



SONA'S ORDEAL

Singer Sona Mohapatra shares her 'victim blaming' experience with followers on social media

LEISURE P2



DEPRESSION FORMED

South Odisha may witness rain from Tuesday under the impact of a depression formed over Bay of Bengal

DOWNTOWN P3



MISSION MOON

China said that it would launch its first unmanned space mission Tuesday to collect samples

INTERNATIONAL P10

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Don't worry. Accept it. I've joined the ruling party

SHORT TAKES

Guv Ganeshi Lal's wife passes away



Bhubaneswar: Sushila Devi, the wife of Governor Ganeshi Lal, died at a private hospital here following a brief illness, officials said Monday. The first lady of the state, who was 75, breathed her last Sunday night, they said. "With profound grief and heavy heart, we inform that the First Lady of the State Smt Sushila Devi passed away yesterday night. Let us pray for the departed holy soul. Om Shanti!" the official Twitter handle of the Odisha Governor said. She is survived by husband, four daughters and three sons. A constant companion in various activities of the governor, she was religious and had a passion for socio-cultural pursuits, Raj Bhavan sources said.

Ex-Assam CM Gogoi dies at 86



Guwahati: Former Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi died here Monday while undergoing treatment for post-COVID-19 complications, state Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said. He was 86 and survived by wife Dolly, daughter Chandrima and son Gaurav, a Lok Sabha member. Gogoi, a three-time CM of the state from 2001 to 2016, breathed his last at the Gauhati Medical College and Hospital (GMCH) at 5.34 pm, Sarma said. The doctors conducted an ECG and found that his heart has stopped, following which the GMCH superintendent confirmed that he is no more, he said. The veteran Congress leader was first admitted to the hospital August 26. P9

AstraZeneca shot scores 90 per cent

AGENCIES

London, Nov 23: Britain's AstraZeneca said Monday its vaccine for the novel coronavirus could be around 90% effective without any serious side effects, giving the world another important tool to halt the COVID-19 pandemic.

The vaccine developed by Oxford University was 90% effective in preventing COVID-19 when it was administered as a half dose followed by a full dose at least one month apart, according to data from the late-stage trials in Britain and Brazil.

No serious safety events related to the vaccine have been confirmed and it was well tolerated across both dosing regimens, it said. "This vaccine's efficacy and safety confirm that it will be highly effective against COVID-19 and will have an immediate impact on this public health emergency," Pascal Soriot, Astra's chief executive, said in a statement.

AstraZeneca will have 200 million doses by the end of 2020, with 700 million doses ready globally by the end of the first quarter of 2021, operations executive Pam Cheng said on Monday.

The vaccine's effectiveness depended on the dosing, and fell to just 62% when given as two full doses rather than a half-dose first. But scientists cautioned against seeing this as evidence that it would be less useful than rival vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna, which each prevented about 95% of cases, according to interim data from their late-stage trials.

"I think it is a real fool's errand to start trying to pick these three (Pfizer/Moderna/Astra) apart on the basis of snippets of phase 3 data from press releases," said Danny Altmann, professor of immunology at Imperial College London. "For the bigger picture, my suspicion is that by the time we are a year down the line, we'll be using all three vaccines with about 90% protection - and we'll be a lot happier."

Scientists also noted there may be advantages to AstraZeneca's vaccine. "Importantly, from what we have heard the vaccine seems to prevent infection not just disease. This is important as the vaccine could reduce the spread of the virus as well as protect the vulnerable from severe disease," said Peter Horby, a professor of emerging infectious diseases and global health at the University of Oxford.

AstraZeneca's vaccine can also be distributed more easily because it can be kept at refrigerator temperature, unlike the drugs from Pfizer and Moderna which have to be stored frozen. That would make the AstraZeneca shot easier to transport and store globally, particularly in lower and middle-income countries.

ADVANTAGE INDIA

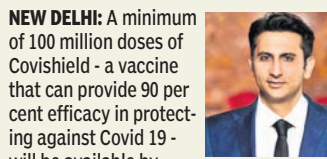
- AstraZeneca will have 200 million doses by the end of 2020, with 700 million doses ready globally by the end of the first quarter of 2021

- AstraZeneca's vaccine can also be distributed more easily because it can be kept at refrigerator temperature, unlike the drugs from Pfizer and Moderna

100 MN DOSES BY JAN: ADAR POONAWALLA

NEW DELHI: A minimum of 100 million doses of Covishield - a vaccine that can provide 90 per cent efficacy in protecting against Covid 19 - will be available by January and hundreds of million could be ready by the end of February, Adar Poonawalla of the Serum Institute of India said.

Poonawalla, whose company has an agreement with the government to mass-manufacture doses of the Covid vaccine, said around 40 million doses had already been produced and that the Centre would buy a large number of these doses for Rs250 or less. The vaccine will be sold for between ₹500 and ₹600 per dose for the private market, he added, explaining that this was to help distributors make some money. He also said the efficacy of the vaccine was "encouraging".



Chowdhury was former director, College of Development Council and Professor of Home Science, Berhampur University having more than 37 years of teaching experience. Likewise, Sabita Acharya, formerly chairman, Post Graduate Council and Professor of Anthropology, Utkal University has more than 31 years of teaching experience.

With more than 26 years of teaching experience Dinabandhu Sahoo currently serves as Professor at University of Delhi. Similarly, Nagaraju presently works as Professor in English, Central University of Karnataka.

Basa has 33 years of teaching experience and was Professor Tagore National Fellow, University of Culture, Government of India. Mohanty, a former Professor of Zoology, Utkal University has 35 years of teaching experience.

Guv appoints VCs for six varsities

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 23: Governor and Chancellor of Universities of Odisha Ganeshi Lal appointed Vice-Chancellors (VCs) for six universities of the state Monday.

The Governor appointed Aparajita Chowdhury, Sabita Acharya, Dinabandhu Sahoo, N Nagaraju, Kishore Kumar Basa and Prafulla Kumar Mohanty as VCs of Rama Devi Women's University, Utkal University, Fakir Mohan University, Gangadhar Meher University, North Odisha University and Khallikote University respectively.

In exercise of powers conferred under sub section (1) read with sub-section (7) of section 6 of Odisha Universities (Amendment) Act, 2020, Lal appointed VCs for a period of four years with effect from the date they assume office as such or until further orders whichever is earlier.

Chowdhury was former director, College of Development Council and Professor of Home Science, Berhampur University having more than 37 years of teaching experience. Likewise, Sabita Acharya, formerly chairman, Post Graduate Council and Professor of Anthropology, Utkal University has more than 31 years of teaching experience.

With more than 26 years of teaching experience Dinabandhu Sahoo currently serves as Professor at University of Delhi. Similarly, Nagaraju presently works as Professor in English, Central University of Karnataka.

Basa has 33 years of teaching experience and was Professor Tagore National Fellow, University of Culture, Government of India. Mohanty, a former Professor of Zoology, Utkal University has 35 years of teaching experience.

Start Strong. Grow Stronger.

1800 266 266 1 (tollfree)

RT-PCR -ve a must for entering Maha

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Nov 23: Maharashtra government Monday made it mandatory for those seeking to enter the state from Delhi, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Goa to carry RT-PCR negative reports. For those flying in, the RT-PCR sample collection should have been done within 96 hours of scheduled time of landing at airports in Maharashtra, a government order said.

In case of journey by train, the collection of RT-PCR samples should have been done within 72 hours of scheduled time of departure from airports in Maharashtra, a government order said. In case of journey by train, the collection of RT-PCR samples should have been done within 96 hours before the scheduled arrival in Maharashtra, the notification issued by Maharashtra chief secretary Sanjay Kumar said. There will be mandatory screening at border check posts for people coming by road. Passengers without symptoms will be allowed entry. Road travellers with symptoms shall have the option of turning back and going to their home to recuperate. The four states - Delhi, Rajasthan, Gujarat

Stemming spread

- In case of journey by train, the collection of RT-PCR samples should have been done within 96 hours before the scheduled arrival in Maharashtra

- There will be mandatory screening at border check posts for people coming by road. Passengers without symptoms will be allowed entry

- People with COVID-19 symptoms seeking to enter the state from Delhi, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Goa would be turned back

and Goa - have been reporting high caseload of the coronavirus disease, an official said. People with COVID-19 symptoms seeking to enter the state from Delhi, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Goa would be turned back, the order said. The order stipulated that all domestic passengers traveling from airports in NCR Delhi, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Goa shall carry RT-PCR negative test reports with them.

Stir by workers made unlawful

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 23: The Odisha Essential Services Maintenance Amendment Bill, 2020, which was passed by the State Assembly Monday, has made strike by employees engaged in essential public services unlawful.

The Odisha Essential Services (Maintenance) Act, 1988 was enacted to provide for the maintenance of certain essential services and ensure normal life of people in the state.

"In order to expand the scope of services covered under the Act, other services disruption of which results in grave hardship to the general public and jeopardise the administration, are proposed to be brought under its purview by way of amendment," Minister of State (Mos) for Home Dibya Shankar Mishra said.

Making an amendment to section 2 of the Act, the government prohibited disruption in services related to fire service, public order, public safety and security. Services connected with excise, forest, prison and correctional service have also been brought under its purview.

Similarly, services in the establishments, undertakings and agencies of the state government connected with the matters related to electronics and information & communication whose interruption would affect public administration has been included in the Act, Mishra said.

The government has also included another sub-clause in the Act, which says, "Any other service in connection with the affairs of the state on which the state government is of the opinion that strikes therein would prejudicially affect the maintenance of any public utility service or services necessary for life of the community; it may, by notification, declare to be an essential service for the purpose of this Act." It means the government has the



DRACONIAN ACT

- FIRE SERVICE, PUBLIC ORDER, PUBLIC SAFETY & SECURITY, EXCISE, FOREST, PRISON AND CORRECTIONAL HOMES BROUGHT UNDER THE ACT

- GOVERNMENT CAN IMPOSE ESMA ON ANY PUBLIC UTILITY SERVICE BY ISSUING A NOTIFICATION; EMPLOYEES PARTICIPATING/INSTIGATING ILLEGAL STRIKE WILL BE PUNISHED

power to impose ESMA on any public utility service by issuing a notification.

In the existing Act, the government has included services connected to transportation, water supply, public health & sanitation and power supply under the ESMA. The government has also included provisions for penalty and punishment for irate employees and instigators.

As per the new norms, an individual who expends or supplies money in furtherance of or in support of strike which is illegal under the Act, will be punished with imprisonment for one year or with fine upto ₹5,000 or both.

Similarly, the amended Act has provision to take disciplinary action against an employee who participates in a strike which is illegal under the Act or instigate others to hold such strike.

The Assembly also passed Bills for minor amendment to the Odisha Lokayukta Act, 2014 and Odisha Local Fund Audit Act, 1948.

GOLDEN CARPET



Farmhands busy harvesting paddy crop to take it home before low pressure rain hits the state, at Uttara on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar, Monday

State tweaks school merger plan

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 23: Conceding the demands of the Opposition, the state government Monday decided to modify the criteria for merger of government schools in the backward KBK (Koraput-Bolangir-Kalahandi) region.

Making an announcement in the Assembly Monday, School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash said the schools having less than 15 students instead of 20 as decided earlier in the KBK areas will be merged. The same relaxation will be given for scheduled areas as well, he said. Following a day-long debate in the house Sunday, the minister had agreed to relax the school merger criteria for scheduled areas even though Opposition members demanded relaxation for both KBK and tribal areas.

Opposition members Monday

raised the issue in the floor of the house to pile up pressure on the government.

Participating in a debate on the issue, Leader of Opposition PK Naik, Congress Legislative Party (CLP) leader Narasingha Mishra, other Congress leaders Sura Routray and Taraprasad Bahinipati have demanded relaxation in the school merger norms for the non-scheduled areas of the KBK region.

The state government had identified 14,382 schools having below 40 students. However, after scrutiny at the district and state-level, the number comes down to 7,772, of which 6,048 schools have student strength of less than 20. To implement the decision, the government is going to spend around ₹300 crore. The merger of schools had been planned in accordance with the law and guidelines of the Niti Aayog. Besides, the new National Education Policy 2020 also has a similar provision.



FUEL PRICES UP FOR FOURTH DAY IN A ROW

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Nov 23: Petrol and diesel prices in the city went up again for the fourth day in a row. Petrol price went up by ₹0.07 and diesel by ₹0.19 Monday. With the addition, petrol price stood ₹82.17 and diesel at ₹78.

International oil rates broke a nearly two-month-long hiatus in price revision. Petrol price in Delhi Monday was hiked to ₹81.53 a litre from ₹81.46 per litre, according to a price notification from oil marketing companies. Similarly, diesel prices rose to ₹71.25 a litre in Delhi from a level of ₹71.07 a litre Sunday.

State-owned fuel retailers started raising fuel prices from Friday. In four days, petrol price went up by 47 paise and diesel rates have risen by 79 paise per litre. Petrol prices had been static since September 22, and diesel rates hadn't changed since October 2.

Though retail pricing of petrol and diesel has been deregulated and oil marketing companies were following a daily price revision formula, the same was suspended for almost two months to prevent volatility in international oil markets from impacting fuel prices regularly during the pandemic.

But with crude on the boil again on news of a successful coronavirus vaccine launch soon, the OMCs have finally resorted to price increase again to cover for their under-recovery on the sale of two petroleum products.

The benchmark Brent crude has crossed \$45 a barrel on Intercontinental Exchange (ICE). It has remained at over \$43 a barrel for most part of November.

The OMCs need almost 40 paise per litre increase in retail price of petrol and diesel to cover for \$1 increase in crude. Going by this yardstick, product prices would have to be increased by up to ₹2 per litre to cover under recovery on its sale.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	44077.15 ↑ 194.90
NIFTY	12926.50 ↑ 67.50
DOLLAR	74.52 ↓ ₹0.10
EURO	88.37 ↑ ₹0.18
GOLD	₹49,400 ↓ ₹812
SILVER	₹60,411 ↓ ₹1747

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	29.2°C	28.5°C
MIN	18.1°C	16.0°C
Humidity	86%	67%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Mainly clear sky	

leisure



SHAGGY WANTS TO GET OFF HIS DEVICES

Popular singer Shaggy is done with social media, and says he got to learn to get off his devices in 2021. The 52-year-old rediscovered his love of cooking amid the Covid pandemic, and now he is keen to detach himself from social media, reports *femalefirst.co.uk*.

SWIFT WINS ARTIST OF THE YEAR AT AMERICAN MUSIC AWARDS

Singer Taylor Swift won Artist of the Year award for the third year in a row at the American Music Awards (AMAs), but had to skip the ceremony as she was busy re-recording her old albums November 22, the night of the AMAs, reports *eonline.com*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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

ARIES
Friends, friends, and more friends – that's what the day will be all about. Life seems to be one big party, even if all you're doing is having tea together! But reserve the evening for that one special friend, suggests Ganesh.

TAURUS
As an administrator, you will command with an iron fist today, predicts Ganesh. In the afternoon, you may find change slowly creeping in; you may discover a more harmonious approach to managing people as compared to a dictatorial style. You will come out with flying colours from any adverse situations.

GEMINI
Today, you will be at complete peace with yourself and your surroundings. So, it is rather unlikely that you will give in to provocations and lose your temper. Health of a family member may cause some anxiety, but more or less, you will remain unperturbed by the word.

CANCER
Your peers will be impressed by your professional efficiency today, forecasts Ganesh. You had better postpone auction bids or sealed tenders for some other day. You are likely to do well in interviews, says Ganesh.

LEO
It's an early thanksgiving for you today, says Ganesh, as you feel full of the spirit of joy and blessing. Academically, this might push you towards developing a penchant for subjects like philosophy and metaphysics. Culturally, this translates into a desire to learn and hone your creative skills. Make the best of this fruitful day and remember to thank God for the mercies and magnanimity bestowed upon you.

VIRGO
The tempest of anger runs wild. You are most likely to blow hotter than Mount Vesuvius ever did, predicts Ganesh. In the afternoon, you may chalk out a big business plan. Peers will stand by your side at the workplace. But in the evening, try spending your time meditating and cooling those nerves, advises Ganesh.

LIBRA
Think long and hard about all things past, present and future, says Ganesh, since there are chances that you may be in a pensive mood today. Try your best to step out of your brooding frame of mind. You might have to manage balancing your personal and professional life. But, your business will progress as expected. So relax, and look forward to an evening that promises to be a pleasant one, especially in the company of a special person of the opposite sex.

SCORPIO
Your entrepreneurship today will reflect a lot of your creativity and artistic sense. Romantic diversions will bring you immense pleasure in the afternoon. Have your close friends over in the evening and spend some quality time, says Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
A poignant and disturbing day is in the offing. At work, Lady Luck will be on your team. Don't let your sentiments cloud your logic though, says Ganesh. In relationship matters, don't keep high expectation, as they may put you under tremendous pressure.

CAPRICORN
You may have a good control over your temper, but Ganesh says you are very likely to lose it today, and most likely, at work. For this one day, think before you say anything and avoid getting into any sort of arguments or scuffle. Make sure you take measured steps, for it may not be a very good day, but you can do your bit to prevent it from getting worse.

AQUARIUS
You need a break! Plan a trip, go for a movie, join a weekend meditation retreat. You may be burning yourself out. A little holiday will get you going once again. If nothing else, a game of tennis, or a brisk walk in the evening should do the trick.

PISCES
Your social standing ought to receive a boost today, and the financial success coming your way today plays no small part in it, says Ganesh. You may find yourself enjoying your own company in the afternoon, but come evening, you are likely to find yourself indulging in some intellectual discussion in the company of like-minded people.

BAFTA starts hunting fresh talents in India

India is one of the most prolific and accomplished industries and a fascinating centre for screen arts, says a British Academy official



MUMBAI: The British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) is taking its first step into India with a talent hunt initiative that lets the Academy identify and nurture up to five talents working in film, games, or television in India.

The exercise, known as BAFTA Breakthrough India, is part of the Academy's year-round effort to support new talent, operating alongside their Awards ceremonies.

The programme has in the past supported artists such as Tom Holland, Letitia Wright, Florence Pugh, Jessie Buckley, Josh O'Connor, and Callum Turner.

Coming to India is part of BAFTA's global expansion effort of the initiative. BAFTA Breakthrough India aims at facilitating the development of relationships between British and Indian talents.

In 2020, BAFTA will identify, celebrate, and support up to five talents working in film, games, or television in India, through this program in the country. The chosen participants will be offered a year-long support programme from BAFTA and be

showcased across India and the UK. By showcasing talent globally, BAFTA Breakthrough aims to push their careers ahead by helping them to learn more about the industry, overcome barriers to progression, and network globally with people who can influence their careers.

BAFTA Breakthrough India is a new international iteration of the successful Breakthrough initiative, which has been running in the UK since 2013 and China since 2019. The effort was launched in the United States this year, supporting over 130 emerging talents to date.

"India is one of the most prolific and accomplished industries and a fascinating centre for the screen arts with lots of creative diversity, which extends far beyond the world-famous 'Bollywood'. Some of the best practitioners in the world work in Indian film, games, and television – and practitioners from around the world have much to learn from them," said

Tim Hunter, Director of Learning and New Talent, BAFTA.

Sesame Street makes debut in Hindi, Telugu

NEW DELHI: The iconic US children's television show *Sesame Street* has made its debut in India with the launch of new YouTube channels in Hindi and Telugu - Sesame

Workshop. It brings educational content featuring the colourful and furry Muppets of Sesame Street to children across India.

Both channels will stream a variety of content for kids aged 3-8 years and will introduce Indian kids and families to favourite global Muppet characters such as Elmo, Cookie Monster, Abby Cadabby, and many more.

Sonali Khan, Managing Director of Sesame Workshop - India, said: "Now more than ever, young children and families need quality early learning at home and

the *Sesame Street* Muppets are here to help with the playfulness and humour for which the brand is known for around the world. With many children remaining out of school, our new YouTube channels

will bring early learning to young children at a time critical to their healthy development, all at no-cost to families and accessible at any time."



Sona opens up on victim blaming

MUMBAI: Singer Sona Mohapatra Monday shared her experience with victim blaming with followers on social media.

"During my B.Tech Engg, walking to the microprocessor lab in a loose khadi green kurta with a salwar. Seniors whistling, speculating loudly about my bra size. One 'well wisher' walked up and asked why I wasn't wearing my dupatta 'properly', fully covering my b****s," she tweeted.

Sona in her tweet used the hashtag #INeverAskForIt, a movement that has been launched to protest against victim blaming, especially in the case of sexual assault survivors, who are frequently asked what they wore at the time of a sexual assault.

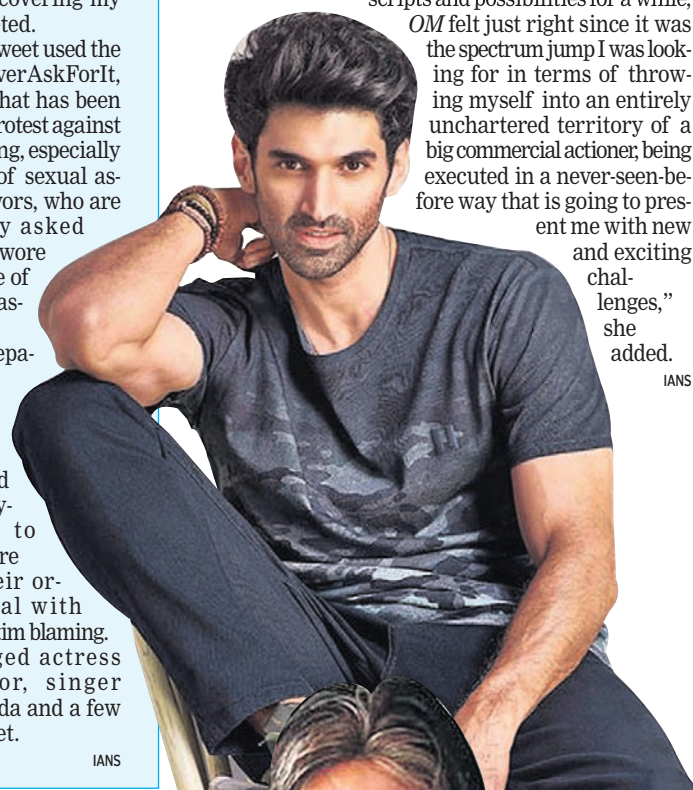
In a separate tweet, the singer urged everyone to share their ordeal with victim blaming. She tagged actress Sonam Kapoor, singer Chinmayi Sripaada and a few others in her tweet.

