



SARCASTIC MEME

Actor Kangana Ranaut calls her rumoured ex-boyfriends Hrithik Roshan and Aditya Pancholi kind souls

LEISURE P2



FRESH BLOW

A US court dismisses a lawsuit filed by Trump's team to reverse the Presidential election result in Pennsylvania

INTERNATIONAL P10



2ND ODI TODAY

India look to bounce back from their loss in the first ODI when they face Australia in the must-win match

SPORTS P12

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 237 | www.orissapost.com

BHUBANESWAR | SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29 | 2020

12 PAGES + SUNDAY POST | ₹4.00

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Every time I pass by this area, I'm reminded that hair stylists too are facing a tough time!

Govt offices to run with 75pc strength

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 28: All government offices in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack will function with 75 per cent strength of employees (all staffers including Group-A officers) during December.

The departments/ head of offices in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack have been given power to decide the manner of selection of employees who will attend office.

However, essential offices and services such as SRC and OSDMA offices, police, fire services, health services and municipal services, among others will function in full strength. Like the month of August, September, October and November, all the government offices across the state will continue to remain closed on Saturdays in December.

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP		
MAX	30.8°C	31.5°C
MIN	18.9°C	17.5°C
Humidity	87%	70%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Mainly clear sky	

FARMERS WON'T BUDGE

Disgruntled farmers refuse offer of alternate protest site, insist on reaching Central Delhi

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 28: The farmers 'will not relent' till they reach Central Delhi – the seat of power from where the government sought votes from them – and 'protest peacefully' at Jantar Mantar near the Parliament house. We want our grievances to be heard by lawmakers, echoed the protesters at the Singhu border between Delhi and Haryana.

The large number of farmers, aggrieved over the three agriculture Bills enacted by the government recently reiterated that they would not accept the Delhi Police's offer to hold their protest at the Sant Nirankari ground at Burari in north Delhi.

The numbers of demonstrators swelled at the Singhu border as the farmers camping there for the 'Delhi Chalo' protest march were joined by more counterparts from Punjab and Haryana, all of them refusing to move towards the Sant Nirankari ground, one of the largest in the national capital.

Gurmej Singh, 62, from Punjab, said the farmers will not give up unless they are able to reach Jantar Mantar or Ramlila Ground in the heart of the national capital and hold their "peaceful" protest there. "We will not go to Nirankari ground. We will either go to Jantar Mantar or Ramlila ground or we will sit here. We have enough ration for six months and will not leave the highway," he said.

Many of these farmers continued to hold their protest peacefully at the Singhu border where they have been holding meetings to decide on their next course of action and have also



With slogans of 'Inquilab Zindabad' on lips, hundreds of protesting farmers, both men and women, with grit, determination and revolutionary thoughts of Shahid-e-Azam Bhagat Singh, gather along borders of the national capital

made arrangements for a long stay at the Delhi-Haryana border.

Many farmers cleaned the roads, cooked their lunch and collected

garbage, keeping in mind the importance of hygiene especially amid the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Most farmers gathered at the Tikri border between Delhi and Haryana too have refused the Delhi Police's offer to go to the north Delhi protest site. The Centre has invited several Punjab farmer organisations for another round of talks in Delhi December 3.

What will we do at the Nirankari ground in Burari, satsang? The government took votes from the farmers by sitting in central Delhi. We want to go to Janpath and gherao Parliament house

MANISH KADIAN | RESIDENT OF HARYANA'S JHAJJAR DIST

ILLEGAL COAL MINING

CBI conducts raids at 45 places in four states

THE SEARCHES WERE SPREAD ACROSS WEST BENGAL, BIHAR, JHARKHAND AND UTTAR PRADESH

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 28: The CBI Saturday carried out a massive search operation at 45 locations in four states after registering a case against alleged coal pilferer Anup Manjhi who was suspected to be acting in collusion with two general managers and three security personnel of Eastern Coalfields Ltd (ECL), officials said.

The searches were spread across West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh, they said.

The CBI registered the case Friday against Manjhi, ECL General Managers Amit Kumar Dhar (of then Kunustoria area, now Pandaveswar area) and Jayesh Chandra Rai (Kajora area) besides ECL Chief of Security Tanmay Das, Area Security Inspector, Kunustoria Dhananjay Rai and SSI and security in-charge Kajora area Debashish Mukherjee.

It is alleged that accused Anup Manjhi alias Lala is involved in the illegal mining and theft of coal from leasehold mines of ECL in Kunustoria and Kajora areas, they said.

The CBI acted on information from "reliable sources" indicating illegal excavation and theft of coal in the leasehold area of ECL in "connivance" with the officials of ECL, CISE and Railways.



FROM INDIATVNEWS

READY FOR A SAIL



A customer enquires about the boat prices ahead of Kartik Purnima Monday, near Rajmahal Square in Bhubaneswar, Saturday

Financing Adani's Oz coal project may hit SBI bonds

FRENCH GIANT AMUNDI THREATENS TO OFFLOAD SBI BONDS IF LOAN GRANTED FOR ADANI GOES THROUGH

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 28: One of the State Bank of India (SBI)'s investors, French giant Amundi has announced that it would sell off its SBI green bonds if the bank grants Rs5,000 crore-loan to Adani's Carmichael coal mine in Australia.

"We consider SBI should not finance this project. Ultimately, it's their decision but we've been extremely clear on the fact that if they decide to do it, we would immediately disinvest," Director of the Institutional Corporate Clients Division & ESG, Jean Jacques Barberis, was quoted as saying by a global wire service.

"Financing the mine would be in 'total contradiction' to the SBI activities financed through its green bond," he added.

"We have engaged SBI asking them not to participate (in the loan) and now we are waiting for their answer," he was quoted as saying.



Amundi, which holds the bond in its Amundi Planet Emerging Green One fund, said it had learnt this week that SBI was considering financing the Carmichael thermal coal mine in Australia.

The Adani Carmichael project has been opposed by climate activists

due to the issue of carbon emissions.

Reports said the move from Amundi demonstrates that some financial institutions understand the serious reputational risks associated with supporting a new thermal coal project like Adani's mega mine,

■ AMUNDI IS EUROPE'S LARGEST ASSET MANAGER AND RANKS IN THE TOP 10 GLOBALLY
■ IT MANAGES ASSETS WORTH 1,650 BILLION EUROS
■ RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT HAS BEEN THE STARTING POINT IN AMUNDI'S INVESTMENT POLICY

especially in the middle of a global pandemic and intensifying climate disasters. Amundi is Europe's largest asset manager and ranks in the top 10 globally. It manages assets worth 1,650 billion euros.

Responsible investment has been the starting point in Amundi's investment policy. When it was created in 2010, Amundi made social and environmental responsibility one of its four founding pillars. It was one of the founding signatories of the Principles for Responsible Investment.

We are considering declaring the Sachivalaya Marg as 'restrictive zone'. However, there is no plan to increase more forces at the spot

UMASHANKAR DASH | DCP

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 28: A mother-son duo attempted self-immolation near the Assembly here Saturday, the third such incident in less than a week to draw the government's attention amid alleged police inaction.

Sulochana Dash and her son Subrat Dash, of Kujang in the Jagatsinghpur district, attempted to set themselves on fire near IG Park, close to the Assembly premises, officials said.

However, an alert security personnel immediately intervened and prevented them from lighting the matchstick though they had poured kerosene on themselves, they said.

While being taken to custody, Sulochana said she travelled all the way to Bhubaneswar and tried to die by suicide after being unable to get justice from the police in Jagatsinghpur. Her other son Amrut Dash was allegedly killed July 20, 2019 and police closed the investigation into the matter after registering a case of unnatural death, she alleged.

Following the earlier two incidents, security was beefed up around the Assembly premises. Due to

HC-monitored SIT to probe Pari case

BHUBANESWAR: Following uproar inside and outside the Assembly over alleged murder of a 5-year-old girl (Pari) in Nayagarh, the state government Saturday said that a High Court-monitored Special Investigation Team (SIT) will probe the case. As Opposition members alleged that there is some confusion in the statement made by Chief Minister on the SIT probe, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Bikram Keshari Arukha made a clarification in the Assembly. He said the Home department has issued notification for formation of SIT and requested Registrar General of Orissa High Court to monitor the investigation. The SIT will be led by IG Arun Bothra.

this, the mother-son duo could not reach the Assembly gate and attempted self-immolation near IG Park, which is close by.

Speaking on the issue, DCP Umashankar Dash told **Orissa POST**, "We are considering declaring the Sachivalaya Marg as 'restrictive zone'." However, there is no plan to increase more forces at the spot. The detained lady and his son are being interrogated at Capital police station to ascertain whether any persons pursued the duo for the immolation bid."

Meanwhile, the Jagatsinghpur police have issued a press note denying the allegations of any wrongdoing leveled against the district police.

Petrol & diesel prices up again

PRICES IN BHUB
Petrol- ₹82.78 (+ ₹0.27)
Diesel- ₹78.59 (+ ₹0.32)

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 28: Petrol and diesel prices were increased by oil marketing companies Saturday as global oil prices remained firm, reaching their highest levels this fiscal. Petrol prices increased by 24 paise to Rs82.13 per litre, Saturday, from Rs81.89 per litre the previous day.

Diesel prices, on the other hand, increased by a higher margin of 27 paise to Rs72.13 a litre, up from Rs71.86 a litre Friday.

Oil companies have begun increasing pump prices of the two petroleum products from last Friday after a nearly two-month-long hiatus in fuel price revision. The prices increased for five consecutive days before going for a day's pause Wednesday last. It has risen on all days thereafter, meaning the prices have risen in eight of the past nine days.

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES



Hats off to you, says Ganesh, for the way you will deal with relationships today. You are also up to something secretive today. But be careful about getting caught in something where you have to dole out money.

TAURUS



Overall, it will be a good day to relax and enjoy good health, says Ganesh. However, there is a catch: you will need to be vigilant when it comes to money matters as there is a looming threat of swindling or mismanaging.

GEMINI



It is quite likely that you will pay attention to cultural and social activities today, predicts Ganesh. There may be new business proposals in the afternoon. You will consider investing your money in mutual funds or life insurance policies.

CANCER



Today, you will long to be with your loved ones, says Ganesh. You will probably plan to refurbish and refurbish your residence. You may get a little stingy when it comes to making payments. You will spend the evening talking to a soul mate on phone, says Ganesh.

LEO



Dashing off in a mad rush never got anyone anywhere. Hence, Ganesh advises you to slow down a bit on this cheerful day. On the business front, you may be slightly concerned about the state of your finances; after all, a smooth functioning of one's enterprise largely depends on the flow of money.

VIRGO



You're the magician when it comes to people and relationships, says Ganesh. Later in the day, you may become all hush-hush about certain affairs. The real worry might come at the end of the day when you realise fun and frolic have been big-tickets. Ganesh foresees a happy and cheerful day, nonetheless.

LIBRA



It's not an easy ride for you today. Expect to undergo a range of emotions that might even make you feel distressed and emotional. However, your academic intelligence will bear some fruit over the course of the day.

SCORPIO



History beckons you, and unknown destinations stir up the adventurer in you, predicts Ganesh. At work, the spotlight shall be on you as you steal the show with your brilliant performance. Business will be fun and exciting for you, hopes Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS



You are on an emotional leash, as you will be on the defensive line when it comes to the feelings of those you love. Chances are high that you will be footloose again – for business or pleasure. So pack your bags, advises Ganesh.

CAPRICORN



A dazzling day awaits you today! From meeting some reliable people to taking commendable initiatives at work, you will be at the centre of everything, and will bag the appreciation of your mentors for your good work.

AQUARIUS



Legal issues may be resolved in your favour today and that will bring a huge sigh of relief! You may just wish to spend time with your family after all that anxiety. Ganesh says you should go for more exciting stuff to take your mind off. Why not join a dance class?

PISCES



Your time today will be carved between dealing with the diverse challenges that your profession will conjure up, and in caring for your family members. However, you ought to come out of your worries at the end of the day smelling like a rose, says Ganesh.



NICOLE KIDMAN A 'WONDERFUL WEIRDO', SAYS MELLISA MCCARTHY

Melissa McCarthy has a peculiar way of praising Nicole Kidman. She says Kidman is a wonderful weirdo. "I've met Nicole but I've not worked with her and there's something so regal about her. She's like a wonderful weirdo," observes McCarthy.

JUDE 'WASN'T SURPRISED' BY COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Actor Jude Law says he was not shocked by the Covid-19 pandemic. He had already feared the possibility of a global health crisis after speaking to experts on the set of his 2011 release, *Contagion*, said the *Anna Karenina* actor, reports *femalefirst.co.uk*.



Taapsee's recipe for post-workout recovery

Mumbai: Taapsee Pannu has offered a quick solution for post workout recovery to those who undergo a rigorous training schedule.

The actress shared the recipe to her 'high protein high fibre drink' on Instagram story: "Its buttermilk with sattu, flaxseed, methi seed powder. Fantastic combination of live bacteria, prebiotics, healthy fats. Great for post workout recovery."

Recently, the actress had shared the recipe to a drink that helps burn fat. She called it her exotic sunset drink!

Sharing the recipe of the drink on Instagram, the actress wrote: "My exotic sunset drink... This fat-burning powerhouse of a drink has raw, unfiltered Apple Cider Vinegar with the mother. Along with it are fenugreek (methi), turmeric, and ginger."

On the work front, Taapsee recently completed a demanding schedule of *Rashmi Rocket* and is gearing up to shoot *Loop Lapeta*. **IAN5**



Hrithik, Aditya are kind souls: Kangana

Mumbai: In an unexpected development, actress Kangana Ranaut Saturday called her rumoured ex-boyfriends Hrithik Roshan and Aditya Pancholi kind souls. Kangana used the adjectives while talking about her recent experience with the government of Maharashtra.

The actress tweeted from her verified account Saturday: "The amount of legal cases, abuses, insults, name calling I faced from

Maharashtra government in these few months make Bollywood mafia and people like Aaditya Pancholi and Hrithik Roshan seem like kind souls... I wonder what is it about me that rattle people so much."

Kangana's tweet comes in reaction to a news piece talking about Mumbai Mayor Kishori Pednekar reacting to the Bombay High Court setting aside BMC notices to the actress.

In partial relief for the actress, Bombay High Court Friday quashed the BMC's demolition notice and the subsequent action of razing a portion of her Bandra bungalow in September, and further ordered that compensation be paid to her. **IAN5**



Arjun, Malaika indulge in Insta banter

Mumbai: Rumoured couple Arjun Kapoor and Malaika Arora indulged in some cheeky banter on social media.

Arjun posted a picture on Instagram. In the image, the actor is seen sporting a grey sweater paired with blue jeans. He completed his look with sunglasses.

"When SHE looks at you..." Arjun wrote as the caption.

Malaika countered: "Who?"

Arjun cheekily replies: "@malaikaarofficial take a wild wild guess fool!!!"

Malaika and her best friend Kareena Kapoor Khan were in Dharamshala, where actors Saif Ali Khan and Arjun Kapoor have been shooting for their next film, *Bhoot Police*, a horror comedy.

The film also stars Yami Gautam and Jacqueline Fernandez. **IAN5**

How painting, sketching eased lockdown stress

Reconnecting to the basics of creating sketches out of nothing has given her purpose in life that she probably had lost in the advertising world, says Zohair Shaikh, co-founder of a marketing agency

With the COVID-induced lockdown requiring most to stay indoors, what flourished was a reconnection to the arts. As the self-isolation period weighed down heavily on the one's mental health, taking to the visual arts has been nothing short of therapeutic for many. Bangalore's Payel Saha, a homemaker, had been an art enthusiast since her childhood with some prizes in her kitty but she dis-

ART AS SANCTUARY



continued the practice after a while. Saha says the pandemic situation has somehow encouraged her to go back to her love.

"It was getting monotonous staying at home, with only online classes and work from home, where we as a family were only engaged with our screens which was tiring and boring. Then I thought to engage my kids in art and creativity, which could give joy like

nothing else. It also, helped me find my interest in the lost passion for art," said Saha, who was also indulged in DIY art and craft projects during the lockdown period.

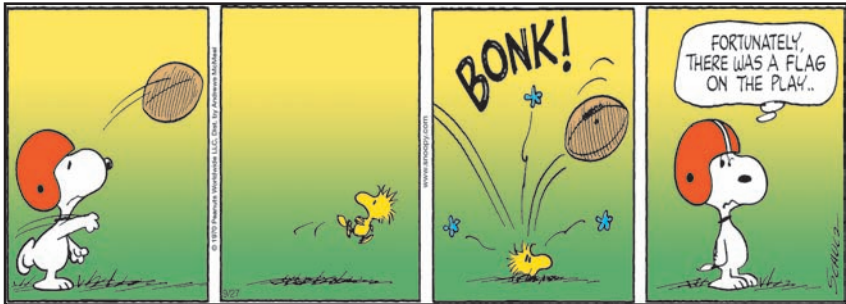
In quite a similar journey, Mumbai-based Zohair Shaikh, the co-founder of a full-service marketing agency, says the lockdown and the intense number of hours of curiosity and confusion were a road back to his

long-lost romance with art. "A passion I always held dear but never found the time or inspiration to really submerge myself into producing quality output. During the lockdown period, reconnecting to the basics of creating sketches out of nothing has given me purpose in life that I seemed to have lost in the crazy hectic life of the advertising world."

Ekta Nankani, a New Delhi-based public relations professional, says: "Initial days of lockdown were a relief from the hectic life we all lead. But eventually, being home started to get to me. There was chaos inside my head and the build-up of stress, anxiety, restlessness took over me."

