds arriving at Chilika lake



Representative pic

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balugaon, Nov 3: With the onset of winter, migratory birds have started arriving at Chilika lake, Asia's largest brackish water lagoon, in Khurda district, a report said here Tuesday.

According to the Balugaon Wild Animal department, more than 15,000 birds of different colours have arrived in the lake after flying thousands of miles till Monday evening. The avian arrival has gladdened the hearts of forest officials and bird watchers.

As against their usual landing that happens October 1, this year it has been delayed by three weeks. Out of the 15,000 migratory birds, 6,243 have arrived at Nalabana area. As many as 160 species of birds come to the lake every year: Out of them till now only 31 species of birds have arrived at the lake.

From the 15,000 birds, 2,643 birds are of Eurasian Wigeon, Northern Pintail, 2,458 Gadwall, 1,532 Northern Pintail, 1,100 Shoveler, 945 Common Koot and 50 Shelduck. The remaining are of Greater Flamingo, Plovers and

Sandpiper species. The birds were also sighted in Mangalajodi, a village on the banks of the lake.

Migratory birds fly thousands of miles across continents, from snow-covered Siberia, Caspian Sea, Baikal Lake to remote parts of Russia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Ladakh, US and Canada, to the marshy lands of Nalabana inside Chilika which is spread across 1,000 sq km. They make the lake their winter retreat. The birds move over the lake in the shape of 'U' and 'V' searching for proper places to build nests before descending on the lake. While many of them are seen flying over Nalabana, some of them have descended inside the sanctuary.

The forest officials have set up 19 camps and formed a mobile squad to oversee their security.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
Tender No. eT-M-KUR-CLG-BALU-119-20
Name of the Work: CLEANING OF BALUGAON STATION INCLUDING PLATFORMS, YARD, WASHABLE APRONS, TRACKS, OFFICE BUILDINGS, RESERVATION OFFICE, CONCOURSE AREA, CIRCULATING AREA, WAITING HALLS, YARD FROM HOME SIGNAL TO HOME SIGNAL ETC FOR A PERIOD OF 04 YEARS.
Advertised Value: ₹ 2,07,10,228.22, EMD/Bid Security: ₹ 2,53,600/-, Tender document cost: ₹ 11,800/-, Period of completion: 48 months.
Bidding start date: 10.11.2020, Tender closing date & time: at 1500 hrs. of 24.11.2020.
Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.
Complete details & tender documents will be available at website www.irps.gov.in
Sr. Divisional Mechanical Engineer
PR-327/L/20-21
Khurda Road

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No. B-368
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER RAIRANGPUR (R&B) DIVISION
E-mail ID - eerbairangpur@yahoo.co.in
'e' - Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. E.E. 07 of 2020-21
1. The Executive Engineer, Rairangpur (R&B) Division on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites single cover percentage rate bid in ONLINE MODE for Building works from eligible contractors as detailed below.
2. Nature of Work : Building Works
3. No. of Works : 20 Nos.
4. Estimated Cost put to tender : Rs.32,13,700/- to Rs.13,74,800/-
5. Class of Contractor : C & B Class for Sl. No. 1 to 16 and D & C Class for Sl. No. 19 to 20
6. Date & time of sale & receipt of Bids : 10.00 A.M. of 11.11.2020 to 4.00 P.M. of 19.11.2020
7. Date of Opening of Bid : Dt.20.11.2020 at 11.00 A.M.
8. The bidders have to participate in ON LINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the Website <http://tendersorissa.gov.in>.
Sd./- 28.10.2020
Executive Engineer
Rairangpur (R&B) Division
OIPR-34041/11/0005/2021

WORKS DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER BHADRAK (R&B) DIVISION
e-mail: bhadrakrnbdivision@gmail.com
Government of Odisha 'e' Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. EE (R&B) BDK-13/2020-21
No.B-364-
No.3121/dt.27.10.2020
1. Nature of work: E.I. Work
2. Number of works: 1(One) No. of E.I. work
3. Amount put to tender : Rs.20,98,600/-
4. Class of contractor: Authorised Dealer of OEM
5. Date & time of availability of bid document in the portal: Dt.09.11.2020 at 10.00 A.M.
6. Last date/time of receipt of bid in the portal: Dt.13.11.2020 upto 05.00 P.M.
7. Date of opening of bid: Dt.16.11.2020 at 11.30 A.M.
8. Name & address of the office inviting bid: Executive Engineer, Bhadrak (R&B) Division
9. The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal "http://tendersodisha.gov.in". All future corrigendum will be available on ONLINE mode only.
Sd./- Executive Engineer
Bhadrak (R&B) Division
OIPR-34079/11/0003/2021

PANCHAYAT SAMITI OFFICE, BANARAPAL
No. i-20-: The Block Development Officer, Banarapal on behalf of the Governor of Orissa invites Percentage rate composite bid in single cover system for the works "Construction of A.W.C. Buildings", from the class C & D contractors, registered with the State Government and contractors of equivalent grade / Class registered with Central Government/ MES/ Railway, to be eventually drawn up in PWD P-I form, for execution of Building (Composite work i.e Civil Work, P.H. Work and E.I. Works). The proof of registration shall be enclosed along with the bid. If successful, the bidder who has not registered under State Government has to register under the State PWD in appropriate class of eligibility before signing the agreement. Bidders may submit bids for any or all the 20(Twenty) Nos. of A.W.C Building. The details of the Eligibility criteria, EMD, enclosures etc. along with the list of project and date and time of sale, receipt and opening of bid documents can be viewed & downloaded from the District website i.e www.angul.nic.in and in the office of the undersigned during office hour.
Sd./- Block Development Officer, Banarapal
OIPR-19039/11/0001/2021

FOCUS FARM REFORMS

DON'T FORGET THE PEASANT



It is certain that for the survival of small farmers there has to be a bare MSP, for those having intimate knowledge of the backward villages in the country, would tend to agree that this class of farmers cannot afford to go far to sell their produce... without clear cut guidelines regarding MSP, there could arise a situation where food security itself may be jeopardised

early as 2015 the encouragement of private players in agriculture trade, including procurement and storage, deregulation of the fertilizer sector and reduction in the number of beneficiaries under the Food Security Act. At the same time it is certain that for the survival of small farmers there has to be a bare minimum support price (MSP), for those having intimate knowledge of the backward villages in the country, would tend to agree that this class of farmers cannot afford to go far to sell their produce.

The new farm Acts may help medium and big farmers who have the resources to go for higher prices, ignoring the MSP. The Vajpayee government had initiated marketing and contract farming reforms in 2003 through a model Act to be adopted by States but the latter implemented it only half-heartedly. However, what has not been given due consideration is the fact that without clear cut guidelines regarding MSP, there could arise a situation where food security itself may be jeopardised.

Recently, Prime Minister Modi said that procurement of food crop at MSP was a key element of the country's food security system and that his government was committed to it, while speaking at the 75th session of the FAL. But surprisingly there was no mention

of this in the recent legislations. Farm producers' organisations, which Modi said are in the process of being established, should have been set up before the legislations were formulated.

Meanwhile, in a recent development, the Punjab Assembly passed three bills which create a safety net for farmers by making trading below the MSP punishable by law. These bills clearly stated that any corporate house or trader who violates the MSP will have to pay a fine and face imprisonment up to three years. Traders are barred from operating in Punjab without a license issued by the State government and the power to fix foodgrain stock limits is vested in the State rather than the Centre.

This was followed by Chhattisgarh, which passed a bill to enact its own farm laws to 'protect' its farmers from the Centre's agri-reform laws. One of the key provisions of the amended Chhattisgarh Krishi Upai Mandi Act is to ensure that the farm produce isn't sold below MSP in mandis or elsewhere. This Act has been passed so that farmers don't get cheated by traders and businessmen.

One may mention here that advanced countries have for long been pressing India to import foodgrains, of which they have a surplus and export other crops where

they are deficient. India had been a foodgrain importer in the late 50s and 60s, buying wheat from the US under PL 480. If the pressure is not thwarted, such imports may have a great impact on the country's economy.

In this context it needs to be stressed that with the population increasing at a fast pace and food security to be ensured to all people, there is need to ensure that food production is not hampered. Also, small and marginal farmers comprise around 70-75 per cent of the farming community and they do not have the capacity to store their produce and go elsewhere for better prices. Thus, whatever reforms are initiated have to take into consideration these factors.

But it's indeed tragic that reforms initiated in this country are done without understanding the ground reality i.e. plans that would benefit the maximum number of people. As such, without bringing in the three Acts, an expert committee should have been formed with agricultural scientists and representative of farmers' organisations to get their views/ recommendations on the subject.

The writer is a Kolkata-based journalist and author, who has been writing on socio-economic, developmental and environmental issues. INFA

Agricultural reforms are imperative in our country as these have a high potential to look after a major segment of the population. There is need not just to increase productivity, but also to ensure that farmers get a better deal and are assured of higher returns. However, there is a lacuna for various reasons and the government too is not forthcoming.

The system is such that not just farmers but middlemen and traders have been the intended beneficiaries. Even the MS Swaminathan Commission Report suggested implementing the C2 (complete costs) +50 per cent formulation. At the same time, there has been talk, over the years, of diversification of crops for better returns but such change has only been resorted to by the big and medium farmers.

The whole picture in the agricultural sector needs to focus on small farmers, who have to struggle hard for a livelihood. Every year there are various problems such as floods or drought as also soil salinisation, pest infections. This is reflected from the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) estimates, which showed that rural indebtedness had risen by 12 per cent between 1993 and 2013 which may have gone up to around 18 per cent presently.

Successive governments have done precious little for small farmers and sharecroppers over the years as a result of which this section of the farm community has suffered greatly. There were no efforts to form cooperatives by mobilising 10 to 15 farmers so that the integrated land holding becomes lucrative. Also the Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR) has done little to transfer technology to poor farmers.

Undoubtedly, big farmers have been largely helped by government policies which seem to favour them. The technocrats at the higher echelons of power have failed to understand the sheer problems faced by small farmers and how these should be addressed and redressed. All reforms are formulated, keeping in view the benefits that can be extended to big farmers and traders of agricultural produce. The latter have over the years exploited the farmers in various ways.

Apparently, this move towards corporatisation of agriculture started a few years back. A committee headed by BJP veteran, Shanta Kumar, recommended as

Dhurjati Mukherjee

SUCCESSIVE GOVERNMENTS HAVE DONE PRECIOUS LITTLE FOR SMALL FARMERS AND SHARECROPPERS OVER THE YEARS AS A RESULT OF WHICH THIS SECTION OF THE FARM COMMUNITY HAS SUFFERED GREATLY

Do not pretend - be. Do not promise - act. Do not dream - realise.

THE MOTHER



MAN EATER

At a time when several BJP-ruled states are mulling legislation against 'love jihad', a term often used by right-wing groups to target relationships between Moslem men and Hindoo women, which, they say, is an elaborate ruse to forcibly convert the women, Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik is moving towards social harmony which has been a linchpin of his administration for the past 20 plus years.

The state government recently hiked the inter-caste marriage incentive from ₹1 lakh to ₹2.5 lakh. Naveen Patnaik's administration has put the whole application system online to take the initiative closer to people. The stated objective of the scheme is to promote inter-caste marriages in the state. This is definitely a welcome initiative.

The regional party led government's move to embrace the social equity principles of Dr BR Ambedkar is laudable at a time when seeking votes using caste and religion have become the national centrepiece of some political parties during election campaigns.

On the other hand, Indian politics has lately tended to veer towards everyone using inflammatory rhetoric bordering on religious hatred to target and turn one community against another and polarise the electorate. While the BJP has openly used the anti Moslem plank for getting votes, other parties too have followed suit, albeit in milder forms.