Sanjana, Aditya team up for OM

MUMBAI: Actress Sanjana Sanghi, who starred opposite Sushant Singh Rajput in *Dil Bechara*, is set to join actor Aditya Roy Kapur in the upcoming action film, *OM: The Battle Within*.

"Getting to delve into the action genre so early on, is something I view as an absolute honour and have immense gratitude for my producers and my director Kapil (Verma) for the potential they have seen in me being able to pull off such a part in our film," Sanjana said.

"After exploring many scripts and possibilities for a while, OM felt just right since it was the spectrum jump I was looking for in terms of throwing myself into an entirely uncharted territory of a big commercial actioner, being executed in a never-seen-before way that is going to present me with new and exciting challenges," she added.



Amitabh encourages fans to fight pandemic

MUMBAI: Amitabh Bachchan Monday encouraged fans to fight the ongoing pandemic bravely, with a message saying they are not alone. Big B shared a selfie on his verified Instagram account where he can be seen travelling to work in his car wearing a mask.

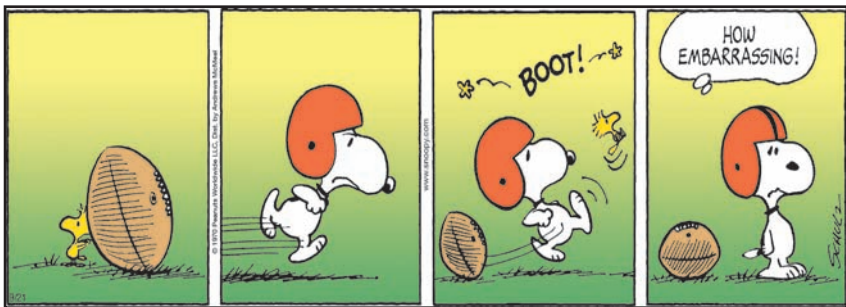
"Off to work .. a long day like everyday .. stay safe .. you are not alone .. we are all in this together and shall remain together to fight .. love you all," he captioned the photo.

Bachchan is currently seen on television hosting the popular television quiz show *Kaun Banega Crorepati* and he keeps sharing work-related updates for his fans and followers on social media.

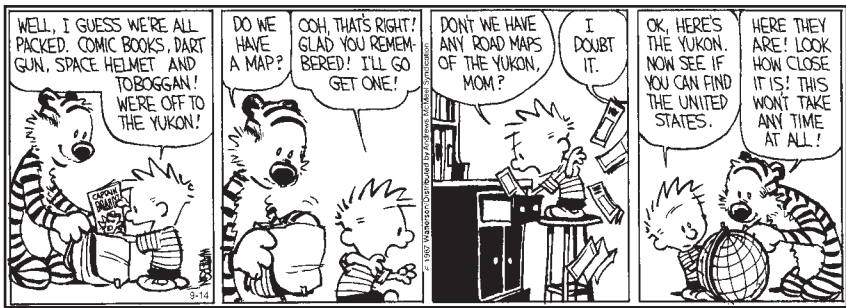
"At work and a short break for a quick lunch .. at it since 6am, and if all goes well shall wrap in a few hours and then gym gym gym," the actor had tweeted a few days ago.



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

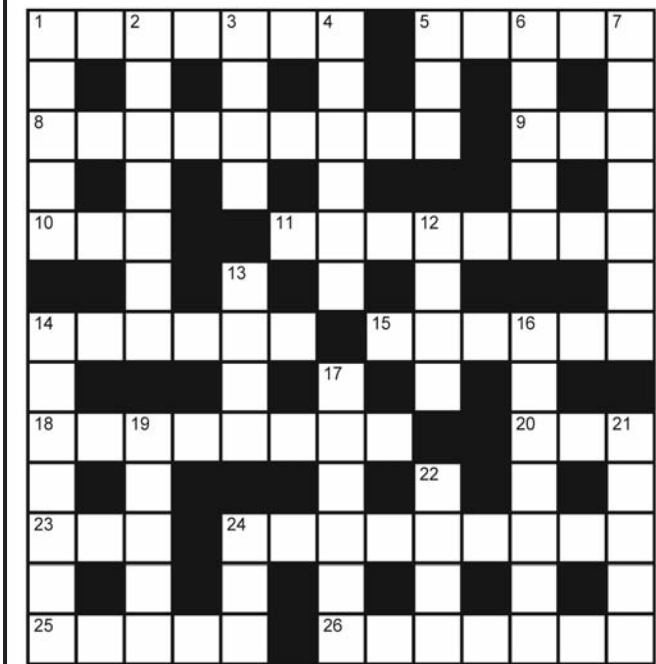


BREVITY



FUN post

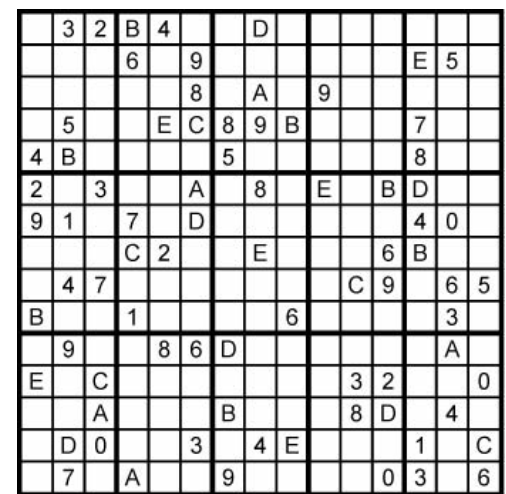
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Idiotic
 - 5 Free-for-all
 - 8 Crumbled
 - 9 Quarry
 - 10 Took the gold
 - 11 Military action
 - 14 Guru's forte
 - 15 Ill-tempered
 - 18 Small celestial body
 - 20 River inlet
 - 23 Possess
 - 24 Steep cliff
 - 25 Kitchen appliance
 - 26 Opposed to
- Down**
- 1 Cousin of a cockatoo
 - 2 Gives in
 - 3 Orderly
 - 4 Royal home
 - 5 Flower starter
 - 6 Top dog
 - 7 Numbers game
 - 12 Stopper
 - 13 Tusked animal
 - 14 Munitions
 - 16 UFO inhabitant?
 - 17 Movie theatre
 - 19 Ballroom dance
 - 21 Argus-eyed
 - 22 Tower site
 - 24 Bakery offering

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



CROSSWORD

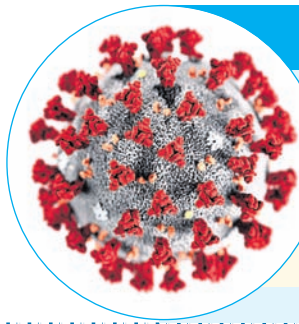
SUDOKU

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



FOR LORD'S ATTIRE

Preparations for the *Nagarijuna Beshha* of Lord Jagannath and Balabhadra scheduled for November 27 in full swing at Puri, Monday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	5,91,68,701	4,09,28,919	13,96,455
India	91,40,312	85,61,444	1,33,773
Odisha	3,14,629	3,06,726	1,657

WINGED BEAUTY



A butterfly lands on a flower to suck nectar in Bhubaneswar, Monday

PHOTO: BIKASH NAYAK

Enrolment dips in state-run schools

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 23: Even though a slew of measures have been undertaken to motivate parents/children towards government-run schools, enrolment in these schools continues to take a nosedive each passing year.

The state-run primary schools have failed to enrol a large number of students in the past few years whereas the admission rate is higher in private and English-medium schools. This was revealed from a written reply given by School & Mass Education (S&ME) Minister Samir Ranjan Dash in the Assembly, Monday.

As per data given by the minister, altogether 65,43,973 students were enrolled in government schools across the state in the year 2014-15



IN THE HOUSE

which came down to 63,91,248 in 2015-16. The enrolment further went southwards from 62,30,310 in 2016-17 to 59,43,448 in 2017-18.

The minister's reply also revealed that the enrolment further declined to 57,42,649 in 2018-19 and 55,47,116

BLEAK SCENARIO

The state-run primary schools have failed to enrol a large number of students in the past few years whereas the admission rate is higher in private and English-medium schools

Altogether 65,43,973 students were enrolled in government schools across the state in the year 2014-15 which came down to 63,91,248 in 2015-16

The enrolment further went southwards from 62,30,310 in 2016-17 to 59,43,448 in 2017-18

However, the enrolment in private schools has increased by 3,02,212 during 2014-15 to 2019-20

the next year.

In total, the student strength in government-run schools has come down by 9,96,857 between 2014-15 and 2019-20 academic sessions.

However, the enrolment in private schools has increased by 3,02,212

during the same period. The number of students enrolled in all private schools of the state in 2014-15 was 10,68,069. However, this has increased to a whopping 13,70,281 in 2019-20.

Interestingly, the total number of students in both government and private schools in Odisha is also showing a decreasing trend. The number of students in both private and government schools in the year 2014-15 was 76,12,042 which declined to 69,17,394 in the year 2019-20.

Similarly, the enrolment of SC and ST students also decreased each year during the period. The number of SC students has come down to 13,17,369 in 2019-20 from 14,58,553 in 2014-15 whereas the number of ST students has declined by 2,35,612 during the period.

CROREPATI ASST PROF UNDER VIG SCANNER

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 23: Vigilance sleuths Monday raided the office and residences of Prasanna Kumar Mishra, an assistant professor of Mathematics at College of Engineering and Technology (CET), Ghatikia here.

The raid was conducted over the allegations of Mishra accumulating assets disproportionate to his known sources of income.

The Vigilance sleuths unearthed properties worth ₹2,19,63,219 including two four-storied buildings in Bhubaneswar, two plots in the city, vehicles, gold and silver ornaments.

FAKE PAAN MASALA WORTH ₹1CR SEIZED

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 23: As part of its investigation into the seizure of a bag containing ₹30 lakh from Khandagiri area here recently, the Commissionerate Police conducted a raid at a fake paan masala manufacturing unit at Jagatpur area of Cuttack, Monday.

On receiving information from Khandagiri police, Jagatpur police carried out the raid and seized around 50 packets of duplicate paan masala worth over ₹1 crore from the spot.

The illegal unit was running from an Ice-cream factory at Jagatpur Industrial Estate. However, the workers engaged there gave the police a slip. Earlier, the Khandagiri police with the help of Tangi police raided another fake paan masala unit at Nirgundi in Choudwar area. However, the police failed to arrest the owner of the units Khirodh Nath.

Sources claimed that the money seized from Mahadev Prasad Das from Tapovan area under Khandairi police limits Friday originally belongs to Nath. Meanwhile, the state GST department officials have started investigation into the source of ₹30 lakh. The Income Tax officials have also been requested to ascertain whether the money was accumulated legally or not.

Depression to trigger rain from today

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 23: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) Monday said some parts of the state would witness rain from Tuesday under the impact of possible cyclonic storm in Bay of Bengal.

The well-marked low pressure area formed over southwest & adjoining southeast Bay of Bengal concentrated into a depression over southwest & adjoining southeast Bay of Bengal, the IMD said in a bulletin.

It moved northwestwards and lay centered near about 550 km east southeast of Puducherry and 590 km southeast of Chennai. It is very likely to intensify into a cyclonic storm during next 24 hours.

Though there will not be any direct impact of the storm on Odisha, light to moderate rainfall would occur in some parts of the state during next few days.

Light rainfall may occur at one or two places in Koraput, Rayagada and Gajapati Tuesday while some places of south Odisha including Malkangiri, Koraput, Rayagada, Gajapati & Ganjam and Kandhamal are likely to witness thundershower Wednesday.

Heavy rainfall would occur at one or two places in Malkangiri, Koraput, Rayagada and Gajapati, November 26. Some places of south Odisha will continue to receive light rainfall till November 28 morning, the Met department said.

Keeping the IMD forecast in view, the Special Relief Commissioner

3 trains cancelled partially

BHUBANESWAR: Owing to a likely cyclonic storm which is heading towards Pondicherry, the Bhubaneswar-Pondicherry Special from Bhubaneswar will run up to Chennai Egmore and will remain cancelled from Chennai Egmore to Pondicherry November 24. Similarly, the Pondicherry-Bhubaneswar Special from Pondicherry November 25 will originate from Chennai Egmore instead of Pondicherry to Bhubaneswar and will remain cancelled between Pondicherry and Chennai Egmore. Likewise, Pondicherry-Howrah Special from Pondicherry November 25 will originate from Villupuram instead of Pondicherry to Howrah and will remain cancelled from Pondicherry to Villupuram.

(SRC) advised District Collectors of south Odisha to take necessary steps to avoid damage to harvested paddy crops.

Meanwhile, the night temperature has come down in the state. Sonepur was the coldest town with a minimum temperature of 11.2 degrees Celsius during past 24 hours.

Phulbani and Daringibadi recorded a lowest temperature of 12.5 degrees Celsius while it was 12.6 degrees at Jharsuguda and 13.2 degrees each at Bhawanipatna and Baripada. Similarly, Keonjhar, Angul and Talcher recorded night temperatures of 13.4, 13.6 and 15 degrees Celsius, respectively.

HC asks govt to clarify on school fee waiver

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Nov 23: The Orissa High Court Monday sought a clarification from the state government on private school fee waiver in the wake of the pandemic.

A division bench of Chief Justice Mohammad Rafiq and Justice Biswanath Rath asked the state government to hold discussions with the private school bodies and decide an amount that can be waived off in the wake of the pandemic.

The HC has scheduled the next hearing for December 2.

A petition was earlier filed by a state-level parents' outfit seeking waiver of fees in private schools of Odisha in view of the COVID-19 outbreak. The Odisha government had clarified its stand on the matter during the

hearing November 10.

The Odisha Parents Federation and a few other individuals had moved the HC seeking exemption of tuition fees by private schools across the state. In their plea, they said that fees should be waived as students were not being able to attend schools after the government declared COVID-19 outbreak as a 'disaster'.

The School and Mass Education department had informed the HC about the school fee waiver. However, it was objected by the private schools.

"Although the schools were shut in the wake of the Covid-19, students of around 6,000 private schools in Odisha were being imparted education online," they argued while dismissing the state government's fee waiver structure.



The High Court has scheduled the next hearing for December 2

e-Lok Adalats settle 2,232 cases in state

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Nov 23: As many as 2,232 cases have been settled from June to September 2020 through e-Lok Adalats organised in Odisha by Legal Services Authorities to facilitate access to justice during Covid-19 pandemic.

According to the Minister of Law and Justice, as many as 20,780 cases were taken up by e-Adalats in the state as on September 12 of which 2,232 were disposed of resulting in settlement of ₹48.97 crore.

The ministry further stated that around 2,061 pending cases were disposed of while 171 cases were disposed of pre-litigation stage.

Significantly, the legal services authorities had adapted to the new normal and moved Lok Adalat to virtual platform in the period of turbulence caused by the pandemic.

"From June 2020 to October 2020, 27 e-Lok Adalats were

RESOLVING DISPUTES VIRTUALLY

Altogether 20,780 cases were taken up by e-Adalats in the state as on September 12 out of which 2,232 were disposed of resulting in settlement of ₹48.97 crore



Online Lok Adalat, popularly known as e-Lok Adalat, is one such innovation of Legal Services Institutions where technology has been used to its maximum advantage and has become a platform to deliver justice at the doorstep of people

organised in 15 states wherein 4.83 lakh cases were taken up and 2.51 lakh cases disposed of resulting in settlement of ₹1,409 crore. During November, e-Lok Adalats have been organised in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Telangana so far wherein 16,651 cases were taken up and 12,686 disposed of re-

sulting in settlement of ₹107.4 crore," the ministry said.

In order to facilitate access to justice amidst the constraints placed by Covid-19 and various public health guidelines, the Legal Services Authorities have ingeniously integrated technology into its conventional methods of justice delivery.

"Online Lok Adalat, popularly known as e-Lok Adalat, is one such innovation of Legal Services Institutions where technology has been used to its maximum advantage and has become a platform to deliver justice at the doorstep of people. E-Lok Adalats are also cost effective as it eliminates the need for organisational expenses," the ministry said.

It is to be mentioned here that Lok Adalats (state as well as national) are an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mode wherein pre-litigation and pending cases in the courts are resolved on the basis of amicable settlement without any expense on the part of litigants. It is free of cost and expeditious method of bringing litigating parties on the same side and saving them from the rigours of trial under adversarial system of adjudication which is generally perceived to be time consuming, complex and costly.

#SteelFact
Globally, the steel industry is developing technologies to **reduce CO₂ emissions** by more than 50%.
Source: World Steel Association

REDUCING CARBON FOOTPRINT FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

TATA STEEL KALINGANAGAR

Maximum steel output, minimal carbon footprint, a commitment to our planet - Our Kalinganagar plant is designed to make technology serve the environment. It is our tribute to the unbounded spirit of new India. And the promise of good for tomorrow. Sure, we make steel. **But #WeAlsoMakeTomorrow.**

Tata Steel is now a part of **ResponsibleSteel™**, the industry's first global multi-stakeholder standard and certification initiative.

www.wealsomaketomorrow.com | www.tatasteel.com

Covid claims 17 more lives in state

ODISHA'S COVID-19 TALLY CLIMBS TO 3,14,629 WITH 668 MORE PEOPLE TESTING POSITIVE FOR THE VIRAL INFECTION IN 24 HOURS

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Nov 23: State's Covid-19 caseload rose to 3,14,629 with 668 people testing positive for the viral infection, while 17 more fatalities pushed Odisha's death toll to 1,657, an official of Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said.

Of the new cases detected from 28 districts, 385 were reported from different quarantine centres, while the remaining 283 were local contact cases.

Nuapada district registered the highest number of 68 infections followed by Khurda at 56 and Sundargarh at 55.

Taking to Twitter, the H&FW department said, "Regret to inform the demise of seventeen #COVID19 positive patients while under treatment in hospitals."

The deaths were reported from Khurda, Sundargarh, Sambalpur, Bargarh Jharsuguda, Bolangir and Kendrapara districts, the official said.

A total of 53 other Covid-19 patients have also died in the state due to comorbidities, said the official. Khurda district alone accounted for 280 deaths followed by Ganjam at 239, Cuttack at 132 and Sundargarh at 127.

The state has thus far conducted over 56.04 lakh sample tests, including 40,606 Sunday. The positivity rate stands at 5.61 per cent.

Meanwhile, another 913 Covid patients recovered in Odisha, taking the total recoveries in the coastal state to 3,06,726, the H&FW department tweeted.

The recovered cases include 118 from Sundargarh, 111 from Mayurbhanj, 66 from Cuttack, 64 from Angul and 62 from Khurda, the department said.

	CONFIRMED	ACTIVE	RECOVERED	DECEASED
Odisha	3,14,629 [+668]	7,106 [+651]	3,05,813	1,657 [+17] Other Than Covid: 53
	3.44 % of India case	1.6 % of India case	3.57 % of India case	1.24 % of India case
India	91,40,312 [+44,404]	4,43,033 [+2,480]	85,61,444 [+41,405]	1,33,773 [+1,500]

Numbers vis-à-vis national data



A police personnel donates plasma in Bhubaneswar, Monday (PIC: @CPBBSRCTC)

IN NUMBERS

Nuapada dist registers the highest number of 68 infections followed by Khurda at 56 and Sundargarh at 55

The deaths are reported from Khurda, Sundargarh, Sambalpur, Bargarh Jharsuguda, Bolangir and Kendrapara dists

Khurda alone accounts for 280 deaths followed by Ganjam at 239, Cuttack at 132 and Sundargarh at 127

The state has thus far conducted over 56.04 lakh sample tests including 40,606 Sunday

Odisha's positivity rate stands at 5.61 per cent

Senior babus depose before Lokayukta

BHUBANESWAR: Some of the top bureaucrats of the state, allegedly involved in the PPE kit and mask scandal, Monday appeared before the Lokayukta at Toshali Bhawan here for hearing. The senior IAS officers— Hemant Sharma, state Industries Secretary and Yamini Sarangi, Managing Director of the Odisha State Medical Corporation Limited (OSMCL)—presented their views on the allegations of massive irregularities during the purchase of masks and PPE kits. This is the third time, first September 14 and later November 4, when both the officers appeared before the Lokayukta in connection with the irregularities.

PPE KIT SCAM
Chief Secy, Asit Tripathy who was directed by the Lokayukta to submit all details regarding purchase of PPE kits, presented his reply in a letter through Hemant Sharma

The Lokayukta expressed displeasure over the reply as Tripathy allegedly intentionally avoided giving the particular info sought by the body

Meanwhile, Chief Secretary, Asit Tripathy who was directed by the Lokayukta to submit all the details regarding the purchase of PPE kits, reportedly presented his reply in a letter through Sharma. However, Lokayukta expressed displeasure

over the reply as Tripathy allegedly intentionally avoided giving the particular information sought by the body. The Lokayukta also asked the two bureaucrats whether they had went through the facts presented in the letter by the Chief Secretary which they denied.