She goes on to add, "Earlier, I bought some art supplies two years back and used to paint not-so-often, maybe once in two months. During the lockdown period, I rediscovered my supplies and began painting again. The process helped me calm my nerves and gave me something to look forward to at the end of the day. I have relished every bit of it." **AGENCIES**

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

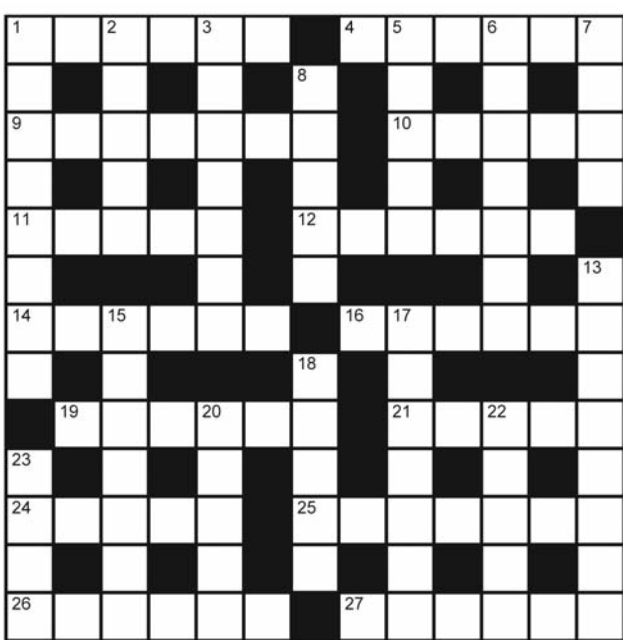


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



Across

- 1 Clandestine
- 4 Shirt closer
- 9 Type of study (2-5)
- 10 Swindle
- 11 Charter
- 12 Shade of red
- 14 On pins and needles
- 16 Royal family member
- 19 Kind of test
- 21 Long suit

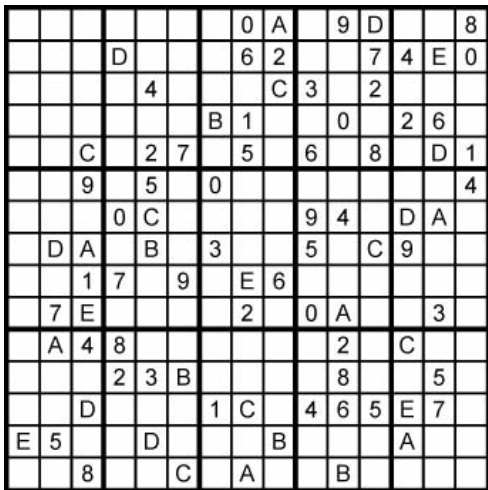
- 24 Flower feature
- 25 Gate-crash (5,3)
- 26 Without warning
- 27 Leafy salad plants

Down

- 1 Simmer down (5,3)
- 2 Bloody Mary ingredient
- 3 Fencing swords
- 5 Gastric woe
- 6 Betrayal
- 7 Alliance
- 8 Hovel
- 13 Sparrow hawks
- 15 Forced out
- 17 Cooking pan
- 18 Port of old Rome
- 20 Donnybrook
- 22 Marchand de vin, e.g.
- 23 Simians

SUDOKU

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

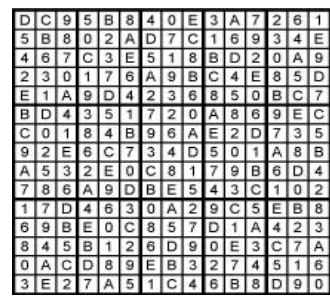


SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



SKY IS RED

Fishing boats return ashore and tourists vacate the beach as sun sets in Puri sky, Saturday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	6,22,36,483	4,29,89,744	14,53,914
India	93,51,109	87,59,969	1,36,200
Odisha	3,17,789	3,10,549	1,730

Bedlam in House over Pari murder case

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 28: Opposition BJP and Congress MLAs disrupted the proceedings of the Assembly for the fourth consecutive day Saturday over the kidnapping and murder of Nayagarh's 5-year-old girl 'Pari'.

No other business except the demand for grants discussion of Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water department could take place in the House Saturday due to uproar by BJP MLAs, resulting in adjournments for several times.

As soon as the House assembled for the day at 10.30am, BJP legislators stormed to the well of the House and resorted to protests demanding expulsion of Agriculture and Higher Education Minister Arun Sahoo and a CBI probe into the case.

Speaking in the House, Congress Legislative Party (CLP) leader Narasingha Mishra said the Minister of State for Home DS Mishra's statement on Pari case was not a full-fledged one. "Though the Speaker had directed the minister to reply on four aspects related to the case, Mishra only touched upon one aspect while omitting the other three aspects conveniently", Mishra alleged.

He said the MOS's statement did not include the role of the Agriculture minister in shielding the main accused in Pari kidnap and murder case. The Congress leader also demanded a clarification from the government on the SIT probe as mentioned by the Chief Minister in



Minister BK Arukha

BJP demands dismissal of Agriculture and Higher Education Minister Arun Sahoo and a CBI probe into the incident

Congress leader Narasingha Mishra said BJP was disrupting the House proceedings to protect the state govt

his statement.

Speaker SN Patro initially adjourned the House for 15 minutes. Later, Parliamentary Affairs Minister BK Arukha assured the members that the government has started the process of SIT probe and the Home department will soon issue a notification in this regard. Unsatisfied with minister's statement, BJP members continued their protests. The House was again adjourned till 3pm.

The bedlam prevailed during the second half too. The saffron party MLAs again resorted to protests.



Leader of Opposition Pradipta Naik

Even Opposition chief whip Mohan Charan Majhi climbed to the podium of the Speaker and removed the glass shield put for Covid-19, and broke the mikes. Unable to run the House, the Speaker adjourned businesses for 30 minutes further. The BJP, however, continued to create ruckus in the House.

The demand discussion of Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water department was held amidst the ruckus and supplementary grant of ₹2252.84 crore was passed. The House also passed the supplementary demand for grants for all other departments through guillotine. Later, the Speaker adjourned the proceedings till 10.30am Sunday.

Speaking to reporters outside the House, Leader of Opposition PK Naik accused Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik of shielding the

Agriculture minister instead of giving justice to the victim girl's family. His party has been demanding a CBI probe into the incident and dismissal of Sahoo from the Cabinet.

Naik said his party's demands for a CBI probe into the matter and dismissal of Sahoo were yet to be met. The BJP members will continue to agitate both inside and outside the Assembly till the victim's family gets justice.

"Pari kidnap and murder case is not a small incident. The girl went missing on July 14 and her skeletal remains were found in the backyard of her house on July 23. Her organs have been removed and might have been transplanted in the body of some rich family's child. Therefore, we demand a CBI probe into the incident," Naik said.

Meanwhile, expressing grave concern over the incident, BJP national spokesperson Sambit Patra said his party will drag the Pari murder case to Delhi.

CLP leader Narasingha Mishra slammed the BJP for disrupting the important Assembly proceedings even after the government agreed for a court-monitored SIT probe.

About CBI probe, he said, everyone knows what happened to the CBI investigation into various cases including the chit fund scam.



IN THE HOUSE

9.6% reaped benefits of PMEGP: Mishra

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 28: The state government Saturday told the Assembly that it has received 7,931 applications under Pradhan Mantri Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) while less than 10 per cent have reaped the benefits of the scheme.

The information was given by the State Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Minister Dibya Shankar Mishra. In his written reply to the House, the minister furnished the details of activities undertaken under the scheme and the number of people benefited.

The minister said till now 7,931 applications have been received of which 762 (9.6 per cent) have availed the benefits of the programme. The margin money (subsidy) paid for the beneficiaries in the scheme stood at ₹2,286 lakh.

METALLURGY HAS THE LION'S SHARE OF EXPORTS: MINISTER

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 28: The state government Saturday revealed that the metallurgy sector has the biggest contribution in the exports from Odisha.

The information was tabled in the Assembly by state Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Minister Dibya Shankar Mishra. He furnished the data of exports from 11 sectors and the revenue earned from them during the last fiscal. The data claimed that the most sought-after exported products from the state were from the metallurgy sector which brought exports earnings to the tune of ₹24,811 crore.

Other profitable sectors included minerals which saw an export revenue of ₹14,027 crore.



However, the least sought-after items from the state were from handlooms sector. The list also said that other items which were least exported from the state were handicrafts, pharmaceutical and other products.

While engineering, chemical and allied sectors saw exports worth ₹4,443 crore, computer software sector fetched ₹4,500 crore through exports during the last fiscal.

On the other side, agriculture and forest sector saw export of products worth ₹187 crore. Likewise, Textiles sector added ₹131 crore to the export earnings of the state.

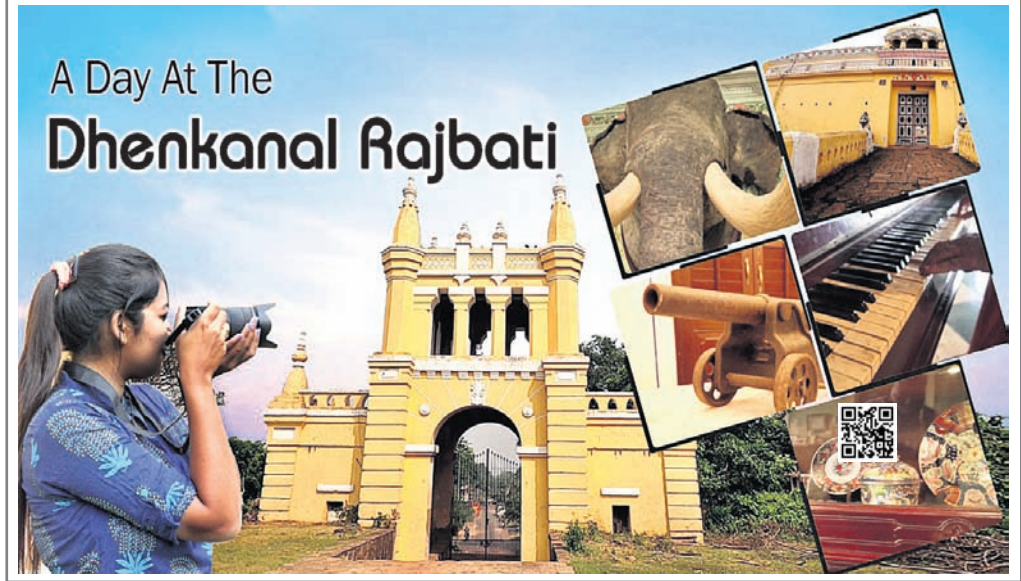
The minister said that the government has been trying to rope in e-commerce platforms to boost sales of handlooms and handicrafts sector which have less exported items in the list of materials going out of the state.

"This includes data from the state on the export of goods from different districts in the fiscal year 2019-20. The state government does not receive any royalty from exports. The State Handicrafts Cooperative Corporation has contracted with various e-commerce companies to trade handicrafts online from Odisha for export," the minister said in a statement.

WATCH IT ON

YouTube

Orissapost Live



SIT to grill bank, forest officials in Pathak case

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 28: The Vigilance directorate Saturday decided to issue notices to all concerned including bank officials, forest officials and relatives in connection with multi-crore DA case of IFS officer Abhaykant Pathak.

The Vigilance directorate is all set to tighten the noose around scam-tainted Pathak, and his son Akash. The 20-member Special Investigation Team (SIT) formed by the directorate to probe all the angles related to the case held a meeting Saturday regarding the preparations for a thorough investigation.

According to a release issued by Vigilance directorate, "Notices under Section 160 CrPC will soon be issued to people acquainted with facts and circumstances of the case to appear at Vigilance Cell for their examination and recording of statement. This will include bank officials, forest officials, relatives, employees, associates etc. The firms from which costly vehicles have been purchased will also be examined."

The SIT will probe the sources through which Pathak acquired such huge and lavish assets. The team will also scrutinise various investments made by the father-son duo. The State Forensic Science Laboratory (SFSL) will be requested to help in the probe. Cyber cell and cell phone forensic experts will also be part of the SIT.

Notably, The Vigilance sleuths during one of the biggest raids involving around 150 officers, found Pathak possessing disproportionate



File photo of Abhaykant Pathak being taken into custody

THE SIT WILL PROBE THE SOURCES THROUGH WHICH PATHAK ACQUIRED SUCH HUGE AND LUXURIOUS ASSETS

THE TEAM WILL ALSO SCRUTINISE VARIOUS INVESTMENTS MADE BY THE FATHER-SON DUO

THE STATE FORENSIC SCIENCE LABORATORY WILL BE REQUESTED TO HELP IN THE PROBE

assets to the tune of ₹9.35 crore. They also seized gold ornaments weighing around 800 grams worth ₹23 lakh, ₹60 lakh cash from his house recently.

It is also came to the notice during the raid that Pathak had paid ₹3 crore towards booking of chartered planes for travelling to cities like Mumbai, Patna and Delhi. The sleuths found possession of three luxury cars like Mercedes, BMW and Tata Harier along with three Yamaha FZs which were registered in his son's name.

Night temperature to fall further: MeT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 28: Night temperature is very likely to fall by 3-4 degrees Celsius at many places across the state during next two days, Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre said Saturday.

Sonepur was the coldest place in Odisha Saturday recording a minimum temperature of 11 degrees Celsius while the temperature at Daringibadi was 14 degrees Celsius. The minimum temperature at Phulbani was 14.5 degrees, 14.6 degrees at Koraput and 15 degrees at Bhawanipatna.



The night temperature at Bhubaneswar and Cuttack was 18.9 and 17.5 degrees, respectively.

Meanwhile, a low pressure area has formed over south Andaman sea and adjoining areas of south-east Bay of Bengal & equatorial Indian Ocean. It is very likely to concentrate into a depression during next 48 hours and likely to intensify further thereafter. It is likely to move nearly westwards and reach south Tamil Nadu coast around December 2, it said.

PANDEMIC SHADOW ON TRADITION



A suspension bridge over Mahanadi river connecting Dhabaleswar shrine (inset) in Cuttack district bears an empty look on the occasion of *Bada Osa*, Saturday, as the temple has been shut for devotees and Section 144 was clamped in the locality in the wake of Covid-19 pandemic. (Bottom) Youngsters play cricket on a pandal at Bali Yatra ground in Cuttack. This year, the administration is not organising the annual trade fair on Mahanadi riverbank on account of the novel coronavirus crisis

OP PHOTOS

₹25.47cr incentives sanctioned for 278 MSMEs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 28: The state government has provided financial incentives to the tune of ₹25.47 crore to 278 Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) units during the current financial year (2020-21) in an attempt to give a fillip to the sector.

In financial year (FY) 2019-20, a total of ₹34.52 crore was provided as various incentives to 361 units. It was learnt that ₹25.47 crore was provided as incentives to 278 units by

November end of the current financial year. With this, 639 units were incentivised with a total amount of ₹69.99 crore from April 2019 to November 2020.

This was revealed at the State-Level Empowered Committee meeting held the under chairmanship of Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy on virtual mode from Lok Seva Bhawan Friday evening.

During the meeting, Tripathy has approved ₹2.94-crore capital investment (CI) subsidy in favour of two small scale enterprises.

Altogether 639 units were incentivised with a total amount of ₹69.99 crore during April 2019 to November 2020

He asked the officials concerned to follow a complete, transparent and proactive practice in assessment and disbursement of different financial incentives to MSME units for attracting more and more young

entrepreneurs to the sector.

Tripathy further directed the department officials to facilitate the process by providing proactive planning, technical and handholding support to the sector.

The filed level officers were asked to be in constant touch with local entrepreneurs and instill confidence in them.

The state government departments and PSUs have been directed to procure at least 20 per cent of their requirement from local MSMEs.

NAGARJUNA BESHA

Decorative items 'shifted' to servitor's house

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, Nov 28: A day after Nagarjuna Besha ritual of Lord Jagannath was performed at Srimandir here, some decorative pieces meant for the special attire were allegedly taken to a senior servitor's house in violation of guidelines laid down by the shrine authorities.

The incident invited sharp reactions from several quarters. The Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) ordered a probe into the alleged incident. "Srimandir administrator (rituals) has been assigned to probe the incident. Action will be taken against anyone found guilty in this connection," said SJTA chief Krishan Kumar.

Lord Jagannath was adorned with gold ornaments, around 16 weapons and many other decorative



SJTA chief Krishan Kumar, Puri Collector Balwant Singh and Srimandir administrator (Rituals) Jitendra Kumar Sahu visited the shrine and enquired about the special attire

pieces as part of the Nagarjuna Besha ritual Friday. The unique ritual was organised after a gap of 25 years, sources said.

The Shree Jagannath Temple Managing Committee and Chhatisha Niyog, the apex body of Srimandir servitors, had earlier decided to preserve the special attire in a mu-

seum after the organisation of Nagarjuna Besha ritual.

In accordance with the decision, the pieces used in special attire were handed over to the SJTA soon after the completion of the ritual. However, an employee of the 12th century allegedly shifted some decorative pieces of the special attire

to the house of a senior servitor Saturday.

"A Srimandir employee was seen carrying some decorative pieces of the special attire including the images of the sun and moon outside the temple Saturday. When confronted by a group of media persons, the employee revealed that he was taking the decorative items to the house of a senior servitor," said a source.

Soon after the incident, the SJTA chief, Puri Collector Balwant Singh and Srimandir administrator (Rituals) Jitendra Kumar Sahu visited the shrine and enquired about the special attire.

"We will find out details regarding the decorative pieces given to us by the artisans prior to the ritual and match the list with the items left with us after the completion of Nagarjuna Besha," said the SJTA chief.

PETROL PUMP BLAST

Maintenance people were ‘unfit’: PESO



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 28: Even as more than a month has passed since the deadly explosion at the petrol pump near Raj Bhawan here October 7, various agencies probing the case are yet to come out with the real cause behind the blast. Two people died in the mishap while several others sustained serious injuries.

Meanwhile, sources in the petroleum and explosives safety organisation (PESO) revealed that both injured Ripudaman Shrivastava, the supervisor appointed by Surya Shakti Vessels Private Limited and deceased Simanchal Parida were not eligible to supervise the testing and maintenance job at the place.

The IOCL authorities have reportedly sublet the maintenance

and testing work to the Faridabad-based Surya Shakti Vessels that in turn outsourced the contract to Simanchal Parida to do the maintenance work.

However, as per the Petroleum Act, 1934 a person had to have minimum 10 years of experience in similar fields and he or she has to duly approved by the PESO authorities from Nagpur to supervise such acts.

Similarly, another fact also came to the fore during the initial investigations on the use of old and below standard materials to make the underground empty tanker that exploded October 7.

Some IOCL authorities found the thickness width of the tanker less than the approved measure, sources claimed. The broken pieces of the tanker have also been sent to various testing labs like CSIR-

GROSS NEGLIGENCE

IOCL authorities have reportedly sublet the maintenance and testing work to the Faridabad-based Surya Shakti Vessels that in turn outsourced the contract to Simanchal Parida to do the maintenance work

Initial investigations was suggestive on the use of old and below standard materials to make the underground empty tanker that exploded October 7

PESO authorities have requested the Commissionerate Police to supply the CCTV footage from the spot so that there could be an effective investigation

Institute of Minerals and Materials Technology (IMMT) for examination.

The PESO authorities have requested the Commissionerate Police to supply the CCTV footage from the spot so that there could be an effective investigation.

The investigating agencies are finding it hard to get real truth as Parida is dead and Ripudaman has been undergoing treatment at the AIIMS in New Delhi.