India's strength lies in unity in diversity but the kind of rhetoric coming from top politicians goes against the very interest of national cohesiveness.

The 'love jihad' narrative fanned by certain groups a decade ago has now gone mainstream. Interestingly, all this is even after the term was disowned by the government. In February 2020 the Union Home Ministry, in a reply to a Member's question, informed the Parliament that the term was not defined under existing laws and no case had been reported by any central agency.

"Article 25 of the Constitution provides for the freedom to profess, practice and propagate religion subject to public order, morality and health," said Minister of State for Home Affairs, G Kishan Reddy.

Recently, jewellery brand Tanishq pulled an advertisement featuring a baby shower for an inter-faith couple after it was vociferously criticised on social media for allegedly promoting love jihad. The company said it had made the decision "keeping in mind... the well-being of our employees, partners and store staff."

After the BJP lost the elections in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh in 2018, many thought that the party would reset and rethink its election strategy in resonance with people's wants and desires but Bihar could prove the adage 'old habits die hard' true.

Apart from any beliefs or convictions, it is in everyone's interest that government and political parties be kept at a safe distance from the personal lives of citizens. Some may find US President Donald Trump's racist policies to be attractive now. However, if he should lose this election then those who have exposed themselves as being racists may find themselves without the support and back up of the American system. That could jeopardize their own or their family's safety. This implies, in every democracy there is a certainty of change of the political party in government. Therefore, if we teach the governance system of the country to dance to a certain tune just because it suits us now, we should be prepared for that same system to be used unethically against our interests when the political party holding the reins of the government changes. In brief, never allow the tiger to become a man eater.

WISDOM CORNER

- Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere. **ALBERT EINSTEIN**
- In three words I can sum up everything I've learned about life: it goes on. **ROBERT FROST**
- Convictions are more dangerous foes of truth than lies. **FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE**

WORDSWORTH

Upskilling

This is a moderately common technical term which hasn't yet reached any of the standard dictionaries, though the Second Additions Volume of the Oxford English Dictionary cites a first use as long ago as 1983. Upskilling refers, as you would expect, to increasing the skills of workers, usually through training. But its introduction reflects substantial changes in the nature of work in developed and developing countries. In the past two decades a substantial proportion of all jobs have become more technical and varied. Much of this is due to the introduction of computers, which require many workers to take on tasks like word-processing or financial analysis which once would have been done by specialists. Trainers and employers both argue that to upskill workers improves their employability. But critics say that upskilled workers are not necessarily better paid, nor do they have better promotion prospects, and that upskilling benefits the employer rather than the worker. Upskilling may be distinguished from reskilling, which usually refers to giving people new skills to cope with a new job, usually an enforced one.

Urban gaming

In the USA, this term most frequently refers to the controversial issue of casinos being operated by Native Americans within cities. But it has recently started to refer to a different sort of game, one which combines computer technology with the actual geography of a town. One game in London is called Uncle Roy All Around You, in which players use handheld computers to search for Uncle Roy, aided by a map and by incoming messages from online players who help them to reach their destination. The games firm Hasbro is setting up another, also in London, that uses specially equipped taxis to play an interactive, virtual-reality Monopoly game in the real locations of the British version of the board. In a related case, researchers in Singapore have created a version of the arcade game PacMan that superimposes the game world on to the real environment by means of special goggles and headsets. Players move about a set play area to collect the little energy pills, which they can see through their interactive goggles, all the while being chased by ghosts who can "kill" them if they catch them.

LOL

Accountant & Farmer

An accountant was walking on the countryside when he found a shepherd who had a lot of sheep. The accountant said to the farmer: "Listen, I can guess how many sheep you have. The farmer started laughing "Oh, dear! I have a lot of sheep. You will not be able to guess how many there are." "Let us bet something: if I guess how many sheep you have, you will give me one of your sheep. If I don't, I will pay you \$100." "Ok, how many there are?" "There are exactly 1,354 sheep." The shepherd was shocked:



"Incredible! I really have 1,354 sheep. Well, a bet's a bet. You win. Choose the sheep you want." "Oh, I will take this one," said the accountant and took one. "Wait for a moment, sir," said the shepherd, "Let's do another bet: if I guess what is your job, you will give me back my sheep, and if I don't, you can take another one." "OK." "You are an accountant." "Oh, God! That's true. But, how do you know it?" "First, give me back my dog, and then I will explain it to you."

IN JEST THIS

Letting go is so hard for parents



Melvin Durai

ALL THE ANIMALS IN OUR TOWN WERE SMART ENOUGH TO AVOID CROSSING ROADS WHEN LEKHA WAS GETTING A DRIVING LESSON FROM ME

My 18-year-old daughter, Lekha, a college student, recently got her driver's license. She was happy when she passed the driving exam, undoubtedly relieved that she wouldn't need to keep taking lessons with me. I had mixed emotions. I was happy and proud, but also sad and concerned.

I was happy that my oldest child had achieved this milestone in her life. I remember my excitement when I got my driver's license more than three decades ago. The idea that I could get into a car and drive anywhere I wanted was thrilling, never mind that I did not own a car at the time. Lekha does not own a car either, but she does have a car that she can borrow: mine.

I was proud that Lekha had earned her license without causing a single accident, no casualties whatsoever, not even a stray cat. All

the animals in our town were smart enough to avoid crossing roads when Lekha was getting a driving lesson from me.

Well, there was one notable exception: a squirrel on a rural road, a squirrel whose parents had evidently not spent enough time on crossing lessons. The squirrel began to cross the road just as Lekha was approaching. Lekha panicked and swerved into the next lane, facing oncoming traffic. I quickly reached over and steered the car back into the right lane, scolding Lekha for overreacting to the squirrel. But I didn't scold her for too long, because I knew this was a new experience for her.

What made me sad about Lekha getting her license was that we would no longer be spending time in the car together, at least not in the same way. I enjoyed sitting in the passenger seat and instructing her, took pleasure in seeing

my daughter acquire a new skill. When she was a child, I had taught her how to ride a bicycle, and now I had taught her how to drive a car. What would be next? Could I teach her how to fly? Yes, but only if it involved a kite.

The driver's license also caused me some concern. Lekha could now drive on her own, without me sitting next to her, instructing her to follow all the rules. Who would scold her when she makes a wrong turn or drives too fast or tries to look at Instagram?

Come to think of it, I had the same feeling when she started riding her bicycle on the road by herself. I worried that she would lose control and fall off her bike, perhaps hurt herself.

The worries were greater, of course, when Lekha and her two siblings were much younger, unable to even walk to the playground by themselves. Like other parents,

my wife and I have had to gradually let go of our children, give them more freedom, allow them to take on the world on their own.

But letting go is so hard. I am already dreading the day that Lekha borrows our car and goes on a drive on her own. I want to be around to protect her, not just from any mistakes she might make, but from all the crazy drivers and squirrels out there.

I am also dreading the day that Lekha gets married, perhaps to one of those crazy drivers. I will be happy, of course, but also anxious about my daughter entering a new phase in her life, facing new challenges that I won't be around to help her with.

Perhaps it would be wise for parents to let go completely one day, to stop worrying about their children and try to relax. I hope I can eventually do that. I also hope the same for my 88-year-old mother.

Lessons from pandemic

Sir, Corona delineates the triumph of human spirit. It is a celebration of the undying spirit of mankind. If life has one hundred reasons to cry, it also has a thousand reasons to smile. Man has been born again from the heap of ashes to the limitless possibilities of life. If the pandemic has snatched our hope and happiness, it has also blessed us with enthusiasm, dynamism, devotion and surrender. Unlock 6.0 has ushered us with vitality and vision. Except religious places, all fields of life have been restored to normalcy. It is a test of our self-control and regulations. Too much unchecked gathering in public places can sabotage our prized control of Covid-19 and the safety norms might go haywire. And, it will be certainly, a disrespect and dishonour to the Covid warriors who have been martyred for our sake. Caution and check are the keys. Man can be devastated, but not defeated. It is the learning lesson of Covid-19.

Prabhudutt Dash, BHUBANESWAR

Stop promising govt jobs

Sir, Today, all the state governments are claiming to provide employment to maximum youths, while a strange statement of the Chief Minister of Goa has come out with grave concerns. Goa CM Pramod Sawant on Saturday said: "Even if God himself became the Chief Minister, he would not be able to provide government jobs to everyone." This acceptance shows the reality of the availability of government jobs in the country. Millions of youth aspirants try hard in the hope of a government job, but they do not succeed. Many times the recruitment process is not completed for a long time. The state governments must stop promising employment and initiate steps to create new job opportunities by skill-based training programs in various sectors. People need to focus on other employment alternatives by bringing down their dependence on government jobs. This is the need of the hour.

Amit Singh Kushwaha, SATNA (MP)

Horrific act

Sir, The shooting of 22 people, including 10 women, at the Kabul University in Afghanistan is a horrific act. Two gunmen fired a volley of bullets and took dozens of hostages after a suicide bomber blew himself up inside the campus. With violence surging across Afghanistan and the Islamic State terrorist group claiming responsibility for the attacks, the Afghan authorities would do well to be on their toes.

NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

OrissaPOST

B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

New J&K land laws meant to hoodwink people: PAGD

Less than 50% attendance as schools reopen

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati, Nov 3: On a day when most government schools reopened for ninth and 10th standard students in Andhra Pradesh after five months, following Covid-19 interruption, less than 50 per cent students chose to attend classes amid the pandemic.

Sharing attendance statistics, Education Minister Adimulapu Suresh said only 39.6 per cent ninth standard students attended classes and only 43.65 per cent students from tenth standard.

As many as 99 per cent of all the government high schools were opened Monday, complying with the state government directives. Likewise, 88 per cent teachers have also attended to their duties in the schools. "In Nellore district, a watchman of AP Model School, Nandavaram, Marripadu mandal and two students of zilla parishad high school (ZPHS), Pathavellanti of Nellore mandal were tested as Covid positive," said Suresh.

However, attendance reports from tribal areas in Visakhapatnam district were not received. There are around 60,000 schools, including aided, unaided and private ones, in the southern state. Many pri-



ate schools did not reopen.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy instructed officials to opt for stress-free education, following a five-month long disruption caused by Coronavirus pandemic. He said students should not be forced to complete the syllabus in a rush because of the delay caused by the pandemic.

Reddy held a review meeting with higher education officials and

told them that education should be pleasant without pressure.

He directed officials to follow the Central government instructions to take appropriate decisions.

The chief minister also told the officials to plan for implementing Vasati Deevana and Vidya Deevana for the current academic year.

On a discussion about licensing universities and regulating private universities, it was decided that 50 per cent

seats should be filled under the convenor quota and the balance 50 per cent under the college quota.

The fee structure under the convenor quota will be fixed by the government and will be footed on behalf of poor students as fee reimbursement.

Reddy also reviewed the progress being made by central institutions in the state such as IIT-Tirupati, IISER-Tirupati, IIM-Visakhapatnam and NIT-Tadepalligudem, Central University in Anantapur and Tribal University in Paderu.

He directed officials to maintain proper roads, drainage, sanitation and electricity connections.

With respect to curriculum, the CM told officials to focus on integrated courses according to industry requirement and asked for newer courses in polytechnic and engineering streams.

"The government is setting up a skill development centre in each parliamentary constituency to improve the skill set of youngsters, who have already completed courses like polytechnic and engineering," he said.

Meanwhile, officials informed the CM that five lakh online classes were conducted for students during the pandemic.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, Nov 3: The People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) Tuesday said that the new land laws were brought by the Centre to 'hoodwink the people in Jammu and Kashmir'.