The Lokayukta later fixed December 7 for the final hearing in the case. Congress party leader Sudarshan Das and non-government organisation, Odisha Bikash Parisada (OBP) have lodged complaint with the Lokayukta alleging massive corruption during the procurement of masks and PPE kits required in the treatment of Covid-19 patients in the state.

AGITATION AHEAD



Members of central trade union federation meet at INTUC office in Bhubaneswar, Monday, ahead of the nation-wide agitation scheduled for November 26 (OP PHOTO)

Implement Orissa Prohibition Act, 1956: Activists urge govt

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 23: Milita Odisha Nisha Nibarana Abhijana (MONNA) Monday demanded implementation of Orissa Prohibition Act 1956 on the 120th birth anniversary of ex-Chief Minister late Nabakrushna Choudhury.

The former Chief Minister Choudhury had introduced the Bill for complete prohibition on manufacturing, traffic and consumption of liquor and intoxicating drugs. This Act also provided punishment under Section-5 for altering or attempting to alter any denatured spirit and for possession of such spirit. But, it has discontinued since 1957.

President of MONNA Padma Charan Naik said that the Act was introduced by ex-chief minister Choudhury for prohibiting liquor but unfortunately the following Chief



Ministers and governments discontinued the Act. We urged the government to implement the Act soon. Earlier, the activists had protested against the liquor sales policy of Odisha government that allows online sales and home delivery of alcoholic beverages amid Covid-19 lockdown.

Kanhu Charan Behura secretary of MONNA said that April 1, 2016, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar declared Bihar a dry state, following in the footsteps of Gujarat, Mizoram, Nagaland and

Lakshadweep. This decision was welcomed by women population of the state. Similarly, the Odisha government should understand the emotions of women population of the state who got affected majorly due to consumption of liquor as the liquor sometimes is the main element behind violence against women. "State government's initiative to add nonviolence in preamble of the Indian Constitution is a disrespect to people like Mahatma Gandhi who dreamt of liquor-free India," said Behura.

MISSION: ENCROACHMENT-FREE SILVER CITY



An excavator engaged by Cuttack Municipal Corporation pulls down illegal structures between the railway station and College Square in the Silver City, Monday (OP PHOTO)

OUAT workers begin strike

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 23: The workers' union of Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT) Monday started the strike and will boycott work 'until the OUAT authorities do not fulfill their demands.'

Members of the union claimed that they have been working for various departments of OUAT for last several years. But, they are getting very low salaries. Besides, the workers are yet to get EPF and other benefits.

The workers claimed that they had raised the issue with the OUAT Vice Chancellor and the Khurda District Labour Officer and the state Agriculture minister but to no avail.

OUAT workers' union president Janardhan Pati said, "Around 600 workers have been working at various departments of the university for last several years. But, the



OUAT workers' union president Janardhan Pati has said that the OUAT VC had assured them June 8 this year to fulfill their demands within 15 days. As of now, no step has been taken in this regard, he added

workers are now getting ₹300 as daily remuneration. We have raised the issue with the authorities concerned several times, but nothing

has been done so far." Pati claimed that the OUAT VC had assured them June 8 this year to fulfill their demands within 15 days. As of now, no step has been taken in this regard, he said.

The workers' union has been demanding for equal pay for equal work, EPF and ESI benefits, recruitment to the vacant posts of Group-D employees and payment of salaries for the coronavirus-induced lockdown period.

Missing for days, jeweller's body found in a jungle

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bolangir, Nov 23: Body of a trader of Hatisara village under Deogaon police limits in this district who had been missing for 18 days was found in a jungle Monday.

The deceased trader was identified as Gajanan Meher, a jeweller.

According to a source, Meher went outside his house November 5, informing his mother that he was going to Patnagarh. It was when he did not return home for a long time, his family members started searching for him but in vain.

The next morning, Meher's family lodged a missing report with the police. Again, Meher's elder brother lodged a report with the police accusing Sira Rana of Sarasbahal village of kidnapping his brother.

Lifer for 2 for raping minor

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Nov 23: A local court handed down life imprisonment to two persons after convicting them in a 2019-gangrape case of a minor girl under Joda police limits in Keonjhar district, Monday.

The convicts were identified as Srivastav Lohar, 20, and Dumbi Munda, 25, of Azad slum under Joda police limits. The court of additional district judge and special judge Lokanath Sahu also slapped a penalty of ₹10,000 on the convicts while ordering for their life imprisonment under POCSO Act. The judge also acquitted three others on lack of sufficient evidence.

According to the case diary, Lohar was in love with the minor girl. He took the survivor to a nearby ground June 24, last year and detained her on some pretext till late night.

The rest of the persons joined him and raped the girl in turns.

A lacklustre 'Anla Navami' observed amid Covid curbs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 23: Keeping in mind the COVID-19 pandemic in Odisha, the Puri district administration announced the imposition of Section 144 around the Sakhigopal temple's premises on the occasion of 'Anla Navami', or 'Radha Pada Darshan'.

Amid such gloomy scenes, Anla Navami, a major Hindu festival of Odisha, beginning Monday has apparently seen muted celebrations.

Many festivals have been prescribed to be observed with strict restrictions to keep the observers far from the disease. 'Anla Navami' is one of them. Since it is observed on the ninth day in the month of Kartika, it is called 'Anla Navami'. According to experts, Anla (Amla), the Indian gooseberry, is high in medicinal value. Perhaps that is the reason the ancient Hindu concept makers dedicated a day in a year to worship the Anla tree so that people come to know about the many benefits of the fruit.

Anla Navami is mostly observed in Odisha.

As per legend, once a Chandala went hunting in the forest. While he hunted for birds and deer, he felt hungry. Seeing an Amla tree, he climbed it and ate the sweet fruits. Unfortunately, as he began to climb down, he fell and died. When Yam raj's attendants came to take away his soul, they could not do so. This baffled Yam raj to a great extent and he sought the help of the sages. They enlightened him by saying that they couldn't approach the Chandala's body as he had consumed amla just before he died.

The festival is also called 'Akshaya Navami' and is observed on 'Shukla Navami' day in the Kartik month. In West Bengal, this day is also known as 'Jagaddhatri puja'. According to Padma Purana, Amla has much religious significance attached to it as it is a fruit known to be very dear to Lord Vishnu. According to Dr. Surendra Kumar Sahoo, medicinal uses of Amla or Amalaki



have been a part of Ayurvedic medicine for more than thousand years. Both dried and fresh Indian gooseberry has great health benefits. One of which is that it acts

like a coolant if taken after meals. It is an excellent source of vitamin C. It is also

helpful to fight with the COVID-19 disease as it contains vitamin-c. Amla juice is the best tonic to make you look and feel young. It is the integral component of Triphala, an ayurvedic formulation, which is used to cure many diseases. Amla balances the three 'doshas' - 'vata', 'pitta' and 'kapha'.

It prevents cancer due to the presence of some important polyphenols. The gooseberry tree is a medicinal plant with tremendous uses and benefits. Hence to preserve this precious species may be the tradition of worshipping gooseberry tree has taken root. Dillip Kumar Mishra a priest says, Anla Nabami is basically observed by women. After a sacred bath early in the morning and then wearing new or

fresh clothes, devotees assembled near a gooseberry tree. In the absence of an amla tree, a branch of the tree earthed on the ground or in a vase, can also be worshipped. People worship the gooseberry tree facing east. First a lamp is lit with a prayer to keep burning till the end of the worship. That is called 'akhanda'. Then devotees pour water and milk on the tree. After that, they apply roli, the Indian red sacred powder, on the tree. They also offer a sari and blouse piece. The next step is to show 'dhup'. And then Moli, the sacred red thread, is tied by all women on the tree, who move seven times circling the tree.

It is followed by a 'katha' either read by a woman or a Brahmin priest, to be listened by all the devotees. The final step is 'arati' and then women put sindoor or roli to each other's forehead to have fun in an auspicious way. Women should include gooseberry or amla in their food on the day of Anla Navami.

Anla Navami is basically observed by women. After a sacred bath early in the morning and then wearing new or fresh clothes, devotees assemble near a gooseberry tree. In the absence of an Amla tree, a branch of the tree earthed on the ground or in a vase, can also be worshipped

DILLIP KUMAR MISHRA | PRIEST

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech-Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupraj Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemann-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.

Specially-abled students' studies suffer

THESE SCHOOLCHILDREN HAVEN'T RECEIVED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE SINCE JULY

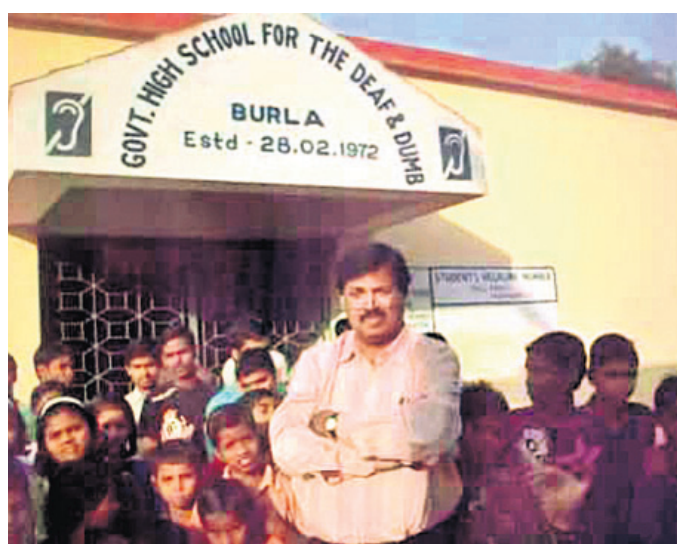
POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, Nov 23: As many as 6,545 specially-abled students in the state studying in special schools and a college have been deprived of education with the institutions remaining closed due to Covid-19 pandemic, a report said.

Guardians and teachers alleged that the closure of the schools and a college has affected their (students) studies and deprived them of receiving their financial assistance since the month of July. The state government had deposited the financial assistance in advance for April, May and June in the accounts of the parents when it ordered for closure of schools.

Later, no financial assistance has been deposited since then. These schools have 980 trained and non-trained teachers. These schools are run by various NGOs with the fund available from the state government.

The development comes close on the heels of a state government decision to merge the schools with the nearby schools where the stu-



dent strength is less than 20 in a class. The decision had rocked the state Assembly. Moreover, the demand by guardians and intellectuals to reopen the schools with all the safety measures has charged up the political atmosphere in the state.

Reports said that there are 103 special schools and a college for the spe-

cially-abled children functioning in the state. These 103 schools and the lone college impart education to 6,545 specially-abled children in the state.

Moreover, online education as promoted by the state government and Centre is of no use for these children who are mostly deaf and mute,

visually challenged, mentally challenged, autistic and children suffering from cerebral palsy.

The state government has devised various methods to impart online education like audio recordings, formation of WhatsApp groups. Even at some places, teachers are personally visiting the homes of the student and teaching them. However, these methods are of little help to these students when it is difficult even to teach them even in a classroom.

This apart, 70 per cent of the guardians do not have a mobile phone while network glitch is often a problem for online education.

When contacted, Basant Sethy, secretary of the state body of teachers of special schools confirmed that closure of schools has severely hit the education of specially-abled children while the students have been deprived of financial assistance since the month of July. The school teachers have made several demands before the state government but they are yet to be realised.

Sulochana Das, state commissioner for persons with disabilities said that the problem faced by the special schools is more than what is faced by the students of common schools due to their closure for Covid pandemic. The state government and various departments are taking more steps for imparting online education to the students and providing funds for the purpose.

The teachers have made several demands before the state government (including financial assistance to the students) but they are yet to be realised

BASANT SETHY | SECRETARY, STATE BODY OF TEACHERS OF SPECIAL SCHOOLS



The state government and various departments are taking more steps for imparting online education to the students and providing funds for the purpose

SULOCHANA DAS | STATE COMMISSIONER FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

2 killed, 5 injured as pickup van rams into kutcha house

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chandahandi, Nov 23: Two minors were killed and five others were injured Monday when a goods-laden pickup van rams into a kutcha house at Jharabahal village under Chandahandi block in Nabarangpur district.

The deceased were identified as Sachin Goud (9) and Nandini Goud (8), in the family. Among them Damurudhar Hati (60), Sashikanta Goud (7), and Ashok Goud (7) were rendered critical in the incident. Lekhapal Goud (8) and Kaibalya Goud (8) sustained minor injuries. The accident occurred when the family members were warming themselves around a bonfire to beat the cold wave.

Other members of the house however, had a narrow escape, as they were in another room inside the house. The house was severely damaged in the mishap.

Damurudhar Hati (60), who had sustained multiple fractures on his legs and waist, is a resident of Jamadarpada village and had come to Jharabahal to meet a girl for his son's marriage. The incident took place when he was about to return to his village this morning.

All the injured were admitted to the District Headquarters Hospital for treatment. The mishap sparked tension in the area as family members resorted to road blockade for four hours by putting up the body on the road. They relented after police and administrative officials intervened.

The driver of the pickup van fled the spot immediately after the mishap. Nabarangpur police have seized the truck and detained its owner for questioning. A hunt has been launched to nab the accused driver.

STIR FOR LIVELIHOOD



Street vendors urge the authorities to stop displacing their business establishments on a frequent basis and demonstrate outside the office of the Sambalpur Municipal Corporation, Monday

Floating restaurants at BNP during Eco-Retreat Festival

THE RESTAURANT WILL BE SET UP ON A POND AT NALITAPATIA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 23: In a bid to boost tourism in Odisha and increase the flow of domestic and international visitors, the Tourism department Monday decided to introduce a floating restaurant during the 'Eco-Retreat Festival' at the Bhitarkanika National Park in Kendrapada district. The restaurant will be set up on a pond at Nalitapatia village. The department has also decided to set up lux-

urious cottages where tourists can reside in during the festival.

This is the first time that Odisha government's Tourism department is organising such a festival. The 'Eco-Retreat Festival' will start December 1 and continue till February 28. The festival is not limited to Bhitarkanika National Park, but will also be organised in other districts. The decision to organise such a festival has been taken to give a fillip to tourism which has been affected due to the

COVID-19 pandemic.

Similar such festivals will also be organised at Daringbadi in Kandhamal district, Hirakud in Sambalpur district and Ramachandi beach near Konark in Puri district.

In Daringbadi, people will get a chance to trek to the Saraswati cave and visit Mandasura valley. At the Hirakud eco-retreat enclosure, facilities like 25 premium Swiss cottage tents, an air-conditioned restaurant and bar will be set up for visitors.

Pvt nursing homes, clinics in Angul 'fleecing' patients

THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION IS ALLEGEDLY LOOKING THE OTHER WAY AND NOT ACTING UPON PATIENTS' COMPLAINTS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Angul, Nov 23: Private clinics and nursing homes that have mushroomed in Angul district are harassing and fleecing innocent and gullible patients, a report said.

A private nursing home at Similipada is a case in point. Here, an operation was performed on a patient and then he was sent home, saying the operation had failed. The relatives of the patient were also forced to deposit Rs16,000 to get their patient back home.

A resident of Gadatmul area in Angul district, Deepak Gochhayat had done ultrasound of his stomach at an ultrasound clinic in Angul town following stomachache. He was told he had a stone in his stomach. To be sure, he had visited an ultrasound clinic in Cuttack. The report said he had a stone in his gall bladder.

He had consulted a nursing home located in Similipada where he was told that the entire cost of the operation would be around Rs 30,000 and he had to deposit ₹15,000 before the operation and the rest after the operation. Accordingly, family members had admitted Deepak to the nursing home November 18. They deposited ₹15,000 advance November 19.

The doctor performed the operation November 20. As the operation was carried out through laparoscopy, Deepak's belly was punctured at three places.

But to the utter dismay of their family members, the nursing home authorities told them that the op-



Representative pic from internet

A PRIVATE NURSING HOME AT SIMILIPADA FORCED RELATIVES OF A PATIENT TO DEPOSIT RS16,000 TO TAKE THE PATIENT HOME DESPITE AN UNSUCCESSFUL OPERATION

OUR CORRESPONDENT TRIED CONTACTING THE NURSING HOME AUTHORITY ON A GIVEN MOBILE NUMBER, BUT COULD NOT REACH THEM AS THE NUMBER PROVIDED WAS SWITCHED OFF

But it was when the family members were taking Deepak out of the hospital after discharge, they were asked to deposit a sum of ₹16,000 towards bed charge, medicine and the laparoscopy camera.

Though the family members and the nursing home authorities had a verbal duel, the former ended up coughing up the sum. They settled the sum with the advance money and returned home.

This incident is just the tip of the iceberg. Though such cases are happening on a regular basis, the district administration is allegedly looking the other way, the report added.

Even if complaints are lodged, no action is being taken against such nursing homes.

Our correspondent tried contacting the nursing home authority on a given mobile number, but could not reach them as the number provided was switched off.

eration was not successful. Later, the doctor asked them to take their patient to somewhere else as the stone had slipped into his intestine.

Hearing this, Deepak and his family members felt the ground slipping beneath their feet. They were also told that the money deposited with the nursing home as advance would be refunded.

3 Maoists, including 1 woman cadre, killed in encounter

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Nov 23: At least three Maoists including a woman cadre were gunned down in an encounter with security personnel Monday on Odisha-Chhattisgarh border, a senior police officer said.

The encounter took place in Kasaranda forest under Rabaghat police limits in Dantewada district of neighbouring Chhattisgarh on the fringes of Malkangiri district in the morning when jawans of the Special Task Force (STF), Special Operation Group (SOG) and District Voluntary Force (DVF) were conducting a combing operation in the area. A jawan was also injured in the gun-fight. He has been rushed to Raipur for treatment.

Alerted, the Maoists fired at the STF jawans, the SOG and DVF men after noticing them and the security personnel retaliated with equal measure which went on for long hours, B Bikraman, DIG of NSB said. The ultras could not sustain the gun-fight and fled the scene. Over 30 ultras might have escaped from the spot, the officer said.

"Of the three Maoists killed in the encounter, one was a woman," the personnel said. Later, the jawans during a search operation found the three Maoists including a woman dead. The security forces began the combing operation following a tip-off that around 15 Maoists were hiding in the forest, officials said. An AK-47 rifle, 12 rounds of six self-loading rifles, explosives, kitbags and other articles have been seized by the jawans.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RWS&S DIVISION, BALASORE
Tel.: 06782-262249, Fax: 262931, email: eerwss_bls@nic.in, No.O-584:- eerwssbls@gmail.com
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Tendering
Identification No.13 Dt.17.11.2020

- Nos. of work : 4 Nos. RPWS schemes in Balasore district.
- Estimated cost : Rs. 5.85 lakhs to Rs. 12.97 lakhs
- Period of completion : 90 days
- Availability of bid : Dt.25.11.2020 at 10.00 hours to 03.12.2020 upto 17.00 hours through online.
- Seeking of clarification : Dt.25.11.2020 at 10.00 hours to Dt.02.12.2020 upto 15.00 hours.
- Date of opening of bid : Dt.08.12.2020 at 11.00 hours in the O/o EE, RWSS Division, Balasore.
- Name and address of the Officer Inviting Tender : Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Balasore

Bid cost & bid security will be receipt through electronic payment by NEFT/RTGS.
Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal: <http://tendersodisha.gov.in>
Sd./- EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RWS&S DIVISION, BALASORE
OIPR-25013/11/0004/2021

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
RENGALI DAM DIVISION, RENGALI DAM SITE, ANGUL - 759105
E-mail: rengalidam@gmail.com
'e' PROCUREMENT NOTICE

1	Nature of the Works	Repair and Maintenance of Building Work Gallery Calculation, Cleaning, Construction of Drain, Re-Drilling of Drainage Hole, VPD, Concrete Pathway etc.
2	No. of Works	14 (Fourteen)
3	Value of Works	Varies from Rs.1.32 lakh to Rs.22.32 lakhs
4	Period of Completion	02 (Two) to 03 (Three) Calendar Months
5	Class of Contractors	'D', 'C', 'B' & SSI Unit
6	Procurement Officer	Executive Engineer, Rengali Dam Division, Rengali Dam Site
7	Bid Identification No.	RDD-06/2020-21
8	Availability of Tender for Online bidding	From 10.00 hrs. of 25.11.2020 to 05.12.2020 upto 15.00 hrs.
9	Last date and time of seeking tender clarification	01.12.2020 upto 15.00 hrs.
10	Date and time of opening of Bid	07.12.2020 at 11.00 hrs.

Further details conditions can be seen from the govt. website: www.tendersorissa.gov.in.
Sd./- Executive Engineer
Rengali Dam Division, Rengali Dam Site
OIPR-32028/11/0003/2021

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, R.W.S.S. DIVISION, SONEPUR, ODISHA
Ph. No. 06654-220259, E-mail: dwsn_snpr@nic.in
CORRIGENDUM 01 OF BID IDENTIFICATION OF 02/2020-21
No. O-603: The following changes are hereby made to Bid Identification No. 02/2020-21 of RWSS Division, Sonepur where as all other terms and conditions remain unaltered.