JOB STIR



Demanding regularisation of service, women health workers at Covid Care Homes staging a sit-in at PMG Square in Bhubaneswar, Saturday

OP PHOTO

Ease of doing business gets digital boost

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 28: With an aim to increase ease of business, the state government decided to issue electrical safety clearance certificates for industries, commercial establishments and business houses on online mode only.

The business units will no longer require to get in touch with authorities except in cases where inspection/site visit is mandated by law. The energy department has recently issued a notification in this effect.

“In order to provide time-bound service in obtaining electrical safety recommendations and electrical safety clearance certificates for industries, commercial establishments and businesses, and to maintain transparency and accountability on the part of the officials, the entire workflow/process of approval for DG set installations for industries, commercial establishments and businesses shall be dealt online only,” the notification said.

The electrical safety recommendations and electrical safety certificates downloaded from the on-

line portal will be valid across the state. No one shall make any application offline.

No physical/manual applications will be required to be submitted to the authorities in addition to the online applications. No physical copies of the documents which were uploaded by the applicants at the time of submission of online applications will be required by any authorities.

However, the applicants will have to produce authentic copy of the respective documents on demand by the appropriate authorities during

inspection/site visits. The online applications will be disposed of within the stipulated timeline.

The authorities shall accept digitally signed certificates downloaded from the portals as valid and shall not require physically signed/stamped certificates. The applicant shall not be required to meet the authorities in person except in cases where inspection/site visit is mandated by law, it said. A few days ago, the government had issued similar notification for online issuance of fire safety certificates for commercial establishments.

2 inter-district bike looters rounded up



POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack Sadar, Nov 28: Cuttack Sadar police arrested two inter-district bike looters on charge, Saturday. Thirteen stolen bikes and articles worth ₹8 lakh were seized from their possession.

The accused were identified as Prakash Pratihari alia Litu, 24, of Banpur village under the police limits and Dayanidhi Nayak alias Chuin, 18, resident of Pochalundi village under Tarsingh police limits in Ganjam district. A case was registered in this connection and the accused produced in court. The two used to steal bikes from Bhubaneswar, Phulnakhara as well

The two were arrested during a routine check up at Balikuda Square on the highway Friday. The two tried to escape but were caught and arrested

as from Bhanjanagar in Ganjam district and later sell them to buyers.

The two were arrested during a routine check up at Balikuda Square on the highway Friday. The two tried to escape but were caught and arrested. The scooter which they were riding was found carrying a fake registration number.

CUSTODIAL TORTURE
Minor boy produced before juvenile board

POST NEWS NETWORK

Pipli, Nov 28: A minor boy, the victim of an alleged custodial torture by Pipli police, was released from Nimapada sub-jail and produced before a juvenile justice board on the direction of Puri SP, Saturday.

The incident has caught the Pipli police on the wrong foot. The incident comes close on the heels of alleged custodial death of two persons in Puri and Sundargarh districts and alleged custodial torture of six youths in Pipli police station premises.

The Puri SP intervened after Sushree Sandhyabati Pradhan, chairperson of the State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, learnt about the matter from media reports and directed Puri SP to conduct a probe and take action, two days back.

Pradhan intervened again Saturday after no action came from Pipli police. Directed by the SP, Pipli police which until now were sitting cool over the matter took the minor boy from Nimapada sub-jail and produced him before the ju-



CAUGHT OFF GUARD

The incident has drawn flak from various quarters as Pipli police produced the boy before the juvenile justice board after being pulled up by the Puri SP, 14 days after his arrest

The alleged highhandedness and brutalities of Pipli police came to the fore after reports came up in media

Police produced him in Pipli court along with other accused by citing him as an adult without making a proper inquiry about his age, November 19

venile justice board Saturday evening.

The incident has drawn flak from various quarters as Pipli police produced the boy before the juvenile justice board after being pulled up by the Puri SP, 14 days after his arrest.

The alleged highhandedness and brutalities of Pipli police came to the fore after reports came up in media.

Media reports claimed that police had arrested the boy November 13

on charge of assaulting a person along with others November 13. Later, police produced him in Pipli court along with other accused by citing him as an adult without making a proper inquiry about his age, November 19.

Earlier, Rakesh Roshan Mohanty, a scribe, had filed a petition in this regard in the National Human Rights Commission. The petitioner claimed that Pipli police did not make any inquiry about the actual age of the minor and even kept his

family members in dark about the arrest.

Police even did not allow the minor to meet his parents who were making daily rounds of the police station to know the wellbeing of their son after his arrest.

The minor was subjected to brutal thrashing in the custody along with other accused which is a gross violation of the Supreme Court guidelines and against the Juvenile Justice Act, he claimed in the petition.

DWARF CHHABITA ACHIEVES ‘HEIGHT’ OF SUCCESS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, Nov 28: She was born a dwarf and at present has a height of approximately three feet. However, 40-year-old Chhabita Rana of Punada village under Sheragarh block in Ganjam district has never let her height come in her way to serve people. Working as an ‘Asha didi’ Chhabita continues to serve residents of local villages in her vicinity.

Chhabita visits the houses of needy people and pregnant women of nearby villages every morning, as a part of her job. If necessary, she also extends financial assistance to needy people from her meagre salary. She provides medicines to poverty-stricken pregnant mothers. She also accompanies them when they go to nearby hospitals for check up. She helps them during vaccination times also.

Chhabita has been in the frontline in the battle against the COVID-19 virus. She spreads awareness about the importance of social distancing, hand hygiene and wearing masks. She also regularly takes part in cleanliness drives in the villages.

FOOD FRAUD



Police raiding an adulterated spices manufacturing unit at Bhadimula in Gatirotupatna area of Cuttack city, Saturday

OP PHOTO

Mutilated body of youth recovered

POST NEWS NETWORK

Barang, Nov 28: The Government Railway Police recovered the mutilated body of a youth at the level crossing of Barang-Naraj-Marthapur railway station in Cuttack district, Saturday.

The deceased was identified as Susant Swain, 40, a bus conductor by profession and a native of Kuspangi village in Banki, GRP OIC Goura Chandra Nayak said.

Preliminary inquiries indicated that he might have committed suicide as he jumped before an approaching goods train, Saturday morning.

The matter came to the fore after the train driver informed the station master at the railway station. A case was registered in this connection and the body was sent for post-mortem, the OIC added.

12 more deaths take nCoV toll to 1,730

PNN/AGENCIES

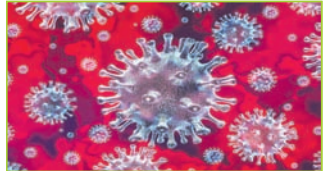
Bhubaneswar, Nov 28: The state Saturday reported 550 new Covid-19 cases, taking the case tally to 3,17,789, a health department official said.

Among the new patients is BJP's national vice-president Bajajayant Panda who announced his Covid test result on Twitter late Friday.

Twelve more people died of Covid-19 in the last 24 hours, following which the toll mounted to 1,730. Of the new cases, 317 were reported from different quarantine centres.

Angul district recorded the highest 53 new cases, followed by Khurda (49) and Sundargarh (47). Four people died in Sundargarh, three in Khurda, two in Angul and one each in Balasore, Dhenkanal and Jajpur districts, the official said.

At present, there are 6,259 active cases in the state, while 3,09,747 patients have recovered. The state has



Of the new cases, 317 were reported from different quarantine centres

Angul district recorded the highest 53 new cases, followed by Khurda (49) and Sundargarh (47)

Four people died in Sundargarh, three in Khurda, two in Angul and one each in Balasore, Dhenkanal and Jajpur districts

so far tested 58.19 lakh samples for Covid-19, including 42,014 Friday. Odisha's positivity rate stands at 5.46 per cent, the official said.

2 HELD, ANOTHER DETAINED IN IIFL LOOT CASE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Nov 28: Police Saturday arrested two more persons and detained another in connection with the loot of gold ornaments from India Infoline Finance Ltd (IIFL) at Nayasarak in this city.

Earlier eight persons were arrested and with this the total number of arrest has gone up to 10. The detained person is being questioned. The accused were identified as Lalit Soni, 45, of Alamchand Bazaar and Saroj Prusty, 25, of Mangalabag.

Police during the probe came to know that similar type of irregularities have been committed in other money lending firms in the city. The matter came to the fore after police took five accused on remand and questioned them in this connection. The prime accused, Lala Amrit Ray used to steal crores of rupees by opening accounts in other gold loan lending firms.

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No maize mandis, middlemen make hay

THIS IS NOT THE FIRST TIME THE PROBLEM HAS NAGGED FARMERS, MAIZE GROWERS IN KALAHANDI AND NABARANGPUR DISTRICTS FACE POST-HARVEST DIFFICULTIES EVERY YEAR

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawanipatana, Nov 28: Farmers in various panchayats under this block in Kalahandi district produce plenty of maize. But in the absence of a well-developed procurement system, they face distress sale.

This is not the first time this problem has been seen in the district, every year maize farmers in Kalahandi and Nabarangpur face post-harvest difficulties.

Aggrieved farmers said they have to depend on middlemen to sell their produce and this has been happening every year. This year too, middlemen have taken advantage of the distress sale of maize and buy the crop at throwaway prices.

Unlike previous years, the problem is that due to Covid-19, farmers are badly affected. They are desperate to sell the crop anyhow to meet their daily expenses at this critical time.

This has handed out a golden opportunity to traders and middlemen to haggle for low prices of the crops. As a result, the maize farmers have to incur losses due to poor price. Farmers have to sell



IN THE CURRENT YEAR, FARMERS IN THESE PANCHAYATS HAVE CULTIVATED MAIZE IN 1,250 HECTARES. THEY CLAIMED THAT DUE TO FAVOURABLE WEATHER CONDITION, THEY HAD GOOD PRODUCTION. THEY HOPED FOR EARNING HANDSOMELY FROM MAIZE SALE, BUT THE GOVERNMENT HAS NOT MADE MANDIS IN THE BLOCK

maize for Rs 900 to Rs 1000 per quintal whereas the minimum support price of the crop is Rs 1850.

Reports said, distress sale of the maize is reported from panchayats like Borda, Gurujung, Dumuria, Palna, Artal, Senpur, kendupati, Borbhata, Madiguda, Matia, Sikua, Changan, Karlapada, Kalam, Mading, Chheliamal, Kamathana and Malagan.

In the current year, farmers in

these panchayats have cultivated maize in 1,250 hectares. They claimed that due to favourable weather condition, they had good production. They hoped for earning handsomely from maize sale, but the government has not made mandis in the block.

“Lack of procurement centres has provided a golden opportunity to buy maize for low price. We are unable to bargain for the price

Unlike previous years, the problem is that due to Covid-19, farmers are badly affected. They are desperate to sell the crop anyhow to meet their daily expenses at this critical time

This has handed out a golden opportunity to traders and middlemen to haggle for low prices of the crops. As a result, the maize farmers have to incur losses due to poor price. Farmers have to sell maize for ₹900 to Rs 1000 per quintal whereas the minimum support price of the crop is ₹1850

Reports said, distress sale of the maize is reported from panchayats like Borda, Gurujung, Dumuria, Palna, Artal, Senpur, kendupati, Borbhata, Madiguda, Matia, Sikua, Changan, Karlapada, Kalam, Mading, Chheliamal, Kamathana and Malagan

matching the MSP,” lamented farmers like Sanjib Bhoi, Jyotiranjana Bhoi, Sitaram Meher, Bidyanath Pradhan, Radhamohan Bhoi.

They also pointed out that even though they had drawn the attention of the district administration toward the plight of the maize farmers, no step has been taken till date.

They have demanded immediate steps for opening of the mandis to save the farmer from distress.

Jharsuguda police bust fake currency racket, 3 arrested

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jharsuguda, Nov 28: In a crackdown, the Jharsuguda police busted a racket circulating fake currency notes in Banaharpali area and arrested three of its members in this connection, informed SP Rahul PR at a presser held here Saturday.

According to police, Mohammed Ajmal (20) of Khadam village under Lakhampur block was trying to fill petrol from a filling station at Bandhabahal area in Jharsuguda district by giving counterfeit currency notes. Staffers of the petrol pump doubted the genuineness of the notes and its owner informed the police about it.

Later, police arrested two accomplices of Ajmal namely Mohammed Irfan (24) and Ishfaq Ansari (32) at a counterfeit currency note printing unit at Bamra in Sambalpur district late Friday night. Police seized fake notes of Rs 96,300.

Sec 144 imposed at temples, river ghats

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jagatsinghpur/Bhadrak, Nov 28: Jagatsinghpur district administration Saturday clamped Section 144 of CrPC on and around several temples of the district in a bid to avoid congregation of devotees ahead of Kartik Purnima scheduled to be observed Monday.

Keeping in view the possibility of congregation at temples across the district on occasion of the Kartik Purnima Monday, the administration has clamped the prohibitory orders. The imposition of Section 144 will remain in force from November 28 to 30. Similarly, Bhadrak district administration has imposed Section 144 at 44 river ghats like Dhamrai Mandira ghat and fishery harbor.

Minor dies in mishap, PS gheraoed

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, Nov 28: Tension flared up at Town Police Station here after a mob gheraoed the police station alleging police inaction in a road mishap that left a minor boy killed Saturday.

According to sources, Sahil Singh, a resident of nearby Sahu Colony, was crossing the road in front of Mahila Police Station when a speeding car hit him, injuring him seriously.

Local people immediately came to his rescue and rushed him to a hospital, but it was too late. The doctors there declared him received dead. Some others back at the spot caught the person on the driver's seat when he was about to leave the place.



Far from being apologetic, the man threatened people with dire consequences. On being informed, the police reached the spot, rescued the driver and seized the vehicle. They recovered the body for post mortem.

Later, the deceased boy's family members, relatives and local people gathered at the police station, accusing the police of shielding the driver.

The deceased's father, who is a daily labourer, demands stringent action against the culprit. He had two sons and Sahil the youngest.

Sambalpur Sadar Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO), Tapan Kumar Mohanty said that a case has been registered at Town Police Station and the driver has been arrested. A detailed investigation is underway.

Adequate policemen have been deployed at the police station to avoid any further escalation of tension.

Yet again, seed crunch scuppers Potato Mission

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, Nov 28: Even as the price of potatoes keeps soaring across the state due to short supply of the tuber from other states, farmers in various parts of Kendrapara are showing interest in potato cultivation. However, shortage of potato seeds has come in their way, a report said.

As the weather is favorable now, farmers in the district have started preparing for potato cultivation. However, in the beginning they are facing an extreme seed crisis.

Some farmers alleged that seeds supplied from the government had not been made till date while they have to buy seeds from the open market at high prices.

It may be noted here that Potato Mission has been implemented by the state government from 2015-16 to make the state self-sufficient in tuber production. It initially aimed to pump in Rs 267.05 crore for it. The scheme was to be continued till 2023-24. The mission was in fact taken up after the state faced an



acute shortage of potatoes following West Bengal's decision to stop supplying the tuber.

Apparently, the mission has flopped in the coastal district as farmers are facing a seed crisis.

According to reports, potato is cultivated in 700 hectares in Kendrapara every year. For a hectare of land, 15 quintals of seeds are required. Accordingly, farmers need 10,500 quintals of seeds in the current

ACCORDING TO REPORTS, POTATO IS CULTIVATED IN 700 HA IN KENDRAPARA EVERY YEAR. FOR A HECTARE OF LAND, 15 QUINTALS OF SEEDS ARE REQUIRED. FARMERS NEED 10,500 QUINTALS OF SEEDS IN THE CURRENT SEASON. BUT SEEDS ARE NOT SUPPLIED WHEN PREPARATION FOR FARMING IS ALMOST READY

GAYADHAR DHAL, SECRETARY OF THE ZILLA KRUSHAK SABHA, SAID, "MOST OF THE MIGRANT WORKERS WHO HAVE RETURNED FROM OTHER STATES DURING THE PANDEMIC ARE KEEN ON POTATO FARMING

season. But seeds have not been supplied when preparation for farming is almost ready.

Gayadhar Dhal, secretary of the Zilla Krushak Sabha, said, "Most of the migrant workers who have returned from other states during the pandemic are keen on potato farming. As Cyclone Amphan has already battered paddy farming in coastal pockets, farmers had hoped to make up for the loss from potato



Adima Adhibasi Ekata Manch, an outfit of tribals, organises a painting competition for tribal children in Harbhanga block of Boudh district, Saturday

Jumbo herd sparks panic in Angul

POST NEWS NETWORK

Angul, Nov 28: A herd of 32 elephants wreaked havoc in the villages near Bantala forest range in Angul district. The wild herd strayed into the village and destroyed acres of paddy and vegetable cultivation.

Sources said, the herd stays in the forest near Jamugadia village in district during day causing panic among villagers. The herd has reportedly destroyed crops on large tracts of agriculture fields leaving farmers worried.

Apparently, the herd, in search of food, strayed into human settlement. Many houses were also damaged by the animals. It should be mentioned that elephants often come out of the forest at night, causing chaos in the villages under Bantala forest range and damaging the kharif crops.

The increasing frequency of their forage has caused panic among locals. The forest officials have been entrusted with the responsibility of reducing man-animal conflicts by creating awareness among people to be friendly towards wildlife.

Despite all this, reports pour in almost every week about elephants



3 bikers attacked by tusker

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, Nov 28: In separate incidents, three persons were attacked by a tusker and hospitalized in serious condition in Dhenkanal district Saturday.

Condition of the two was stated to be critical and they were shifted to SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack. One of them is undergoing treatment at the district headquarters hospital.

The first incident of the two injuries happened near Patarapada Bada Joranala under Parjang block. The injured have been identified as Saroj Bhoi and Kartik

straying into villages in search of food and water. It is an established fact that there is paucity of food and drinking water for elephants in the forest that compel them to head towards nearby villages. The animals destroy farmers' standing crops and damage their houses. Sometimes, they kill human beings and their livestock.

Majhi of Baigania village. They were on the way to their workplace on a bike when they were attacked by a tusker.

After a while, Biswanath Pradhan of Bahala village was also travelling on his bike on the same route and met with the same ill fate. Saroj Bhoi said, "We were going to duty. The elephant first caught hold of Kartik Majhi and then it attacked me. Then it headed to the jungle." Another victim Biswanath Pradhan said, "I was on my way on my bike when the elephant appeared all at once and dragged me with its trunk and flung to the ground."

6-yr-old girl goes missing for days

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jeypore, Nov 28: At a time when the 'Pari' murder case is creating a huge ruckus in Odisha, a six-year-old girl who has gone missing from Taupadar village under Pottangi block in Koraput district has come to the fore. The girl has been missing for last six days. Family members of the girl lodged a complaint with the police November 22. However, till date the police have not been able to come up with any concrete news.