While rejecting the new land laws, PAGD said these were an attempt to distort facts and mislead people. In a statement issued by the media office of the PAGD, the alliance said that the land laws that existed in the erstwhile J&K state were most progressive, pro people and pro former in the entire Indian Subcontinent.

The statement added, "The real object of repealing the basic land laws and invoking massive amendments to the other laws is to push in and implement the agenda of effecting a demographic change and disempowering the people of Jammu and Kashmir. Jammu and Kashmir was first in the country to implement the concept of 'land to tiller' by enacting Big Landed Estates



Abolition Act, 1952 followed by Agrarian Reforms Act, 1976 restricting the land holding to twelve and half acres and ending the exploitative practice of 'absentee landlordism' and, whosoever calls it archaic would be guilty of ignorance of the history of Jammu and Kashmir."

"It is because of the timely land reforms that no starvation deaths occur in Jammu and Kashmir, no farmers suicides have been ever reported from Jammu and Kashmir and everyone in Jammu and

Kashmir has available three fundamental necessities - food, clothing and shelter; the position that is now sought to be reversed by making massive assault on the land law regime," the statement said.

The statement asked as to how can Alienation of Land Act be termed as archaic when it prohibited transfer of land to a non state subject, thus protecting the interests of the Permanent Residents of Jammu and Kashmir and at the same time made a provision for transfer of land by mortgage to organisations like Industrial Development Bank of India, Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India to keep pace with industrial development.

The statement added that the laws now introduced through amendments are not only against people of Jammu and Kashmir but undemocratic, unconstitutional and backward looking with only aim to disempower people and change the demography.

AP makes forceful plea against cutting down Polavaram cost

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Amaravati, Nov 3: The Andhra Pradesh government has made a forceful plea against cutting down the Polavaram project cost from Rs 55,656 crore to Rs 20,398 crore and asserted that it was the Centres bounden responsibility to complete it in accordance with the AP Reorganisation Act, 2014.

AP Special Chief Secretary (Water Resources) Adityanath Das led the state delegation at a meeting of the Polavaram Project Authority in Hyderabad, where he maintained that estimating the project cost at 2013-14 rates was not acceptable.

The meeting was held in the backdrop of a recent controversy that broke out after the Department of Expenditure under the Union Finance Ministry sent an office note to the Polavaram Project Authority suggesting that the latter accept the revised cost estimate at 2013-14 price level, amounting to just about Rs 20,398.61 crore.

Calling it a 'communication gap', Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi October 28, requesting that the latter personally intervene and prevail upon the Union ministries of Finance and

Jal Shakti to accord investment clearance for the second revised cost estimate of the Polavaram, amounting to Rs 55,656.87 crore at 2017-18 price level.

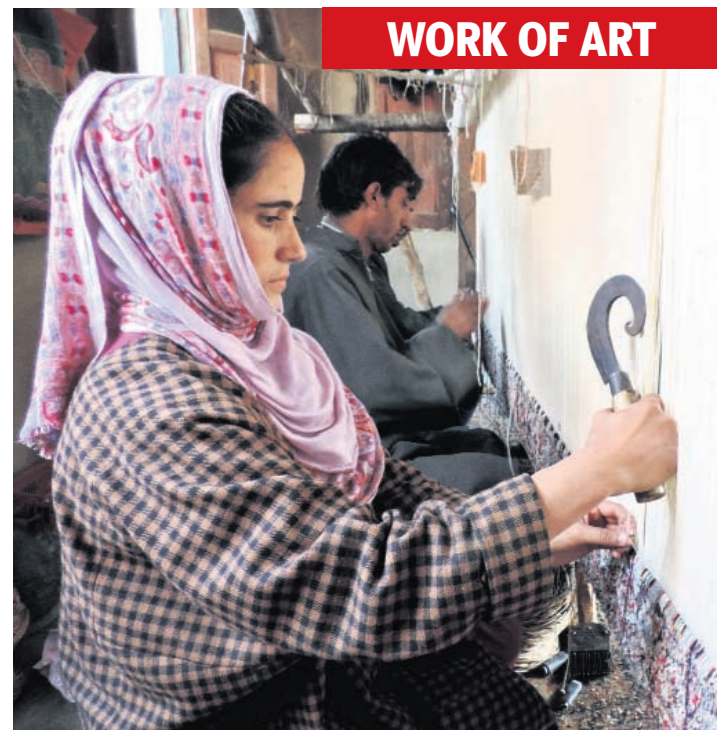
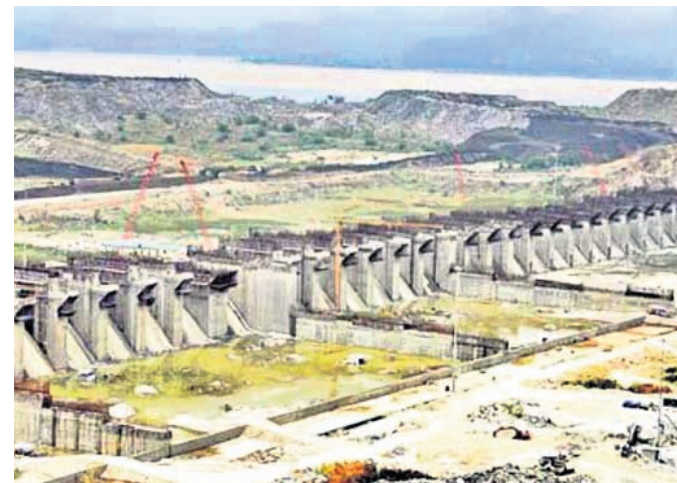
"The PPA and the Central Water Commission themselves estimated that over Rs 55,000 crore would be required to complete the Polavaram project. But now cutting down the project cost by more than Rs 30,000 crore is certainly not acceptable," the Special Chief Secretary said at Monday's meeting.

As per the second Revised Estimates Committees recommendation, the Centre should still bear the cost of Rs 47,725 crore on the project.

Das pointed out that Polavaram has been declared as a national project under the AP Reorganisation Act, 2014. "The state government is only the executing agency of the project and it is the Centres responsibility to complete it," he added.

He also recalled that the Centre agreed to treat the expenditure incurred on the project, prior to 2014, as the state government's share.

Das also said drinking water should also be treated as part of the irrigation component of the project, in tune with the guidelines on national projects.



A woman weaves Kashmir carpet on a loom on the outskirts of Srinagar, Tuesday.

UNI PHOTO

Op Muskaan brings back smiles on faces of 12K rescued children

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati, Nov 3: As part of its 'Operation Muskaan', Andhra Pradesh Police has rescued 12,621 children living rough on the streets or forced by circumstances to work to eke out a living across the state, reigniting their hopes of a better life in future.

These lucky children include orphans, child labourers, and those just living on the streets without any guardians. Among the rescued children, 10,492 are boys and 2,129 girls.

Police officials scoured bus stations, railway stations, shops, industries, major road intersections and other public places to identify and rescue such children who are vulnerable to crime and criminals.

The initiative was taken up on the directions of Director General of Police Gautam Sawang.

In Prakasam district alone, police identified 322 such boys and 125 girls, in coordination with government and non-governmental



bodies, Labour Department and others.

In East Godavari district, police identified 177 vulnerable children - 153 boys and 24 girls - Monday at places like Kakinada, Ramachandrapuram, Peddapuram, Amalapuram, Rampachodvaram, and Chinturu.

"Children are the future wealth of our country. They should not be forced to work by any organisation or individual; everyone should show humanity towards them," said Prakasam District Superintendent of Police Siddharth Kaushal.

He warned that cases would be registered against those employing children as labourers.

Kaushal also called upon parents of children to support their education and not send them out to work for a living.

The police has already conducted six phases of Operation Muskaan, rescuing lost and runaway children. Earlier, the operation was conducted from July 14 to 20.

The operation is now also aimed at protecting street children from contracting coronavirus.

Children having parents and guardians will be handed over to them while the orphans will be sent to child care homes and rehabilitation centres.

7,700 bunkers built along LoC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, Nov 3: The Jammu and Kashmir government has completed the construction of 7,777 bunkers along the Line of Control (LoC) and the International border (IB) in five districts of Jammu region, officials said Tuesday.

This was conveyed to Divisional Commissioner of Jammu Sanjeev Verma during a meeting with deputy commissioners of border districts held via video-conferencing to review the progress of construction of individual and community bunkers along the border in Jammu division.

In December 2017, the Centre sanctioned 14,460 individual and community bunkers for border residents facing Pakistani shelling along the LoC and the IB.

"A total of 7,777 bunkers have been completed so far in the (Jammu) division - 6,839 individual bunkers and 938 community bunkers. The work on 334 other bunkers is on and are at different stages of construction," an offi-

cial spokesperson said.

He said 1,569 bunkers have been completed in Samba, 1,161 in Jammu district, 1,519 in Kathua, 2,603 in Rajouri, and 925 in Poonch.

While three districts of Jammu, Samba and Kathua share borders with Pakistan along the IB, Rajouri and Poonch districts, along with a part of Jammu district, share borders with Pakistan along the LoC.

The divisional commissioner reviewed the stock position of construction material (steel and cement) and directed the deputy commissioners to closely monitor the construction work.

He also directed the executing agencies to expedite the pace of work and adhere to fixed timelines.

Verma also asked the deputy commissioners to set weekly and monthly targets for completion of work on bunkers and share completion plans.

The meeting had threadbare discussion on various issues and resolved many bottlenecks which are hampering the work progress, the spokesman said.



J&K bagging 6th slot among UTs debunks admin's claim: NC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Nov 3: The National Conference Tuesday said Jammu and Kashmir bagging the sixth slot in the governance among seven union territories debunks the claim of the incumbent administration about its administrative performance.

"It is distressing to see J&K steep so low on administrative performance published in Public Affairs Index 2020, in spite of the bluster of the incumbent J&K government on governance," NC provincial president Nasir Aslam Wani said in a statement.

Expressing concern over the report that has placed J-K at sixth position among UTs in governance and administrative performance, he said, it has vindicated the stand of the National Conference that the state of governance and administration has gone for a toss in J&K.

"The findings of the public affairs index have corroborated our estimation of the prevailing situation in J&K. It is not just governance and effective administration that has suffered reverses, the government has

also defaulted on the promise of giving jobs to unemployed," he said.

"The promised dawn of development, employment extravaganza, stepping up of infrastructure on multiple fronts ranging from job creation to infrastructure augmentation. Not just the local government, the central government too is responsible for the mess," he added.

Wani said J&K had also featured at the bottom in NITI Aayog's Export preparedness index 2020 previously in August and that the recent report has only revealed that the situation is not getting better.

The report also reveals that J&K has miserably performed on other four parameters that include policy, business ecosystem, export ecosystem, and export performance, he said.

Our battle is to restore special status: Mehbooba

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Nov 3: Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti Tuesday said she would go to any extent to safeguard the future of the youth of Jammu and Kashmir by striving for the restoration of the erstwhile state's special status.

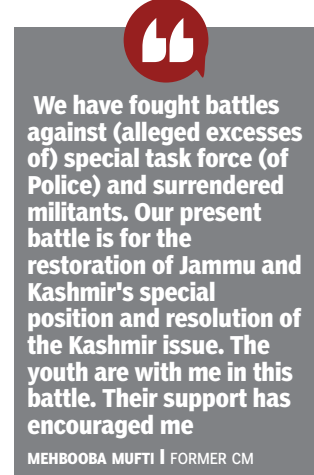
"We have lived our lives.... Now we have to think about the youth and their children. We can go to any extent to safeguard the future of our youth," Mehbooba told reporters after a convention organised by the PDP's youth wing here.