Sl. No.	As per Original TCN	As per Corrigendum
(i)	Sl. No. 2 (BARKANI), Estimated Cost: Rs.3986036/-, EMD - Rs.40000/- Class of Contractor: 'C' & 'B'	Sl. No. 2 (BARKANI), Estimated Cost: 4070718, EMD - Rs.41000/- Class of Contractor: 'B' & 'A'
(ii)	Sl. No. 4 (TENTULIKHUNTI), Estimated Cost: Rs.4962374/-	Sl. No. 4 (TENTULIKHUNTI), Estimated Cost: Rs.4964308/-
(iii)	Sl. No. 5 (SAGARTAL), Estimated Cost: Rs.5943160/-	Sl. No. 5 (SAGARTAL), Estimated Cost: Rs.5945094/-
(iv)	Sl. No. 6 (DEYGAON & SILATMUNDA), Estimated Cost: Rs.6725123/-	Sl. No. 6 (DEYGAON & SILATMUNDA), Estimated Cost: Rs.6729001/-
(v)	Sl. No. 7 (BASASANKAR), Estimated Cost: Rs.5383077/-, EMD: Rs.54000/-	Sl. No. 7 (BASASANKAR), Estimated Cost: Rs.5467759/-, EMD: Rs.55000/-
(vi)	Sl. No. 8 (GOVINDPUR), Estimated Cost: Rs.6140425/-	Sl. No. 8 (GOVINDPUR), Estimated Cost: Rs.6142395/-
(vii)	Availability of Tender Online for bidding from Dt.18.11.20 to 02.12.20	Availability of Tender Online for bidding from Dt.23.11.20 to 07.12.20
(viii)	Seeking Clarification: Dt.01.12.20	Seeking Clarification: Dt.05.12.20
(ix)	Technical Bid Opening: Dt.03.12.20 at 12 hours.	Technical Bid Opening: Dt.08.12.20 at 11 A.M.

1. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents which is available in the e-procurement portal <https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in>.
2. Authority reserves the right to reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.
Sd./- Executive Engineer
RWSS Division, Sonepur
OIPR-25037/11/0003/2021

Here, Hindus & Muslims share place of worship

FOR 800 YRS, THE SHRINE OF SATYA PIR HAS BEEN STANDING TALL, DISPLAYING EXEMPLARY BROTHERHOOD AND COMMUNAL HARMONY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chandikhol, Nov 23: Atop the Aalamgiri hill under Barchana block in Jajpur district, a shrine of 'Satya Pir' is located. The shrine has been displaying exemplary brotherhood and communal harmony for hundreds of years.

Looking like a dome from a distance, people refer to it as 'Dargah'. Both Hindus and Muslims have been visiting the shrine for more than 800 years as a place of worship.

This shrine is unique because the 'Shirni bhog' offered here is prepared by Hindus. Those who present the 'bhog' however are Muslims. Every Thursday, the shrine comes alive with hundreds of devotees thronging there to offer their prayers.

There is a pair of wooden sandals or Kathau as people call them. The devotees visiting this shrine worship this pair of sandals. To perform various jobs at the shrine like beating drums, offering flowers and taking wooden sandals to villages,



Atop the Aalamgiri hill under Barchana block in Jajpur district, shrine of 'Satya Pir' is located

servitors have been engaged. Those who are presently serving at the Dargah have been doing this for generations.

The shrine of 'Pir Baba' is located

on plain land atop the hill spreading over five acres. Earlier colourful fairs were organised around the Dargah. Now however, those have stopped.

THE 'SHIRNI BHOG' OFFERED HERE IS PREPARED BY HINDUS

THOSE WHO PRESENT THE 'BHOG' ARE MUSLIMS

EVERY THURSDAY, THE SHRINE COMES ALIVE WITH HUNDREDS OF DEVOTEES THRONGING THERE TO OFFER THEIR PRAYERS

Folklore has it that the shrine has magical healing powers. Elderly persons in the know of things said that villages hit by cholera or chicken pox used the sandals to prevent the spread of the diseases. "Whenever, the sandals were taken to the affected villages, the disease would disappear mysteriously," said a senior resident of the locality. People of nearby Charinangal, Manduka, Nalipur and Gopalpur villages also had many such instances to narrate.

You cannot get someone who can say for sure how old is the dome.

But, historian Harishchandra Prusty believes it dates back to 12th or 13th century.

Every year, the 'World Heritage Week' is observed from November 19 at the site of the dome. During the week, meetings and seminars are organised and decisions are taken to develop the heritage sites. However, development work has never started. This is the reason why the shrine is facing several problems.

Earlier, people would cultivate the lands around the shrine as a token of respect for 'Pir Baba'. Now, however, nothing happens as most of the land is encroached upon.

Local people say the ancient shrine has all the qualities that a famous religious tourist spot requires. It only needs government attention. Once the spot is developed, it will attract tourists from far and near. They have urged the government to announce the shrine as a tourist spot during the ongoing 'World Heritage Week' and take steps for its overall development.



The supreme state of human love is...the unity of one soul in two bodies.

SRI AUROBINDO



NEW MID-EAST PLAY

The covert rendezvous with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman of Saudi Arabia on Monday is a major political and diplomatic victory for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu coming as it does a little over two months after signing a peace deal with the UAE and Bahrain. Normalising relations with the Middle East has been a priority for Netanyahu who has long argued that Israel can and should make peace with the Arab world without needing to find a lasting peace settlement with the Palestinians and his recent overtures with the Middle Eastern countries suggest that he may be making all the right moves.

Normalising relations with the UAE and Bahrain was a genuine achievement for the Israelis. Recent months have seen a dramatic change in the diplomatic landscape of the Middle East with US President Donald Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner serving as a go-between, linking the Gulf states and Israel. However, the latest meeting has surprised many as Saudi has maintained, until recently, that they would wait for a Palestinian state before any official relationship with Israel.

For such a long time, Israel-Palestinian conflict was the central issue on the global diplomatic agenda. However, of late, the issue has been pushed off the agenda and there is no serious diplomatic impetus to solve the decades-old vexatious issues.

Trump's policies in the Middle East also favoured the Israelis. From moving the US embassy to Jerusalem to Mike Pompeo's recent visit to the occupied Golan Heights, every decision of Trump in the Israel-Palestine conflict angered the Palestinians while cheering Israel.

With his latest move, the Israeli prime minister has not only managed to marginalise the Palestinian cause but found an ally against a common enemy - Iran.

Iran held sway across the Middle East and Moslem world and projected itself as the champion of the Moslem cause, a role Saudis have coveted but never quite managed to achieve. Saudis also tried to undermine Iran's influence in the region but failed to achieve anything concrete so far. Their puny but next-door-neighbour, Yemen, has been a long time ally of Iran.

Meanwhile, tensions between Israel and Iran have increased after President Donald Trump unilaterally pulled the United States out of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action—the 2015 accord to wind back Iran's nuclear program in return for sanctions relief—in 2018.

Netanyahu sees Iran as Israel's number one enemy. Israel and Iran have been antagonists since the 1980s. But, after the US' 2003 invasion of Iraq and the formal withdrawal of American troops in 2011, the regional balance of power was broken. This left the Middle East without a clear leader. That created a vacuum that has brought the countries into increasing conflict.

For Netanyahu, who formed a national unity government with rival Benny Gantz after failing to secure a clear election victory, and faces an indictment for bribery, fraud and breach of trust, this is not only a major triumph but will also help him to divert attention within the country from the corruption charges and his government's failure to effectively tackle the coronavirus crisis.

WISDOM CORNER

- The ability to be in the present moment is a major component of mental wellness. **ABRAHAM MASLOW**
- Look at situations from all angles, and you will become more open. **THE DALAI LAMA**
- We are what our thoughts have made us; so take care about what you think. Words are secondary. Thoughts live; they travel far. **SWAMI VIVEKANANDA**

WORDSWORTH

Venery

It refers to hunting or the chase. Let us leave unexplored the other meaning, which the Oxford English Dictionary defines as "The practice or pursuit of sexual pleasure". At times it may seem to its participants to resemble a hunt, but that sense isn't connected etymologically: it comes from Venus, the Roman goddess of beauty and love. Our sense is from Old French venerie, which comes from Latin venari, to hunt. The monk in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales describes himself as "An outrider, that loved venery," by which he meant he loved hunting, though Chaucer's tales are so bawdy that incautious readers might assume the other sense. Venery refers to hunting game animals such as wild boar, hares, wolves, bears and — especially — deer. A close relative to venery is venison, nowadays always meat from a deer but in earlier times the flesh of any hunted animal. Venery dates from medieval England and is closely connected with the royal forests established by the Norman kings and nobles after the Conquest of 1066 (despite the name, the royal forests included fields and open ground as well as woods). The beasts of venery were those that were considered most noble to hunt. There were animals of a lower order, too, the beasts of the chase, which included the fox, as well as beasts of the warren, such as the rabbit and the pheasant. This led to the expression terms of venery, collective nouns for types of game and other wild animals, such as cete of badgers, murder of crows, parliament of rooks and paddling of ducks.

Verbigeration

The American actor, musician, and author John Lithgow remarked in a newspaper interview in February 2015 that verbigeration was his current favourite word. Though it describes the use of words, the concern of any actor or writer, Mr Lithgow would surely not wish it to be applied to himself. One might guess that it refers to the bigging up of verbs, though it's actually said with a soft g, like refrigeration. The association isn't altogether wrong, as it refers to the involuntary repetition of meaningless words and phrases. The psychiatrist Bernard Glueck described it in 1916 as "senseless word salad." Another writer, G Stanley Hall, in a work ten years earlier with the off-putting title Youth: Its Education, Regimen, and Hygiene, preferred to define it as "The continual utterance of certain words or phrases at short intervals, without reference to their meaning." It has been regarded as a symptom of a mental disorder, though we in the UK, currently in the run-up to a general election, may feel it could be used to describe certain British political figures. Its source is Latin, verbum, a word (also the source of verbiage), plus the verb ger re, to carry on or conduct, from which derived the Latin verb verbigere to talk or chat. An isolated early appearance of verbigeration in English was in the dictionary Glossographia in 1656; Thomas Blount, who compiled it, defined it in this neutral Latin sense.

LOL

PICKING ON A TARDY STUDENT

A college business professor could not help but notice that one of his students was late to class for the third time that week. Before class ended he went around the room asking students some questions about the day's lecture. Of course, he made sure to pick on his tardy pupil. "And who was it that developed the

theories behind communism?" the professor asked. "I don't know," the student said. "Perhaps if you came to class on time, Mr. Reeb, you would know," said the professor. "That's not true," the student replied. "I never pay attention anyway!"



DON'T MICROMANAGE

FOCUS INDUSTRIAL POLICY



Ajit Ranade

IT IS INEVITABLE THAT WITH TOO MANY CONDITIONS, INDIA'S INDUSTRIAL POLICY WILL BECOME INCOHERENT AND INCONSISTENT

Nokia was once the leader of the world in mobile phone handsets. Its largest manufacturing plant was located in Sriperumbudur in India as part of a special economic zone. In a six-year period it produced more than 500 million handsets, much of them exported. Nokia employed a workforce of more than 30,000 including indirect employment, and it had a big share of women employees. Nokia was indeed the rock star example of what it means to make India a manufacturing hub for the world. It stood for a high-quality product and high quality employment, of a global brand, adding to the then brand of 'Made in India'. But much before 'Make-in-India' became a slogan, the Nokia plant was shut down. It has now become a case study in business schools of the opposite of a Cinderella story, of how a successful dream-like story can go kaput.

This is not the place to discuss the demise of the Indian factory in all its gory details. A part of the blame goes to excessive zeal shown by India's tax authorities, bordering on tax terrorism, and also broken promises. Blame must also be apportioned to Nokia's own failure to anticipate the global revolution in smart phones, leading to being stuck with a large scale capacity in low-cost feature phones. With hindsight it can be safely said that much of this woeful story was avoidable, and an alternate glorious future could have been written for Nokia as well as India's prowess in mobile phone manufacturing for the global market.

More importantly what have we learnt from the Nokia story? Stories of excessive zeal of the taxman continue. Despite lowering the corporate tax rate to East Asian levels, and for new manufacturing facilities down to 15 per cent, the mindset is still extractive. India's tax regime, including the GST system is still burdensome and inhibits competitiveness. We have been successful in attracting Apple to make its iconic phones in India, so that is something to be cele-



Stories of excessive zeal of the taxman continue. Despite lowering corporate tax rate to East Asian levels, and for new manufacturing facilities down to 15 per cent, the mindset is still extractive. India's tax regime, including the GST system is still burdensome

brated. But as compared to the scale of a 100 million phones annual production, achieved by Nokia, Apple is tiny.

The Apple story was successful thanks to an approach called the 'production linked incentive scheme' which gives incentives related to volumes. That has been extended to 13 sectors, including mobile phones, drugs, battery cells, man-made textiles, auto-components and solar panels. The total budgeted outgo on incentives is nearly 2 trillion rupees over the next five years. The PLI scheme seems to be supported by protection via import tariffs. This is an old school economics textbook approach, that to attract investment in the country, you raise tariff walls. And hence a foreign player can access India's vast consumer market only by jumping across that wall, that is, being forced to invest in India. This is not the lesson which Nokia or Sriperumbudur taught us. That plant came to India not by jumping tariff walls, but by being attracted by low cost labour and skills, as well as ease of doing business in an SEZ. If we promote domestic production by raising import tariffs, it increases costs for

the domestic buyer significantly. It also acts like an export tax, for entrepreneurs who are using imported components to re-export their products.

Unfortunately, India reversed its two-and-half-decade old progress in tariff reduction in 2018. Since then India's average import tariff on industrial products has gone up from 13 per cent to 18 per cent, and has been applied to nearly one third to one half of all 10,000 odd product lines. Remember, high import duties increase domestic costs, and are a de facto export tax as well. Additionally, the PLI scheme's approach is to pick winners and champions. In some sectors this makes sense. For instance, India's import dependence on China for advanced pharmaceutical intermediates (APIs) is 68 per cent and that needs to go down. It is also a strategic sector since it is in healthcare. But India's status as a leading bulk drugs exporter to the West is also dependent on the import of APIs from China. So, while a PLI for APIs is good, it will take some time to wean away from China dependence. But in general the government cannot, and should not be in the business of choosing winners and cham-

pions, and least of all future trends in technology. Imagine if the government had a PLI scheme for Nokia to produce low cost 2G phones in very large quantities, it would have been stuck paying for an obsolete technology. And if it abruptly discontinued it, then it would have been guilty of breaking a sovereign promise.

Such are the perils of incentivising production in fast technology industrial fields. Another hazard of the PLI scheme is that the government specifies too many details and tries to micromanage. This may be due to the government's bureaucratic approach, or excessive caution in preventing abuse of subsidies. One example of this overkill is that the bid document for the auto sector for those who wish to apply for PLIs is 187 pages long! Imagine the compliance cost. No wonder so far not many big players have stepped in, either for auto or for pharma. Thus, industrial policy which is too intrusive, too prescriptive, too keen to pick and choose winners, and far too based on protectionism is bound to get tangled up and not succeed.

The recent case of BSNL is illustrative. Forced to break away from a confirmed tender to Chinese suppliers for its 4G network, it found that the new bidders were 89 per cent more expensive, and had no proven track record in producing at scale. Another anomaly is in solar panels, where on one hand we want to achieve 100 gigawatt solar capacity but have put tariff barriers on foreign suppliers. This will increase the cost of domestic production of solar power. It is inevitable that with too many conditions, India's industrial policy will become incoherent and inconsistent. The best approach is one which gives private and foreign investors stability, predictability and continuity in a broad policy stance. Leave out the micro specifications if you want to succeed.

The writer is an economist and Senior Fellow, Takshashila Institution.

THE BILLION PRESS

SPECTRUM COASTAL ODISHA

Build disaster resilient infrastructure



Shoumyakant Joshi

UNDER SWACHH BHARAT MISSION, THE GOVERNMENT PROMOTES ONLY TWIN LEACH PIT TOILETS, BUT THIS TECHNOLOGY IS NOT APPROPRIATE IN COASTAL AREAS

Odisha has a history of recurring natural disasters. Almost every year, coastal districts witness floods and cyclones and western Odisha is prone to acute droughts; whereas a large section of the state is at risk to earthquakes. High population density, encroachments on flood plains, poor socio-economic condition and weak infrastructure increase the vulnerability of coastal districts. Out of the state's total geographical area of 15,751 lakh hectares, 1.40 lakh hectares are flood-prone.

As per a study "Economic implications of flood impacts in Odisha, India" conducted by the Madras School of Economics, Odisha incurred average ₹60 crore annual loss due to floods during 1953 to 2002. Such climatic challenges bring disruption in the economy causing losses of life and property. As per a latest government report, the total estimated loss due to cyclone Fani is approximately ₹12,000 crore. Majorly infrastructure like power, telecommunication, roads, water and sanitation facilities and public buildings were damaged beyond repair.

Disasters affect the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) system and infrastructure both in rural and urban areas limiting access to water and sanitation facilities. People drinking contam-

inated water from tube wells both during and post-flood is a common scene. Open defecation is common in affected villages as toilets get damaged due to floods. These have long-term and greater negative impact on public health. As per the Damage, Loss and Need Assessment report of Fani released by the state government, 18.9 per cent of constructed toilets were partially damaged and 1.4 per cent completely damaged in affected coastal districts. Individual toilet recovery expenses were estimated at ₹50.46 crore. In case of drinking water infrastructure, 1,068 piped water supply schemes (49 per cent) suffered structural, mechanical, and electrical damage. In order to avoid such huge damage, implementation of sustainable disaster resilient WASH infrastructure is necessary. However, there are challenges that need to be addressed.

Lesser scope and minimum financial allocation for disaster resilient model demonstration in any WASH programme is the major policy-level challenge. In the guideline for implementation of first phase of Swachh Bharat Mission, it was clearly mentioned to adopt different toilet technologies, which are geographically suitable and sustainable. However, the missing element was that there was no special financial pro-

vision if anyone wanted other technological options. As new disaster resilient toilet technology may require small additional budget, so in order to keep cost within ₹12,000 (which was provision), most districts never went for any innovation.

Second, there is low adaptation of disaster resilient WASH infrastructure technology in disaster-prone areas. The government and other agencies working in ensuring water sanitation facilities in coastal districts have promoted universal infrastructure design for all geographical locations, whereas the need of special disaster resilient water and sanitation infrastructure was missing. For an instance, under Swachh Bharat Mission, the government had promoted only twin leach pit toilets invariably, but this technology is not appropriate and eco-friendly in coastal areas. Other toilet options like bio-disaster toilet, septic tank and eco-san toilet can be promoted.

In case of drinking water source promotion, large populations of coastal districts depend on shallow hand pumps which can easily suffer bacteriological contamination during floods. High raised hand pumps are promoted in some places but the approach to those is not accessible for all during disasters. Implementation of any disaster

resilient WASH programme requires technical skills among masons and engineers. But there are huge capacity gaps among masons and architects. Traditional designs for construction of water and sanitation infrastructure are still promoted even in disaster-prone areas. So during floods or cyclones those become defunct. The government should come with proper capacity building plan for masons and engineers.

Due to lack knowledge among community members, they never strategically plan for resilient WASH infrastructure even when they invest huge amounts for any infrastructure. Engineers working at district and block offices are the key authorities who design all public infrastructure like schools, hospitals, Anganwadi centres and community halls and approve the plans. But due to lack of tools, techniques and guidelines; the designs and plans are never prepared under the lens of disaster resilience.

In order to address the recurrent losses due to disasters, the government should incorporate action points against the above-mentioned challenges to have resilient infrastructure.

The writer works as Monitoring and Evaluation Lead with WaterAid India. Views are personal.

Delhi's pollution

Sir, Politicians in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh, who are dissatisfied with farmers, say that pollution levels are on the rise due to the burning of stubbles. This is completely baseless, and in fact, politics is being played by both the ruling and opposition parties. People have also blamed the farmers. The real reason is that in Loni, Ghaziabad, plastics are being burnt which is poisoning the entire Delhi-NCR with smoke. Tyres, tubes, wires and plastic waste coming out of various factories and workshops are being burnt in this area, leaving the entire region in smoke. This activity has become a business in Loni. Police and government officials are aware of this, but no action has been taken. Because of the wet environment in the winter, the smoke creates a layer in the atmosphere that does not allow sunlight to reach the Earth's surface. As a result, toxic gases spread throughout the day. Data of incidents of stubble burning cannot be denied but only stubble burning cannot be blamed for pollution. The smoke coming out of plastics is hundred times more toxic than the smoke coming out of stubble. This problem can only be solved if both the central and the state governments take appropriate action against the culprits by finding out who is burning the plastic waste. Otherwise, the whole of Delhi-NCR will be affected by lung diseases in a few days.

Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR

Commendable steps

Sir, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson has just got the ball rolling to establish a fierce fight with the climate change crisis. Johnson has announced a string of action plans just well ahead of the upcoming 2021 UN Climate Change Conference to be held under the supervision of the UK government. Strict plans to ban petrol vehicles, serious measures to cut greenhouse gas emissions, innovative ideas to make homes greener and energy-efficient and bold steps to switch to traditional yet beautiful ways of travelling like walking and cycling have all been on the list prepared to fight the climate crisis. The UK PM has indeed been talking about the natural world while having green industrial revolution plans. Finally, the perfect execution of green plans through proper phase-out methods will definitely make a big difference to the future fight against climate change, even inspiring the international community and attaining the desired target to protect Mother Earth.

P. Senthil Saravana Durai, MUMBAI

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

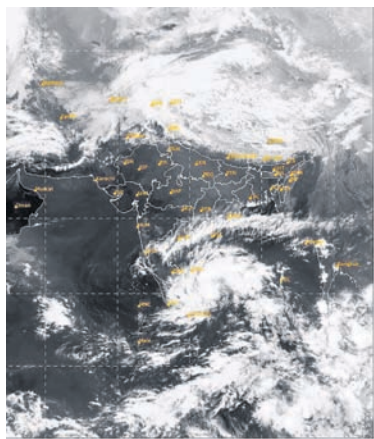
B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

TN braces for severe cyclonic storm

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Nov 23: With the depression over the Bay of Bengal likely to intensify into a cyclonic storm by Tuesday and cross the coast as a severe cyclonic storm a day after, the Tamil Nadu government Monday reviewed the situation, asking the respective district administrations to be on guard.