According to sources, the girl identified as Banguru Pangi's daughter was playing on the balcony of her house November 21 evening. However, then she disappeared suddenly. Family members frantically searched for her without success. The next day, they filed a missing complaint at the Pottangi police station. The police launched a probe.

Police detained Banguru for questioning and suspect that he has a role in this incident.



SOG Commandant Anirudh Singh and Director of Intelligence RK Sharma visiting Malkangiri to take stock of security and the ongoing anti-Maoist operations

From animals' safe haven to poachers' paradise

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, Nov 28: Once regarded as a safe haven for wild animals, the jungles in Dhenkanal district have turned into poachers' paradise, causing headache to the forest department.

The figures shared by the forest department are testimony to why the district has earned the dubious distinction. Between September and November, as many as 32 hunters were arrested from eight ranges. Of them, three were arrested from Dhenkanal Sadar range, nine from Kapilas range, two from Sarangi range, five from Hindol range, three from Kamakhyanagar Eastern range, four from Kamakhyanagar Western range and six from Mahabirod range.

Amongst the weapons and animal body parts seized from their possession were included ten rifles, 15 live bullets, bows and arrows, deer hide, deer antlers, Sambar deer antlers, two pieces of tusk, electric wires used for hunting and some amounts of venison and flesh of other hunted animals.

Poachers use the easiest way to hunt animals by laying live electric wires in Kapilas range, a home to a wide range of animals including some endangered ones

With Kapilas range reporting the maximum number of poaching cases, the forest department is presently learnt to be under tremendous pressure.

Kapilas range is known not only for elephants but also for a wide range of animals, including some endangered ones. The poachers here use the easiest way to hunt animals, by laying live electric wires. There were instances in the past wherein elephants got electrocuted after coming in contact with these live wires.

Similarly, the number of hunting cases involving deer and wild boar has also increased in the jungle close to Deogaon-Tangi road under



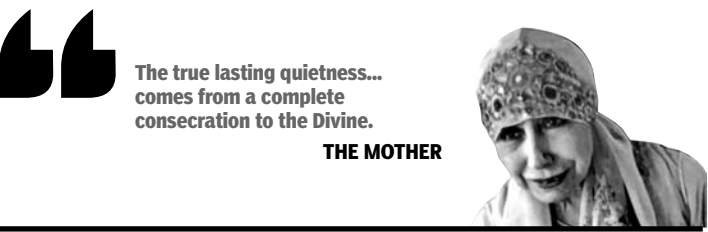
Gandia police limits. The hunters' modus operandi is to lay live wire at night, collect hunted animals the next morning and then sell their flesh in nearby areas.

The entire process is carried out so clandestinely that the forest department hardly gets any inkling of these cases. There are also cases of hunters being killed after coming in contact with the live wires. In one of such incidents reported from Mahabirod area last month, a youth had died.

Some animal lovers said the

poaching cases can be checked or, at the very least, brought down if the intelligence system works perfectly, night patrolling is intensified and exemplary punishment is handed out to the accused.

When contacted, Dhenkanal DFO Prakash Chandra Guptani said poaching incidents have increased in the last few months. We have taken some immediate steps and our efforts are on to stop hunting. The range officers and employees have been directed to intensify raids, he added.



What lies ahead

India's economy contracted for another three months we were told this week. Meaning that as a nation we produced less in goods and services than we did in the same period last year. Meaning also that Indian families in the numbers of lakhs and perhaps crores got pulled into poverty. India's economy has contracted for six months, since the prime minister called for the harshest lockdown in the world. This has brought the nation into what economists call a recession, whose definition is two straight quarters of de-growth.

We know we are in a recession because of the media. The prime minister has not tweeted out the numbers his government has put out. The finance minister has not either. The NITI Aayog's head says he was "pleasantly surprised" that the numbers were not worse than had been expected. The chief economic advisor professes "cautious optimism" about the data. He had previously predicted growth in the quarter from April to September. It turned out that instead of growth we had contraction of 23.9 per cent. He describes himself as interested in "deep thinking and research". In the economic survey, he used Wikipedia as a source. News about the third quarter is not good. Bank credit is lower in the current period than it was in the one when the economy contracted. The core sector (steel, cement, electricity, coal, oil, refining and fertilizers) shrunk in October. If you do not know this, it might be because the prime minister and the finance minister have not tweeted about it. If they ignore something, then it doesn't exist.

The data is all from the corporate sector. We have no idea what is happening to the unorganised and small sectors where most Indians are employed. The weak and the poor cannot "work from home." They must toil every day to eat. We do know that the lockdown, like Demonetisation, like GST, has taken work away from the small and the poor and given it to the corporate sector. The stock market is at a historic high for this reason.

Elsewhere, the capital of our nation is facing farmers' protests. They want the government to take back the laws that will gut procurement and affect their livelihood. The government's agents have said that the protesters are anti-national and separatists. The standard line that is used for anyone — academics, minorities, farmers, dissident industrialists — who points out that what the government is doing is wrong. It is like children and name-calling. That is the level of maturity in our national debate.

On the Ladakh front, China has refused to go back from the spaces they have occupied on our border and the Indian Army has to spend the winter in spaces that have not been prepared for such an eventuality. Our jawans were issued sleeping bags that have been previously found to be "unfit for use in glacier and super higher altitude areas." But they must make do because the political establishment has decided it does not want to deal with the problem. The prime minister tweeted that he had an "excellent discussion with my friend Boris Johnson," the British prime minister, about climate change and other matters. He has not found the time to have a discussion with his friend Xi Jinping about his army going back from our borders. Again, if you don't talk about the problem, it doesn't exist.

His right hand man, the home minister of India, has said that implementation of his pet project the Citizenship Amendment Act, has been postponed for now. He says this is because of Covid and he will only implement the CAA after the pandemic ends. Why Covid should affect India's giving citizenship to those non-Muslims who came to India illegally before December 2014 is not known. No other law has been paused because of it. But after an aggressive campaign against those he called termites, Amit Shah is now hesitant to take India down the road of religious discrimination. It might help to understand why by looking at what our ambassador in the United States is up to. He has spent the last two weeks sweet talking those American leaders who had previously condemned India's actions on CAA, the National Register of Citizens and on Kashmir. He has been tweeting out the details of the meetings without saying why India was now engaging with those who did not like the actions of the Modi government. The reason of course is that Modi's friend Donald Trump has been rejected and a Democrat will become US president in two month's time. The Democratic Party has been very vocal about its concern that India is heading in the wrong direction under Modi and is damaging itself by indulging in overt majoritarianism and harassing and bullying its own minorities. We will see what the affect of India's outreach to the Democrats is soon.

Meanwhile, there has been no let-up in the conduct of the ruling party. In Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh and elsewhere, laws have been passed that will jail Muslim men for 10 years if they marry Hindu women.

In Hyderabad, the BJP has said in the campaign for the local elections that a vote for Muslims is a vote against India. Ten years ago this would have produced outrage, but today it is normal and is accepted because it has become normalised. This is what is going on in our country today. It is hard to see any of it without a sense of dread and fear for what is happening and what lies ahead.

WORDSWORTH

■ Viatical

This adjective is first cited in the Oxford English Dictionary from 1847, deriving from the Latin viaticum, related to via, "way; road," which has been used in English since medieval times in the Roman Catholic Church for the Eucharist given to someone dying or in danger of death; in more general usage, though it is a rare and rather formal word, it retains the original Latin sense of "articles for use on a journey; travelling expenses." Since about 1991, viatical has taken on a new figurative sense referring to the purchase of a dying person's insurance policy to give immediate cash for medical treatment and living expenses; the full term is viatical settlement. The scheme developed to help people with AIDS but has since been extended to any terminally ill person needing money. The technique can bring valuable benefits to those helped but unscrupulous operators have sometimes taken unfair advantage and there are ethical implications when health organisations or doctors become involved. The purchaser of the policy has to continue to pay the premiums until the subject of the policy dies, so he is in effect betting on how long the seller will survive. For this reason, such purchases have been dubbed death futures. A person selling a policy in this way is sometimes called in legal English a viator. The popularity of the scheme has waned in recent times as the success of treatments for AIDS has extended life expectancy.

LOL

Passing a parrot

A lady was walking down the street to work and she saw a parrot on a perch in front of a pet store. The parrot said to her, "Hey lady, you are really ugly." Well, the lady is furious! She stormed past the store to her work. On the way home she saw the same parrot and it said to her, "Hey lady, you are really ugly." She was incredibly ticked now. The next day the same parrot again said



to her, "Hey lady, you are really ugly."

The lady was so ticked that she went into the store and said that she would sue the store and kill the bird. The store manager replied, "That's not good," and promised the parrot wouldn't say it again. When the lady walked past the store that day after work the parrot called to her, "Hey lady." She paused and said, "Yes?" The bird said, "You know."

FOCUS BANKING SECTOR

PRELUDE TO PRIVATISATION



Santosh Kumar Mohapatra

AT THE TIME OF INDEPENDENCE, ALL BANKS IN INDIA WERE OWNED BY BUSINESS HOUSES, BUT NONE CAME FORWARD TO HELP THE GOVERNMENT IN ITS PLANNED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

We do know that the lockdown, like Demonetisation, like GST, has taken work away from the small and the poor and given it to the corporate sector

Ever since the nation embarked on the path of neo-liberalism, there has been a constant attempt by the ruling dispensations at the Centre to allow entry of business houses into the banking sector. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) recently released a report of an Internal Working Group (IWG) headed by PK Mohanty which proposes to allow Indian corporate houses into the banking sector either directly as promoters or through the NBFC route. This is a continuation of the Modi government's "pro-corporate neoliberal" economic policies.

Even when licenses to private banks were issued in the post-liberalisation period (in 1993 and 2001), big business houses were prohibited from getting licenses. The NDA government wants to abandon this long-standing policy. It is also quite contradictory to allow corporates to open banks when the government is expediting mergers of banks, closing branches under the spurious plea of building banking behemoths to compete with their global peers.

The last time (2013-14) when the RBI invited applications for new private banks, a host of corporates including Tata Sons; Aditya Birla Nuvo, L&T Finance Holdings, Reliance Capital, and IMACS Management Services Ltd had applied for permits.

The government's latest move has drawn criticism from experts, who have red-flagged the risks associated with it. Rating agency S&P Global has said it was sceptical of allowing corporate ownership in banks given India's weak corporate governance amid large corporate defaults over the past few years. Former Chief Economist of the World Bank Kaushik Basu dubs the decision as a good looking step in bad direction and may lead to crony capitalism.

Former RBI governor Raghuram Rajan and deputy governor Viral Acharya termed the proposal as a 'bad idea'. While questioning the urgency and timing of the IWG proposals, they have cautioned that such an attempt will allow non-fi-



Rating agency S&P Global has said it was sceptical of allowing corporate ownership in banks given India's weak corporate governance amid large corporate defaults

ancial businesses to gain easy access to the sector and encourage connected lending.

Allowing corporate houses to set up banks is a retrograde step and will overturn the process of nationalisation of banking sector initiated by former PM Indira Gandhi. It is not a 'big bang' reform but just a surreptitious design to weaken the public sector banking system to help corporates take control over financial savings, just the way BSNL was destroyed so that the telecom sector could be overtaken by private companies especially Jio. It is a prelude to privatisation of the banking sector.

It should be recalled here that at the time of Independence, all banks in India were owned by business houses, but none came forward to help the government in its planned economic development projects. Bank nationalisation helped in expansion of branches in every nook and corner of the country and ensured credit flow to priority sectors like agriculture, small-scale industries, housing, and exports.

It is argued that corporates will be allowed as promoters albeit with conditions. The IWG has suggested significant amendments to the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 to prevent connected lending and exposures between banks and other financial and non-financial group entities. This is aimed at increasing the RBI's powers and

strengthening the supervisory mechanism for large conglomerates. However, if comprehensive regulation and supervision were only a matter of legislation, India would not have an NPA problem and collapse of private banks. Governance is frail in India. Moreover, regulators can succumb to either political pressure or the urgency of the moment.

The foremost problems before the banking sector are mammoth NPAs, the massive scale of banking frauds, huge bad loan write-off, surplus liquidity, closure of rural branches. Banks now need capital infusion by the government which is low as a percentage of GDP in India as compared to other countries. Handing banks to corporates will not solve the above problems rather exacerbate the situation.

There is a strong reason for not inducting corporate houses in the banking industry with significant conflicts of interest. Corporates are basically borrowers from banks. They will divert funds to concerns which they have an interest in and will try to push down lending rates arbitrarily. Also, the risk of contagion from corporate defaults to the financial sector will increase significantly. It will further exacerbate the concentration of economic and political power in certain business houses. In other words, allowing industrial houses to own banks would allow them to

corner the bulk of the credit for their own businesses through connected lending. It will be impossible to assess risks and regulate the banking sector in such a scenario. Moreover, it will be affected by cronyism. That is why, many countries, including the United States, prohibit industrial houses from operating banks. South Korea prohibited industrial houses from promoting new banks following the financial crisis in 1997.

If banks are owned by corporates, it will lead to overleveraging. A highly leveraged banking system can lead to unstable dynamics and downward spirals. Numerous studies confirm the understanding that the US financial crisis of the years 2007-09 and the subsequent great recession was caused by excessive leveraging of the US banking sector; its exposure to the US real estate sector. Many private and foreign banks have been responsible for highly imprudent and speculative practices. Overleveraging occurs when a business has borrowed too much money and is unable to pay interest payments, principal repayments, or maintain payments for its operating expenses due to debt burden.

In contrast, the Indian banking sector — dominated by the public sector banks — has successfully withstood the global financial crisis. In the light of the global financial crisis sparked off in 2008 by the profligacy of private banks and financial speculation, allowing corporates in banking sector in India is an illogical decision.

India's financial landscape is blotted by scams involving big businesses, big failures of private banks like Centurion Bank of Punjab, Global Trust Bank, Bank of Rajasthan, Times Bank, Yes Bank and most recently, Lakshmi Vilas Bank. What is noteworthy is that private banks in crisis are rescued by public sector banks. Banks run by businesses will increase the scope for financial malpractices. The growth of savings will be affected and thereby our savings economy.

The author is an Odisha-based economist and columnist.

SPECTRUM POLITICAL CRISIS

Kyrgyzstan stands at crossroads



Djoomart Otorbaev

THERE IS A PERSISTENT MYTH IN KYRGYZSTAN THAT CHANGING THE CONSTITUTION WILL MAKE LIFE SUDDENLY BETTER

After staging three revolutions in two decades, one could argue that the Kyrgyz people have accumulated unique knowledge of how it's done. Then again, because new problems have emerged each time, there are clearly limits to what experience can offer.

Kyrgyzstan's latest revolution began in a typical fashion. Following a parliamentary election on October 4, protesters and rioters took to the streets seeking to annul the result, triggering a full-scale political crisis. By October 6, demonstrators had occupied the White House — the government building that houses the president's office and parliament. In the following days, a peaceful power struggle unfolded. In the end, the Central Election Commission annulled the election results, President Sooronbai Jeenbekov resigned, and Sadyr Japarov, a politician who had just been released from prison, became the acting president.

Meanwhile, as the country's only remaining independent political body, the parliament had continued to work throughout the protests, enacting legislation to hold a presidential election and a vote on a new constitution on January 10, 2021. This reform was initiated by Japarov himself, prompting his opponents to accuse him of attempt-

ing to usurp power and divert the country from the path of democracy. Japarov, now 51, began his political career in 2005, when he was elected to parliament. The government that was elected in 2010 prosecuted him, and he went into hiding abroad. When he returned, he was convicted and imprisoned.

Both of his parents and his son died during his incarceration, elevating his status as a political martyr in the eyes of many Kyrgyz. Japarov's rise to power reflects not just his vivid biography, but also the determination of his activist base of supporters and the loyal MPs who backed him. For all the criticism that he is now receiving, there is no question that he played a central role in preventing the country from sliding into chaos during the critical days of the October revolution.

Many Kyrgyz view Japarov as a political outsider who can unite a fractured country and carry out necessary reforms. He has already announced a program to fight corruption, curb the shadow economy, and renew the political establishment with a younger generation of untainted professionals. If the upcoming vote on constitutional changes succeeds, it will be the tenth time that Kyrgyzstan has amended its con-

stitution since it emerged from the Soviet yoke in 1991. There is a persistent myth in Kyrgyzstan that changing the constitution will make life suddenly better. But, of course, constitutional changes yield real-world results only when there is a deep public understanding and acceptance of constitutionalism.

Given the speed of events in recent weeks, the international community fears further destabilization. But the Kyrgyz people recognize and appreciate the fact that they have barely avoided falling into the political abyss. During the revolution, law-enforcement agencies seemed paralyzed, unable to ensure security of either state institutions or private property. The only force that proved capable of maintaining a degree of legality was the self-organized 'people's guards' who have cut their teeth during past periods of unrest.

The official law-enforcement agencies were hampered by their own leaders' incompetence, corruption, and lack of professionalism. During the days of rioting, many division chiefs (those with a rank above colonel) simply vanished, no longer even answering calls from their subordinates. The whereabouts of the (former) ministers of internal affairs and national security are still unknown;

it is safe to assume that they are on the run. State institutions and civil society are once again functioning completely on their own.

The Kyrgyz state budget is around \$2 billion — almost all of which is allocated for 'protected items' such as salaries and pensions — whereas annual remittances, mainly from migrant workers in Russia, exceed \$3 billion, accounting for around 30 per cent of GDP. The gap between private and public incomes is one of the main sources of systemic corruption. Kyrgyz do not expect anything from the state, and ask only that it not take too much from them in the form of bribes and kickbacks.

Since the earliest days of Kyrgyzstan's independence, public trust in government has been repeatedly undermined by systemic corruption, falsified election results, and the state's reliance on informal institutions. Unlike in other countries with similar problems, corrupt regimes here are overthrown quickly. But the Kyrgyz people now must learn to build as well as they can destroy. Failing that, they will always be risking another plunge into political chaos, and, with it, the threat of state failure.

The writer is a former Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan.

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Farmers on warpath

Sir, Thousands of farmers of Punjab and Haryana are seen marching towards New Delhi. They are out on foot, in buses and in tractors. They are agitating against three farm laws passed by the Modi government. Farmers believe that these laws will make them vulnerable to the market, affect their income and benefit corporates. They demand total withdrawal of these laws. The farmers' march seems to be peaceful. Surprisingly, the police are seen using tear gas and water cannon to disperse the agitating farmers. There seems to be a war like situation in the Delhi-Haryana border. However, the farmers look undeterred. Prime Minister Narendra Modi should personally take note of the situation and hold talks with the agitating farmers. Using tear gas and water cannons on farmers is not the way out.