The former chief minister said while her party had battled against alleged excesses committed by the task force of police and surrendered militants in the past, it would



now focus on the restoration of special status of Jammu and Kashmir. "We have fought battles against

(alleged excesses of) special task force (of Police) and surrendered militants. Our present battle is for the



restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's special position and resolution of the Kashmir issue. The youth are with

me in this battle. Their support has encouraged me," she said.

Mehbooba said it has been her party's stand that Jammu and Kashmir should not be a cause of confrontation but a bridge between India and its neighbours.

"It was dream of Mufti Mohammad Sayeed that Jammu and Kashmir should be a bridge between India and its neighbours. The Centre will finally have to follow this principle," she added.

Asked if the atmosphere was conducive for holding elections in Jammu and Kashmir, Mehbooba said, "Election is not a priority for me." In August last year, the Centre revoked Jammu and Kashmir's special status under Article 370 of the Constitution and bifurcated it into union territories.



Some people have a problem... they say 'why does Modi win elections?'... Modi wins elections because he works to resolve the issues of all the (poor) mothers and sisters... NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

2 LABOURERS UNEARTH HIGH-VALUE DIAMONDS

Two labourers became rich after they unearthed two diamonds weighing 7.44 and 14.98 carats at mines in Madhya Pradesh's Panna district, an official said Tuesday



AT 53.5%, BIHAR SEES LOWER TURNOUT THAN IN 2015

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 3: The second phase of Assembly elections in Bihar, held amid the looming coronavirus threat, saw 53.51 per cent people voting, down from the 56.9 per cent in 2015.

The key candidates included Tejashwi Yadav - the Chief Ministerial candidate of the Opposition alliance of the Rashtriya Janata Dal, the Left and the Congress - and his brother Tej Pratap Yadav.

Hectic campaigning for the third and last phase continued alongside the election, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressing two rallies in Forbesganj and Saharsa.

Addressing a rally in Forbesganj, Prime Minister Narendra Modi targeted the Congress Tuesday for not having even 100 members in total in both Houses of Parliament.

In Bihar's Madhubani, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar came under 'ouion attack' while talking about providing jobs.



Mounted voters show their ID cards outside a polling station as they arrive to cast their votes for the second phase of Bihar Assembly elections in Patna, Tuesday

sons formed a cordon around him. The perpetrator was caught, but Kumar ordered the securitymen to 'let him go' and pay him no attention.

Prasad Yadav's elder son Tej Pratap Yadav is in the fray, recorded an estimated 54.25 per cent votes till 5 pm.

Senior Congress leader Shatrughan Sinha - whose son Luv Sinha is contesting the election

from Patna's Bankipur - said critics of RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav will be 'khamoshed' (silenced) when results for Bihar assembly polls are declared November 10.

Two separate incidents of firing were reported in the Morena Sumawali seat in Madhya Pradesh, affecting the polling process briefly. Four people have been arrested.

Mercury dips to 10°C in Delhi; harsh winter ahead: IMD

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 3: The minimum temperature of the national capital dipped to 10°C Tuesday morning, five notches below normal and the lowest this season so far.

IMD Director General Mrutyunjay Mohapatra said that winters will be harsher in northern India this year due to the La Nina effect.

Safdarjung, Delhi's base station for weather, and Ayanagar recorded a minimum of 10°C, Lodhi Road recorded a minimum of 10.6°C, Palam recorded 12.7°C, while Ridge logged 13.7°C.

According to IMD officials, temperatures usually dip to 11-12°C by the last week of November. 'It will be hazy today, with mist or shallow fog on Wednesday morning and clear sky throughout the day.'

India, US, Japan and Oz kick off large naval drills

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 3: India, the United States, Japan and Australia began their largest joint naval exercises in over a decade Tuesday.

The annual 'Malabar' wargames that India holds with the United States and Japan have been expanded to include Australia this year.

China has accused the United States, which has been leading the effort to forge a common front among its allies, of a 'Cold War mentality' and ideological prejudice.

Five ships of the Indian Navy, including a submarine, were deployed in the exercise along with US Navy's John S McCain missile destroyer.

There will be no contact between the military personnel of the four nations because of Covid-19 restrictions during the first phase of the drills running till November 6.

'The exercise will showcase the high-levels of synergy and coordination between the friendly navies, which is based on their shared values and commitment to an open, inclusive Indo-Pacific and a rules-based international order.'



MALABAR EXERCISE

The annual 'Malabar' war games that India holds with the United States and Japan have been expanded to include Australia this year to cover all members of the Quad

China has accused the United States, which has been leading the effort to forge a common front among its allies, of a 'Cold War mentality' and ideological prejudice

The exercises come at a time when the host, India, is locked in a military stand-off on the disputed land border with China.

Thousands of troops are in close proximity in the western Himalayas, where India says Chinese troops have intruded across its side of the

de facto border. Beijing denies any intrusion and says India has been building roads and other infrastructure in the disputed area, causing the crisis.

Australia's diplomatic relations with China also worsened this year after Canberra led calls for an international inquiry into the coronavirus pandemic and Beijing imposed trade sanctions on Australian beef and barley.

International

Five dead in Vienna attack

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Vienna, Nov 3: Five people died, including an assailant, and 17 others were wounded in a shooting in the heart of Vienna hours before a coronavirus lockdown started.

Two men and two women died from their injuries in the attack Monday evening, Chancellor Sebastian Kurz said. The suspected attacker was shot and killed by police.



with gunshot wounds but also cuts. 'It is now confirmed that yesterday's attack was clearly an Islamist terror attack,' Kurz said.

later told APA that the dead assailant, who had roots in the Balkan nation of North Macedonia, had a previous conviction under a law that punishes membership in terrorist organisations.

The attacker, named as Kujtim Fejzulai, was sentenced to 22 months in prison in April 2019 because he had tried to travel to Syria to join

Vienna's hospital service said seven people were in life-threatening condition Tuesday after the attack, the Austrian news agency APA reported

The attacker, named as Kujtim Fejzulai, was sentenced to 22 months in prison in April 2019 because he had tried to travel to Syria to join the Islamic State group.

He was granted early release in December under juvenile law.

Fifteen house searches have taken place and several people have been arrested, he added. The attacker, he said, 'was equipped with a fake explosive vest and an automatic rifle, a handgun and a machete to carry out this repugnant attack

on innocent citizens.' Authorities were still trying to determine whether further attackers may be on the run.

Among those wounded in the attack was a police officer, said Nehammer. The 28-year-old officer was in the hospital but was no longer in a life-threatening condition.

China annexed over 150 ha of Nepal's territory: Report

The Chinese Foreign Ministry described the report as a 'completely unfounded rumour'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, Nov 3: China has annexed over 150 hectares of Nepal's territory, according to a leading British daily whose report was rejected by the Chinese Foreign Ministry Tuesday as a 'completely unfounded rumour'.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin's remarks came after The Telegraph quoting Nepalese politicians reported that China has annexed more than 150 hectares of land in five areas near the border.

Reacting to the news report, Wang said: 'I want to point out

that the report is a completely unfounded rumour'.

Pressed further to provide evidence to back his denial, Wang said, 'As this is a rumour, those who have compiled this report should come up with their evidence first'.

'My suggestion is, before making such a report, you should act responsibly to verify things and then report on this. I can say that this report is a completely unfounded rumour,' Wang said.

Pakistan rejects MEA's statement on GB

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Islamabad, Nov 3: As Pakistan is heading towards making the official announcement of declaring Gilgit Baltistan (GB) as its fifth province, heated exchange of statements has flared up between New Delhi and Islamabad.

In a latest, Pakistan has 'categorically rejected' the Indian Ministry of External Affairs' (MEA) statement regarding GB, stating that New Delhi has no locus standi whatsoever on the issue.

'Regurgitation of false and fabricated claims by India can neither change the fact nor divert attention from India's illegal actions and continuing humanitarian crisis resulting from the perpetration of the worst human rights violations in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).'

How dogs tracked their humans across the ancient world

DAVID GRIMM

Sometime toward the end of the last Ice Age, a gray wolf gingerly approached a human encampment. Those first tentative steps set his species on the path to a dramatic transformation.

'It's a really cool study,' says Wolfgang Haak, an archaeogeneticist at the Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.

Dogs are one of the biggest enigmas of domestication. Despite decades of study, scientists still haven't figured out when or where they arose, much less how or why it happened.

critics said there wasn't enough evidence to be sure. A few years later, researchers reported signs of dogs in the Americas as early as 10,000 years ago.

To fill in some of the blanks, two big names in dog and human genetics teamed up: Greger Larson, an evolutionary biologist at the University of Oxford, and Pontus Skoglund, a paleogeneticist at the Francis Crick Institute.

The dog DNA alone revealed some surprises. As early as 11,000 years ago, there were already five distinct dog lineages; these gave rise to canines in the Near East, northern Europe, Siberia, New Guinea, and the Americas.

The dog DNA alone revealed some surprises. As early as 11,000 years ago, there were already five distinct dog lineages; these gave rise to canines in the Near East, northern Europe, Siberia, New Guinea, and the Americas.



time, 'domestication had to occur long before then,' Skoglund says. That fits with archaeological evidence: The oldest definitive dog remains come from Germany about 15,000 to 16,000 years ago.

Remarkably, pieces of these ancient lineages are still present in today's pooches. Chihuahuas can trace some of their ancestry to early American dogs, for example, whereas Huskies sport genetic signatures of ancient Siberian dogs.

becomes a bit wilder thanks to an infusion of feral DNA, it doesn't matter, because you're going to eat them anyway, he explains. But dogs that go native make bad guards, hunting companions, and friends.

In many places, the team found a strong overlap between human and dog genomes. For example, farmers and their pups in Sweden about 5000 years ago both trace their ancestry to the Near East.

But sometimes the stories didn't match up. Farmers in Germany about 7000 years ago also came from the Near East and also lived with dogs.

match up. Farmers in Germany about 7000 years ago also came from the Near East and also lived with dogs. But those animals seem more similar to hunter-gatherer pups, which came from Siberia and Europe.

That suggests many early migrants adopted local dogs that were better adapted to their new environment, Haak says. The benefits were many, adds Peter Savolainen, a geneticist at the Royal Institute of Technology and an expert on dog origins.

match up. Farmers in Germany about 7000 years ago also came from the Near East and also lived with dogs. But those animals seem more similar to hunter-gatherer pups, which came from Siberia and Europe.

of the day quote

Every single vote given to NDA will take Bihar on the path of development. But one wrong vote of yours will again push Bihar towards Jungle Raj



SUSHIL MODI | BIHAR DY CHIEF MINISTER

His predecessor Oommen Chandy immediately gave up the Vigilance Bureau after facing an allegation; likewise, Vijayan also should rise up to the occasion as he is facing allegations of wrongdoings



RAMESH CHENNITHALA | KERALA LEADER OF OPPOSITION

Officials need to opt for stress-free education, following a five-month long disruption caused by coronavirus pandemic



YS JAGAN MOHAN REDDY | ANDHRA PRADESH CM

SHORT TAKES

Man, son shot dead in UP

Pratapgarh (UP): A father and son in Uttar Pradesh were allegedly shot dead by their neighbours with their licensed DBBL gun over a petty dispute in Pratapgarh district. The accused fled after committing the crime. The murders took place in Balipur, the same village where a Deputy SP rank police official was killed by an infuriated mob in 2013. The incident took place Monday evening and the deceased have been identified as 50-year-old Rajendra Bahadur Singh and his 22-year-old son Abhay Pratap Singh.

Girl killed in UP elephant attack

Sonhadra (UP): A herd of around 15 elephants wreaked havoc in Sonhadra district of Uttar Pradesh and trampled a 10-year-old girl to death. The elephants damaged houses in the Nemna village as they rampaged through and crushed corn and paddy stocks. According to villagers, the herd raided early Monday after damaging paddy crops in the fields.