It announced suspension of inter and intra-district bus services in seven districts from Tuesday, till further orders. Trains were partially and fully cancelled in some districts.



In this India Meteorological Department (IMD) released satellite image captured Monday, is seen a depression over the Bay of Bengal that is likely to intensify into a cyclonic storm by Tuesday and cross the coast as a severe cyclonic storm a day after. The depression over southwest and adjoining southeast Bay of Bengal moved west-northwestwards with a speed of 11 kmph and lay centred at 1130 hrs of Monday over the same region, about 520 km east-southeast of Puducherry and 560 km south-east of Chennai.

standby with required equipment, earth movers, trucks and other machinery from Monday onwards in Pudukottai, Cuddalore, Nagapattinam, Tanjavur, Tiruvarur, Villupuram and Chengalpattu districts, he said.

Evacuation of people in vulnerable areas, facilities, including supply of food in relief camps, safeguarding boats and nets of fishermen, taking up fogging operations, monitoring water levels in big lakes and provision of mobile communication units should be ensured, he said.

Revenue Minister R B Udayakumar and Electricity Minister P Thangamani expressed preparedness of their ministries to respond to any challenges arising due to the cyclone.

Udayakumar told reporters that all arrangements are in place to face the cyclone and special attention will be given to follow social distancing norms in the relief shelters owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Those living in low lying areas should immediately shift to relief camps, he said.

Tamil Nadu and Puducherry coasts between Karaikal and Mamallapuram around November 25 afternoon as a severe cyclonic storm with a wind speed of 100-110 kmph gusting to 120 kmph," it said.

Under its influence, widespread rainfall/thunderstorm were "very likely" over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal during November 24 to 26, the IMD warned.

As a result, a high alert has been sounded in Nagapattinam and fish-

ermen have been asked not to venture into the sea till November 26.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K Palaniswami, who held a review meeting here, asked his cabinet colleagues and officials to remain fully alert and take appropriate precautionary measures.

At the "NIVAR Cyclone" review meeting, a number of directions were issued, he later said in a statement. These included officials of various departments being on

Web series row: MP cops book two Netflix officials

'A Suitable Boy' showed kissing scenes purportedly on the campus of a temple

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhopal/Indore, Nov 23: An FIR was registered in Madhya Pradesh Monday against two executives of OTT platform Netflix for allegedly hurting religious sentiments through its web series 'A Suitable Boy' which showed kissing scenes purportedly on the campus of a temple, an official said.

The FIR has named Monika Shergill, Vice President, Content (Netflix) and Ambika Khurana, Director, Public Policies (Netflix), Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra said.

Meanwhile, Collector of Khargone district Anugraha P told PTI that the controversial kissing scenes do not appear to have been filmed inside a temple in Maheshwar town in the district.

Earlier in the day, Shergill and Khurana were booked by Rewa police on a complaint filed by Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM) national secretary Gaurav Tiwari who demanded apology from Netflix and the makers of the series, and removal of 'objectionable scenes,' which he stated were also 'encouraging love jihad.'

"I had asked officials to examine the series 'A Suitable Boy' being streamed on Netflix to check if kissing scenes in it were filmed inside a temple and if it hurt religious sentiments. The examination prima facie found that these scenes are hurting the sentiments of a particular religion," Mishra said in a video statement.

"On the basis of a complaint filed by Gaurav Tiwari, an FIR is being registered under section 295 (A) (malicious acts to outrage and insulting the religious feelings and beliefs) of the IPC in Rewa against Netflix officials-Monika Shergill and Ambika Khurana," he added.

Rewa SP Rakesh Kumar Singh told reporters that the FIR has been registered and further investigation is underway.



Kissing scenes (filmed) inside a temple of Lord Maheshwar (a historic town located on the banks of Narmada in Madhya Pradesh) have hurt the sentiments of Hindus. This is also encouraging 'love jihad'

GAURAV TIWARI | BJYM NATIONAL SECRETARY

complaint so far regarding the controversy surrounding the Netflix series. But taking cognisance of media reports, I sent a sub-divisional magistrate (SDM) and tehsildar to the spot at Maheshwar. We have inspected the fort complex where the web series ("A Suitable Boy") was shot. There are also temples in the huge fort complex on the banks of the Narmada River at Maheshwar. But according to the SDM report, at first glance, it seems the controversial kissing scenes were not filmed inside the temple. Probably these scenes were shot somewhere else in the fort complex," the collector said.

Saturday, Gaurav Tiwari had submitted a memorandum to the Rewa SP demanding an apology from Netflix and makers of the series, and removal of 'objectionable scenes.'

"Kissing scenes (filmed) inside a temple of Lord Maheshwar (a historic town located on the banks of Narmada in Madhya Pradesh) have hurt the sentiments of Hindus. This is also encouraging 'love jihad,'" Tiwari had stated.

The six-part Netflix series has been directed by renowned filmmaker Mira Nair, who is known for her critically-acclaimed films such as 'Salaam Bombay', 'Monsoon Wedding' and 'The Namesake'.

"We have not received any formal

She said a committee will be constituted to probe the matter in detail if the government orders so.

"As of now, the allegation has not been confirmed that the controversial kissing scenes of the web series were shot inside a temple in Maheshwar. However, if the state government orders us, we will constitute a committee to investigate the matter in detail and send a report," the collector said.

She said the district administration had allowed the shooting of 'A Suitable Boy' in Maheshwar during December last year.



ON ALERT

Fishermen shift their boats for safety following Cyclone Nivar alert, in Mamallapuram Monday.

PTI PHOTO

MP SEES COVID-19 SURGE, REPORTS 1701 FRESH CASES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

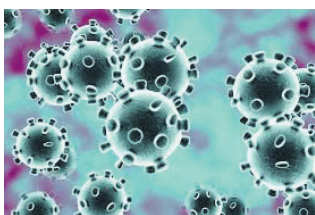
Bhopal, Nov 23: Madhya Pradesh Monday reported 1,701 fresh COVID-19 cases, taking the tally of infections to 1,94,745, while ten fatalities pushed the toll to 3,172, health officials said.

A total of 1,120 patients were discharged from hospitals in the last 24 hours, raising the number of recoveries to 1,79,237.

Three of the ten fatalities occurred in Indore, while two persons died in Gwalior. One death each was reported from Bhopal, Khargone, Sagar, Damoh and Harda, the officials said.

Of the 1,701 new cases, Indore accounted for 586, Bhopal 349 and Gwalior 108.

The number of cases in Indore rose to 38,247, including 735 deaths, while Bhopal's case tally stood at 29,701 with 506 fatalities. Gwalior so far recorded 14,022 infections, the officials said.



Indore now has 3,088 active cases, followed by Bhopal and Gwalior with 2,323 and 708 active cases, respectively.

With 29,926 samples being tested in the state in the last 24 hours, the count of COVID-19 detection tests rose to around 35.30 lakh.

Coronavirus figures in MP are as follows: Total cases 1,94,745, new cases 1,701, death toll 3,172, recovered 1,79,237, active cases 12,336, number of people tested so far 35,30,106. The state has imposed night curfew in Bhopal, Indore, Gwalior and other cities even as it braces for a possible second wave of Covid-19 infections.

BJP playing MGR card to make inroads in TN

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 23: MG Ramachandran aka MGR is considered to be an icon of state politics and cinema in Tamil Nadu. The same MGR founded the ruling AIADMK in Tamil Nadu about 48 years ago. Now the BJP is looking to emotionally connect with the people of the state by cashing in the popularity of the icon.

The BJP has played the 'MGR card' for the second time in Tamil Nadu in a month. Home Minister Amit Shah paid floral tributes to the photograph of the former chief Minister in Chennai during his visit to Tamil Nadu last Saturday. Earlier, the BJP had used photographs of the great Tamil cinema actor and former chief minister during the Vetri Vel Yatra in the state November 6.

Terming MGR as a great leader, Home Minister Amit Shah said that

his contribution to the development of Tamil Nadu can never be forgotten. It is believed that the BJP is trying to connect with the people of the state by according due respect and attention to MGR, who has been perceived as an icon of Tamil pride over the years.

The BJP has been in a coalition with the ruling AIADMK in Tamil Nadu since the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. The party is also likely to continue with the AIADMK alliance in the forthcoming assembly elections next year.

However, the BJP is trying to expand the party on its own in the state. The party is in constant action mode. From November 6, the BJP's Tamil Nadu unit had taken out a yatra under a one-month outreach programme.

Even AIADMK leaders expressed displeasure over the use of MGR's photographs by the BJP. They believed that the BJP was cashing in on the popularity of their home-



grown icon for its own benefit.

The buzz in Chennai's political corridors is that Home Minister Amit Shah has sent out a big political message to the state Saturday by praising AIADMK founder and former chief minister MGR and

Jayalalitha during his visit to Chennai.

A BJP national functionary who monitors the politics of Tamil Nadu told IANS, "Every state has some icons and personalities closely connected to the people. MGR is such

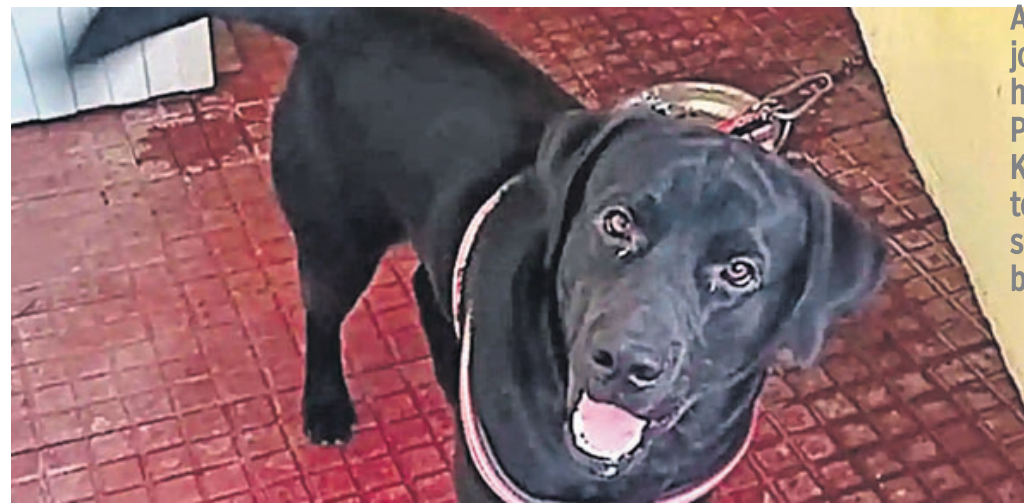
an entity. If the BJP is giving him respect, what is the harm? As the party is currently aligned with the AIADMK in the state, it should not be seen in other sense to honour the party's founder."

Besides being an actor and successful politician, M.G. Ramachandran is also considered as the cultural icon of Tamil Nadu. After ruling Tamil cinema for more than 30 years, MGR forayed into politics and reached the chief minister's chair.

He became the first Tamil film actor to become chief minister by contesting the election. As chief minister, MGR launched the 'Poshan mid-day meal scheme', which made it possible for the children of government schools to get food. Through many such schemes, he created a place in the hearts of the poor and the needy.

And the BJP wants to capitalise on his appeal to find a foothold in the state.

DNA test on Labrador to settle ownership dispute



As per police, while journalist Shadab Khan said he had brought the dog from Panchmarhi hill station, Kartik Shivhare, who claims to be associated with ABVP, said he got it from Babai, both in Hoshangabad

though Shrivastava said his police station had no record of such a complaint. Shrivastava, however, said Khan called up police last week claiming he had seen his "missing" Labrador at Shivhare's place.

Khan had taken away the dog showing its registration number at the time but, November 19, Shivhare approached police saying the dog's name was Tiger and that he had bought it from Babai August 11.

Since the dog was friendly to both claimants, a DNA test was decided upon by both of them, the official said. The dog, at the moment, is with Shivhare, he added.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhopal, Nov 23: In what may be a rare occurrence, in a dispute over pets, the police in Madhya Pradesh's Hoshangabad district plan to subject a Labrador to a DNA test after two people claimed ownership and the dog signalled recognition at both of them.

As per police, while journalist Shadab Khan said he had brought the dog from Panchmarhi hill station, Kartik Shivhare, who claims to be associated with the ABVP, said he got it from Babai, both in Hoshangabad, some 80 kilometres from here. "We have collected blood samples of the dog as well as the canine from Panchmarhi who fa-

thered it as per papers held by Khan, and a team will leave for Hyderabad tonight for the DNA test," Hoshangabad Dehat police station inspector Hemant Shrivastava said.

Khan said the dog with the shiny black coat, who he had named Coco, had gone missing in August and he had filed a police complaint,

MP to set up plant for clean fuel from stubble burning

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhopal, Nov 23: The Madhya Pradesh government has proposed a plan to set up an industrial unit producing fuel from stubble burnt by the farmers in the state, said Agriculture Minister Kamal Patel. This would help save the environment, putting an end to the air pollution caused by stubble burning.

The Minister recently met Union Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan in New Delhi and discussed several issues, including the initiative of producing clean fuel from stubble burnt by the farmers.

After harvesting the crops, the farmers set them on fire which results in stubble burning releasing widespread smoke and harms the environment. To prevent this emphasis is being laid on producing clean fuel from the burnt stubble.

Patel informed that the Madhya Pradesh government has decided



to open petrol pumps in 25 agricultural produce mandis in the state. The process will be completed soon by selection of the mandis as per requirement. Opening petrol pumps in the mandis will save the

farmers from facing several problems. Patel said that effective schemes for the welfare of farmers have been implemented in the state which will help them become 'self-reliant' and prosperous.



Will PM Cares fund be used to ensure free vaccination? By when will all Indians be vaccinated? RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

CORONAVIRUS EFFECT

Given the strict Covid protocols, at the end of the first week after the annual two-month-long Sabarimala season began, only around 9,000 pilgrims visited the famed Lord Ayyappa shrine



of the day quote

If the Berlin Wall can come down, why can't these three countries (India, Pakistan and Bangladesh) merge? If the BJP wants to form one country by merger of these three countries, then we will welcome it



Even smaller states have helped their people, but the Maharashtra government has failed during pandemic crisis



All preparations for the vaccination should be done in advance. COVID-19 vaccination work should be conducted with inter-departmental coordination



SHORT TAKES

Girl ends life

Gurugram: A 17-year-old girl allegedly committed suicide at her resident in village Chakkarpur in Gurugram on Sunday night, the police said Monday. The deceased identified as Vandana, a native of Bihar, was a student of Class 11 and was residing in a rented accommodation here. Chhote Lal, father of the deceased, told the police that Vandana went to her room on Sunday night after having dinner. "When she didn't open the door in the morning, we peeped in through the window and found her hanging from the ceiling fan. We along with other tenants living here broke the door and brought down the body," he said.

One killed

Gurugram: A 40-year-old driver was killed in an accident here in the NCR city of Haryana. Police is scanning CCTV footage to identify the killer and the vehicle which hit him from behind and ran away. The victim Tapan Ghosh, a native of West Bengal was killed in the Sector-45 incident on Sunday, the police said. Ghosh, who used to drive a private vehicle, was residing along with his wife and three kids at Kanhai village here. He was travelling on his bike towards Sector-51 for some work at 2.15 p.m. on the Sector-45 road, when an unknown vehicle hit his bike from behind.

Two shot dead

Patna: Two persons were killed and another injured after three bike-borne assailants suddenly opened fire at a group of people in Bihar's Saran district on Monday morning, police said. One of the attackers was nabbed by villagers and badly beaten, leading to his death. The incident occurred in Morirajpur village under Garkha police station. Garkha SHO Krishna Kumar said that the investigation into the crime is currently underway, but did not reveal the probable cause of the incident.

5 Naxals surrender

Raipur: Five Naxals, including a woman, surrendered in Chhattisgarh's Dantewada district Monday, police said. They turned themselves in after being impressed by the surrender-cum-rehabilitation campaign called 'Lon Varratu'. Superintendent of Police Abhishek Pallava said. "Of them, Somadu Vetti (22), a platoon section deputy commander, was carrying a reward of ₹3 lakh on his head," he said. They were given immediate assistance of ₹10,000 and will be provided facilities further as per the government's surrender and rehabilitation policy, he added.

SC seeks COVID update

The situation is likely to worsen in December and all states have to be ready to "combat" it, the top court said while expressing concern over the spurt in coronavirus cases across the country



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 23: The COVID-19 pandemic has "worsened" in Delhi and gone "out of control" in Gujarat, the Supreme Court said on Monday, directing the Centre and all states to apprise it within two days of the steps taken to contain the situation nationwide. The situation is likely to worsen in December and all states have to be ready to "combat" it, the top court said while expressing concern over the spurt in coronavirus cases across the country. A bench of Justices Ashok Bhushan, R S Reddy and M R Shah said, "We are of the view that the immediate steps are required to be taken by all the States as well as by the Union of India. "Let status report, as indicated, be filed within two days from today and the matter be listed on November 27, 2020 for consideration and passing appropriate orders". The bench told Additional Solicitor

General Sanjay Jain, appearing for Delhi government, "Things have worsened in Delhi especially in November. You file a status report on what steps are being taken to contain the situation." "In Gujarat, the situation is going out of control," said the bench, while noting that this month there has been a spike in the COVID cases throughout the country, especially in Delhi, Maharashtra and Gujarat. "It is also submitted that the situation in the month of December is likely to worsen and all States have to be prepared to combat the worsened situation regarding COVID-19," the bench noted in its order and observed that authorities have to take immediate steps. "There is a spike in cases and this is only November. Prepare for the worst in December. You have to take immediate steps," the bench told advocate Rahul Chitnis, appearing for Maharashtra. The top court said all efforts

shall be made by the Centre and the states to mitigate the situation and to deal with the rising number of COVID-19 cases. It pulled up the Gujarat government for allowing huge gatherings in functions including wedding celebrations saying that the cases are rising there and the situation has worsened in the State just after Delhi and Maharashtra. The top court also sought to know the policy of Gujarat government on allowing social gathering during the pandemic and said that situation has "gone out of control" in the state. As per the data provided by the Union health ministry on Monday morning, India's COVID-19 caseload went past 91 lakh with 44,059 coronavirus infections being reported in a day, while the recoveries surged to 85, 62,641. The death toll climbed to 1, 33,738 with 511 new fatalities. Delhi had recorded 6,746 fresh COVID-19 cases on Sunday while 121 more fatalities pushed the death toll to 8,391. The total number of cases in Delhi had climbed to 5, 29,863 of which 4, 81,260 have recovered. Gujarat on Sunday had reported 1,495 fresh positive cases, taking the total count of infections to 1, 97,412, while fatalities mounted to 3,859. With the addition of 5,753 coronavirus positive cases in Maharashtra on Sunday, the state's overall infection count increased to 17, 80,208 and the death of 50 patients took the fatality count to 46,623.

WINTER MARVEL



A woman walks during snowfall on the outskirts of Srinagar, Monday

PTI PHOTO

TRS vows free drinking water in Hyd

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, Nov 23: Telangana's ruling party Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) Monday announced several promises including free drinking water to woo the voters in Greater Hyderabad civic polls scheduled on December 1. Releasing the manifesto, party president and Chief Minister K. Chandrababhan Naidu announced that all households in Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) limits will get free drinking water from December with the ceiling of 20,000 litre per month.

KCR said Hyderabad, which has 10 lakh domestic water connections, will become the second city in India after Delhi to provide free drinking water. "This move will benefit 97 per cent of consumers in the city," he said. The TRS chief said he spoke to Arvind Kejriwal about the implementation of the scheme. "The government of Delhi is providing ₹200-300 crore subsidy for the scheme and we estimate it will be on similar lines in Hyderabad," he said. KCR appealed to people to cooperate in ensuring that the water is not wasted.

PM to talk to CMs on COVID

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 23: Amid the rising cases of coronavirus, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to review the situation on Tuesday with the Chief Ministers, sources said. Sources also said the Prime Minister will discuss the rollout of the vaccine programme in the states. He will hold virtual meetings with the Chief Ministers of Haryana, Delhi, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal and Kerala. After this meeting, the Prime Minister is scheduled to discuss the vaccine delivery roll out with all the states and Union Territories. The Centre is preparing on a war footing the vaccine delivery system as the Covid cases have surpassed nine million. With 44,000 new Covid-19 cases, India's tally reached 91,39,866 on Monday.

According to the data released by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, 511 new deaths occurred due to the deadly virus in the last 24 hours taking the toll to 1,33,738. While the active cases stood at 4,43,486, a total of 85,62,641 have recovered from the virus and have been discharged of which 41,024 were discharged in the last 24 hrs. It is also, however, the 16th straight day when India reported less than 50,000 cases in a day. The last time daily new cases crossed the 50,000 threshold was on November 7. While the recovery rate stands at a whopping 93.86 per cent, the fatality rate is at 1.46 per cent, the Ministry data revealed. Maharashtra remains the worst hit state with 82,521 active cases and 46,623 deaths so far. Apart from Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka have reported the highest number of cases.