Gourang Charan Parida, PURI

Maradona's tryst with Kerala

Sir, Diego Maradona, the God of football, visited only two Indian cities during his lifetime - Kolkata and Kannur (Kerala) and both these places are known for their madness for soccer. We the people of Kannur cherish the day Maradona came to our city eight years ago on 23 October, 2012. It was a private visit sponsored by an international jewellery brand. The whole city was in frenzy and I remember the roads and the premises around the hotel where Maradona stayed were jam-packed with fans who came from far and near. As soon as they saw him waving from the balcony of the hotel room the whole crowd went crazy. Later, at the Jawahar Stadium where the organisers conducted a special function Maradona mesmerised the crowd with his football stunts, dance and songs! He even cut a huge cake made specially for him in the replica of a stadium and football but the legend, witnesses say, made it sure that he didn't slice the football because for him it was his life and soul! Maradona left Kannur with golden memories the people will cherish forever. The hotel room, room number 309, in which the Soccer legend stayed has been turned into a 'shrine' where all the things he used during his stay has been kept intact. The hotel management also allows only Maradona fans to stay in that extra special room! His memories linger on in the hearts of soccer fans in Kannur and the everlasting energy left by the legend is felt even now in the stadium and the place where he stayed.

M Pradyu, KANNUR (KERALA)

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

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Gehlot hits back at BJP for remarks on toppling govt

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jaipur, Nov 28: Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot gave a be-fitting reply to the continuous attacks being made by the opposition BJP. He said that the BJP leaders have created an atmosphere of negative politics in the state at the time of the pandemic, when the Rajasthan government is working hard to fight the Covid battle. Gehlot said that in the last few days, there have been unrestrained statements made by the BJP leaders on Covid management by the Rajasthan government who have also been questioning the future of the ruling dispensation. "The state government is working along with social workers, employees, social organisations and religious leaders amid the Covid pandemic. But the negative politics being done by the opposition party has created public anger



The BJP, which formed the government through horse trading in Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Goa, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh, is still frustrated due to the failure of its endeavour to topple the government in Rajasthan

ASHOK GEHLOT I CM

against them," the CM said. Gehlot said many senior lead-

ers of Rajasthan BJP say that the government will collapse in the coming days. The Leader of Opposition, Gulabchand Kataria, said that the government will topple in Rajasthan in six months. Former BJP president Arun Chaturvedi said that there will be mid-term elections in the state in the coming times. Union minister Arjun Ram Meghwal said that the government has started wavering in Rajasthan. MP Jaskaur Meena said that MLAs can leave the government at any time for the sake of money. All these statements highlight the BJP's anti-democratic thinking, the CM said. Such statements make it clear that BJP leaders are trying to destabilise the government of Rajasthan on the basis of money power and muscle power. BJP made similar efforts in the past, but due to the solidarity and commitment of Congress MLAs, they failed.

Rahul holds virtual meet to discuss Left-Cong alliance

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Nov 28: Senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Friday held a virtual meeting with Bengal unit leaders and discussed various aspects of the party's alliance with the Left Front for 2021 Assembly elections.

According to the state Congress leadership, Gandhi enquired about the seat-sharing deal between the two parties.

During the meeting, the entire state Congress leadership favoured the party's alliance with the Left, but opinions of senior members differed over seat-sharing.

Some members said that the party should take a cue from the just-concluded polls in Bihar, where it managed to win only 19 out of the 70 seats it contested, before arriving at any decision.

"We have told Rahul Gandhi ji that the entire state unit is keen on forging an alliance with the Left, but seat-sharing talks were yet to start. The Left-Congress alliance in Bengal is the best possible option for defeating the TMC and the BJP," a senior party leader said.

Another leader, who was also a

BENGAL POLLS



part of the meeting, said, "Some were of the opinion that the party had contested 92 seats during the 2016 polls, and the number should-n't go down this time. Others said it would be wise to concentrate on areas where the party has a significant support base."

Both Gandhi and general secre-

tary (organisation) KC Venugopal gave the state unit leaders a patient hearing, and gave assurances that they would apprise party president Sonia Gandhi about the development, he added.

In 2016, both the Left and the grand old party had fought together and bagged 76 seats in the

In 2016, both the Left and the grand old party had fought together and bagged 76 seats in the 294-member assembly. The CPI(M)-led Left Front later walked out of the alliance

During the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, the two sides failed to reach an agreement on seat sharing

After their dismal performance last year, with the Congress bagging two Lok Sabha seats and the CPI(M) drawing a blank, the two sides have now decided to stitch an alliance again for 2021 polls, likely to be held in April-May

294-member assembly. The CPI(M)-led Left Front later walked out of the alliance.

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Bengal got no Covid aid from Centre: TMC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Nov 28: The Trinamool Congress Saturday claimed that the Mamata Banerjee administration has so far spent Rs 4,000 crore on COVID-19 management in West Bengal and has not received any assistance from the BJP-led NDA government at the Centre to deal with the pandemic situation.

State Women and Child Development and Social Welfare Minister Shashi Panja said that starting from scratch, the West Bengal government has expeditiously built the necessary infrastructure to tackle the pandemic.

"With no assistance from the Centre, the Mamata Banerjee government has spent Rs 4,000 crore to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic in the state. It has spent Rs 1,200 crore before June and the remaining Rs 2,800 crore after that," she told reporters at the TMC headquarters



here.

The state had faced the double disaster of COVID-19 and super cyclone Amphan, in which losses amounted to Rs 1.02 lakh crore, Panja said.

"The West Bengal government has spent Rs 6,500 crore in providing relief and rebuilding infrastructure affected by the super cyclone," she said.

Alleging that the Centre has not provided any relief to the state, Panja said that the BJP-led NDA government has denied West Bengal of its legitimate dues.

She claimed that the Union government has not yet paid Rs 50,000 crore dues to West Bengal, of which Rs 36,000 crore is for co-funded schemes of the state and the Centre, while holding that the TMC government has ensured that no project suffered because of this.

"The state is also yet to receive Rs 11,000 crore under devolution of funds as its share from various taxes raised from the state," she said, adding that another Rs 3,000 crore is due from the central government on food subsidy and some other heads.

The minister claimed that apart from the Rs 50,000 crore, the West Bengal government is yet to receive Rs 7,750 crore on account of GST compensation dues.

She claimed that the state is also yet to receive Rs 6,787 crore through the Centre's borrowing scheme.

The minister said that the BJP is losing its political allies and is getting itself "new allies" in the central investigation agencies to brow-beat political opponents.

"The BJP is losing allies, with Shiv Sena and Shiromani Akali Dal having left and JD(U) also likely to leave the NDA. It has got new allies in CBI, ED and Income Tax Department," Panja said.

The TMC leader alleged that BJP MP Arjun Singh has not given full information to the Election Commission while filing his nomination for the Lok Sabha elections.

She claimed that Singh, a former MLA of the TMC who joined the BJP before the 2019 general elections, has not declared in full about his financial assets and relations in his declaration to the Election Commission.

Bengal BJP in touch with ex-TMC minister Suvendu



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Nov 28: The BJP central leadership is in touch with disgruntled TMC mass leader Suvendu Adhikari, who has resigned from the Mamata Banerjee cabinet, but nothing has been decided as of now regarding his joining the saffron party, sources in it said Saturday.

Adhikari, they said, is in good terms with some of the saffron camp leaders but talks regarding his conditions for joining the party are yet to begin.

The BJP is, however, hopeful about his joining as it feels that the heavyweight TMC leader has "few options left" a senior BJP leader said.

"We are in touch with Suvendu Adhikari. We share good terms with him but nothing has been decided as of now regarding his joining us. We have to wait for few more days to have a clear picture," the leader said on condition of anonymity.

Although Adhikari has resigned from the Mamata Banerjee cabinet in which he was the minister in charge of transport, waterways and irrigation, he has not resigned from TMC or as MLA.

"After resigning as minister it will be tough for Adhikari to continue in TMC. So the options before him are floating a new party or joining BJP or

Congress," the BJP leader said.

"It takes a lot of money and human resource to float a new political outfit, which we don't think is possible at this juncture," he said.

The option for Adhikari to join the Congress is less as the party is very weak in Bengal. "So the only option left is the BJP, which we think is the most beneficial proposition for both of us," he said.

Sources said Adhikari's exit from the cabinet on Friday is seen as a prelude to his severing of his two-decade-old association with the TMC right from its inception in 1998.

The TMC leadership, which had initiated backchannel talks with him, has decided to adopt a "wait and watch" approach and will not initiate any further talks to address his grievances, sources in the party said.

Apart from his home district of East Midnapore, Adhikari has influence over at least 40-45 assembly segments in tribal Jangalmahal area comprising the districts of West Midnapore, Bankura, Purulia and Jhargram and parts of Birbhum and minority-dominated Murshidabad districts.

This assumes significance as polls in the state, where BJP has made deep inroads, is due in April-May 2021 and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee will seek to return to power for the third consecutive term.

RAJ SLASHES RT-PCR TEST RATE TO ₹800

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, Nov 28: The Rajasthan government Saturday fixed the rate for Covid-19 RT-PCR tests by private labs in the state at Rs 800, slashing it by Rs 400.

Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said the government ordered the lowering of the Covid test rates from Rs 1,200 to Rs 800 following a drop in test kits prices.

The state government issued the order slashing the Covid-19 test rate by private labs soon after the chief minister digitally inaugurated a 70-bed Covid-19 Intensive Care Unit in RUHS Hospital here and disease testing labs in six towns.

Speaking during the programme, Gehlot said his government is making all efforts to strengthen the Covid-19 management infrastructure. "People should not be worried by the rise in positive cases as they will do due to the increasing number of tests," he said.

He sought to assure people of "encouraging" recovery rate in the state, saying Rajasthan has a Covid death rate below one per cent - one of the lowest in the country.

Gehlot said the corona infection must not be hidden at any stage because delaying treatment makes



the disease fatal.

He said those who did not get themselves screened timely had to undergo treatment in hospital.

The chief minister said the health infrastructure has been strengthened throughout Rajasthan for maximum screening and proper treatment of corona-infected persons and now RT-PCR testing facility is available in every district.

Defending Covid-infected Health Minister Raghu Sharma's visit to newly set up ICU in RUHS Hospital, a dedicated Covid hospital, in Jaipur, the chief minister asked who else will conduct a visit if not

the health minister.

Gehlot said after testing positive, the minister was admitted in the RUHS Hospital and he inspected the newly set up ICU there.

BJP had raised objections after the Covid-positive minister visited the hospital. The BJP leaders had accused him of putting the lives of others including the hospital staff at risk.

Speaking during the function, Rajasthan assembly Speaker C P Joshi said the chief minister is being appreciated in the entire country for his management during the corona crisis.

New bird species makes first appearance in Raj

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jaipur, Nov 28: The spotting of a new species of babbler bird has added a new dimension to Rajasthan's rich biodiversity. The small resident bird spotted in Udaipur is a puff-throated babbler, whose scientific name is Pelornis ruficeps.

This new species of bird has been found in the Phulwari Ki Nal Wildlife Sanctuary in Udaipur district. The puff-throated babbler was spotted by environmental scientists Dharmendra Khandal, Satish Sharma and Harkirat Singh Sangha, who are working for biodiversity conservation in south Rajasthan. A detailed report on this has been published in Issue 16 of the 'Indian Birds'.

Udaipur-based ornithologist Satish Sharma said that the newly-spotted bird is a member of the babbler family whose beak and legs are light pink in colour. The colour of the back is light black, the throat is completely white and there are deep stripes on the chest.

The white and black stripe above the eye extends to the back of the neck. It stays in pairs or small

groups and eats insects lying on the ground in the clump of leaves falling down from trees.

This babbler species is found in Vijayanagar, Gujarat, the plateau regions in Bihar and Odisha, Eastern and Western Ghats regions, Palakkad in Kerala, and Chitteri Hills in Tamil Nadu, among other places.

RESIDENT BIRD

THE BIRD IS A MEMBER OF THE BABBLER FAMILY WHOSE BEAK AND LEGS ARE LIGHT PINK IN COLOUR. THE COLOUR OF THE BACK IS LIGHT BLACK, THE THROAT IS COMPLETELY WHITE AND THERE ARE DEEP STRIPES ON THE CHEST

THE WHITE AND BLACK STRIPE ABOVE THE EYE EXTENDS TO THE BACK OF THE NECK. THE BIRD STAYS IN PAIRS OR SMALL GROUPS AND EATS INSECTS LYING ON THE GROUND IN THE CLUMP OF LEAVES FALLING DOWN FROM TREES



is to make art exhibitions accessible, especially for students. The gallery on wheels would reach all parts of the city rather than people visiting a gallery in one corner of it," Kapur said.

On the days artists book the tram, people will be able to view their paintings on paying a nominal entry fee of Rs 6. The WBTC would be displaying a collection of old photos from its archive when there will be no booking.

"The tram would travel the entire city, and would be parked at major junctions like Esplanade, Shyambazar and Gariahat for a

few hours daily or on alternate days, as per the artists' desire," so that people of central, north or south Kolkata respectively are able to see their work, a WBTC official said. The tram would be available to artists at a daily rate of Rs 3,600. The charge for two days would be Rs 6,000 and for three days, Rs 8,000, and after that, it would be Rs 1,500 for each day.

There would be concessions of up to 50 per cent for artists who are students of any school or college and also those from charitable organisations doing an exhibition for any social cause, the official said.

of the day quote

Happy to inform that India has practically achieved its Pre-2020 Climate Action targets. Although India is not responsible for historical emissions, India, under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji, is leading the world on Climate Action



Prakash Javadekar | Union Minister

How can it be illegal action if the construction (at Ranaut's bungalow) is illegal as per the BMC's findings? I still respect the court's decision. The law should be equal for all



Sanjay Raut | Shiv Sena MP

The state has inputs of some unwanted elements raising pro-Khalistan slogans in the ongoing farmers' protests in and around the national capital



Manohar Lal Khattar | Haryana Chief Minister

SHORT TAKES

Three charred to death

Dewas (MP): Three persons were charred to death when their four-wheeler caught fire after hitting a dumper in Dewas district of Madhya Pradesh early Saturday, a police official said. The accident took place at Bhauransa on Bhopal-Indore highway, about 14 kms from the district headquarters, he said. After the accident, both the vehicles caught fire, he said. The deceased were identified as Shyam Mali (45), Pappu Thakur (32) and Shivanarayan Namdeo (50), all residents of Ujjain.

Akbaruddin Owaisi booked

Hyderabad: AIMIM leader Akbaruddin Owaisi was Saturday booked for his comments on the samadhis of former Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao and TDP founder NT Rama Rao, and state BJP president Bandi Sanjay Kumar, for his retort to it. They were booked under Section 505 of the Indian Penal Code (statements conducing to public mischief), police said. Akbaruddin, younger brother of AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi, courted a controversy November 25, asking whether the 'samadhis' of former Prime Minister Rao and TDP founder on Hussain Sagar lake bank would be removed.

Seaplane service shut down

Ahmedabad: Seaplane service between Ahmedabad and the Statue of Unity in Gujarat's Kevadia has been suspended for 15 days. India's first seaplane service was flagged off by Prime Minister Narendra Modi a little over two weeks back. Director of the civil aviation department, Ajay Chauhan said that the seaplane's flying hours are up and the aircraft needs servicing for which it has been sent back to the Maldives.

Naxals flee after encounter

Chaibasa (Jharkhand): An encounter took place between security forces and Naxalites in West Singhbhum district, a police officer said. Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG), Kolhan Range, Rajiv Ranjan Singh said that an encounter took place between security forces and PLFI Naxalites in Manmaru forest under the jurisdiction of Bandgaon police station on late Friday evening.



Farmers should be allowed wherever they want to go. Arvind Kejriwal will be the host of farmers in Delhi

RAGHAV CHADHA | AAM AADMI PARTY LEADER

VENKAIAH NAIDU LIKELY TO CHAIR SCO HEADS OF GOVERNMENT SUMMIT

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu is expected to chair the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's (SCO) council of heads of government summit November 30. For the first time, India is hosting the summit of the council of heads of government of the SCO



FOUR CENTRAL POLICE GROUPS WITHOUT REGULAR CHIEFS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 28: Four central police organisations are functioning without regular heads for varied lengths of time as the government has not appointed their full-time chiefs.

The latest organisation to come under this category is the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) as its chief Rajesh Ranjan is set to retire this month-end and the Union home ministry has given the "additional charge" of the post to SSB director general Kumar Rajesh Chandra "till the joining of regular DG, CISF or untill further orders, whichever is earlier" as per an order issued November 26.

Similarly, the charge of the federal counter-terrorist force NSG, the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) and the central police think tank - Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD) - is being rendered in additional capacities by various Indian Police Service (IPS) officers. Indo-Tibetan Border Police chief SS Deswal is handling the "additional charge" of the National Security Guard since incumbent AK Singh retired September 30.

K'taka CM's secy hospitalised after 'suicide' bid

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Nov 28: Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa's political secretary and relative N R Santosh who was hospitalised following alleged suicide attempt, is 'stable and cheerful', and may be discharged in a day or two, doctors treating him said on Saturday.

Responding to the incident, the state Congress demanded an investigation into the matter to enable the truth to come out and claimed that some confidential matters are linked to it.

According to sources, Santosh is said to have attempted suicide by consuming sleeping pills Friday night.

On finding him unconscious at his Dollars Colony residence here, family members have rushed him to Ramaiah Memorial Hospital.

Santhosh(31) was brought at about 8.30 pm with an alleged history of consumption of sleeping tablets at around 7 pm, the hospital president Dr Naresh Shetty said in a statement.

PAWAN BANSAL IS AICC TREASURER

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 28: Congress Saturday appointed former Rajya Sabha MP Pawan Kumar Bansal as the interim treasurer of the All India Congress Committee (AICC). The post fell vacant after the sudden demise of veteran Congressman and sitting Rajya Sabha MP from Gujarat, Ahmed Patel earlier this month.

A four-time Lok Sabha MP from Chandigarh, Pawan Kumar Bansal also served one term as a Rajya Sabha MP for Punjab. In addition, Pawan Kumar Bansal has also served as a national spokesperson of the AICC and chairman of the party's research and reference cell in the past.

Doctors warn over Delhi's 'suicidal' half-marathon

TOP DOCTORS HAVE WARNED ELITE RUNNERS ARE TAKING A MAJOR HEALTH RISK BY COMPETING IN SUNDAY'S HALF-MARATHON IN THE MIDST OF A MAJOR COVID OUTBREAK AND SOARING AIR POLLUTION

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

New Delhi, Nov 28: Top doctors have warned elite runners are taking a major health risk by competing in Sunday's New Delhi half-marathon in the midst of a major coronavirus outbreak and soaring air pollution.