Maoist gunned down in Kerala

Thiruvananthapuram: A Maoist is reported to have been killed after a gunfight took place in the forests near Wayanad with the police patrol team early Tuesday. The police pointed out that the slain extremist is believed to be a non-Keralite and was in the age group of 30 to 35. The encounter took place in the forests near Meenmuti. Wayanad forests border with Karnataka.

BSF official dies at polling booth

Hajipur: A Sub Inspector of the Border Security Force (BSF) on duty at a polling booth in the Lalganj assembly seat died of heart attack Tuesday, police and hospital sources said. The security man felt acute pain in chest while he was on duty at booth number 181 following which he was taken to Hajipur sadar hospital, they said.

Mild quake hits Meghalaya

Nongpoh: An earthquake of magnitude 4.4 was reported near Nongpoh in Meghalaya on Tuesday morning, according to India's National Center for Seismology. The epicentre of the earthquake was 71 km west-southwest (WSW) of Nongpoh, the agency said. The earthquake struck at 1:13 am at a depth of 10 km from the surface.



You can get me to give you in writing that Nitish Kumar will never again be the Chief Minister after November 10

CHIRAG PASWAN | LOK JANSHAKTI PARTY CHIEF

BHU BEGINS 'GARBH SANSKAR' THERAPY

The Ayurvedic Department of Banaras Hindu University (BHU) has started the 'Garbh Sanskar therapy' that will instil Indian traditions, cultures, and knowledge in the unborn child



Madras HC against special courts to hear cases against MPs, MLAs

The Madras High Court's three-judge Criminal Rules Committee has objected to a Supreme Court order to create special courts to expedite cases involving lawmakers

AGENCIES

Chennai, Nov 3: The Madras High Court's three-judge Criminal Rules Committee has raised objection to a Supreme Court order to create special courts to expedite cases involving MPs and MLAs.

In its response to the amicus curiae appointed by Supreme Court, the Madras HC committee has said that special courts can "only be of offence centric and cannot be offender centric" - arguing that MP/MLAs cannot be seen as a special class of persons and given a separate court.

They have also pointed out that special courts have already been created to handle cases under special laws such as POCSO, SC/ST Act, Prevention of Corruption Act, NDPS, PMLA etc. Further, it has been argued that under the law, special courts can only be created by statute and not by judicial or executive order.

This response comes even as other state high courts have filed reports on number of special courts set up to deal with these cases.

The issue of statutory special



courts has also been flagged by several other states. Bihar, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Punjab and Haryana, Telangana, Meghalaya and Kerala are among the states where the "special offences" such as sexual offences against children under POCSO Act, SC/ST Act have not been transferred to the "MP/MLAs courts" and remain before the statutory special courts.

The Supreme Court had in 2017

for designation of special courts are valid since legislators "form a class in themselves," and "there is a reasonable nexus of decriminalisation of Indian polity in fast tracking disposal of these cases".

He has also argued that the Supreme Court had used its plenary powers under Article 142 to issue directions for setting up special courts.

The Supreme Court had also directed states to appoint senior police officers as "nodal officers", who would be responsible for ensuring that the accused MP/MLA is served with summons from the court and is produced before the court on every hearing.

This was done as states have pointed out that accused persons and witnesses would be "forced to travel" long distances to reach the designated special courts if a single designated court is created for the entire state. However, according to the amicus report, "Most of the High Courts have stated that Nodal Prosecution Officers have not been appointed making them responsible for prosecution of the cases."

GOLD SMUGGLING CASE Future of Vijayan hangs in balance



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, Nov 3: Things are getting difficult for the CPI-M in Kerala, which is the Left party's last bastion in the country.

With allegations coming thick and fast, murmurs have begun over the future of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and the powerful state secretary Kodiyeri Balakrishnan, both of them presently caught in a maze of issues, making it difficult for them to face the combined encore of the Congress and the BJP, which for a while have been demanding that both these top CPI-M leaders take the exit route.

Vijayan slamming various central agencies Monday, which are working hard in the gold smuggling, Life Mission and a few other cases, have been picked up by various media houses, indicating that things are getting more and more difficult for the Chief Minister.

When Vijayan was slowly getting over the shock of the arrest of his once closest aide and top IAS officer M. Sivasankar for his alleged involvement in the gold smuggling case, the word that has gone around is that it would become untenable for him if the probe agency picks up one of his staff members, whose name has surfaced in the media Tuesday.

Likewise, for Balakrishnan, his younger son has over the years become a headache, not just for him, but also for the party.

Bineesh Kodiyeri has been arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and the latest reports say that it wouldn't end with just the ED, as his close aide Anoop Mohammed is in the custody of the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) for a few weeks and it wouldn't be long before the NCB picks him up too.

What came as a shock for the CPI-M is the open statement by 91-year old MM Lawrence, a former stalwart of the party, in which he lashed out at the way Bineesh has been conducting himself.

Even though the party leaders at the recent two-day meeting of the CPI-M put up a brave face and pledged their support to both Vijayan and Balakrishnan, it remains to be seen if this support remains intact even if a staff member from Vijayan's office is picked up and if the NCB takes Bineesh into their custody. The CPI-M knows that with two polls around the corner - local body elections in December and Assembly elections in May 2021 - if these allegations and the probe do not subside quickly, things will be pretty bad for the 'red party' and the only way out will be to look for a change in leadership.

The CPI-M certainly knows that if it happens, it would do more harm than good, as it could well be accepting the hard facts on the damning evidences that have started coming thick and fast from the various probe agencies.

SANDALWOOD DRUGS CASE

Bail pleas of Ragini, Sanjjanaa rejected

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Nov 3: The Karnataka High Court Tuesday declined to grant bail to Kannada film actresses Ragini Dwivedi and Sanjjanaa Galrani in the drugs case. The High Court had reserved its verdict for Tuesday after hearing the arguments last week.

A single-judge bench headed by Justice Sreenivas Harish Kumar also dismissed the bail plea of four others, including the anticipatory bail application of film producer Shivaprakash, in the case.

The Central Crime Branch, probing the drug case arrested Ragini Dwivedi and Sanjjanaa Galrani in September. Shivaprakash is still at large, the police said.

The two actresses and the drug supplier Prashant Ranka were in the CCB custody till September 13 and were later remanded to judicial custody September 14, while Prashant was also denied bail.

Since then they were lodged in the Parappana Agrahara Central jail here. The city police intensified investigation into the drug abuse among celebrities after the Narcotics Control Bureau arrested three people, including a Malayalam television serial actress Anikha and Bineesh Kodiyeri's aide Mohammed Anoop with synthetic drugs.

The trio was charged with supplying drugs to the celebrities in Bangalore including Kannada film actors and singers.

One of the high profile accused



is Aditya Alva, son of former minister Late Jeevaraj Alva.

The CCB probing the case had even raided the Mumbai residence of Hindi film actor Vivek Oberoi who has married Alva's sister but to no avail.

Meanwhile, Galrani's counsel Hasmath Pasha argued that the investigating agency has not yet determined the quantity of drugs consumed by the Kannada actor. On this basis, he contended that bail cannot be denied. The senior advocate also cited the Bombay High Court's decision to grant bail to Rhea Chakraborty who has been accused of consuming drugs. Pasha highlighted that Galrani has been in custody for more than 50 days and even after searching her house and seizing electronic gadgets, no evidence had been found. The two actresses have been booked under the provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 (NDPS Act), and the Indian Penal Code.

The counsel appearing for Ragini Dwivedi also put forth the same argument. Moreover, they also stated that there would be no chance of tampering with evidence if the actors were granted bail.

Covid deaths dip below 500/day

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 3: With a fresh spike of 38,310 coronavirus infections and 490 deaths in 24 hours, India's tally Tuesday rose to 82,67,623, said the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Out of the total Covid-19 cases, 5,41,405 are currently active, 76,03,121 have been discharged, while 1,23,097 lost the battle against the pandemic.

While the recovery rate stands at 91.68 per cent, the fatality rate is 1.49 per cent, the data from the

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare showed.

Maharashtra continues to be the worst-hit with a total of 16,87,784 cases, including 44,128 deaths; followed by Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi.

Meanwhile, the national capital recorded 4,001 fresh Covid-19 cases on Monday, taking the tally to 3,96,371. The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) conducted 10,46,247 sample tests in a single day on Monday, taking the total number of samples tested so far to 11,17,89,350.

DEFYING NORMS



Vendors holding baskets containing ice cream are seen at a crowded beach amidst the coronavirus disease outbreak in Mumbai

REUTERS PHOTO

The truckers who keep coronavirus patients breathing

THE GOVERNMENT SAYS DEMAND FOR MEDICAL OXYGEN HAS JUMPED FOUR TIMES TO ABOUT 2,800 TONNES A DAY

REUTERS

Selaqui, Nov 3: Subhas Kumar Yadav has fought fear, deadlines and hunger to truck liquid oxygen from a factory in India's Himalayan foothills to hospitals in the northern plains during the coronavirus epidemic.

The worst time, he said, was in the weeks after the Centre imposed a sweeping lockdown to contain the disease in late March, when roads were deserted, police made arbitrary checks and roadside restaurants, repair shops and motels were shuttered. But the oxygen he was carrying was saving the lives of thousands of those infected. "We were on duty," said the 33-year-old driver with Linde India Ltd, an affiliate of the world's largest supplier of industrial gases, Linde Plc. "It's not like we could just give up and go home."



Subhas Kumar Yadav, a truck driver who ferries liquid oxygen from a Linde India factory to hospitals, poses in front of a tanker carrying liquid oxygen along a road in Selaqui in Dehradun

REUTERS PHOTO

With India's Covid-19 infections surging since March and many patients struggling to breathe, hospitals have scrambled to secure supplies of medical oxygen, increasing pressure on people like Yadav and com-

panies like Linde to deliver them in time. The government says demand for medical oxygen has jumped four times here to about 2,800 tonnes a day, prompting some states to restrict movement here of the commodity

from local factories to other regions. Around half of the total liquid oxygen production in India is now being used for medical needs, up from only 15% earlier.

Linde, which competes with nearly two dozen oxygen suppliers in India, including France's Air Liquide, has responded by tweaking its production lines away from industrial gases like nitrogen and argon, company officials said.

"Despite the limitations, there has not been a single stock-out situation for our partner hospitals," Linde India said. Still, as infections peaked in India in mid-September, hospitals in some parts of the country were left gasping for oxygen.

MAXIMUM OXYGEN India has the world's second highest number of confirmed coronavirus infections at more than 8 million, behind only the United

States. But India's deaths-per-million people ratio of around 88 is one of the lowest in the world among hard hit countries.

Linde India's factory in Selaqui, at the foot of the Himalayas in northern India, is set up to produce 154 tonnes of oxygen daily, but since the pandemic, the facility has churned out up to 161 tonnes.

"We did maximum oxygen production," said Surendra Singh, a Linde India business head. "Almost 85-90% went to medical (clients)."

It helped that industrial demand itself had come down because of the lockdown, though the reopening of the economy could change that.

To ship the oxygen to hospitals - the furthest is 680 km, a two-day drive away - and two regional depots, the factory depends on a fleet of 33 container trucks and a pool of 66 drivers.

Power situation 'critical' as Punjab runs out of coal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Nov 3: With three private power plants shutting down and two electricity generating units having nearly run out of coal, state-owned power utility PSPCL announced it will impose power cuts across all categories in Punjab from Tuesday evening.

Coal supplies to thermal power plants in Punjab have been severely affected after Railways suspended the operation of freight trains in the wake of the blockade of some tracks by farmers in protest against the three new central farm laws. With the power situation turning dim, Punjab State Power Corporation Limited (PSPCL) chairman and managing director A Venus Prasad said, "We will impose three-hour power cuts today (Tuesday) evening."