AIMIM MLA stokes row in Bihar Assembly

IMAM ARGUED THAT HE WANTED TO SAY THE WORD 'BHARAT' INSTEAD OF 'HINDUSTAN' DURING THE OATH CEREMONY

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Patna, Nov 23: The first day of the newly elected Bihar Legislative Assembly witnessed a controversy when AIMIM MLA Akhtarul Imam raised objection over the word 'Hindustan' while he was being administered the oath of office by pro-tem Speaker Jitan Ram Manjhi Monday.

Imam argued that he wanted to say the word 'Bharat' instead of 'Hindustan' during the oath ceremony. It was strongly objected to by the BJP and the JDU MLAs and some of them asked him to go to Pakistan if he and other AIMIM MLAs had a problem with the word Hindustan. As per the procedures, the MLAs can take oath in five languages - Hindi, English, Sanskrit, Maithili

and Urdu. In the first four languages, 'Bharat' is mentioned in the oath letters and 'Hindustan' is written on the Urdu oath letter. Imam, who was elected from the Amaur constituency in the Seemanchal region, insisted on using the word Bharat when he chose to take oath in the Urdu language. Following him, the other four MLAs of the AIMIM also took

the oath in Urdu. The BJP and the JD(U) MLAs raised objections to this and criticised the AIMIM MLAs. Neeraj Kumar Babloo, the BJP MLA said: "It shows the wrong intention of the AIMIM MLAs for not using 'Hindustan' word in their oath. If they have objection over Hindustan, they should go to Pakistan or any other country. They have no right

to stay in our country." Madan Sahani, the JDU MLA said: "Sometimes new MLAs, in a bid to draw the attention of everyone do something different. But the act of the AIMIM MLAs is highly objectionable. There is no harm in using 'Hindustan' during the swearing-in ceremony. Unfortunately, they didn't follow the tradition of the Bihar assembly," said Sahani.

Tejas Express stopped

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Nov 23: The Indian Railway Catering And Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC) has cancelled the operation of the country's first private train Tejas Express from Monday. The IRCTC has decided to end the operations of the Lucknow-Delhi and Mumbai-Ahmedabad Tejas Express due to a shortage of the passengers. Tejas Express had resumed operations in October after its operation was suspended due to coronavirus. The IRCTC is a public sector undertaking of the Ministry of Railways. Earlier, the IRCTC had said in a statement that the management has decided to cancel the operations of all Tejas trains due to a shortage of passengers. IRCTC has cancelled the Lucknow-New Delhi (82501/82502) Tejas Express from November 23 while the Ahmedabad-Mumbai (82901/82902) Tejas Express from November 24. "The management has decided to cancel all departures of the IRCTC Tejas trains due to



low occupancy levels resulting from Covid-19 pandemic. The company will review its decision after seeing the occupancy level of other trains of the Indian Railways operating in both these routes," IRCTC said in a statement. The two Tejas trains between Lucknow-New Delhi and Ahmedabad-Mumbai were resumed from October 17 in view of the festival rush. The operation of both the trains was stopped on March 19 due to the pandemic. IRCTC had taken several steps to run Tejas Express keeping in mind the coronavirus outbreak. Sources said that the occupancy of Tejas Express was around 25 to 40 per cent after the resumption of operation as against 50-80 per cent before the coronavirus lockdown.

KANGANA MOVES HC TO QUASH FIR AGAINST HER

The police have filed the FIR against Kangana Ranaut and her sister under IPC Sections 153-A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race), 295-A (deliberate acts hurting religious sentiments) and 124-A (sedition), 34 (common intention)

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 23: Actress Kangana Ranaut and her sister Rangoli Chandel filed a petition in the Bombay High Court on Monday, seeking to quash an FIR registered against them by Mumbai Police for allegedly "trying to create hatred and communal tension" through their posts on social media.



The FIR, under sedition charges, was registered pursuant to orders passed by the Bandra magistrate's court directing the police to carry out an inquiry against Ranaut and her sister following a complaint lodged against them. "Kangana and Rangoli have filed a petition in the Bombay High Court for quashing of the FIR and the magistrate's order," their advocate Rizwan Siddiquee said. He said the petition has also sought the court to stay the summons issued against the duo asking them to appear before the police for questioning, and also a direction to the police to not take any coercive steps against them.

The Mumbai Police last week summoned Ranaut and her sister for the third time to record their statements on November 23 and 24. The police have filed the FIR against Ranaut and her sister under IPC sections 153-A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race), 295-A (deliberate acts hurting religious sentiments) and 124-A (sedition), 34 (common intention). Magistrate Jaydeo Ghule on October 17 passed the order directing the police to conduct an inquiry and register FIR on a complaint filed before the court by casting director and fitness trainer Munnawarali Sayyed, seeking action against Ranaut and her sister for their posts on social media. In his complaint, Sayyed pointed out to the court several posts published by Ranaut and her sister on their social media accounts on actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death case, an incident of lynching of two seers in Palghar district, and a post comparing Mumbai with PoK.

Lok adalats go virtual; settle 2.51 lakh cases

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 23: Lok adalats, the inexpensive alternative dispute resolution mechanism, moved to the virtual platform due to the coronavirus pandemic and 27 such e-lok adalats organised in 15 states settled 2.51 lakh cases between June and October. Over 12,000 cases have been disposed of by lok adalats so far this month, resulting in the settlement of ₹107.4 crore, the law ministry said in a statement Monday. From June to October, 27 e-lok adalats were organised in 15 states, wherein 4.83 lakh cases were taken up and 2.51 lakh cases disposed of, result-

ing in the settlement of ₹1,409 crore, the statement said. During this month (November), e-lok adalats have so far been organised in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Telangana, wherein 16,651 cases were taken up and 12,686 disposed of, resulting in the settlement of ₹107.4 crore, it added. To facilitate access to justice amidst the constraints placed by COVID-19 and various public health guidelines, legal services authorities at the national and state levels have ingeniously integrated technology into their conventional methods of justice delivery.



"Online lok adalat, popularly known as e-lok adalat, is one such innovation of legal services institutions where technology has been used to its maximum advantage

and has become a platform to deliver justice at the doorstep of people," the statement read. Organised by legal services authorities, lok adalats are an alter-

native dispute resolution mode wherein pre-litigation and cases pending in courts are disposed on the basis of amicable settlements, without any expense on the part of the litigants. It is free of cost and an expeditious method of bringing litigating parties on the same side and saving them from the rigours of trial under the adversarial system of adjudication, which is generally perceived to be time consuming, complex and costly. Lok adalats also play a key role in reducing the burden of the regular courts. Cases related to unpaid power bills and traffic challans are often settled in such adalats.

AIMIM's key Bengal leader joins TMC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Nov 23: AIMIM's West Bengal unit leader Anwar Pasha along with some of his colleagues joined the Trinamool Congress Monday, claiming that the Asaduddin Owaisi-led party was only acting as a polariser of votes to help the BJP. Alleging that a section of people is trying to take the country towards destruction using religion, Pasha said that those who are eyeing Bengal at present, whether "wearing saffron or green", should know that there is no place for such division in this state. "AIMIM has played a hand in the polarisation of votes in Bihar and thus helped the BJP in forming the government there, but this will not happen in Bengal," he said. Pasha, who was welcomed to the TMC fold by ministers Bratya Basu and Moloy Ghatak, said that 30 per cent of West Bengal's population is Muslims, asserting that the political developments in Bihar cannot be emulated in this state. Urging the Muslims in the state to stand by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, he said AIMIM chief Owaisi should not come to Bengal.

of the day quote

Extremely sad to know of the demise of Shri Tarun Gogoi, former Chief Minister of Assam. The country has lost a veteran leader with rich political and administrative experience. His long tenure in office was a period of epochal change in Assam



RAM NATH KOVIND | PRESIDENT

A few days ago, our honourable home minister had come (here), which was a show off. Food items like Basmati rice, postor bora (poppy seed fritters) cooked in five star hotels were taken to the Dalit household. One Brahmin was also brought in from outside



MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

Wedding season is about to start and it is important that people take all health precautions seriously while going to the markets and attending events. Saving lives is our top priority



ASHOK GEHLOT | RAJASTHAN CM

SHORT TAKES

Two held

New Delhi: Two men have been arrested for allegedly raping and molesting a 28-year-old Mumbai-based freelance event manager in Delhi's Aerocity area, police said Monday. They have been identified as Sandeep Mehta (57) and Naveen Dawar (47), both eatery owners in Haryana's Sonapat, they said. Mehta was booked under section 376 (rape) and is in police custody, while Dawar, who was booked under section 354 (assault or criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty), has been sent to judicial custody, a senior police officer said.

Man shot dead

New Delhi: A 50-year-old man was killed and his son injured after they were allegedly attacked by a group of men over personal enmity in northeast Delhi's Nandnagri area on Monday morning, police said. The incident took place around 7 am when Zulfikar Qureshi and his 22-year-old son were roaming near their house. Qureshi was shot on his head, while his son was attacked with a sharp-edged weapon. The two were taken to a nearby hospital, where Qureshi was declared brought dead by doctors. His son is undergoing treatment at the hospital and his condition is stated to be stable, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Northeast) Ved Prakash Surya said. According to police, the two were previously involved in several criminal cases.

16 arrested

Indore: Ten men and six women were arrested in Indore in Madhya Pradesh for allegedly partying and firing a celebratory shot in the air during night curfew imposed to stem the coronavirus spread, police said Monday. All 16 were charged under relevant sections of the Epidemic Diseases Act and the IPC and taken into custody on Sunday night from Paradise Garden in the Dwarakapuri area, an official said.

3 Naxals killed

Raipur: Three Naxals, including a woman cadre, were killed in an encounter with security forces in Chhattisgarh's Kanker district Monday, police said. A Sashatra Seema Bal (SSB) jawan was also injured in the gunfight, they said. The skirmish took place in a forest around 8 am when a team of SSB's 33rd battalion was out on patrolling duty from its Kosranda camp, Inspector General of Police (Bastar range) Sundarraj P said.



The BJP is doing the politics of ballot to strengthen democracy in Jammu and Kashmir

ANURAG THAKUR | UNION MINISTER

MINOR HELD FOR THREATENING YOGI

A minor has been arrested for allegedly sending a threat message to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. A mobile phone and a SIM card was recovered from his possession



KERALA PUTS 'DRACONIAN' POLICE ACT ON HOLD

Shortly after CPI-M general secretary Sitaram Yechury announced in New Delhi that the amendment providing for up to five years jail term to those making defamatory social media posts would be reconsidered, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said his government was not "intending" to implement it now

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, Nov 23: The CPI(M)-led Left front government in Kerala Monday decided to put on hold a controversial amendment to the Police Act as the law triggered a political storm across the country with many describing the measure as an assault on freedom of expression and media.

Shortly after CPI-M general secretary Sitaram Yechury announced in New Delhi that the amendment providing for up to five years jail term to those making defamatory social media posts would be reconsidered, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said his government was not "intending" to implement it now.

Further action would be taken after detailed discussions in the assembly and hearing views from various quarters, he said, with the announcement coming amid widespread criticism of the amendment and protests by Congress and threat by BJP to legally challenge it.

While the government has said it brought the amendment through an ordinance to check cyberbullying, opposition parties and even Left sympathisers have slammed it, saying it was against the freedom of speech and media.

Leader of the Opposition in the state assembly Ramesh Chennithala



dubbed as a "hoax" Vijayan's statement that his government was not intending to implement the act and demanded that it be repealed at the earliest. The ordinance has become a law when it was signed by the Governor and no one, even the Chief Minister, could say that a law would not be implemented once it comes into force.

"So, Vijayan's statement that the amendment would not be enforced is only to deceive people," the Congress leader alleged in a state-

ment, adding police can still register cases under the section as long as it remains as a law.

Sources in the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said that either the state Cabinet will recommend to the Governor withdrawal of the ordinance or the Home Ministry will issue a direction to Police not to take any action under it.

Supreme Court lawyer and constitutional expert Kaleswaram Raj said the only way to undo the effect of an ordinance was to with-

draw the same by way of another ordinance.

"Since the ordinance is notified, the law has come into being. The stand of the government that it will not invoke the ordinance does not have any legal foundation... It should be recalled by a method known to law," he said.

The International Press Institute condemned the ordinance, saying it was a "nasty and diabolical" attempt to muzzle the media in Kerala. Governor Arif Mohammed Khan on Saturday signed the Kerala Police Act Amendment ordinance envisaging addition of Section 118-A to prevent cyber attacks against women and children.

The section stipulates either imprisonment for up to five years or a fine of up to ₹10,000 or both to those who produce, publish or disseminate content through any means of communication with an intention to intimidate, insult or defame any person through social media.

Justifying the move to bring in the ordinance, Vijayan said the government decided to amend the Police Act in an effort to curb widespread malicious campaigns through social media and other platforms which pose a threat to individual freedom and dignity, constitutionally ensured to citizens.

Bharti, hubby get bail in drugs case



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 23: A Mumbai court Monday granted bail to comedian Bharti Singh and her husband Harsh Limbachiya, who were arrested after seizure of drugs from their house in suburban Mumbai.

The magistrate's court granted bail to the couple on a bond of ₹15,000 each. Bharti Singh, who has appeared in a number of comedy and reality shows on TV, was arrested on Saturday night by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), while her husband was taken into custody on Sunday morning following seizure of ganja (cannabis) from their house in suburban Andheri.

They were produced on Sunday before the magistrate's court which remanded them in judicial custody till December 4. They then filed bail pleas through their advocate Ayaz Khan which were posted for hearing on Monday. The NCB had re-

covered 86.5 gm of ganja during the search their residence and office.

This is considered as 'small quantity' under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, an official earlier said. On Monday, Khan told the court that the couple has been booked for pos-

The magistrate's court granted bail to the couple on a bond of ₹15,000 each

session and consumption of drugs that is considered "smaller than the small quantity prescribed in the Act".

"The offences under which my clients (Singh and Limbachiya) have been booked are pun-

ishable up to one year in jail. Hence, bail should be granted," he argued. Khan further told the court that Singh is a woman, who is suffering from diabetes and hence, liberty should be given. "Singh has performed in several reality television shows and acted in films. She and her husband have no criminal antecedents and hence, there is no chance of them absconding," he said.

Ex-Assam CM Gogoi dies at 86



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

post-Covid-19 complications. He also suffered a multi-organ failure.

Following post-Covid-19 complications, the veteran politician, who was on non-invasive ventilation (NIV) since he was admitted to the Gauhati Medical College and Hospital (GMCH) on November 2, was put under invasive ventilation.

Doctors at the GMCH said that Gogoi's health condition deteriorated gradually with problems in breathing following which the doctors put him on intubation ventilator, which is a machine driven ventilation.

"The doctors have tried hard to revive his organs with medicines and other medical methods besides serving dialysis numerous times, but all the efforts have failed," the Health Minister said.

He said the doctors at GMCH were in constant touch with experts from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Delhi. Due to his critical condition, Gogoi could not be shifted outside the state for medical treatment.

Gogoi was discharged from the hospital on October 25 after he recovered from Covid-19 and other post-recovery complications after more than 60 days. He was administered plasma therapy and subsequently became stable.

The octogenarian Congress leader was under the observation of the nine-member medical team headed by GMCH Superintendent Abhijit Sarmah.

Guwahati, Nov 23: Veteran Congress leader and three-time Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi (86) passed away Monday evening after a protracted illness, Assam Health and Finance Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

The former Union Minister and sitting member of Assam assembly is survived by his wife Dolly Gogoi, son Gaurav Gogoi, a Lok Sabha member, and daughter Chandrima Gogoi who lives in the US.

Announcing Gogoi's death, Sarma told the media that the former Chief Minister's body would be kept at the famous Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakshetra in Guwahati on Monday night. The cremation will take place on Tuesday or Wednesday with full state honours after consultation with his family.

The longest serving Assam Chief Minister, Gogoi's health condition deteriorated since Friday due to

CHECKING POLLUTION



An EDMC vehicle sprinkles water over a road at Ghazipur to contain pollution, in New Delhi, Monday

PTI PHOTO

EX-RAIL GUARD TURNS 100, TO GET DOUBLE PENSION

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Nov 23: Keshav Narhar Bapat, one of the oldest living retired railway guards, has turned 100.

After a stint in the Army, Bapat, a resident of Bhusawal in Maharashtra, joined the Great Indian Peninsular Railway (GIPR), now called as the Central Railway, in 1951 and retired around 42 years back. He turned 100 years' old on November 21 and the Central Railway has now decided to double his pension

amount from this month as a "goodwill gesture". CR's Chief Public Relations Officer Shivaji Sutar said Monday.

CR officials felicitated Bapat with bouquets, sweets and a greeting letter from Bhusawal Divisional Railway Manager Vikas Kumar Gupta Saturday. "When our personnel department officials reached Bapats home to wish and greet him on his 100th birthday, his family members were surprised and thanked us for the visit," Sutar said.

According to CR officials, Bapat joined the GIPR in 1951, which in the same year got converted into the Central Railway. He retired as a guard around 1978. The officials said Bapat's family members told them that he was in the Army before joining the GIPR.

He fought in the World War II and went to many countries during the battle. After taking voluntary retirement from the Army, he joined the Railways, where he worked as a train guard, the officials said.

NCB team attacked during raid

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 23: A group of around 50 people have allegedly attacked a team of Narcotics Control Bureau officials and injured two of them during their raid on drugs peddlers in suburban Goregaon, an NCB official said Monday.

Three persons have been arrested in connection with the incident that took place on Sunday evening when the five-member team, including NCB Zonal Director Samir Wankhede and Superintendent of Police Vishwa Vijay Singh, went to conduct the raid, he said. As the NCB team reached Bhagat Singh Nagar locality in Goregaon, around 50 people, including women, gathered there and later attacked members of the central anti-narcotics agency, the official said.

Some people in the crowd were instigating others to attack the NCB officials, terming them as "kidnappers". These people allegedly started hitting the NCB officials and also pelted stones on them, he said. NCB Zonal Director Wankhede tried to stop the crowd from attacking them and also informed local police.

SHRINGLA TO VISIT NEPAL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 23: Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla will pay a two-day visit to Nepal later this week during which he will hold talks with his counterpart and other Nepalese dignitaries to advance bilateral ties, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) announced Monday.

The foreign secretary's visit to Nepal on November 26-27 comes amid a strain in bilateral ties following a bitter border row between the two countries. Shringla's visit to Nepal will be his first trip to the country after assuming charge, according to the MEA.

"The visit is in keeping with the tradition of regular high-level exchanges between the two countries and the priority India attaches to its relations with Nepal," the MEA said. During the visit, Foreign Secretary Shringla will meet his counterpart and other Nepalese dignitaries to discuss the wide-ranging bilateral cooperation between the two countries, it said.

2014-29 period 'very important' for India: PM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 23: Asserting that the 2014-29 period between the 16th to 18th Lok Sabha is "very important" for a young democracy like India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Monday said the last six years have been "historic" for the country's development and a lot remains to be done in the remaining period.

As the age of 16, 17 and 18 years is very important for the youth, so is the time between the 16th and the 18th Lok Sabha for a young nation like India, he said while digitally inaugurating 76 multi-storied flats in the national capital for Members of Parliament.

The 16th Lok Sabha (2014-19) has been historic for the country's

progress, and the 17th Lok Sabha has already become a part of history due to a number of decisions it has taken, he said, referring to the passage of landmark legislations aimed at reforming farm and labour sectors besides abrogation of Article 370 and the citizenship law.

"I am confident the next Lok Sabha (2024-29) will also play a very important role in taking the country ahead in this new decade... There is so much for the country that we have to achieve. Be it 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' campaign, or economic targets or many other pledges like these, we have to achieve them during this period," he said to an audience of parliamentarians, including ministers and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla.

People of Jammu and Kashmir have also joined the mainstream of development, with many new laws coming into effect in the union territory for the first time, he said in a reference to the abro-



gation of Article 370, which had granted the erstwhile state a special status. "It is our responsibility that when history evaluates different terms of Lok Sabha, this period is remembered as a golden chapter in the nation's development," Modi stated.

The second term of the Modi government is scheduled to end in 2024 when the next general election will be held. The ruling BJP has already set its sight on the next Lok Sabha polls with its president J P Nadda set to undertake a 120-day nationwide tour to tone up the saffron party's organisational machinery with a focus on regions and seats where it had not done well in 2019.

In his speech, Modi referred to the GST rollout, enactment of the

Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code and a law proposing death sentence for those convicted of raping children as among the major achievements of his government's first term between 2014-19. India now has resources and a strong resolve to fulfil the dreams of its 130 crore citizens and attain the goal of self-reliance, he said.

Asserting that the country's "new mindset and mood" is reflected in the composition of the 16th Lok Sabha, which had over 300 first-time MPs, and the current lower house, which has 260 MPs elected for the first time, the prime minister noted it has over 400 parliamentarians who are in their first or second terms. The current Lok Sabha also has a record number of woman MPs, he said.



Today, we have renewed hope that we are on the brink of one of the most significant scientific discoveries of our time, as we reach the crucial last stage to finding a vaccine

ALOK SHARMA | UK BUSINESS SECRETARY

NK CALLS FOR TIGHTER BORDER CONTROLS

North Korea has called for tighter border controls against the coronavirus pandemic, urging its officials to stay on "high alert at all times" amid a global resurgence of new cases, state media reported



of the day quote

I do not want to take measures like a lockdown that will start hurting our economy which at the moment is showing signs of a robust recovery. Unfortunately, the opposition's only goal is NRO at whatever cost to the lives of people and the country's economy



IMRAN KHAN | PAKISTAN PRIME MINISTER

China calls on foreign troops to leave Afghanistan in an orderly and responsible manner, give terrorist forces no breathing space and contribute to Afghanistan peace and reconciliation process



ZHAO LIJIAN | CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN

Our greatest defence against Covid-19 is solidarity and cooperation



ANTONIO GUTERRES | UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL

SHORT TAKES

2 killed in Calif. church stabbing

San Jose (US): Two people died in a stabbing Sunday night at a church in California, and multiple other people are "seriously wounded," San Jose police and Mayor Sam Liccardo said. "Our hearts go out to the families of the two community members who have succumbed to stabbing wounds in the attack at Grace Baptist Church downtown," Liccardo said in a tweet late Sunday. The mayor also said in the tweet that a suspect had been arrested, but later deleted the tweet and said a statement from police on the status of the investigation was upcoming.