Women's marathon world record-holder Brigid Kosgei from Kenya and Ethiopia's two-time men's winner Andamlak Belihu are among the 49 elite athletes running the 21-kilometre race, while thousands of amateurs are taking part virtually.

Organisers say the "highest level of safety-standards, with bio-secure zones" have been laid on for the race starting at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium.

But with New Delhi recording more than 500,000 virus cases, and air quality in the world's most polluted capital hovering between 'un-

healthy' and 'hazardous', health experts said the athletes should think twice. "It will be suicidal for runners to run the race this time. We have such high levels of pollution, we have the risk of coronavirus," Arvind Kumar, founder trustee of the Lung Care Foundation, told this news agency.

"With the presence of this twin threat if people are still running despite knowing everything, well, I have no words to express my anguish." "Whether you are an international elite runner or you are a small boy from a village, the damaging potential of a damaging agent remains the same," said the doctor.

Toxic mix

Randeep Guleria, director of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), the country's top research body, told this news agency that "in an ideal situation" the race should not be run.



"Because of high levels of air pollution, exercising outside in this weather sometimes can lead to aggravation of underlying lung problems," he said. "Even if you are an elite runner the air pollution would still affect your lung."

Normally thousands of amateurs would also take part, but because of the coronavirus they have been told

to run their chosen route between Wednesday and Sunday and chart their time on an app. Delhi has been hit by a winter pollution crisis each year for the past decade when crop-stubble burning from nearby states, cold temperatures and car and industrial pollution produce a toxic mix. This year, the Indian capital is also a major concern in the battle against

the coronavirus. India is the world's second worst-hit country behind the United States, with about 9.3 million cases. The city is considering imposing a night-time curfew because of the rising number of cases, according to media reports.

Kosgei, who is visiting India for the first time, acknowledged her concerns about travelling for the race. "We have definitely been affected by Covid-19. I had to convince my parents and family back home to allow me to visit Delhi for the half-marathon," she said. "The virus has affected most of the sporting events. But it is important for us to take care of ourselves." As in other countries, nearly all sport in India has been cancelled. After repeated delays, the Indian Premier League cricket went ahead in the United Arab Emirates and the Indian Super League football is being held in a bio-secure "bubble" in Goa.

JAMMU & KASHMIR

Overall 52% voting in first phase of DDC polls

The DDC polls is the first major electoral exercise in J&K after the abrogation of Article 370 last year



Security guard outside a polling booth in Srinagar, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

AGENCIES

Srinagar, Nov 28: The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir witnessed 51.76% polling in the first phase of District Development Council (DDC) elections held here Saturday, November 28. Reasi witnessed the highest number of votes polled at 74.62% while Pulwama district in South Kashmir reported the least percentage at 6.70%.

The voting percentage in Jammu division is 64.2% and in Kashmir division, it is 40.65%, said KK Sharma, state election commissioner.

The DDC polls is the first major electoral exercise being held in the region after witnessing a political upheaval as the central government abrogated Article 370 last year and bifurcated the erstwhile state of J&K into two Union Territories.

The polling is being held in eight phases across 280 constituencies of the union territory in which over 1,400 candidates are in the fray. The polling began with the onset of dawn at about 7 a.m. amid biting cold, but gained momentum as the day progressed.

In the volatile areas of South Kashmir, where a low voter turnout was expected, Pulwama witnessed a dismal percentage of less than 7% in the first phase. In Shopian's poll-bound areas which witnessed high-

est number of counter-insurgency operations, however, 42.58% of votes were cast.

Ali Mohammad Bhatti, a 65-year-old voter from Narapora, a village in Shopian with over 1,200 electorates, said his participation in the DDC polls were "important" for the upliftment of his village. "No one wants to work on the ground, we are expecting a change under the DDCs," he said.

An elaborate security cover has been laid in and around polling booths to thwart any law and order situation. The polling, however, ended without any major incident of violence or protest. A senior security official said that as many as 100 personnel of the police and paramilitary were posted in and around each polling station to secure the exercise. "We had ensured a four-tier security cover for each polling station," the official said.

In Srinagar, the J&K police used as many as 30 drones for aerial surveillance in the polling areas.

Meanwhile, back in Shopian, in a far-flung village which is over 50 km from Srinagar, Mohammad Ilyas Kumhar is fighting elections for the sixth time. A former militant with Al-Jehad outfit for five years in the 1990s, Ilyas is contesting as an independent. "I am only fighting to promote democracy and thwart those who call for the boycott," Ilyas said.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kohima, Nov 28: The Kohima bench of the Guwahati High Court has granted an interim stay to the Nagaland governments July 2 decision to ban commercial import, trade and sale of dogs and dog meat in the markets of the northeastern state, officials said.

An official of the high court bench said on Friday that Justice S. Hukato Swu issued the interim stay late on Thursday following a writ petition filed by Neizevolie Kuotsu and two others, pending the disposal of the plea.

The court had September 14 given opportunity to the state government to file an affidavit in opposition with the direction; the government advocate told the HC that there was no reply from the state respondents.

The court asked the state respondents (government) to make all efforts to file their affidavit-in-reply and further listed the case after



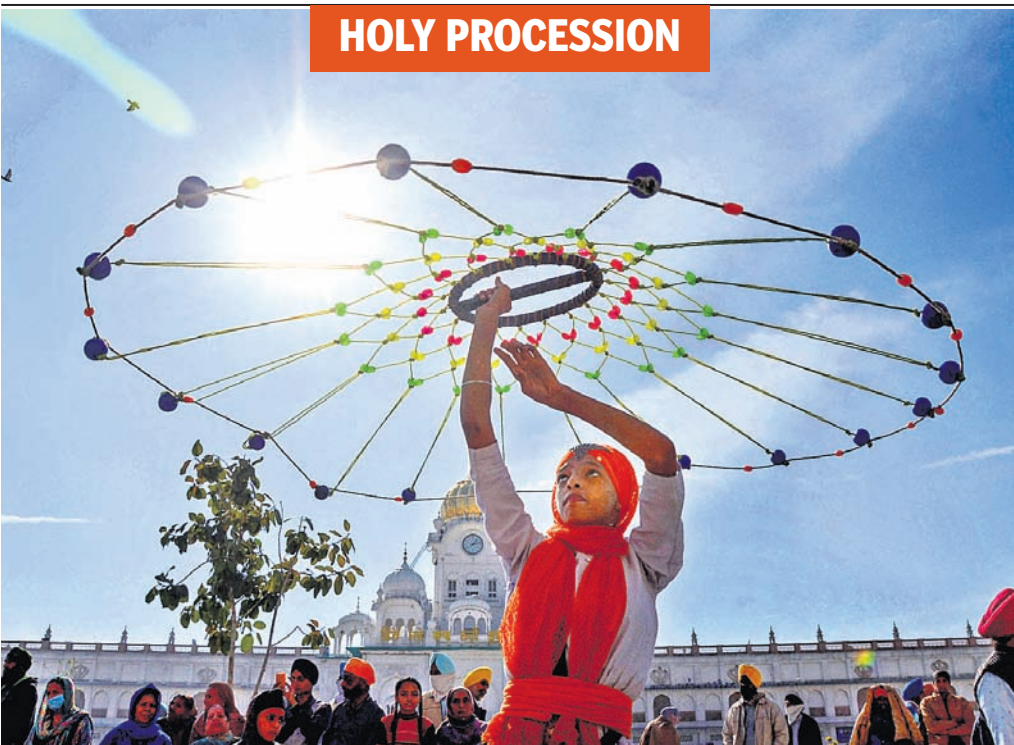
The winter vacation of the court.

The lawyers for the petitioners argued that if an executive exercise was made violating the basic rights of the citizens, the executive court orders could not stand the test of law.

The petitioners' lawyers pointed out that orders to be implemented must have statutory backing.

The counsel further pleaded that the impugned order by the state government in July had been passed in the garb of Cabinet decision,

HOLY PROCESSION



Sikh devotees perform martial arts Gatka as they participate in Nagar Kirtan (holy procession) ahead of the 551st birth anniversary of Sikhism founder Guru Nanak Dev near Golden Temple in Amritsar, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

Hacker selling CEO, CFO email accounts for as less as ₹7,400

COMPROMISED CORPORATE EMAIL ACCOUNTS ARE GOLDMINES FOR CYBERCRIMINALS AS THEY CAN BE MONETISED IN MANY DIFFERENT WAYS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 28: A hacker is selling passwords for the Microsoft email accounts of hundreds of top-level executives including CEOs, CFOs and CMOs on the Dark Web for nearly \$100-\$1,500 (nearly Rs 7,400-Rs 1.1 lakh) per account.

According to a report in ZDNet late Friday, the threat actor is currently selling email and password combinations for Office 365 and Microsoft accounts of C-level executives and the selling price is set depending upon the company size and the role of the executive.

"The data is being sold on a closed-access underground forum for Russian-speaking hackers called exploit.in".

The high-level employees at risk include chief executive officers, chief operating officers, chief financial officers, chief marketing officers, chief technology officers, presidents, vice presidents and company directors, among others.

The cover security researcher who agreed to contact the seller to obtain samples "confirmed the validity of the data and obtained valid credentials for two accounts".

The email accounts belong to the CEO of a US medium-sized software company and the CFO of an EU-based retail store chain, according to the report.

"The seller refused to share how he obtained the login credentials but said he had hundreds more to sell". According to data provided by



threat intelligence firm KELA, the same hacker previously expressed interest in buying "Azor logs," a

term that refers to data collected from computers infected with the AzorUlt info-stealer Trojan.

Compromised corporate email accounts are goldmines for cybercriminals as "they can be monetised in many different ways," KELA product manager Raveed Laeb was quoted as saying.

Most likely, the compromised emails can be abused for CEO scams, also known as Business Email Compromise (BEC) scams which are on the rise globally including in India.

Global cybersecurity firm Trend Micro recently said it blocked 438 million email-borne cyber threats in India in the first half of this year which represented the third-highest numbers in Asia.

Business Email Compromise (BEC) detections increased by 18 percent from the second half of

2019, in part due to scammers trying to capitalise on home workers being more exposed to social engineering.

Educational institutions are more than twice as vulnerable to a carefully-crafted BEC attack as any average organisation, according to a latest report by Barracuda Networks, a leading provider of cloud-enabled security solutions.

Using this form of attack, threat actors have taken hold of schools, resulting in devastating losses.

Such spear phishing attacks hit the Indian education sector hard between June and September, affecting more than 1,000 schools, colleges, and universities, according to the report that came out earlier this month.

of the day quote

I fear physical and mental harm after having exposed the powerful leader like Lalu Prasad Yadav

LALAN KUMAR PASWAN |
BIHAR BJP MLA

Uddhav Thackeray's one year is summed up by two decisions of the court...the court gave a nice earful...Supreme Court gave a hard-hitting decision. It looks like the government machinery is being misused

DEVENDRA FADNAVIS |
FORMER MAHARASHTRA CM

Victory even by one vote is ultimately a victory. We have 125 (seats) and anyone having 122 would form the government. If anyone thinks that something wrong has been done (in the Assembly election), he can move the court which will hear the case and give its ruling

NITISH KUMAR |
BIHAR CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Leh freezes at minus 12.9°C

Srinagar: Night temperatures dropped across J&K and Ladakh UTs Saturday as Leh remained literally frozen at minus 12.9°C. The weather office has forecast generally dry weather till Thursday. Srinagar city recorded minus 2.2°C as the minimum temperature while Pahalgam recorded minus 5.2°C and Gulmarg recorded minus 5.6°C, while Kargil was at minus 9.2°C.

Four dead as car rams into bus

Noida (UP): Four people died Saturday as their car rammed into a state transport bus on the Yamuna Expressway in Uttar Pradesh's Greater Noida, police said. A fifth passenger of the car was hospitalised with severe injuries after the road crash took place around 6.45 am in the Beta 2 police station area, they said. "The incident took place around one-and-a-half kilometres prior to the Zero Point. The vehicle was on the Agra-Noida lane on the expressway. The Toyota Innova rammed into the roadways bus from behind after which four of its five occupants died on the spot," a police spokesperson said.

Couple, minor daughter killed

Aurangabad: A couple and their minor daughter were allegedly killed with sharp weapons at a village in Aurangabad district of Maharashtra early Saturday, police said. The couple's six-year-old son was injured in the attack, they said. Police are trying to find out whether the crime was committed by an individual or a group of persons. The incident took place in Old Kawsan village, located around four kms from Paithan city, between 1 am and 4 am, a senior official said.

ATM with over ₹28 lakh stolen

Jalna: Unidentified persons decamped with an ATM containing cash of over ₹28 lakh in Nagewadi area of Maharashtra's Jalna city Saturday, police said. The incident took place in the early hours of the day when one of the men uprooted the ATM attached to a bank, carried it to a vehicle parked nearby and drove away, an official from Chandanjihira police station said. The machine contained cash to the tune of ₹28.64 lakh, he said.



There is a "huge gap" in the demand and supply of human organs and tissues for transplant in the country

DR RANDEEP GULERIA |
AIIMS DIRECTOR

FRESH SNOWFALL IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

Tourist hotspots Kufri and Kalpa in Himachal Pradesh received fresh snowfall, while Keylong recorded the lowest temperature in the state at minus 9.9°C



CARING



A woman feeds a spotted deer at Borivali in Mumbai, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

BIHAR RS BY-POLLS

RJD may field its candidate

THE BJP HAS NOMINATED SUSHIL MODI FOR THE RAJYA SABHA SEAT RECENTLY VACATED AFTER THE DEATH OF FORMER UNION MINISTER RAM VILAS PASWAN

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Patna, Nov 28: After having suffered a defeat in the election for Speaker of Bihar Legislative Assembly, the primary Opposition party Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) is refusing to bow down to the ruling NDA government in the state and is preparing to give it a tough political fight. The RJD is now devising a different strategy for the Rajya Sabha elections.

The RJD is gearing to field its own candidate for the upcoming Rajya Sabha by-elections. Earlier, November 27, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) nominated the name of former Deputy Chief Minister and party leader Sushil Kumar Modi as the NDA candidate for the Rajya Sabha by-elections.

The BJP has nominated Sushil Modi for the Rajya Sabha seat recently vacated after the death of former Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan. With this major decision, the saffron party has put a stamp of approval on Sushil Modi's name by bringing him into national politics. Considering the sheer numerical strength of the NDA in the Assembly, Sushil Modi is likely to be elected as Rajya Sabha member.



The nomination for this vacant RS seat can be filed till December 3 and the by-elections for the Upper House of the Assembly will be held December 14.

As per RJD sources, two names are being pitched in by the Grand Alliance for the upcoming Rajya Sabha by-elections. The party is likely to nominate RJD state President Jagdanand Singh and senior party leader Abdul Bari Siddiqui for the Rajya Sabha seat. Siddiqui had recently lost the Bihar Assembly elections. Both the RJD leaders are considered to be trusted confidants of RJD patriarch Lalu Prasad.

Sources in the RJD also say that apart from veteran party leaders, the RJD could also field other lesser-known fresh faces to avoid criticism in case the party suffers a defeat in the RS polls.

However, the RJD has not revealed its political strategy yet. Looking at the sheer strength in terms of numbers in the Upper House, the NDA has the clear majority with 125 MLAs while the RJD-led Grand Alliance has 110 MLAs. Two days ago, the Grand Alliance had also fielded its candidate for the post of Bihar Assembly Speaker and suffered a defeat.

ED attaches former IAS officer's assets

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 28: Assets worth over ₹27 crore of Chhattisgarh-based former IAS officer Babulal Agrawal have been attached by the Enforcement Directorate (ED), the central probe agency said Saturday.

The agency is probing Agrawal, his family members and others in connection with a money laundering case linked to charges of alleged corruption and disproportionate assets.

"The attached assets include plant and machinery, balances in bank accounts and immovable properties of Babulal Agarwal and his family members," the ED said in a statement.

The total value of the attached properties is ₹27.86 crore, it said. Agrawal, a 1988-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer, was arrested by the agency from his residence in state capital Raipur on November 9 and he is in judicial custody till December 5.

He has served as a principal secretary in the Chhattisgarh government and has been arrested by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) also in the past on charges of corruption.

Agrawal was suspended by the state government after the CBI arrested him. It was alleged that Agrawal wanted to "settle" CBI probes against him which were registered in 2010 when he was the health secretary in the state government.

When the ED arrested him earlier this month, it said the action was taken against Agrawal for "laundering the proceeds generated out of criminal offences through shell companies and integrating the same in the business of his family members."

The ED had said its criminal case filed against Agrawal, his chartered accountant (CA) Sunil Agrawal and others was filed under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) after studying a 2010 FIR of the Chhattisgarh anti-corruption bureau and the CBI.

UP ordinance on conversions comes into force

Uttar Pradesh becomes the first state to bring anti-love jihad law after Governor promulgates ordinance

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, Nov 28: Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel Saturday gave assent to an ordinance against forcible or fraudulent religious conversions that provides for imprisonment up to 10 years and a maximum fine of ₹50,000 under different categories.

The promulgation of the Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Ordinance, 2020, came four days after the Yogi Adityanath government had approved the draft of the legislation which also curbs religious conversions only for the sake of marriage.

The new law, however, did not go down well with the Opposition Samajwadi Party. Hours after the Governor's nod, SP president Akhilesh Yadav said his party will oppose the Bill when it comes up in the UP Legislature for passage.

"The Samajwadi Party is not in favour of any such law. We will oppose it (when it comes up in the Assembly)," the SP leader said in reply to a question at a press conference here. According to the ordinance, a marriage will be declared "null and void" if the conversion of a woman is solely for that purpose and those wishing to change their religion after marriage need to apply to the district magistrate.

It also has a provision under which if someone returns to their original religion, it shall not be deemed a conversion. While the onus to prove that the conversion has not been done forcibly will lie on the person accused of the act and the convert, it said. In case of contravention of the law, the ordinance says that the court shall grant appropriate compensation payable by the accused to the victim of conversion which may extend to a maximum of ₹5 lakh in addition to the fine.

The ordinance says no person shall convert, either directly or indirectly from one religion to another by use or practice of misrepresentation, force, undue influence, coercion, allurement or by any fraudulent means or by marriage nor shall any person abet, convince or conspire such conversion. An aggrieved person, his/her parents, brother, sister, or any other person who is related to



The ordinance against forcible or fraudulent religious conversions provides for imprisonment up to 10 years and a maximum fine of ₹50,000 under different categories

According to the ordinance, a marriage will be declared "null and void" if the conversion of a woman is solely for that purpose

Hours after the Governor's nod, SP president Akhilesh Yadav said his party will oppose the Bill when it comes up in the UP Legislature for passage

him/her by blood, marriage or adoption may lodge an FIR about such conversion, according to the ordinance.