"The power cuts will increase to four-five hours," Prasad said, adding, "The power situation is critical." As daytime power shortage rose to 1,000-1,500 MW, the power department has been left with no option but to impose power cuts on all residential, commercial and agricultural consumers beginning Tuesday evening, an official spokesperson said.

At present, the day demand in the state stands at about 5,100-5,200 MW and night demand is about 3,400 MW, the spokesperson added. Supply, on the other hand, is totally inadequate with only agricultural power (AP) load of vegetable feeders (800 MW) being given supply for four to five hours during daytime every day, the official further said.

The situation worsened on Tuesday as one unit of private power plant GVK (2x270 MW), which was operational at around 12 noon, was headed for a shutdown by 5 pm, when the coal stock is slated to completely run out.

Two other private thermal plants - Nabha Power at Rajpura and Talwandi Sabo in Mansa - have already shut down their operations due to coal shortage.



AMERICANS HEADED TO POLLING STATIONS AS ELECTIONS IN THE UNITED STATES WAS OFFICIALLY UNDER WAY TO DECIDE WHO WILL OCCUPY THE WHITE HOUSE FOR THE NEXT FOUR YEARS - INCUMBENT REPUBLICAN PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP OR HIS DEMOCRATIC RIVAL AND FORMER VICE PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN



How will the polls impact Indo-US relations

Irrespective of the outcome of Tuesday's keenly-contested US presidential election, America's strategic relationship with India is expected to maintain the current momentum and strengthen further, policy documents and remarks from the two campaigns indicate.

President Donald Trump, in the first term of his presidency, has emerged as the best friend of India at the White House taking the relationship to a new level and his friendship with Prime Minister Narendra Modi is well known, which was reflected in the two leaders addressing two joint rallies in the US and India in less than a year. Highlighting the great relationship that he has developed with Modi, Trump in September said that he has 'great support from India'.

Former vice president Joe Biden, the Democratic presidential candidate, has a strong track record of being an ardent advocate of a strong India-US relationship both as a Senator from Delaware for over three decades and then as deputy of President Barack Obama for eight years.

From playing a key role in the passage of India-US civil nuclear deal during a Republican administration to setting up the goal of a USD 500 billion in bilateral trade, Biden has strong ties with Indian leadership across the aisle and has a large number of Indian Americans within his close circuit. At a fundraiser in July, Biden had said that India and the United States were natural partners.

The ground for India-US relationship post November 3 was laid down during the recently concluded 2+2 ministerial held in New Delhi. Officials from the two countries, both during and after the ministerial, underscored that the ties have bipartisan support and it is not based on which party occupies the White House or has a majority in the House of Representatives and the Senate. It is very well expected that there could be a change in nuances or emphasis on certain elements of relationship, on who occupies the White House or have majority in the Congress, the common national interest of the two countries in terms of democracy and threat being posed by China, would drive the momentum between India and the US. Notably, India is the only major country with which the Trump administration failed to arrive at a trade deal, even a mini-trade deal, despite the fact the top leadership of both India and the US expressed their desire to do so. Given the track record of differences between the two countries for the last three decades, the sharp differences are likely to remain the same even during a Biden administration. However, the bilateral trade is likely to grow at a fast pace between India and the US irrespective of who comes to power. Officials from the two countries are likely to pick up the thread from the trade negotiations that they have almost concluded this year.

RACE FOR WHITE HOUSE

To all of our supporters: thank you from the bottom of my heart. You have been there from the beginning, and I will never let you down. Your hopes are my hopes, your dreams are my dreams, and your future is what I am fighting for every single day!

DONALD TRUMP
UNITED STATES PRESIDENT

For four years, the world's nations have watched as a very different American president engages with the international community — or doesn't. Longtime alliances have been strained, agreements wiped away, tariffs erected, funding withdrawn.

Some nations have been the objects of presidential derision. Others, like North Korea, have been on the receiving end of diplomatic overtures once considered unthinkable. For countries around the planet, the presidency of Donald Trump in its first term has been, it is safe to say, a singular experience to watch.

Now that an inflection point in Trump's time in office is at hand with Tuesday's US election, what's at stake if his presidency ends — or if it continues? Nation by nation, how is Election Day in the United States being watched, considered, assessed?

America, we cannot afford four more years of Donald Trump

KAMALA HARRIS
DEMOCRATIC VICE PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEE

It's all about trade for China — and trade is about hitting economic growth targets at home and being a technology leader abroad. The stormy commercial relationship between the world's two biggest economies since President Donald Trump took office is front and center in China's view of the US election.

While a win for Democratic challenger Joe Biden offers no guarantee of relief, Beijing hopes to avoid a further deterioration and see negotiations put on an even keel. "People are concerned. They want to know what their future is to be," said investor and prominent blogger Ding Chenling.

I'm running as a proud Democrat, but I will govern as an American president. I will work with Democrats and Republicans, and I'll work as hard for those who don't support me as for those who do. Because that's the job of a President

JOE BIDEN
DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

"Whoever is the U.S. president has no choice: they will have to do business with China." Trump seized on longstanding concerns about Chinese commercial espionage, the forced handover of technology, and state subsidies for Chinese companies. He elevated them into a high-stakes tariff war launched in 2018, and last year tightened controls on Chinese purchases of computer chips and other high-tech components.

That could place a drag on China's

It's Election Day in America! Get out and #VOTE FOR FOUR MORE YEARS OF President @realDonaldTrump

MIKE PENCE
VICE-PRESIDENT OF US

ambitions to be a global leader in cutting edge technologies and build, as it calls it, a "moderately prosperous society" at home, although the loss of access to U.S. technology is also motivating a drive for self-sufficiency. Meanwhile, Trump's vow that China would pay for allegedly cheating the U.S. consumer has yet to yield more balanced trade.

September exports to the US rose 20.5% over a year ago to \$44 billion as China's factories continued to assemble most of the world's smartphones, personal computers and consumer electronics, along with much of the clothing, housewares and toys sold in the US. That means that, despite disruptions from trade tension and the pandemic, the ruling Communist Party is likely to hit its economic targets for the time being. Still, calming the stormy seas of trade could provide the long-term assurance Beijing's leaders seek. "I believe Joe Biden would ease relations," said Qu Zhan, a Beijing health care worker.



Pedestrians walk past campaign signs for Democratic presidential candidate and former Vice President Joe Biden near the White House in Washington

The next U.S. president could reshape the country's relationship with

President Rodrigo Duterte, who leads a key American treaty ally in Asia — but presents a dilemma. Duterte has been regarded by international watchdogs as a human rights calamity for his notorious anti-drug crackdown that has left thousands of mostly poor suspects dead. He has been accused of undermining one of Asia's most vibrant democracies — an American legacy.

Known for his expletive-laced outbursts, the 75-year-old leader is hypersensitive to criticism of his so-called war on drugs. He once told then-President Barack Obama in a speech to "go to hell." Unlike his predecessor, President Donald Trump has not publicly raised red flags over Duterte's brutal campaign. Trump's gambit won him cozier ties with Duterte, who called on Filipino Americans in March to vote Republican, saying, "you are getting the best deal with Trump."

But the Filipino leader has pressed on with his anti-U.S. broadsides while nurturing ties with China and Russia. In February, his government notified Washington of its intent to terminate a key security pact, although he later delayed the effect of that decision.

"Do we need America to survive as a nation?" he asked. He essentially said, no. While a Trump re-election would likely mean business as usual for Duterte, a Biden presidency carries the prospect of a stronger US pushback against Duterte at the risk of further alienating the leader of a crucial ally with less than two years left in office.

THE MATH GAME

What's this entire hubbub about 270? It's not about the 270 whales stranded this fall on Australia's island state of Tasmania. It's not about congestion on Interstate 270 feeding commuters into Washington, DC. It's about who's going to sit in the White House for the next four years.

THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE

Nearly 2.9 million more people voted for Hillary Clinton in the 2016 presidential election, but she still lost. President Donald Trump won because he took the Electoral College, under a system set up in the US Constitution and refined through the centuries. This is where the magic number comes into play. To win the White House, a candidate must win at least 270 electoral votes. That's a majority of the 538 that are up for grabs in the 50 states.

WHAT HAPPENS IN A TIE

What happens if the presidential race between President Donald Trump and former vice president Joe Biden ends in an Electoral College tie? The House of Representatives will vote to determine who wins, but it won't be each individual congressman voting. If no candidate reaches 270, the presidency would be decided by the House members who are sworn in January 3. Each state's House delegation would have one combined vote. If a majority of states go to one candidate, that candidate will be president. Twenty-three are majority Democrat and one -- Pennsylvania -- is split. But, unlike the Senate, all 435 House seats are up for election, so those numbers can change. If the House ends up in a tie vote for president, one state would have to flip to put someone over the top. If it's still tied on Inauguration Day, the vice president-elect will become the acting president until the House breaks the tie.

TRUMP'S BEST PATH

Trump has several paths to 270, but his best route hinges on winning Florida and Pennsylvania. If he wins both states and holds onto North Carolina and Arizona, which he narrowly carried in 2016, and also Georgia and Ohio, which he won in 2016 but is now competitive, he will win. With 29 electoral votes, Florida is arguably the most crucial state for Trump.

WHAT BIDEN NEEDS

Democrat Joe Biden's campaign is laser-focused on the states in the Midwest and close by that Trump flipped in 2016 — Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania. He's also making a big play for Arizona, a state that hasn't backed a Democratic presidential candidate since 1996. Biden is also redoubling his focus on Florida.

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

The biggest factor that may slow things down this year is clear: Millions of Americans decided to vote by mail rather than risk contracting coronavirus at a polling place. And in general, those mail ballots take longer to count.

Election workers must remove the ballots from their envelopes, check for errors, sort them and flatten them — all before they can be run through scanners the moment polls close and be tabulated. In states with well-established vote-by-mail programs, this processing happens weeks before Election Day.

The results are often released quickly. But several states did not have this system in place before this year and laws on the books prohibited election officials from processing the ballots well in advance of Election Day. Without a head start, there's virtually no way to process and count all the mail votes on Election Day, while also counting all the in-person votes.

Prayers for Harris in her ancestral village, for Trump in Delhi

Chennai/New Delhi, Nov 3: Supporters of US vice presidential candidate Kamala Harris held prayers near her ancestral village in India ahead of Tuesday's US election, while a Hindu fringe group sought divine blessings for her rival Donald Trump.

The southern Indian region where Harris' maternal grandfather was born is rooting for the Democratic Party to win because of the family connection. Meanwhile, a group that claims to have the support of 5 million

Hindus says it wants Trump to be re-elected in order to keep India's main rivals - Pakistan and China - in check.

Hours ahead of the US presidential election, people living in and around Thulasendrapuram, the village of Harris' grandfather, gathered at a temple for special prayers.

One local politician conducted an "abhishhekam", a practice that involves pouring milk over a Hindu idol while religious verses are recited, in the presence of about 20 villagers, said R. Manikandan, a shopkeeper near the temple.