Pak to close edu institutions

Islamabad: A little over two months after students across Pakistan returned to classes, the authorities Monday decided to close all educational institutions again from November 26 to January 10 to contain the COVID-19 pandemic that has claimed nearly 7,700 lives and infected over 3.7 lakh people in the country.

Great-grandson of Gandhi dies

Johannesburg: Satish Dhupelia, the great-grandson of Mahatma Gandhi, has succumbed to coronavirus-related complications here in South Africa, three days after his 66th birthday, a family member said. Dhupelia's sister Uma Dhupelia-Mesthrie confirmed that her brother died Sunday of COVID-19 related complications after he contracted the disease in hospital where he had been under treatment for a month due to pneumonia.

Nicolas Sarkozy appears in court

Paris: Former French president Nicolas Sarkozy briefly appeared in court Monday to face trial on corruption accusations before judges suspended the hearings until Nov. 26 to assess the health of one of his co-defendants. Prosecutors allege Sarkozy offered to secure a plum job in Monaco for judge Gilbert Azibert in return for confidential information about an inquiry into allegations that Sarkozy had accepted illegal payments from the late L'Oréal heiress Liliane Bettencourt for his 2007 presidential campaign.

UK regulator reviews Pfizer/BioNtech vaccine

While the final deployment plans will depend on decisions by regulators, preparations are underway for the NHS to be ready to begin vaccinating as soon as the first vaccine is approved and delivered to the UK

AGENCIES

London, Nov 23: The UK government Monday said that the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency's (MHRA) is reviewing data from Pfizer/BioNtech to determine whether its COVID-19 vaccine meets "robust" standards of quality, safety, and effectiveness.

The joint vaccine, produced by American pharmaceutical giant Pfizer and German biotech firm BioNtech, had recently claimed to be 94 per cent effective in protecting people over 65 years old from COVID-19, with trials suggesting it works equally well in people of all ages, races and ethnicities.

"Today, we have renewed hope that we are on the brink of one of the most significant scientific discoveries of our time, as we reach the crucial last stage to finding a COVID-19 vaccine," said UK Business Secretary Alok Sharma.

"While this news is a cause for celebration, we must make sure that this vaccine, like all new medicines, meets standards of quality, safety, and effective-



ness. I urge the public to be patient while we wait for regulators to do a thorough assessment. Finding a vaccine is not going to end the pandemic overnight, but we are hopeful of being one step closer to defeating this terrible virus," the Indian-origin minister said.

The UK is expected to receive a total of 40 million doses by the end of 2021, enough to vaccinate up to a third of the population, with the majority of doses anticipated in the first half of next year.

"This is another important step

on the road to recovery. We must now allow the MHRA's renowned teams of scientists and clinicians to make an independent assessment of whether it meets their robust standards of quality, safety, and effectiveness," said UK Health Secretary Matt Hancock. "If approval is granted, the NHS [National Health Service] will be ready to deliver. The NHS has vast experience in delivering widespread vaccination programmes and an enormous amount of work has taken place to ensure we have

the logistical expertise, transport and workforce to roll out a vaccine according to clinical priority, at the speed at which it can be manufactured," he said.

The UK government stressed that the COVID-19 vaccine will only be authorised for supply by the UK's independent regulator if it meets strict standards of quality, safety, and effectiveness, and if they are satisfied the vaccine can be consistently manufactured.

While the final deployment plans will depend on decisions by regulators, preparations are underway for the NHS to be ready to begin vaccinating as soon as the first vaccine is approved and delivered to the UK. The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) said that general practitioners (GPs) have already been signed up to take part in the programme when an appropriate vaccine is ready and dozens of hospitals across the UK will lead coordination on behalf of neighbouring hospitals, community trusts and local health groups in vaccinating staff and other priority groups. Several vaccination sites will also be set up across the country.

China sets launch window for mission to Moon

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, Nov 23: China said Monday that it will launch its first unmanned space mission Tuesday to collect samples from the Moon's surface and return to earth, which its scientists say is one of the country's most complicated and challenging space missions.

China National Space Administration (CNSA) said that the fuelling of the Long March-5 rocket, currently China's largest launch vehicle, began Monday ahead of the launch on Tuesday. The rocket, which will send the Chang'e-5 spacecraft to Earth-Moon transfer orbit, is scheduled to be launched from the Wenchang Spacecraft Launch Site in south China's Hainan Province in the early hours Tuesday.

The mission is the country's first attempt to launch a spacecraft to collect and return samples from the Moon, the CNSA said.

The Chang'e-5 mission aims to conduct unmanned lunar sample collection and return to Earth, one of the country's most complicated and challenging space missions, state-run Xinhua news agency reported. It will contribute to the scientific studies in fields such as the formation and evolution of the Moon, it said. China's lunar exploration program is named after the legendary Chang'e, the "Moon Lady," who took a potion

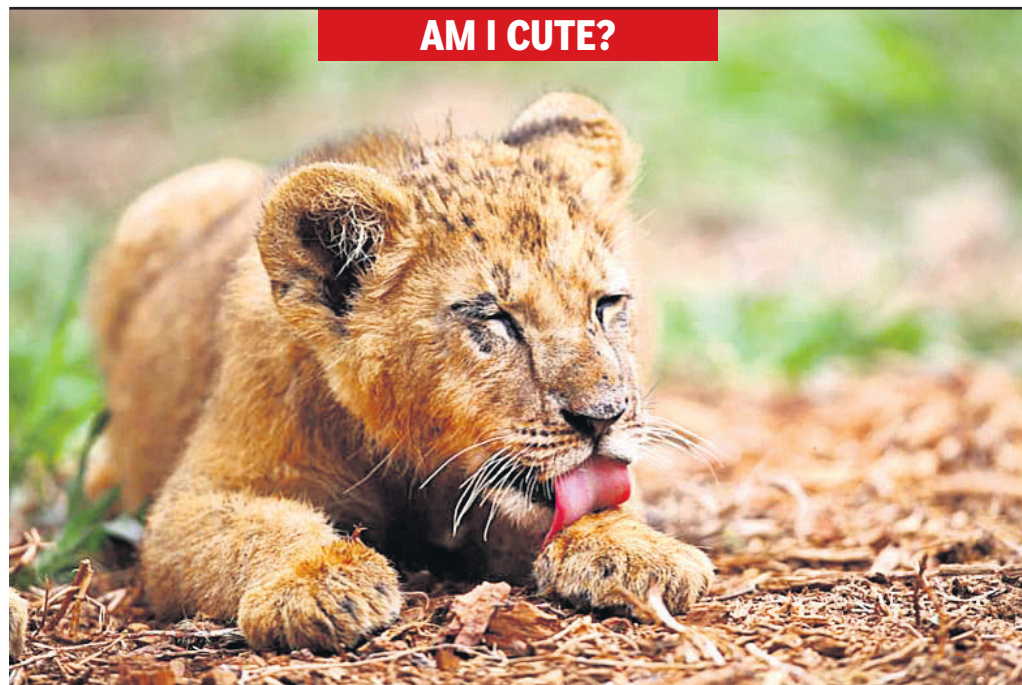
and floated into the sky, eventually landing on the Moon, where she became a goddess accompanied by a jade rabbit.

A major space power, China launched its first Mars mission 'Tianwen-1' July 23 this year. The Mars spacecraft which included an orbiter, lander and rover is on its way to the red planet.

China launched its first lunar probe, Chang'e-1, in 2007 which orbited 200 km above the Moon and mapped 3D images of the lunar surface followed by Chang'e-2 in 2010 which had sent high resolution photos of the Moon's surface. Chang'e-3 was launched in 2013 which softly touched down on the Sinus Iridum 12 days later. Chang'e-3 included a lander and a moon rover called Yutu (Jade Rabbit). China had launched an experimental spacecraft in 2014 to test technologies to be used on Chang'e-5. The Chang'e-4 probe was launched in 2018. It made the first-ever soft landing on the Von Karman Crater in the South Pole-Aitken Basin on the far side of the Moon. Chang'e-4, including a lander and a moon rover called Yutu-2, or Jade Rabbit-2, conducted low-frequency radio astronomical observation, terrain and landform survey, mineral composition and shallow lunar surface structure detection, and neutron radiation and neutral atom measurement, according to Xinhua reports.



which had sent high resolution photos of the Moon's surface. Chang'e-3 was launched in 2013 which softly touched down on the Sinus Iridum 12 days later. Chang'e-3 included a lander and a moon rover called Yutu (Jade Rabbit). China had launched an experimental spacecraft in 2014 to test technologies to be used on Chang'e-5. The Chang'e-4 probe was launched in 2018. It made the first-ever soft landing on the Von Karman Crater in the South Pole-Aitken Basin on the far side of the Moon. Chang'e-4, including a lander and a moon rover called Yutu-2, or Jade Rabbit-2, conducted low-frequency radio astronomical observation, terrain and landform survey, mineral composition and shallow lunar surface structure detection, and neutron radiation and neutral atom measurement, according to Xinhua reports.



A newborn lion cub licks himself inside a cage after being born at Altiplano's zoo in San Pablo Apetatitlan, in Tlaxcala state, Mexico

European powers see hope for Iran accord in US transition

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Berlin, Nov 23: The German, French and British foreign ministers were meeting Monday to discuss the future of the international agreement on Iran's nuclear program amid hopes that the incoming US Administration might help breathe new life into the accord, Germany's Foreign Ministry said.

The three European powers have spearheaded efforts to keep alive the agreement, concluded in Vienna in 2015 and officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA. Russia and China also remain on board.

President-elect Joe Biden has said he hopes to return the US to the accord, in which Iran agreed to

limit its nuclear activities in exchange for the lifting of international sanctions. President Donald Trump withdrew the US from the agreement in 2018 and imposed crippling economic sanctions on Iran, which responded by publicly abandoning nuclear restrictions in the agreement.

Monday's meeting at a government guest house in Berlin, which wasn't announced in advance, aimed to discuss "what a further approach involving all signatories to the JCPOA, and perhaps also with a new US Administration, could look like," Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Andrea Sasse told reporters.

"We are confident that a constructive approach by the US toward the Vienna nuclear agreement could

contribute significantly to breaking the current negative spiral we are seeing with Iran, and opening new prospects for the preservation of the JCPOA," she added.

Sasse renewed calls for Iran to stop its violations of the agreement and comply with all of its provisions in full.

She said Monday's meeting also would address Iran's missile program and wider regional role — issues that are not addressed by the nuclear agreement, to the displeasure of its critics. Asked whether the Europeans fear Trump taking further steps against Iran before he leaves office that would undermine their hopes, Sasse replied: "if there are such measures, we will evaluate them if they happen."

UK SC TO HEAR CASE OVER 'IS BRIDE' RETURN

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Nov 23: Britain's Supreme Court is set to decide whether a woman who ran away from her London home as a teenager to join the Islamic State group in Syria can return to the UK.

The British government is fighting to keep Shamima Begum from coming back to the country where she was born.

At a hearing beginning on Monday, it is challenging a lower court's ruling that Begum can return to Britain to mount a legal challenge aimed at restoring her UK citizenship, which was revoked on national security grounds.

The Court of Appeal said in July that "the only way in which she can have a fair and effective appeal is to be permitted to come into the United Kingdom." But James Eadie, a lawyer acting for the UK government, told the Supreme Court justices that Begum "is considered to pose a real and current threat to national security." Begum, now 21, was one of three east London schoolgirls who traveled to Syria in 2015 to live under IS rule. She says she married an Islamic State member from the Netherlands and had three children, all of whom have died.

She resurfaced at a refugee camp in Syria in 2019 and told reporters she wanted to come home, but was denied the chance when then-Home Secretary Sajid Javid revoked her citizenship. The situation has thrown into sharp relief the larger question of how Western societies deal with people who joined IS but want to go back to their home countries. Begum challenged the decision, arguing she is not the citizen of another country and that Javid's decision left her stateless.

Greenhouse gas levels at new high despite lockdowns: UN

THE WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANISATION SAID LOCKDOWNS, BORDER CLOSURES, FLIGHT GROUNDINGS AND OTHER MEASURES TO REIN IN THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS HAD INDEED CUT EMISSIONS OF MANY POLLUTANTS AND GREENHOUSE GASES LIKE CARBON DIOXIDE

AGENCIES

Geneva, Nov 23: Greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, the main driver of climate change, hit record highs last year and have continued climbing this year, despite measures to halt the pandemic, the UN said Monday.

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) said lockdowns, border closures, flight groundings and other measures to rein in the coronavirus crisis had indeed cut emissions of many pollutants and greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide.

But it warned the industrial slowdown due to the pandemic had not curbed record concentrations of the greenhouse gases that are trap-

ping heat in the atmosphere, raising temperatures, causing sea levels to rise and driving more extreme weather.

"The lockdown-related fall in emissions is just a tiny blip on the long-term graph," WMO chief Petteri Taalas said in a statement. "We need a sustained flattening of the curve." The WMO's main annual Greenhouse Gas Bulletin said preliminary estimates indicated that during the most intense period of the shutdowns, daily CO2 emissions may have been reduced by as much as 17 percent globally.

The annual impact was expected to be a drop of between 4.2 and 7.5 percent, it said. But this will not cause concentrations of CO2 in the



atmosphere to go down, it said, warning the impact on concentrations was "no bigger than the normal year to year fluctuations."

Historic CO2 concentrations will continue to rise, albeit at a slightly reduced pace, WMO said, adding that the pace would be no more

than 0.23 parts per million (ppm) per year slower than the previous trajectory — well within the 1.0 ppm natural inter-annual variability.

"On the short-term the impact of the Covid-19 confinements cannot be distinguished from natural variability," it said.

Emissions are the main factor that determine the amount of greenhouse gas levels but concentration rates are a measure of what remains after a series of complex interactions between atmosphere, biosphere, lithosphere, cryosphere and the oceans.

CO2 is by far the most important long-lived greenhouse gas in the atmosphere related to human activities, and is responsible for

roughly two-thirds of the Earth's warming.

WMO's Bulletin listed the atmospheric concentration of CO2 in 2019 at 410 parts per million, up from 407.8 ppm in 2018, and said the rise had continued this year.

Taalas pointed out that the world breached the global threshold of 400 ppm in 2015, voicing alarm that "just four years later, we crossed 410 ppm." "Such a rate of increase has never been seen in the history of our records."

The United Nations agency said that since 1990, there had been a 45-percent increase in so-called radiative forcing, which is the warming effect on the climate by greenhouse gases.

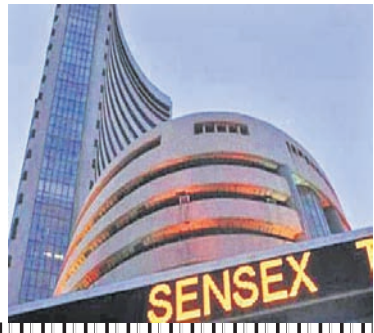
business



India's macroeconomic situation is improving fast and the country's GDP growth will turn positive in the third and fourth quarters of the current financial year
ASHIMA GOYAL | EMINENT ECONOMIST

SENSEX ENDS ABOVE 44,000

The Indian stock market continued its record run Monday amid volatility, as the BSE SENSEX ended above the 44,000 mark after touching a fresh intra-day high earlier during the day. Minutes into the trade Monday, SENSEX hit an all-time high of 44,271.15 points



of the day quote

We are hoping resolution of NPA cases worth about ₹18,000cr pending before NCLT in H2. In the last quarter, resolution of some big account at NCLT will further strengthen the balance sheet



PP SENGUPTA | MD, IOB

We all are aware that India needs to do a lot for improving logistics. One major initiative that is expected to be announced by the government soon is a national master plan for providing multi-modal connectivity all across the country



GURUPRASAD MOHAPATRA | SECRETARY, DPIIT

In our efforts to tackle the ever-growing challenges of infectious diseases and AMR, we found the perfect collaborator in India Health Fund to help democratise innovations and make primary healthcare more accessible



SRINIVAS RAMANUJAM | CEO, VILLAGRO

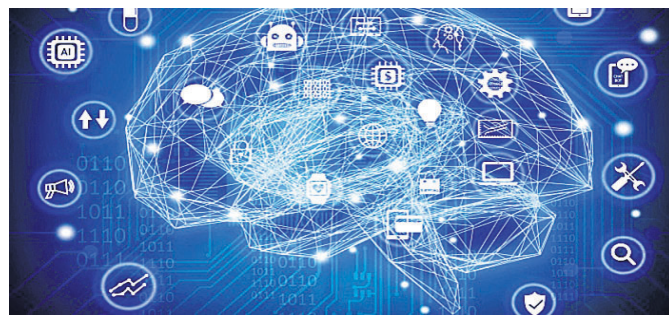
'AI, ML, 5G, IoT will be most important tech in 2021'

THE SURVEY WAS ON THE MOST IMPORTANT TECHNOLOGIES FOR 2021, THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE SPEED OF THEIR TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION AND THE INDUSTRIES EXPECTED TO BE MOST IMPACTED BY TECHNOLOGY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Nov 23: Artificial intelligence (AI), Machine learning, 5G and Internet of Things (IoT) would be the most important technologies in 2021, according to a new study by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE). The technical professional organisation Monday released the results of a survey of Chief Information Officers (CIO) and Chief Technology Officers (CTO) in the US, the UK, China, India and Brazil. The survey was on the most important technologies for 2021, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the speed of their technology adoption and the industries expected to be most impacted by technology. On which would be the most im-

portant technologies, nearly one-third of the total respondents (32 per cent) said AI and ML followed by 5G (20 per cent) and IoT (14 per cent), according to an IEEE statement. Manufacturing (19 per cent), healthcare (18 per cent), financial services (15 per cent) and education (13 per cent) are the industries that most believe would be impacted by technology, according to the CIOs and CTOs surveyed. At the same time, more than half (52 per cent) of CIOs and CTOs see their biggest challenge as dealing with aspects of COVID-19 recovery in relation to business operations. These challenges include a permanent hybrid remote and office work structure (22 per cent), office and facilities reopenings and return (17 per cent), and managing per-



manent remote working (13 per cent). However, 11 per cent said the agility to stop and start IT initiatives as this unpredictable environment continues would be their biggest challenge. Another 11 per cent cited online security threats, including those related to remote workers, as the biggest challenge they see.

CIOs and CTOs surveyed have sped up adopting some technologies due to the pandemic. More than half (55 per cent) of respondents have accelerated adoption of cloud computing, 52 per cent have accelerated 5G adoption and 51 per cent have accelerated AI and ML. The adoption of IoT (42 per

cent), augmented and virtual reality (35 per cent) and video conferencing (35 per cent) technologies have also been accelerated due to the global pandemic. Compared to a year ago, CIOs and CTOs overwhelmingly (92 per cent) believe their company is better prepared to respond to a potentially catastrophic interruption such as a data breach or natural disaster. "What's more, of those who say they are better prepared, 58 per cent strongly agree that COVID-19 accelerated their preparedness," the statement said. Asked which technologies would have the greatest impact on global COVID-19 recovery, one in four (25 per cent) of those surveyed said AI and ML.

'Asset quality of Indiabulls Housing Fin vulnerable'



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 23: Asset quality at non-bank lenders IIFL Finance and Indiabulls Housing Finance is "vulnerable" due to the economic contraction, global ratings agency Moody's Investors Service said Monday. The agency said Muthoot Finance - the third non-bank finance company it rates - is better positioned because of its focus on the gold loans business. Loan collections have shown an improvement for all the three NBFCs despite the six-month loan repayments moratorium ending in August on a pick-up in economic activity, but "asset quality at IIFL Finance and Indiabulls is vulnerable to economic contraction", it added. Till now, various types of support measures for borrowers from authorities have prevented a sharp deterioration of asset quality at the lenders, it added. "However, we expect delinquencies will eventually increase at IIFL Finance and Indiabulls once the support programs end given the severity of the pandemic's impact on India's economy," the agency said. A modest loan growth and loan sales will help IIFL and Indiabulls maintain capitalisation despite the weakening of profitability, which will be hurt by credit costs for the loan losses, it noted.

'Bank licences to corporate a bad idea'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 23: Days after an Internal Working Group (IWG) of Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) recommended allowing large Indian corporates to enter the banking sector, former RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan and Deputy Governor Viral Acharya have hit back at the suggestion and questioned the timing for it. Terming the recommendation as a "bombshell", in a blogpost, they said that although several recommendations of the report are worth adopting the one to allow corporate houses into banking should not be taken up. "To the contrary, it is even more important today to stick to the tried and tested limits on corporate involvement in banking," said the article. Sharing the article on LinkedIn, Rajan said that he thinks the proposal as a "bad idea". It said that there are two primary rationales for not allowing cor-



The history of such connected lending is invariably disastrous - how can the bank make good loans when it is owned by the borrower?