In cases of mass religious conversion, the registration of the social organisations will be cancelled, and strong action will be initiated against them. If those previously convicted under the ordinance are caught again for the same offence, they shall be subjected to double punishment, it said.

Notwithstanding anything contained in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, all the offences under this ordinance shall be cognisable and non bailable and triable by the sessions court, the ordinance said.

In recent weeks, BJP-run states like Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh have revealed plans to enact laws to counter alleged attempts to convert Hindu women to Islam in the guise of marriage, which Hindu activists refer to as "love jihad".

The UP Cabinet's approval to the ordinance followed the announcement by Adityanath that his government would come out with a law to deal with "love jihad".

Adityanath had used the Hindu funeral chant of 'Ram Naam Satya Hai' to threaten those who do not respect daughters and sisters.

PM lauds vaccine work in Ahmedabad, Hyd and Pune

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad/Hyderabad/Pune, Nov 28: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Saturday visited Ahmedabad, Hyderabad and Pune to review coronavirus vaccine development work there.

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said the day-long visit was aimed at getting a first-hand perspective of the preparations, challenges and roadmap in India's endeavour to vaccinate its citizens.

Modi began by visiting pharma major Zydus Cadila's manufactur-

ing facility near Ahmedabad. Wearing a PPE kit, he reviewed the vaccine development process at the company's research centre, located over 20 km from Ahmedabad.

Modi was extensively briefed about the vaccine work at the plant by the company officials. He was briefed about the vaccine production procedure. He interacted with scientists and vaccine developers, an official said.

"Visited the Zydus Biotech Park in Ahmedabad to know more about the indigenous DNA based vaccine being developed by Zydus Cadila. I



compliment the team behind this effort for their work. Government of India is actively working with them to support them in this journey," Modi tweeted after the visit.

Zydus Cadila chairman Pankaj Patel recently said the company is aiming to complete the vaccine trial

Bhagat Singh's spirit alive amid Punjab farmers' protest

Several artists, singers, ex-servicemen, trader organisations and youth clubs had joined the campaign to mobilise people to launch the biggest offensive against the agriculture laws

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 28: With slogans of 'Inquilab Zindabad' on lips, hundreds of the protesting farmers, both men and women, with strong grit, determination and revolutionary thoughts of Shahid-e-Azam Bhagat Singh, have gathered along borders of the national capital for a planned protest against new farm laws with the commitment and spirit of volunteering.

Men wearing t-shirts with photos of Bhagat Singh on them and women donning yellow 'dupattas'

on their heads that represent the colour of martyrs, the protesters largely from Punjab have been hogging the limelight.

"We are the backbone of the country. But it is really sad that how these security people are treating us like an enemy," said protester Rajdeep Kaur, daughter of a farmer from Punjab's Sangrur district, while pointing towards a police contingent.

Like Kaur, a sea of protesters inspired by the thoughts of Shaheed Bhagat Singh, are shouting slogans 'Inquilab Zindabad' at



A young boy holds a flag as security personnel stand guard, during the 'Delhi Chal' protest march by farmers against the new farm laws in New Delhi, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

the protest site. Even many of them were seen carrying a photo of Shaheed Bhagat Singh.

"We travelled from Amritsar peacefully. As we reached the Haryana border, we had major scuffles with Haryana Police at several points," said farmer Gurdev Singh, who belonged to the Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) Ekta-Dakaunda faction.

He said the revolutionary spirit of the farmers has emerged victorious. "We managed to cross all hurdles despite the heavy deployment of men and the use of water

cannons and tear gas."

Holding a yellow flag, Jarnail Singh, who lost his hand in his childhood after sticking it into a combine harvester, was shouting, "Ekta Zindabaad".

"Age doesn't matter but your passion does," remarked octogenarian Nachattar Kaur who reached here after travelling two days on a tractor-trailer from a village in Gurdaspur district along with his eight-year-old great-grandson, who was holding a flag.

Ruldu Singh, a leader of the BKU (Ekta-Ugrahan), the largest

among the 31 farm organisations in Punjab, said they have hundreds of volunteers who have been pursuing the ideology of Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh.

"The young ones have been assigned duties to regulate traffic peacefully while the convoy was on its way from the Khanauri border (in Sangrur district) to Delhi. Without violence they breached the massive blockades comprising huge boulders, barbed fence and mounds of earth on the Bathinda-Dabwali road to enter Haryana," he said.

of the day quote

Know that Biden will be a President who represents the best in us. A leader the world will respect and our children can look up to



KAMALA HARRIS | US VICE PRESIDENT-ELECT

We must be sure that during Christmas and New Year people are not alone, so that is why on the evening of December 24 or 25 isolated people, people living alone, will have the possibility to invite up to two people inside their home



ALEXANDER DE CROO | BELGIUM PM

More than half of Canadians will receive a COVID-19 vaccine by next September



JUSTIN TRUDEAU | CANADIAN PM

SHORT TAKES

8 killed in Pak

Peshawar: Firing broke out between two rival groups during a reconciliation jirga (tribal council) called to settle a land dispute, killing at least eight people on Saturday in northwest Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, police said. The incident occurred at the hujra adjacent to the house of former member of the provincial assembly Sardar Ali at Chota Lahor in Swabi district of the province, district police Officer Imran Shahid said. Hujra is a traditional guest room in the Pashtoon society.

Talks resume

London: Teams from Britain and the European Union resumed face-to-face talks on a post-Brexit trade deal Saturday, with both sides sounding gloomy about striking an agreement in the little time that remains. EU chief negotiator Michel Barnier returned to London to meet his U.K. counterpart David Frost. Talks have been held virtually for the past week as Barnier completed a spell of self-isolation after a member of his team tested positive for the coronavirus. COVID-19 is just one complication in negotiations that remain snagged over key issues including fishing rights and fair-competition rules. Barnier said Friday that the remote talks had made little progress and the "same significant divergences persist."

Five shot dead

Baghdad: Supporters of a firebrand Iraqi cleric shot dead five people on Saturday, according to medical officials, in overnight clashes with anti-government protesters in southern Iraq. The anti-government demonstrators attempted to block the path of a rally supporting Shiite Muslim leader Moqtada al-Sadr. Followers of the populist cleric also wounded 40 others in the clashes, according to two medical officials.

Seven injured

Kabul: At least seven people were injured Saturday in two separate magnetic IED blasts in Kabul, police in the Afghan capital said. The first blast occurred at around 7.10 a.m. in the Khair Khana area in PD11 from a magnetic IED placed on a Land Cruiser, reports TOLO News. In this blast, four people were wounded, the police said. The second blast took place at around 7.40 a.m. in the Omid-e-Sabz township in Kabul's PD6, caused by a magnetic IED also placed in a car, the police said.



The US has sanctioned four entities in China and Russia for their support of Iran's missile programme, which remains a significant proliferation concern. We will continue to use all our sanctions tools to prevent Iran from advancing its missile capabilities

MIKE POMPEO | US SECRETARY OF STATE

CHINESE DEFENCE MINISTER TO VISIT NEPAL

Chinese Defence Minister Gen. Wei Fenghe will visit Nepal Sunday and meet the country's top leadership, the Foreign Ministry announced Saturday



India, Lanka, Maldives agree to boost ties

Sri Lanka hosted the fourth National Security Adviser-level trilateral meeting on maritime security cooperation with India and the Maldives. It took place after six years

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, Nov 28: Top security officials of India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives Saturday agreed to further strengthen cooperation and ensure peace for common benefit as they took stock of the current maritime security environment in the region during the high-level trilateral dialogue which was held here after a gap of six years.

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval took part in the dialogue along with Sri Lankan Defence Secretary Major Gen (Retd.) Kamal Gunaratne and Maldivian Defence Minister Mariya Didi. Sri Lanka hosted the fourth National Security Adviser-level trilateral meeting on maritime security cooperation with India and the Maldives. It took place after six years - the last one was held in New Delhi in 2014.

According to a joint statement issued by Sri Lanka's Ministry of



Defence, the three countries - recognising the significance of the forum for promoting meaningful cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region on common issues pertaining to maritime security - took stock of the current maritime security environment in the region.

They discussed mutual cooperation in the areas of Maritime Domain Awareness, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief, Joint Exercises, Capacity Building,

Maritime Security and Threats, Marine Pollution, and Maritime Underwater Heritage, it said. They agreed to further strengthen cooperation in dealing with these challenges, to ensure peace and security in the region for common benefit, the joint statement said.

The three countries also exchanged views on common security threats and agreed to broad base cooperation by expanding the scope to improve intelligence sharing

Nepal's political crisis deepens

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kathmandu, Nov 28: Nepal's protracted political crisis deepened Saturday after embattled Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli rejected Pushpa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda's" accusations that he was running the government without consulting the party, and instead blamed his rival for non-cooperation in handling the party's affairs.

In the much-awaited Central Secretariat meeting of the ruling Communist Party of Nepal (CPN) on Saturday, Prime Minister Oli submitted a separate 38-page political document in response to the allegations made by party's executive chairman "Prachanda". Oli was responding to the allegations made against him by "Prachanda" in his 19-page political paper presented at the Secretariat meeting on November 18.

In his report, Prachanda had accused Oli of running the government without consulting the party, failing to abide by the party's



due procedures and engaging in corruption. Prime Minister Oli dismissed the allegations levelled against him by "Prachanda" while submitting the separate report, according to a senior Standing Committee member of the party.

Oli, in his response, has accused chairman "Prachanda" of non-cooperation in handling the party's affairs, as well as steering the government. According to party spokesperson Narayan Kaji Shrestha, the meeting took place at the Prime Minister's official residence in Baluwatar. The next meeting has been scheduled for December 1 at the party headquarters in Dhumburahi on the outskirts of Kathmandu.

16 MILLION COVID PATIENTS' DATA LEAKED ONLINE: REPORT

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Sao Paulo, Nov 28: Healthcare records and personal information of 16 million Covid-19 patients in Brazil were found exposed online, according to media reports.

The treasure trove of data got leaked after a hospital employee uploaded on open source code repository GitHub a spreadsheet containing key information such as usernames, passwords, and access keys to sensitive government systems, ZDNet reported.

Among those affected by the leak are Brazil President Jair Bolsonaro, seven government ministers, and the governors of 17 Brazilian states, said the report.



Besides names of patients, addresses and ID information, the exposed database also contained sensitive healthcare records including medical history and medication regimes.

The data was secured after a GitHub user found the spreadsheet with the passwords. The document was spotted on the personal GitHub account of a person working with Albert

Einstein Hospital in Sao Paulo. Following the discovery of the exposed data, the user alerted Brazilian newspaper Estadao, which in turn notified the hospital and the Brazilian Ministry of Health after analysing the data, said the ZDNet report.

Iran vows revenge over slain scientist

KHAMENEI SAID IRAN'S FIRST PRIORITY AFTER THE KILLING WAS THE DEFINITIVE PUNISHMENT OF THE PERPETRATORS

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tehran, Nov 28: Iran's supreme leader Saturday called for the "definitive punishment" of those behind the killing of a scientist linked to Tehran's disbanded military nuclear program, a slaying the Islamic Republic has blamed on Israel.

Israel, long suspected of killing scientists a decade ago amid tensions over Tehran's nuclear program, has yet to comment on the killing Friday of Mohsen Fakhrizadeh. However, the attack bore the hallmarks of a carefully planned, military-style ambush.

The slaying threatens to renew tensions between the US and Iran in the waning days of President Donald Trump's term, just as President-elect Joe Biden has suggested his administration could return to Tehran's nuclear deal with world powers from which Trump earlier withdrew.

The Pentagon announced early



Saturday that it sent the USS Nimitz aircraft carrier back into the Mideast. In a statement, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei called Fakhrizadeh "the country's prominent and distinguished nuclear and defensive scientist."

Khamenei said Iran's first priority after the killing was the "definitive punishment of the perpetrators and those who ordered it." He did not elaborate. Speaking to a meeting of his government's coronavirus task force earlier Saturday, President Hassan Rouhani blamed Israel for the killing.

Rouhani said that Fakhrizadeh's

death would not stop its nuclear program, something Khamenei said as well. Iran's civilian nuclear program has continued its experiments and now enriches uranium up to 45 per cent, far below weapons-grade levels of 90 per cent.

But analysts have compared Fakhrizadeh to being on a par with Robert Oppenheimer, the scientist who led the US Manhattan Project in World War II that created the atom bomb. "We will respond to the assassination of Martyr Fakhrizadeh in a proper time," Rouhani said.

He added: "The Iranian nation is smarter than falling into the trap of the Zionists. They are thinking to create chaos." Friday's attack happened in Absard, a village just east of the capital that is a retreat for the Iranian elite. Iranian state television said an old truck with explosives hidden under a load of wood blew up near a sedan carrying Fakhrizadeh.

Climate change having uneven impact on world's arid regions

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

London, Nov 28: While climate change and rising global temperatures are leading to decline in vegetation in arid regions of the world's poorest countries, the situation appears to be better in wealthier countries, says a study.

For the study, published in the journal Nature Sustainability, researchers from University of Copenhagen in Denmark followed vegetation trends across the planet's driest areas using satellite imagery from recent decades.

They found that too little vegetation is sprouting up from rainwater in developing nations, whereas things are headed in the opposite direction in wealthier ones. As a re-

sult, the future could see food shortages and growing numbers of climate refugees.

"We observe a clear trend of arid areas developing in a negative direction in the most economically challenged countries," said Professor Rasmus Fensholt from University of Copenhagen. "Here, it is apparent that the growth of vegetation has become increasingly decoupled from the water resources available and that there is simply less vegetation in relation to the amount of rainfall. The opposite is the case in the wealthiest countries." According to the researchers, there may be several explanations for the uneven impact of climate change. Among the most obvious is rapid population growth, in



Africa for example, where there is an increasing need to exploit

land that is otherwise poorly suited for agriculture.

Doing so produces lower yields and puts increasing amounts of livestock on too little grass in already fragile ecosystems. Conversely, vegetation in arid areas of the world's wealthier countries seems to be coping better with climate change.

This is likely due to the intensification and expansion of larger farms, where more economic resources allow for, among other things, irrigation and fertilisation. "Here, our results demonstrate that in arid regions, particularly those in Africa and Asia, less vegetation grows for the amount of rainwater that falls, while more vegetation grows in arid areas of South America and Australia," said lead author

Christin Abel from University of Copenhagen.

The results suggest that as a result of climate change, future trends for the planet's poorest areas only seem to be getting worse at a time when more than 40 per cent of Earth's ecosystems are arid. Forecasts point to an expansion of today's arid areas where they will make up a larger and larger share of our global ecosystems. This may result in more and more people being left without food and their needing to migrate.

"One consequence of declining vegetation in the world's poorer arid regions areas may be an increase in climate refugees from various African countries," Fensholt said.

of the day quote

Market capitalisation improvement and asset monetisation -- these are the two indicators that DIPAM wants to be included going forward in the MoUs that may be signed with administrative ministry

TUHIN KANTA PANDEY | SECRETARY, DIPAM

Even though the latest data points show an increase in the pace of economic activity, the worst is not over. We believe that the resurgence of Covid-19 in the festive season, alongside the uncertainty about vaccines means that downside risks remain significant

ARUN SINGH | GLOBAL CHIEF ECONOMIST, DUN & BRADSTREET

Nearly 65% of the domestic air travel has returned to the pre-COVID-19 level and now there is a need to evolve a strategy to bring back the tourism industry on its feet

PRADEEP SINGH KHAROLA | CIVIL AVIATION SECRETARY

SHORT TAKES

IRDAI approves stake swap

New Delhi: Max Financial Services Ltd (MFSL) Saturday said IRDAI has approved the proposed transfer of 39.47 crore shares constituting 20.57% of the paid-up equity share capital of Max Life Insurance held by Mitsui Sumitomo Insurance to MFSL. This is in exchange for issuance of 7.54 crore shares of MFSL, constituting 21.87% of issued and paid-up share capital of MFSL.

Sebi bars NDTV promoters

New Delhi: Sebi has barred NDTV promoters Prannoy Roy and Radhika Roy from the securities market for two years and also directed them to disgorge illegal gains of over ₹16.97 crore for indulging in insider trading more than 12 years ago, but the company denied the charges saying it will immediately appeal against the ruling. Besides, the market watchdog has barred seven individuals and entities for insider trading in the shares of the company for a period varying from 1-2 years.

4th UEF World Summit from Dec 4

Chennai: The fourth edition of United Economic Forum World Summit along with Trade Expo is scheduled to be held from December 4. The three-day event would see participation of more than 80 speakers from 30 countries, organisers said Saturday. The summit to be held online would be on the theme 'Imagine-Impact-Inspire', UEF President Ahmed AR Buhari said.

Verloop.io teams up with ADIB

Mumbai: Verloop.io has announced that it has collaborated with Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank (ADIB), a leading financial institution in the UAE to launch ADIB Chat Banking, the UAE's first Emirati language customer care chatbot. The service is equipped with the unique ability to understand and respond to the Emirati Arabic dialect, in addition to classical Arabic. Powered by AI, ML and NLP, the chatbot will enable users to fulfill their banking needs in real-time and get personalised experiences on WhatsApp.

Demand for holiday homes gains traction amid pandemic

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 28: As the pandemic has significantly impacted operations of businesses and people's working model, housing preferences also have changed and the demand for holiday homes or second homes has increased in the past few months.

According to Aditya Kushwaha, CEO and Director Axis Ecorp, the need for a perfect balance between work and personal life has fuelled the concept of a weekend retreat in a holiday home.

"Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the concept of a holiday home or a second home has gained widespread acceptance. With most of the corporate professionals working from home, geography is no longer a



constraint," he said.

He also noted that from the investment perspective, second homes in non-metro cities are a relatively safe investment option with higher capital appreciation compared to homes in metros, especially during

Despite COVID, FDI doubles y-o-y upwards arrow. Indicating global investors' preference for India's enabling environment under PM Modi, FDI increased from \$14.06 billion to \$28.1 billion in the July-September quarter

PIYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the concept of a holiday home or a second home has gained widespread acceptance. With most of the corporate professionals working from home, geography is no longer a constraint

ADITYA KUSHWAH | CEO AND DIRECTOR AXIS ECORP

COVID-19, when alternative options such as mutual funds, shares have seen diminishing returns.