He said more than 15 cars and motorcycles, belonging to reporters working for local and international media outlets, had assembled in Thulasendrapuram to cover the ritual. RR Kalidas Vandayar, a businessman and the head of a cricket association in the nearest town, plans to offer food to more than 150 people to seek their blessings for Harris, who is running alongside Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden. "She is from here and we are proud of her," said Vandayar's brother R.R. Jayakumar Vandayar. Hundreds of miles north in Delhi, nearly two dozen members of a group known as Hindu Sena (Hindu Army) joined a priest wearing saffron robes to conduct fire rituals and chant verses for Trump's victory. They held up pictures of the leader with one of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi resting to the side. "India can fight terrorism only if Trump is around, and both China and Pakistan will stay restrained as long as he is the president," the group's founder, Vishnu Gupta, said by phone. "We wish Harris well because of her Indian ancestry, but vice presidents are not as powerful."

business



Private sector companies offering the benefit of the new LTC cash voucher scheme to its employees will not have to undertake any additional compliance burden
AJAY BHUSHAN PANDEY | FINANCE SECRETARY

SENSEX EXTENDS GAINS

The Sensex rallied 504 points while the Nifty reclaimed the 11,800-level Tuesday, propped up by banking and finance counters, as global markets marched higher on US election day.



of the day quote

We will see the worthy players in the retail sector that continue to add value gain from the high investor interest and we will see the 'me-too' variety of businesses fail
HARSH MARIWALA | BUSINESSMAN

In mid to long term, we want to co-create animation content with local Indian creators. As the first step, we decided to bring Japanese animation to India to test the water
YUKI KAWAMURA | HEAD OF GLOBAL IP EXPANSION, AKATSUKI INC

Ola Electric has been engaging with state governments, including Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra, to set up an e-scooter manufacturing plants
BHAVISH AGGARWAL | CEO, OLA INDIA

SHORT TAKES

Godrej Properties' net profit falls 78%

New Delhi: Realty firm Godrej Properties Tuesday reported a 78 per cent fall in its consolidated net profit at ₹7.10 crore for the quarter ended September. Its net profit stood at ₹31.57 crore in the year-ago period. Total income also fell to ₹250.23 crore in the second quarter of this fiscal year from ₹395.11 crore in the corresponding period of the previous year, according to a regulatory filing.

Zydus Cadila's new drug for COVID-19

New Delhi: Drug firm Zydus Cadila Tuesday said it has filed the investigational new drug (IND) application for its small molecule candidate ZYL1, positioned for management of critically ill COVID-19 patients. "Following up on its initiatives to fight COVID-19 with diagnostics, vaccines and therapeutics, the company is now focussing on cutting edge research to bring targeted therapies..." Zydus Cadila said in a regulatory filing. The company has filed the IND application of ZYL1.

PNB Bank lowers debt recast target

New Delhi: Punjab National Bank (PNB) Tuesday lowered the debt recast target by 50 per cent to ₹20,000 crore as there was not enough demand for restructuring approved by RBI a couple of months ago. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has permitted one-time restructuring of corporate and personal loans to help entities amid the COVID-19 crisis. "But MSME, we are expecting restructuring to happen to the extent of anything around ₹4,000-5,000 crore before December 31," PNB MD S S Mallikarjuna Rao said.

Adani Ports & SEZ Q2 profit up 32 pc

New Delhi: Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Limited (APSEZ) Tuesday reported a 31.57 per cent increase in its consolidated profit to ₹1,393.69 crore for the second quarter ended on September 30, 2020. The country's largest integrated logistics player had clocked a consolidated net profit of ₹1,059.20 crore in the corresponding period a year earlier, the company said in a BSE filing. Its total consolidated income increased to ₹3,423.16 crore for the second quarter, as against ₹3,326.90 crore in the year-ago period.

India's exports dip 5.4 pc

TRADE DEFICIT IN OCTOBER NARROWED TO USD 8.78 BILLION AS AGAINST USD 11.76 BILLION, AS IMPORTS ALSO FELL 11.56 PER CENT TO USD 33.6 BILLION

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 3: After recording positive growth in September, India's exports declined 5.4 per cent to USD 24.82 billion in October on account of dip in shipments of petroleum products, gems and jewellery, leather, and engineering goods. Trade deficit in October narrowed to USD 8.78 billion as against USD 11.76 billion, as imports also fell 11.56 per cent to USD 33.6 billion during the month under review.



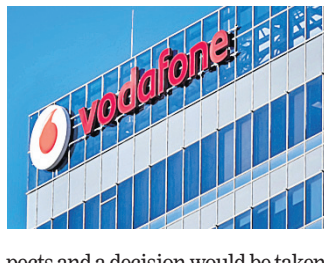
India's merchandise exports in October 2020 were USD 24.82 billion, as compared to USD 26.23 billion in October 2019, showing a fall of 5.4 per cent, the Commerce and Industry Ministry said in a statement. Major export commodities which recorded negative growth during October included petroleum products (53.30 per cent), cashew (21.57 per cent), coffee (9.25 per cent), marine products (8.09 per cent) and engineering goods (3.84 per cent). Sectors which showed positive growth included rice, oil meals, iron ore, oil seeds, carpet, pharmaceuticals, spices, cotton and chemicals. During April-October 2020, exports declined 19.05 per cent to USD 150.07 billion, while imports fell 36.28 per cent over the same period last year to USD 182.29 billion. Oil imports dipped 38.52 per cent to USD 5.98 billion in October. During April-October, it declined 49.5 per cent to USD 37.84 billion. After contracting for six straight months, India's exports rose 5.99 per cent to USD 27.58 billion in September. Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) President Sharad Kumar Saraf said the nominal decline in exports during the month was mainly because of huge container shortage and hike in sea freight, which upset exports, particularly for those who have negotiated on CIF (Cost, Insurance, Freight) or C&F (Cost and Freight) basis. Besides, farmers' agitation in some of the hinterland states also affected exports during October, he said. As the election process gets over

in the US, with the upcoming Christmas and New Year season, both global and Indian economy are slated for economic revival. Exporters have continuously been receiving a lot of enquiries and orders, further adding to the positive sentiments with signals of further resilience in the global supply chain, he added. Mohit Singla, founder chairman, Trade Promotion Council of India (TPCI), said agri and food odities recorded positive growth, which depicts continuity of demand of Indian food and agri products globally, despite other traditional products slipping in demand. The time has come for India to be the global food basket of the world, as India has witnessed two bumper crop harvest and Indian industry is already capitalizing the advantage fully despite tough times, Singla added.

Govt mulls appeal against Voda order

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 3: The Indian government has time till the last week of December to appeal against the verdict of an arbitration panel that scrapped levy of ₹22,100 crore tax on the UK-based telecom firm Vodafone Group Plc using a retrospective law.



Finance Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey, refusing to be drawn into discussion on former Finance Minister Arun Jaitley's promise to honour awards in retrospective tax cases, said the government is examining all aspects to arrive at a decision on whether to appeal against the Voda award. We are still examining various aspects and a decision would be taken in due course, Pandey told PTI. Asked if there is a time limit on the decision to file an appeal, Pandey said, All arbitration orders if at all have to be appealed, have a time limit of 90 days. So, we have time to decide, so will decide. Jaitley as the Finance Minister of Modi-1.0 government on several occasions had stated that the BJP government will not raise any new demand using the retrospective tax legislation and will honour arbitration awards in cases where companies had challenged tax demands raised by the previous regime using the controversial retrospective tax legislation.

Vodafone had challenged before the arbitration tribunal India's usage of a 2012 legislation that gave the government powers to retrospectively tax deals like Vodafone's USD 11-billion acquisition of 67 per cent stake in the mobile phone business owned by Hutchison Whampoa in 2007. It challenged the demand of ₹7,990 crore in capital gains taxes (Rs 22,100 crore after including interest and penalty) under the Netherlands-India Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT). The arbitration tribunal had said India's conduct in respect of the imposition of tax demand on Vodafone notwithstanding the Supreme Court judgement is in breach of the guarantee of fair and equitable treatment. As per the award, the government has to reimburse Vodafone 60 per cent of its legal costs and half of the 6,000 euros cost borne by Vodafone for appointing an arbitrator on the panel. Sources said the Government of India's liability will be restricted to about ₹75 crore in cost refunds.

Future Retail files caveat before HC



AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 3: Kishore Biyani led-Future Group has filed a caveat before the Delhi High Court requesting it to be heard if any plea is filed by e-commerce major Amazon over its ₹24,713 crore deal with Mukesh Ambani-led RIL. Anticipating a move by Amazon, which had got an interim arbitration award in its favour, putting the announced deal on hold, the Future Group firm has moved the Delhi High Court. Let no order of any kind be passed of any kind or any other petition and application, which may be filed by the petitioners/caveatee (Amazon.com NV Investment Holdings LLC) against the respondent/caveator - Future Retail Ltd, without due notice under section 148A of the code of civil procedure, the Future Group firm stated in its urgent caveat petition. A caveat is filed by a litigant in

high courts and in the Supreme Court to ensure that no adverse order is passed against the party without it being heard. The Future group firm has already served a copy of the caveat petition to Amazon, it said. "You are requested to give at least 48 hours notice before moving any petition under section 9 of the Arbitration & Conciliation Act or any other application against the proposed respondent/caveator," the Future Group firm said while sending a copy of caveat to Amazon. Amazon declined to comment on the development. On October 25, Singapore International's Arbitration Centre (SIAC) passed an interim award in favour of Amazon, with a single-judge bench of V K Rajah barring FRL from taking any step to dispose of or encumber its assets or issuing any securities to secure any funding from a restricted party.

ED attaches ₹169cr assets of firm in money laundering



AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 3: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has attached assets worth ₹169 crore of a firm in connection with its money laundering probe in the coal blocks allocation case, the central agency said on Tuesday. The case pertains to Topworth Urja and Metals Ltd (formerly Shree Virangana Steels Ltd) that was allocated the Marki Mangli-II, III and IV coal blocks in eastern Maharashtra. The ED, in a statement, alleged that the firm got the coal blocks "through fraudulent means and by misrepresentation." "Due to illegal allocation of Marki Mangli-II and Marki Mangli-III coal blocks, the company was benefited to the extent of ₹169.64 crore," the agency claimed. "A total of 9,21,748 MT of coal was extracted illegally during 2011-12 to 2014-15 and there was illegal gain to the extent of ₹52.50 crore by extracting the coal from these blocks. The company also had benefited to the extent of ₹20.40 crore on account of sale of excess power generated out of captive power plant and sold to the connected grid," the ED said.

Mercedes unveils 1st locally manufactured AMG model

New Delhi: German luxury carmaker Mercedes-Benz Tuesday said it has commenced the local production of its AMG portfolio in India, and rolled out its first-ever locally made GLC 43 4MATIC Coupe. The company rolled out AMG GLC 43 4MATIC Coupe, tagged at ₹76.7 lakh (ex-showroom), from its Pune facility Tuesday. With this, the company now locally manufactures 11 models from its Pune plant, which has an installed capacity of 20,000 units annually. The company is confident that the local production of the AMG will further increase its popularity.

Flipkart acquires Mech Mocha's IP to strengthen gaming

New Delhi: Walmart-owned Flipkart Tuesday said it has strengthened its gaming strategy through the acquisition of Intellectual Property from Mech Mocha for an undisclosed amount. Mech Mocha is a mobile gaming startup that runs India's first live-social gaming platform 'Hello Play'. Co-founded by Arpita Kapoor and Mohit Rangaraju, Mech Mocha has been backed by investors including Accel Partners, Blume Ventures and Shunwei Capital.

Airtel's Nxtra to invest ₹1,750 cr to scale up data centres

New Delhi: Bharti Airtel Tuesday said its subsidiary Nxtra Data will invest around ₹1,750 crore to scale up data centre infrastructure and cloud services across the country. The company also announced signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation for setting up two new data centre campuses in the state.