RAGHURAM RAJAN | FORMER RBI GOVERNOR

porates into banking, first being that industrial houses can easily get financing, with no questions asked, in case they have an in-house bank. "The history of such connected lending is invariably disastrous - how can the bank make good loans when it is owned by the borrower?" Further, both the economists also noted that regulatory can succumbed to either political pressure or the urgency of the moment. Observing that a regulator has to discriminate between "fit and proper businesses" and shady ones only when it is "truly in-

dependent" which may always not be the case. "Why is there urgency to change the regulation? After all, committees are rarely set up out of the blue," said the article. Questioning the timing of the proposal, Rajan and Acharya said: "Why now, at a time when we are still trying to learn the lessons from failures like IL&FS and Yes Bank?" The proposal has created ripples and drawn criticism from several experts and analysts although industry has applauded the recommendation.

Economic reforms will continue: Sitharaman

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 23: Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Monday said that the government will continue its reform agenda and take up more measures in days ahead.

In her address at the National MNCs Conference 2020, organised by the CII, Sitharaman said that in furtherance of its reforms agenda, the government is ensuring the setting up of dedicated special manufacturing zones for the production of pharma, medical devices and APIs (active pharmaceutical ingredients) in six states. Effective unified single window mechanism is part of these zones, she said. Sitharaman said that the Prime Minister has not lost the opportunity for deep reforms, even during the coronavirus crisis, and the reforms momentum would continue. Noting that several measures are being taken up to keep the reforms impetus intact such as professionalisation of the financial sector and thrust on disinvestments, she said that all enterprises, MNCs and India Inc, big, medium and small enterprises, are facing a reset exercise in doing business.



The FM said that the government has been working assiduously towards ensuring a facilitative environment for the MNCs operating overseas

"We will have to make sure that policies are right to make India an attractive investment destination," she said. The Finance Minister said that the government has been working assiduously towards ensuring a facilitative environment for the MNCs operating out of India. Enthused by government's thrust on reforms and reduced taxation rates, several sovereign funds have expressed interest in partnering with the government on its National Infrastructure Pipeline, she added.

SHORT TAKES

EbixCash gets 70% stake

New Delhi: EbixCash, a subsidiary of Ebix Inc which provides on-demand software and e-commerce services to insurance, financial, healthcare and e-learning industries, has acquired 70% stake in BPO company AssureEdge Global Services for undisclosed amount. AssureEdge is recognised as an independent customer retention and customer response organisation in India, with a variety of BPO offerings via six contact centres across the country, EbixCash said in a statement.

'Lockdowns will slow recovery'

Mumbai: Lockdowns in Gujarat, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh can slow the economic recovery and the outlook on business resumption remains concerning, a Japanese brokerage said Monday. Nomura, which has built a business resumption index to gauge the recovery after the pandemic, said the index moved up by a notch for the week ended November 22 but continues to be below pre-pandemic levels.

Biocon acquires 26% stake

New Delhi: Biotechnology major Biocon Monday said it has inked an agreement for the acquisition of 26% stake on a fully diluted basis in Hinduja Renewables Two Pvt Ltd for ₹5.91 crore. The indicative time period for completion of the acquisition is December 15, 2020, Biocon said in a BSE filing. The cost of the acquisition is ₹5,91,61,730 for the acquisition of 26% stake on a fully diluted basis in one or more tranches, it added.

Max Estate to invest ₹400cr

New Delhi: Max group's realty arm Max Estates Monday said it has started construction of its new commercial project, comprising mainly office space, in Noida with an investment of ₹400 crore. The company has roped in New York Life Insurance Company as financial partner to develop this project Max Square, which will have 7 lakh sq ft of office and retail spaces. This is the third commercial project of Max Estates, which is part of Max group's listed entity Max Ventures & Industries Ltd.

CIL TO SET UP 3 GW SOLAR POWER PROJECTS BY FY24

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 23: State-owned Coal India Monday said it plans to set up 14 rooftop and ground-mounted solar power projects of 3,000 MW capacity by 2023-24 which will entail an investment of ₹5,650 crore. Coal India (CIL) is mandated by the coal ministry to become a net zero carbon company. Solar power initiative is a part of CIL's diversification plans, the PSU said in a filing to BSE. The likely investment would be around ₹5,650 crore, it said. While ₹3,650 crore is planned to be invested through CIL's capex, till 2023-24, the rest would be met through joint venture models that the company intends to pursue for this initiative. Synergising their efforts, CIL and NLC India Ltd have floated a



joint venture entity 'Coal Lignite Urja Vikas Private Ltd' to develop 1,000 MW solar power projects. CIL has also tied up a JV with NTPC and an MoU with Solar Energy Corporation of India for solar projects of 1,000 MW each, the progress of which is being worked out individually. Additionally, the solar power initiative helps CIL reduce its whopping annual power consumption expense, which was around ₹3,400 crore ending FY2020, accounting for around 4.4 per cent of the revenue expense for the year.

PPT's riverine port to come up near Mahanadi

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 23: The Ministry of Ports Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) allowed the Paradip Port Trust (PPT) to set up a riverine port near river Mahanadi, reveal sources. It said that PPT showed its interest to set up the proposed Riverine Port on River Mahanadi as the Odisha government decided to set up the Port on a 'PPP Mode'. To implement the proposal, PPT will sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Odisha Government. Sources stated that the port will be all weather and multi-user port at river Mouth of Mahanadi and it will be developed and maintained by PPT. The riverine port will be set up at Akhadasali village under



Mahakalpada Block in Kendrapara district and it is expected to be developed in two phases. It was said that around 175 hectare of land required for early phase development. Two berths will be established for transportation of 18.43 MTPA of cargo in first phase and it is likely to bear the cost of worth ₹2,110 crore. The capacity of transportation of cargo will increase from 18.43 MTPA to 45.88 MTPA, and an

additional 125 hectare of land will be required, sources said. The riverine port will be connected to National Highway-53 and Haridaspur-Paradip Railway Line for transportation of cargo. The port will open opportunity for employment and it is expected that about 4,300 people will get direct and indirect jobs in the first phase, and about 10,700 in the second phase.

RRVL's 'vocal for local' mission expands to 40K artisans

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 23: Reliance Retail Monday said it showcased more than 40,000 artisan-crafted products from over 50 GI clusters to its customers this festive season in a strong push to locally-made artisanal products. "A direct result of its three-year-old flagship initiatives - 'Indie by AJIO' and 'Swadesh' - started to provide avenues for sales and employment to local craftsmen, the programmes now engage with more than 30,000 craftsmen, representing over 600 art forms across a wide spectrum of clothing, textiles, handicrafts and handmade natural goods," the company said in a statement. Indie by AJIO is an online marketplace for local artisans and hand-

Indie by AJIO is an online marketplace for local artisans and handcrafted products. The Indie range is sourced from over 50 GI crafts clusters from across India, including Odisha

crafted products. It features this distinctive idiom beautifully in the wide lifestyle products ranging from apparel to home furnishing and accessories such as jewellery and footwear, it said. The craft repertoire includes Ikat, Shibori, Banarasi, Bagh, Ajrakh to Jamdani, Tangail, Chanderi and many more. The Indie range is sourced from over 50 GI crafts clusters from across India, including Gujarat, Rajasthan,



Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha, Bihar, Jharkhand, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal. The Geographical Indication (GI) tag identifies natural produce, handicrafts or manufactured goods as products native to a territory, region or locality for their unique characteristics by attributing them

to their geographical origin. Swadesh is a special brand of Reliance Retail that brings alive India's rich handcrafted traditions and offers over 400 types of handmade textiles, handicrafts and agricultural products that are listed with GI. Swadesh has an MoU with the Ministry of Textiles which enables

the sourcing of 100 per cent authentic crafted products, directly from artisan communities. Swadesh brand is available across multiple formats including AJIO and Trends. Akhilesh Prasad, president - Reliance Fashion & Lifestyle, said, "We are delighted that our development efforts over the last few years are now bearing strong results both in our ability to engage with an increasing number of craftsmen as well as our ability to co-create and co-curate products that are being increasingly accepted by today's consumers." With a rapidly expanding portfolio, Indie by AJIO helps customers discover the best of Indian fashion and crafts and offers the convenience of delivering them right at customers' doorsteps.

"The diversity of sourcing from across the length and breadth of India has resulted not only in the creation of a stunning portfolio that is every handcraft connoisseur's dream but also in the direct employment for over 30,000 skilled artisans across the country. We will continue to grow this segment with time," Prasad said. Further, as a member of the AIACA (All India Artisans & Craftworkers Welfare Association), all of Swadesh's products come with a craft mark certification such as Dabu, Chanderi weaving, Single Ikat weaving, Kutch leatherwork, Chikankari embroidery, Kashida Kari, Ajrakh, Applique, Bagru block printing, hand block printing, block printed kalamkari, Mangalgi handloom weaving, among others.

GIANT-KILLER MEDVEDEV

Russian World No.4 tops third-ranked Thiem in the final after beating top two rank holders in earlier stages to claim his maiden ATP Finals title

He had zero victories over Top 10 opponents over the preceding 12 months.

Thiem's defense and power from the baseline put him on top early, and strong serving at key moments allowed him to save the first eight break points he faced.

But Medvedev, the runner-up to Nadal at the 2019 US Open, finally converted on his sixth break chance of the third set by sneaking forward behind a return, making a forehand volley winner and going up 3-2.

Thiem credited Medvedev with playing an 'unreal game' there. That was enough, because Medvedev never faced a break point the rest of the way; he finished with 12 aces.

A key shift came in the second-set tie-breaker, thanks to a change

“ It means a lot. (It) shows what I'm capable of when I'm playing good, feeling good mentally, physically. (I) just need to produce it more and more. (It's) a great boost of confidence for all the Slams and tournaments coming up. Hopefully I can continue this way ”

DANIIL MEDVEDEV

Medvedev became the first player to defeat each of the men ranked 1 to 3 in the season-ending c'ship (ATP Finals) and only the fourth to do so at any tour event since 1990

in style from Medvedev. Thiem went up 2-0 there, before Medvedev used an element of surprise by rushing to the net more often than usual — behind serves and returns — and reeling off the next seven points.

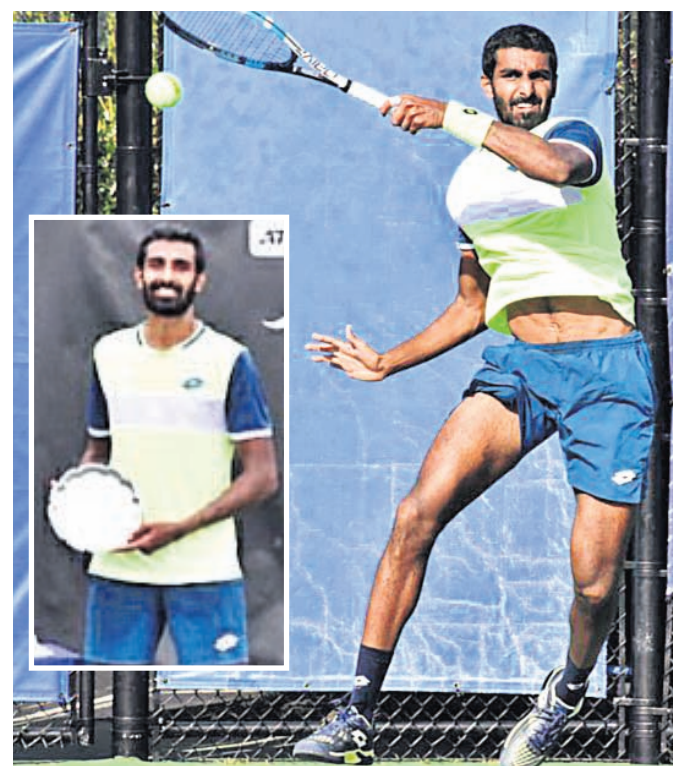
That Medvedev began moving forward behind returns 'was surprising' and 'very gutsy', said Thiem, who had won three of the pair's previous four matches, including in straight sets in the semifinals in New York in September en route to his first Grand Slam trophy.

In the second set, Thiem had break opportunities to take a 4-3 edge, but he badly missed a short shot on one. He put his hands on his hips. "Maybe," Thiem said afterward, "the match would have had a different outcome if I convert that break point."

He stumbled and tumbled to the court in the next game, but appeared to be OK. Still, Medvedev said he sensed Thiem was fading down the stretch.

2ND STRAIGHT LOSS IN FINAL FOR INDIAN AFTER MISSING OUT ON ORLANDO TITLE

Prajnesh finishes runner-up, again



Prajnesh Gunneswaran plays a forehand during a match of Orlando Open; (inset) the Indian poses with the runner-up prize, Sunday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Orlando, Nov 23: Indian tennis player Prajnesh Gunneswaran ended runner-up at the Orlando Open, losing the summit clash of the ATP Challenger event to American Brandon Nakashima, here.

Prajnesh did not have the required power in his strokes to hurt the American, losing 3-6, 4-6 in the USD 52,080 hard court tournament Sunday.

The Indian left-hander could convert none of the eight break chances that came his way in an hour and 28 minute contest.

It is Prajnesh's second straight runner-up finish. He had reached the final at the Cary Challenger last week. The result helped Prajnesh to move to 128 from 137. He has already locked the India

No.1 rank with his Orlando show.

Serving at 2-3, 30-all, Prajnesh buried a forehand to the net to be down a break point but saved it with an ace. Another forehand error by Prajnesh gave Nakashima another chance but the Indian saved that too with a well set-up winner.

However, Nakashima's strong ground-strokes brought him another chance and this time Prajnesh could not save, sending a backhand over the baseline. An easy hold put the American ahead 5-2. He returned to serve out the set without any fuss.

In the third game of the second set, Prajnesh dropped serve and squandered two break chances in the next game to let 19-year-old Nakashima run away with his maiden Challenger level singles trophy.



Dominic Thiem reacts after conceding a point

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Nov 23: Daniil Medvedev did not travel an easy path to the biggest title of his career at the ATP Finals: He beat No.3 Dominic Thiem for the championship after earlier getting past No.1 Novak Djokovic and No.2 Rafa Nadal.

By switching tactics and coming back for a 4-6, 7-6 (7-2), 6-4 victory over US Open champion Thiem in Sunday's final, No.4 Medvedev became the first player to defeat each of the men ranked 1-3 in the season-ending championship — and only the fourth to do so at any tour event since 1990.

The win against Thiem on an indoor hard court in an arena without spec-

tators, who were barred because of the coronavirus pandemic, followed those against Djokovic in the round-robin portion of the tournament and Nadal in Saturday's semifinals. Medvedev went 5-0 in all, quite a turnaround from a year ago, when he was 0-3 at the ATP Finals.

The tournament now ends its 12-edition stay in London and heads to Turin, Italy, next year.

Medvedev closed 2020 by going 10-0 in November, including seven wins against members of the Top 10.



OFC begin season with loss Reds outfox Foxes in Premier League

AGENCIES

Goa, Nov 23: Odisha FC (OFC) had an unwanted start to their Indian Super League campaign for this edition as they suffered a 0-1 defeat against Hyderabad FC (HFC) in their season-opener at the GMC Stadium in Bambolim, Monday.

The loss was even more frustrating considering the goal came from the penalty spot as Aridane Santana, who represented the Bhubaneswar-based side in the previous edition, calmly put the ball into the net in the 35th minute.

Manuel Marquez's side looked the more dominant side in the beginning and could have scored the opening goal within five minutes of the match had Santana been a little more clinical with his header. The HFC skipper failed to convert a free-header from Lluís Sastre's in-swinging corner from a very close range as the ball went wide.

In the 34th minute from a quick counter-attack, Santana found Halicharan Narzary at the edge of the box with a square pass and the Indian winger took a shot on goal which hit Odisha skipper Steven Taylor on his left arm as the English defender tried to block the shot. A penalty was awarded and Santana found the back of the net.

Narzary got another opportunity to score just minutes before the halftime whistle as he attempted a shot from the edge of the box, but credit to Arsheep Singh who managed to parry the ball with the tip of his finger.

Odisha got their first major goal scoring chance of the match just two minutes after the second half kick-off courtesy a defensive blunder from Joao Victor. The Spaniard

failed to intercept a long ball from Odisha's half and the ball fell to Nandhakumar Sekar. The winger took a touch near the box and was pulled the trigger but Akash Mishra did well to intercept the shot.

This was the first time in Hyderabad's brief history that they managed to keep a clean sheet in an ISL game. They next take on Bengaluru FC November 28 while Odisha face Jamshedpur the next day

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Liverpool, Nov 23: Liverpool set a club record of 64 top-flight home matches unbeaten by overwhelming Leicester in a 3-0 win in the English Premier League (EPL).

Diogo Jota had a record of his own, becoming the first player to score in his first four home top-division league appearances for Liverpool Sunday with a glancing header to add to Jonny Evans' own goal in the first half.

Roberto Firmino made amends for hitting the post twice by scoring the third in the 87th minute from a corner as Jurgen Klopp's side — undefeated in the league at Anfield since April 2017 — eclipsed the great team of the late 1970s and early 1980s, whose own run was coincidentally ended by a Leicester team in 1981.

Fabinho's return after a three-match absence not only eased Liverpool's injury worries but soothed any anxiety at the back as he slotted into central defense with a calm, assured performance usually associated with Virgil van Dijk, who is out long-term through injury.

With Liverpool's absentee list also including Mohamed Salah, Jordan Henderson and Trent Alexander-Arnold, Leicester —



JUGGERNAUT CONTINUES: Liverpool's Diogo Jota wheels away in celebration after scoring in his fourth consecutive home league match, Sunday

with their 100 per cent record away from home — and its former Liverpool manager Brendan Rodgers would have fancied their chances of a first win at Anfield in over 20 years.

However, the hosts were well

worth their 2-0 lead at halftime. Jamie Vardy, the scourge of the top teams, barely had a touch of note and never really had the chance to test Fabinho's newly healed hamstring or Joel Matip's lack of pace. Instead, it was another livewire

forward in Jota who took center stage, occupying the wide-right position usually the preserve of Salah.

The summer signing roamed in off the flank to cause Leicester all kinds of problems, and he was duly rewarded with his goal just before the break.

When he headed in a cross from Andy Robertson, it was his seventh goal in his last six club matches and gave Klopp's side a cushion after Evans had headed James Milner's corner past his own goalkeeper at a corner.

The evergreen Milner, 35 in January, deputised for the absent Alexander-Arnold and did not put a foot wrong in keeping Harvey Barnes quiet while also offering an outlet down the right. That was until he was moved into midfield after Naby Keita was added to the casualty list with a hamstring injury.

Liverpool hit the post twice within seconds as Firmino's shot rebounded, was cleared off the line by millimeters, and Sadio Mane's follow-up strike deflected off Kasper Schmeichel and onto the upright.

Firmino's persistence eventually paid off as Liverpool moved level on points with Tottenham at the top of the table, behind only on goal difference.

Warner focussing on disciplined batting Lara bats for Surya in India team

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sydney, Nov 23: Australia's big-hitting opener David Warner Monday said his 'days are numbered' in international cricket and continuing an approach of keeping his aggression in check, he would rather ignore than engage if Indian players attempt to sledge him during the upcoming series.

Warner, in a virtual press conference facilitated by the series' official broadcaster Sony, touched upon his evolution as a batsman in the past couple of years.

"I've just recently turned 34, so my days are numbered, when you're in the 30s. There's obviously a risk element but there's obviously a cricket smarts element to it as well," the explosive opener said ahead of

the limited-overs series against India starting with the first ODI November 27.

Warner, who has had his share of aggressive on-field showdowns, said he would prefer to look the other way if Indians try to get chatty with him. "I'll always draw from that mate. To try and get engaged, that's the way they like to play as well," he said.

"We're learning over time, trying not to engage in that. Probably try and reversing the effect by trying and ignoring it, trying to take it on board and using it against them by using your bat," he added.

"It's probably something I've learnt over time. And you don't know the effect it can have on your teammates as well. You've got to be a bit more humble in that respect."



Warner said at 34, he has become a calculated risk-taker and is focussed on maintaining a strong strike rate. "For myself, it's about getting off to a good start and taking calculated risks in that middle-overs period if we're talking

about 50-over games," he said. "For me, it's about making sure that I am batting as much as I can and at a good strike-rate as well. I think last year was probably the most disciplined I've batted in Test match cricket as well.

"I really took pride in the last 12-24 months, to apply that discipline and you keep learning as you get older... You've got to be on top of your game to be able to adapt to that."

A lot of this discipline has come from fatherhood, said Warner, crediting his children for the gradually-acquired patience. "...Not get too aggressive or angry when the kids aren't listening. For me, I am getting tested on and off the field. So, it's about being calm and relaxed and trying to sum up the situation you're playing in," he said.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 23: West Indies great Brian Lara feels that a batsman of Suryakumar Yadav's calibre should have been in the Indian white-ball squad for the tour of Australia.

The Mumbai Indians batsman's non-inclusion, despite being seventh in the IPL run-getters' list with 480 runs at a strike-rate of 145 plus, has become a major talking point.

"I see no reason why, looking at the (Indian) squad, he can't be a part of it," Lara said on Star Sports show 'Cricket Connected'.

Lara said he is impressed not just by the runs but also the manner in which Yadav has scored them. "Yeah, definitely. He is a class



player. I don't just look at players that score runs, I look at their technique, capabilities under pressure, positions that they are batting and for me. Suryakumar Yadav has done such a wonderful job for Mumbai."

The only explanation that has come for the 30-year-old's exclusion is the lack of space in the line-up. Lara said he fits the bill for the No.3 slot.

"He comes to bat on the back of Rohit Sharma, and Quinton de Kock and every time, they are under pressure, he comes in at No.3," he said.

"Just remember, other than the openers, the No.3 batsman in any cricket team is normally your best player, your most reliable player and for me, he (Surya) has been that for Mumbai Indians," he stated.