Over 60% Indian firms to leverage Cloud as a platform

The current scenario has enabled Indian firms to spend more on public cloud infra-as-a-service (IaaS), platform-as-a-service (PaaS) and software-as-a-service (SaaS)

lenges arising from the spread of the pandemic Covid-19. "Strategic investments in technology will become imperative to minimize the adverse impact and make businesses more resilient. The role of providers will become crucial in helping organisations flatten the curve and leverage cloud in their next normal," said Rishu Sharma, Principal Analyst for cloud & artificial intelligence at IDC India. India public cloud services (PCS) market is projected to touch \$7.1 billion by 2024 growing at a CAGR of 20.3 per cent between 2019-2024. Although most organisations in India have adopted cloud at some stage, the current pandemic situation has



Organisations are planning to leverage cloud for digital innovation and accessing innovative ecosystems, in addition to gaining flexibility and meeting up additional demands
SWAPNIL SHENDE | SENIOR MARKET ANALYST

EMERGING MARKET

From a segment perspective, SaaS forms the largest component of the overall public cloud services market in India, followed by IaaS and PaaS. With the changing strategy, over 56 per cent of the Indian organisations plan to increase their spend on SaaS services, as a result of Covid-19 market. In the IaaS segment, the top two providers accounted for over 78 per cent in 2019. "Organisations are planning to leverage cloud for digital innovation and accessing innovative ecosystems, in addition to gaining flexibility and meeting up additional demands," said Swapnil Shende, Senior Market Analyst for artificial intelligence at IDC India.

SRH SEAL PLAY-OFF SPOT

Supernovas eye 3rd straight title



DAVID WARNER (L) & WRIDDHIMAN SAHA

a fighting total on a slow surface with an entertaining knock. The defending champions collected 51 runs off the last five overs.

Needing a victory to make the play-offs, SRH bowlers made merry on a helping surface after their skipper David Warner decided to put the opposition in to bat.

MI skipper Rohit Sharma (4), who missed the last four games due to a hamstring injury, made a surprise return. However, he lasted for only seven balls as pacer Sandeep Sharma (3/34) got rid of him.

It was the turn of spinners Rashid Khan (1/32) and Shahbaz Nadeem (2/19) to provide wickets in the middle-overs. Suryakumar Yadav (36) and Ishan Kishan (33) got starts but couldn't convert into big scores.

BRIEF SCORES

MI 149/8 (Kieron Pollard 41, Suryakumar Yadav 36; Sandeep Sharma 3/34, Shahbaz Nadeem 2/19) **lost to SRH 151/0** (David Warner 85 n o, Wriddhiman Saha 58 n o) by 10 wickets.

POINT TABLE table with columns: TEAM, M, W, L, N/R, NRR, PTS. Shows SRH leading with 14 points.

David Warner (85 n o, 58b, 10x4, 1x6) and Wriddhiman Saha (58 n o, 45b, 7x4, 1x6) played superbly to take SRH home without much difficulties completing the task in just 17.1 overs.

As a result, they made it into the play-offs, courtesy a better net run-rate as SRH, RCB and KKR finished their league campaign with 14 points. So the net run-rate proved to be the decider. SRH finished third with a net run-rate of 0.608 while RCB finished with -0.172. KKR finished their journey with -0.214.

Earlier, SRH bowlers played their part in a must-win game by re-

stricting MI to 149/8. MI would have ended up with much less if it wasn't for Kieron Pollard (41. 25b, 2x4, 1x6), who ensured his team put up



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sharjah, Nov 3: The best of Indian women's cricket will combine with and also go up against stars from countries like England, South Africa, and the West Indies when the third edition of the Women's T20 Challenge gets underway here Wednesday.

The four-match tournament will have three teams - defending champions Supernovas, last year's runners-up Velocity and Trailblazers - competing against each other once before the summit clash November 9. Cricketers from Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and New Zealand will also participate.

The Supernovas, led by Harmanpreet Kaur, have been invincible so far winning all the previous two editions. They will kickstart the tournament taking on Mithali Raj's Velocity in a repeat of last year's final eyeing a third title on the trot.

Harmanpreet was in top form in the last edition scoring two half centuries in three matches and in the final, her blistering 37-ball 51 sealed a second win for them.

She had a forgettable outing averaging a dismal 6.00 from five matches that cost India quite dearly in the tournament where they finished runners-up, after being bowled out for 99, chasing 185.

There will also be Jemimah Rodrigues to watch out for. The Mumbai cricketer was the top run-getter (123 runs at an average of 61.50) in their triumphant cam-

THE TEAMS FOR WOMEN'S T20 CHALLENGE... SUPERNOVAS: Harmanpreet Kaur (C), Jemimah Rodrigues, Chamari Atapattu, Priya Punia, Anuja Patil, Radha Yadav, Taniya Bhatia (wk), Shashikala Sirivardene, Poonam Yadav, Shakera Selman, Arundhati Reddy, Pooja Vastrakar, Ayushi Soni, Ayabonga Khaka and Muskan Malik. VELOCITY: Mithali Raj (C), Veda Krishnamurthy, Shafali Verma, Sushma Verma (wk), Ekta Bisht, Mansi Joshi, Shikha Pandey, Devika Vaidya, Sushree Dibyadarshini, Manali Dakshini, Leigh Kasparek, Danielle Wyatt, Sune Luus, Jahanara Alam and M Anagha. TRAILBLAZERS: Smriti Mandhana (C), Deepti Sharma, Punam Raut, Richa Ghosh, D Hemalatha, Nuzhat Parween (wk), Rajeshwari Gayakwad, Harleen Deol, Jhulan Goswami, Simaran Dil Bahadur, Salma Khatun, Sophie Ecclestone, Natthakan Chantham, Deandra Dottin and Kashvee Gautam.

paign last season. The opposition camp features Mithali, who will be keen to lead from the front and avenge their 2019 defeat when they lost by four wickets in a last over thriller. Velocity will rely heavily on 16-year-old Indian

sensation Shafali Verma who grabbed eyeballs by hitting most sixes (nine) in the World T20 and finished as the fifth highest run-scorer.

All the International players will be making a return to the field after the COVID-19 break that followed the Women's WT20 in February-March. It will be interesting to see their fitness levels, coming back after enduring a lockdown.

The tournament will also feature Thailand's opening batter Natthakan Chantham, who scored her country's first Women's WT20 half century. She became the first Associate cricketer to play in the tournament which is seen as a precursor to a full-fledged Women's IPL.

Natthakan will represent Trailblazers captained by Indian opener Smriti Mandhana. Trailblazers will also feature veteran pacer Jhulan Ghoswami, English spinner Sophie Ecclestone, and West Indian star Deandra Dottin.



Make helmets mandatory for batsmen: Sachin

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 3: Concerned about safety of the players, Indian batting legend Sachin Tendulkar Tuesday urged the ICC to make it mandatory for batsmen to wear helmets while playing at the professional level.

Tendulkar shared a video of Sunrisers Hyderabad all-rounder Vijay Shankar getting hit on the head when Kings XI Punjab fielder Nicholas Pooran threw the ball to-

wards the striker's end, attempting to run out the batsman.

In the video, originally posted by the official website of the Indian Premier League, Shankar is seen falling on the ground after taking the hit as physios rushed to check on him. Fortunately the 29-year-old was wearing a helmet.

"The game has become faster but is it getting safer? Recently we witnessed an incident which could've been nasty. Be it a spin-

ner or pacer, wearing a HELMET should be MANDATORY for batsmen at professional levels. Request @icc to take this up on priority," Tendulkar tweeted.

The tragic death of young Australian batsman Phillip Hughes after being hit by a Sean Abbott bowler during a domestic match in November 2014 had triggered a debate on players' safety.

Tendulkar also tagged all the cricket boards including the BCCI,

Cricket Australia and, England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB).

In another tweet he tagged Ravi Shastri, recalling an incident when the India head coach got hit by a full-toss bowled by Sunil Gavaskar during an exhibition match.

"This also reminded me of the time when you got hit after top-edging a full toss bowled by Mr Gavaskar during an exhibition game. That could've been a grave injury too but thankfully wasn't!"

Watson bids adieu to cricket

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sydney, Nov 3: Top Australian all-rounder Shane Watson Tuesday retired from competitive cricket following his team Chennai Super Kings' (CSK) exit from the Indian Premier League (IPL), calling himself 'ridiculously fortunate' to have enjoyed a career spanning 20 years.

The 39-year-old retired from international cricket in 2016 and bid adieu to the Australian Big Bash league last year. "It all started as a dream as a young kid saying to my Mum, as I watched a Test match, that I want to play for Australia. Now as I officially announce my retirement from all cricket I feel crazily lucky to live out my dream," Watson said on his YouTube channel, a link of which was posted on his Twitter handle.

"It really does feel like the right time. Knowing that I've played my last game of cricket ever, for my beloved CSK, who've been so incredibly good to me over the last three years.

"To think that I'm finishing up my playing days as a 39-year-old after all of my injury setbacks that I've had along the way, I feel so ridiculously fortunate."



In his spectacular international career, Watson played 59 Tests, 190 ODIs and 58 T20Is, scoring 10,950 runs and taking 291 wickets for Australia.

A sought-after player in the T20 format, Watson also has 3874 runs in 145 IPL games with four hundreds and 21 fifties. He also has 92 wickets.

Watson scored 299 runs in CSK's IPL campaign this year which ended on Sunday with the side failing to qualify for the playoffs for the first time. The Australian all-rounder remains one of the few players to have won the IPL with two different teams.

He was a star performer (472 runs and 17 wickets) for Rajasthan Royals during their win in the inaugural edition, while his century in the final against Mumbai Indians had sealed CSK's third IPL title in 2018 after they returned from a two-year ban.

During the triumphant 2018 season, Watson amassed 555 runs and picked up six wickets. "Now as one chapter closes, another very exciting one opens and I am forever grateful for everyone's love and support through this phase of my life and now on to the next very exciting chapter that awaits," he signed off.

Indian archery support staff tests positive

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pune, Nov 3: A support staff member of the Indian archery team training at the Army Sports Institute (ASI) here has tested positive for COVID-19 but the camp resumed after a two-day break, the Sports Authority of India (SAI) said Tuesday.

The SAI said it is getting RT-PCR test conducted for all national campers as per the protocol. The support staff member, who tested positive for the virus October 30, is undergoing treatment at a special COVID-care hospital in Pune outside the premises of ASI.

Following the COVID-19 positive case, the training camp was suspended for two days - October 31 and November 1 - but resumed Monday. "All precautions were taken with campers being isolated and restricted to their respective rooms for those two days. With due COVID precautions and monitoring of temperature, the camp has resumed with effect from November 2," the SAI said in a release.

NILAM SANJEEP WORKING ON TECHNIQUE FOR INDIA BERTH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Nov 3: Indian men's hockey team defender Nilam Sanjeep Xess says he is striving hard to address some technical issues in his game to cement his spot in the national side.

The 21-year-old, who has played 14 matches for the Indian team, said he has been honing his skills during the national camps. "It's been a little rocky start to my international career. My last tournament for India was the Olympic Test Event in August 2019. However, I have continued to work hard on my game in various national coaching camps since the competition," he said in a Hockey India release.

"I have singled out a few techniques that I need to work on and hopefully, I will improve as a player. I am very determined to raise my



game to a level with which I can cement a regular spot in the Indian team. That is my immediate target at the moment." Xess said he is very fortunate to be rubbing shoulders with Harmanpreet Singh and Rupinder Pal Singh. "I am very lucky to be practicing hockey with players such as Harmanpreet and Rupinder. They are very

inspiring athletes and I have learned a lot from them," he said.

"They have been terrific defenders for India in the last few years and I hope they continue to help India win many more matches in the future. Hopefully, I will be as good as them one day. We have a terrific balance in the defence unit, which is very valuable for the entire team."

Xess said that winning an Olympic medal is his ultimate dream as a sportsman. "It's the biggest achievement for any sportsman. If I make it to the Indian Olympic team next year, it will certainly be a dream come true for me," he said.

"Our team has grown from strength to strength in the last few years and all the hard work is paying off. Hopefully, the Indian team will make history in Tokyo next year."

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