These properties can be rented out to home-stays and tourism businesses, a booming market promis-

ing an assured and stable source of income to investors, Kushwaha said.

He noted Axis Ecorp has witnessed a rise in demand from NRIs and has around ₹50 crore worth of stock at its project 'Axis Blues' in Goa, since lockdown was announced in India. On the impact of the pandemic and the lockdown restrictions, he said that lockdown impacted the development and expansion plans

of various players as most of the people were locked inside their homes and companies adopted work from home to keep their employees safe.

"However, with the implementation of unlock, things are slowly coming back on track. Companies and developers are adapting to the new environment," he said.

He observed that the nationwide lockdown imposed in March severely impacted the new launch activities as there was a shortage of labourers and supplies initially. However, a major component of workers stayed back and continued working, there was a ray of hope to complete projects.

He said that the company expects sales at its Axis Yog Villa to reach ₹70 crore by the end of next year.

EPFO extends deadline to submit life certificates

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 28: Retirement fund body EPFO has extended the deadline for submission of life certificates by pensioners till February 28, a move which would benefit over 35 lakh persons who could not submit the document by November due to coronavirus pandemic.

The pensioners who could not submit their life certificates till November 30 deadline, would get pension every month till February.

"In view of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the vulnerability of elderly population to coronavirus, the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has extended the time limit up to 28th February 2021 for submission of Life Certificate (Jeevan Pramaan Patra-JPP) in respect of the Pensioners drawing pension under EPS 1995 (Employees' Pension Scheme-1995) and whose Life certificate is due in any month till February 28, 2021," a labour ministry statement said.

Presently, a pensioner can submit JPP anytime during the year up to 30th November, which is valid for a period of one year from the date of issue. All such pensioners can submit life certificates till February 28, 2021.

During this extended period, pension will not be stopped in respect of 35 lakh pensioners who could not submit JPP during November 2020, the ministry added.

Punjab accepts borrowing option to meet GST shortfall

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 28: Congress-ruled Punjab has accepted the Centre's borrowing proposal and will get ₹8,359 crore through the special window to meet GST revenue shortfall.

"Government of Punjab has communicated acceptance of option 1 to meet the revenue shortfall arising out of GST implementation. The number of states which have chosen this option has gone up to 26. All the 3 Union Territories with Legislative Assembly (i.e. Delhi, Jammu & Kashmir and Puducherry) have also decided in favour of option 1," a finance ministry statement said.

The Centre has already borrowed ₹24,000 crore on behalf of the states in four instalments and has passed it on to 23 states and three Union Territories October 23, November 2, November 9 and November 23. From the next round of borrowings, Punjab, Kerala and West Bengal too would receive funds raised through this window. Earlier this week, Kerala and West Bengal too had communicated to the Centre about accepting the borrowing option to meet GST revenue shortfall.

Under the terms of option 1, besides getting the facility of a special window for borrowings to meet the shortfall arising out of GST implementation, states are also entitled to get unconditional permission to borrow the final instalment of 0.50% of GSDP out of the 2% additional borrowings.

Total FDI inflow during Q2 FY21 \$28.1 billion

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 28: The total foreign direct investment (FDI) during the second quarter of financial year 2020-21 stood at \$28.10 billion, out of which FDI equity inflows were \$23.44 billion.

"This takes the FDI equity inflows during the financial year 2020-21 up to September 2020 to \$30,004 million, which is 15% more than the corresponding period of 2019-20," said an official statement.

In rupee terms, the FDI equity inflows of ₹2,24,613 crore are 23% more than the last year. August 2020 was a significant month when FDI equity inflow of \$17.48 billion was reported in the country.

According to data from the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Mauritius and Singapore were the biggest sources of FDI in India with 29% and 21% contribution respectively.

The US, Netherlands and Japan followed with 7% contribution each.

Among the sectors, services sector continued to lead with the highest share in FDI inflow. The sector,



IN RUPEE TERMS, THE FDI EQUITY INFLOWS OF ₹2,24,613 CRORE ARE 23% MORE THAN 2019

According to data from the DPIIT, Mauritius and Singapore were the biggest sources of FDI in India with 29% and 21% contribution respectively

The US, Netherlands and Japan followed with 7% contribution each

The inflow of foreign investments has been on the rise after the governments round the world, including in India, announced liquidity measures in the wake of the pandemic

which includes financial, banking, insurance, outsourcing, R&D among others, received 17% of the FDI equity inflow during the period under review.

Computer software and hardware segment got 12% FDI share while the telecom sector received 7%.

Among the states, Gujarat attracted the highest FDI equity inflow: 35% of the overall funds coming in during April-September, followed by Maharashtra (20%),

Karnataka (15%), and Delhi (12%).

The inflow of foreign investments has been on the rise after the governments round the world, including in India, announced liquidity measures in the wake of the pandemic.

The Centre has also announced liberalising measures for FDI in several sectors, including contract manufacturing, coal mining, and defence that are likely to fetch in more investments.

HSBC mulls exit from US retail banking: Report

REUTERS

Shanghai, Nov 28: HSBC Holdings Plc is considering a complete exit from retail banking in the United States after narrowing the options for how to improve performance at its struggling North America business, the Financial Times reported Saturday.

The bank's senior management aim to present the plan to the board in the coming weeks, the FT reported, citing people familiar with the situation.

HSBC declined to comment on the report.

HSBC said last month it planned to reduce annual costs to below \$31 billion by 2022, a more ambitious target than it set out in February and well below the operating ex-



penses of \$42.3 billion it reported in 2019.

The bank also said it would also accelerate the transformation of its US business, where it has long struggled to compete with much bigger players.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 28: Several political leaders of Odisha sought central government's intervention on reviving Neelachal Ispat Nigam Limited (NINL) which has been remained shut since March this year. As a result, the employees of the plant have also not received any payment since ten months.

Three MPs and Minister of State MSME Pratap Chandra Sarangi wrote letters to the union commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal to take up the matter of revival of NINL and to release long pending salaries and arrears as early as possible.

In his letter, Sarangi writes, "Considering the protracted disinvestment process, the effort should



be made to start operation of the plant and also 110mn tonnes capacity iron ore mines owned by suitable PSUs, preferable from the Ministry of Steel (MoS) so that thriving plant would be a lucrative offer for the strategic buyers."

"Besides, it is estimated ₹230 crore worth of finished products is lying in NINL plant premises which could be sold suitably to fund NINL for payment of staff salaries.

Further, at a time when disinvestment of NINL is being pursued, it would be at larger public interest to retain the in heren t character of NINL as steel plant by way of selling the stakes to a relevant strategic buyers," the minister added.

He urged the Centre to interfere the matter and expedite the implementation of the decision reached in the meeting held August 13, 2020 in the larger interest of suffering families.

Meanwhile, Lok Sabha MP Mayurbhanj Bishweswar Tudu urged the government to merge NINL with steel PSU SAIL/RINL/NMDC. Jajpur MP Sarmistha Sethi also requested the (Central) government to restart the plant and insisted to release legitimate dues of employees.

WHY YOU NEED TO BUY A PERSONAL ACCIDENT COVER

A PERSONAL ACCIDENT COVER PROVIDES FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY, IN CASE THERE'S A DISABILITY OR DEATH DUE TO AN ACCIDENT

It's very easy to think that 'nothing will happen to me', but accidents and injuries can happen anytime and can rather inflict far reaching impacts. It is hence important to think what will happen to you and your family members in case you meet with a serious accident. This is advised because a fatal/critical injury can have serious financial repercussions and to avoid any such situation, it is essential to have an appropriate personal accident cover.

WHY GET THIS COVER?

Personal accident cover is a benefit policy which covers you against death or disability due to an accident. An accident may cause, total or partial disability, which may lead to your inability to earn, in turn hampering the financial stability of your family. In such a situation, a life insurance policy doesn't provide coverage and a health insurance policy covers the hospitalisation expenses

alone. A personal accident policy fills this lacunae by keeping you secured in case of any such unforeseen circumstances. This policy is quite affordable and a cover with a sum insured of ₹15 lakh will cost you less than ₹1 in a day. It is available on an annual basis and needs to be renewed after a year. Also, the coverage starts right from day one, without any waiting period.

SO WHAT DOES IT COVER EXACTLY?

A personal accident cover provides financial support to you and your family, in case there's a disability or death due to an accident. Here, the magnitude of the injury doesn't matter. Both major accidents such as a road crash as well as medical treatment for minor accidents like falling off a bicycle and breaking an arm, or fracturing a leg while playing football are covered under this policy.

While coverage for accidental death and permanent total disability (as

in a coma or paralysis) are most important, you must not ignore the possibility of temporary disability, which can create a gap in regular income. Opting for these basic covers at a minimal price is a wise financial investment to save yourself/ your family from crises later on.

A lot of personal accident policies also come with worldwide coverage for

death, permanent total disability, permanent partial disability, adventure sports benefit, children's education benefit, fracture care, EMI payment and loan protector covers as well as coma due to accidental bodily injury cover.

CUSTOMISATION FEATURES OF THE POLICY

The coverage mentioned above in these policies empowers a customer to pick and choose the coverage that they prefer the most for themselves. For example, if you are an adventure sports enthusiast, you can avail that

cover as an addition to the health insurance base cover, and pay a premium for that. Or if you have an EMI to pay off, you can take a loan protector extension and be secured about your loans, if something major like death/a permanent disability were to ever happen.

A personal accident insurance cover is essential to protect your family's financial health that can go off track suddenly due to an unfortunate accident. Planned financial support in time of exigencies not only help you to cope with the sufferings better, but also extends you a life of dignity by allowing to have a normal life as soon as you recover. Personal accident policies are an affordable and viable option, something that should definitely be in your financial risk planning.

(The writer is Head - Retail Underwriting, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance)



Gurdeep Singh Batra

DO-OR-DIE FOR INDIA

With no Plan B in place, Men in Blue need their ‘A’ game to save ODI series as they face Australia in second match today



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sydney, Nov 28: India's battered bowling unit will have little time to regroup and limited resources at their disposal in a desperate bid to perform a redemption act and save the ODI series against a turbo-charged Australia in the second game here Sunday.

It wasn't just about the margin of defeat – by 66 runs – but the manner in which the home team exposed India's vacant cupboard of all-rounders that will give Virat Kohli and Ravi Shastri numerous points to ponder.

Hardik Pandya's 76-ball-90 was at best a good innings but just like the Champions Trophy final in 2017, the sparkling knock was never going to help India win the contest.

Adding insult to injury the was Pandya's frank admission that he is not bowling anytime soon and even if he rolls his arm over, it is

likely to be in 20-over World Cups

So with no back-up all-rounders or a plan B in place, India will have to execute their plan A perfectly. That leaves Kohli with bowlers who can't bat and a top-order where none can bowl. Kohli did bowl an over or two but that is history as far as the skipper is concerned.

With Australia's top three – captain Aaron Finch, David Warner and Steve Smith – hitting the straps right away, Jasprit Bumrah and company will have no option but to pick up the pieces and give a better account of themselves on a strip that promises to be a belter.

It is highly unlikely that India's combination will change unless both Yuzvendra Chahal and Navdeep Saini are declared unfit.

The duo collectively conceded 172 runs in 20 overs between them and the wiry wrist-spinner did leave the field after sustaining an on-field injury just after the completion

of his spell.

Saini, on the other hand, has back spasms and Thangarasu Natarajan has been inducted in the 50-over squad as a cover.

In case they are ruled out, Shardul Thakur, with decent batting abilities could replace Saini and Kuldeep Yadav's inclusion will be a forced change.

For Australia, it is possible that highly-rated all-rounder Cameron Green will be rewarded with an ODI cap as Marcus Stoinis picked up a side strain during the first game. Both skipper Finch and Smith hinted that Green is in line for an ODI debut.

While a five-bowler theory is certainly hurting India, some of the shot selections at the top of the order left a lot to be desired.

Especially Shreyas Iyer, whose dismissal was an embarrassing sight as he fended awkwardly to a well-directed bouncer from Josh Hazlewood.

Team India fined for slow over-rate

Dubai: The Indian cricket team were fined 20 per cent of their match fee for maintaining a slow over-rate against Australia in the series opening first ODI in Sydney. India took an unprecedented four hours and six minutes to complete their 50 overs during their 66-run loss in the first ODI. ICC match referee David Boon imposed the sanction after India were ruled to be one over short of the target after time allowances were taken into consideration. "Skipper Virat Kohli pleaded guilty to the offence and accepted the proposed sanction, so there was no need for a formal hearing," ICC said in a release.

For Mayank Agarwal too, extra bounce became his undoing but he is too good a player to fail consistently. Skipper Kohli, the man who is revered by the Australian team, media and public at large, would love to play a signature ODI knock, glimpses of which were on display during his 21 in the first ODI.

The lack of a sixth bowling option will put tremendous pressure on Bumrah, whose erstwhile ODI form has deserted him since he came back from his stress injury.

While he was brilliant in the IPL, just like the New Zealand series in February, the Gujarat slinger looked pedestrian at best at the SCG. An equaliser Sunday will be easier said than done.

Found nice rhythm: Smith

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sydney, Nov 28: Australian batsman Steve Smith found his 'rhythm' with a cracking hundred against India in the first ODI but admitted that there wasn't much pressure unlike other times.

"I just found a nice rhythm again," Smith told reporters while crediting his skipper and fellow centurion Aaron Finch for setting up a nice platform with a 156-run opening stand with David Warner.

"It was just see-ball, hit-ball and obviously the foundation had been set so I could be quite aggressive," Smith said.

Having found his 'hands' as he had said prior to the match, Smith was happy that he could decide which bowlers to attack even though the entire Indian bowling line-up was at the receiving end of his onslaught.

"I picked my bowlers and where I wanted to hit them, and just played some good shots to the areas of my strengths."

By his own admission, the pressure was less unlike some other times when quick wickets have fallen around him.

"There wasn't a whole lot of pressure. Probably, at other times, when I have batted my best, it's been when the team has been under a bit of pressure and I have had to play almost an anchor role to help us get a total," the former skipper said.

Smith said that trying to switch from his natural style of building the innings to a more T20 friendly mode of power-hitting did affect his game.

"I haven't felt quite right for a while and maybe that's T20 cricket, trying to be a bit more powerful and probably not play-



ing as much to my strengths as I'd like," Smith said. "So I've been getting myself back to my normal grip and finding it."

During one net session, Smith was able to drive on the left side of the mid-off and it was at that moment he realised that he has got

his mojo back.

"It might sound really funny but it just sort of clicked into place the other day and I was able drive the ball where I wanted to. I could beat mid-off on the left side and I wasn't slicing the ball as much as I was in the IPL for a little while."

India missing Dhoni's 'skill & character': Holding

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 28: West Indies fast bowling great Michael Holding feels that despite a star-studded batting line-up, the Indian team is missing the 'skill and character' that the peerless MS Dhoni used to display during big run chases.

"It was always going to be difficult for India to chase that down. One thing India will struggle with is the loss of MS Dhoni," Holding said in a YouTube chat show

'Holding Nothing Back'.

The 66-year-old further said that India missed the composure and control of Dhoni, who retired from international cricket in August this year.

"Dhoni comes in to this Indian batting order halfway down and he usually takes control while chasing. India have chased so well in the past with Dhoni in the team."

"This batting line-up that they have got is still very talented – we saw some talented players and fan-

tastic strokeplay. Hardik played a beautiful knock but they still need a player like Dhoni. Not just his skills but his strength of character," he added.

Holding said the Indian team felt more confident going about run chases with Dhoni in the side.

"They have never been afraid to win the toss and insert the opposition because they know what Dhoni is capable of and their batting is capable of."

Dhoni's calmness was a big fac-

tor in run-chases. "We never see Dhoni panicking at any stage while India are chasing. He usually paces that chase so well because he knows his ability and he knows how to go about the chase."

The former pacer added that Dhoni not only assessed the situation well but also provided support and insights to the person batting alongside him. The former cricketer turned commentator also slammed India's sloppy display on the field.

Bairstow shines as England defeat SA



Jonny Bairstow (L) and Ben Stokes are chatting during their partnership

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cape Town, Nov 28: Jonny Bairstow brought England home with an unbeaten 86 from 48 balls against South Africa to win the first T20I by five wickets Friday.

Bairstow won it with back-to-back boundaries, a four and then a big six over wide long-on, to take England to 183/5 and past South Africa's 179/6 with four balls to spare.

England was behind the game through most of their chase despite Bairstow's boundary hitting until the 17th over, when Bairstow and captain Eoin Morgan plundered 28 off left-arm seamer Beuran Hendricks.

That changed the complexion completely at a fan-free Newlands, with England needing 51 runs from 24 balls before the over and just 23

from 18 after it.

Morgan fell for 12 in the next over to a catch at midwicket off Lungi Ngidi but England kept its head, and Bairstow kept smashing boundaries, after being given the opening.

Bairstow hit nine fours and four sixes and was England's match-winner after being shifted from opener to No.4 to give Jos Buttler a chance at the top of the order.

Sam Curran, who took 3-28 with the ball to lead England's bowling attack, helped out with the bat with a six of his own right at the end, and was 7 not out.

BRIEF SCORES: South Africa 179/6 (Faf du Plessis 58, Rassie van der Dussen 37; Sam Curran 3/28) lost to England 183/5 (Jonny Bairstow 86 n o, Ben Stokes 37; George Linde 2/20) by five wickets.

BFC share spoils with HFC

AGENCIES

Goa, Nov 28: Former champions Bengaluru FC (BFC) and Hyderabad FC (HFC) played out a goalless draw in an Indian Super League (ISL) clash Saturday at the Fatorda Stadium here.

Manuel Marquez made two changes in the Hyderabad line-up which defeated Odisha in their opening match. Chinglensana Singh and Joel Chianese repaced Mohammad Yasir and Hitesh Sharma. Carles Cuadrat, on the other end, fielded an unchanged Bengaluru side which managed a 2-2 draw against FC Goa in their first match.

The match got off to a cagey start as both teams adopted a safety-first approach. Hyderabad had more ball possession but they failed to break the defensive solidity of Bengaluru FC.

The only chance Hyderabad got to score the opening goal in the first half when Aridane Santana attempted a header from Lluís Sastre's inswing free-kick but Gurpreet Singh Sandhu's brilliant save denied him from scoring.

The away side received a double blow when two of their foreign players Joel Chianese and Sastre had to leave the pitch with injuries. In the 35th minute, Chianese limped off the pitch with a swollen ankle after a clash with Udanta Singh. Then just a minute before the half time whistle, Sastre had to be stretched off



the field after he felt some discomfort in his hamstring.

With two of their five foreigners out with injuries, Hyderabad quite expectedly went into a shell and concentrated on protecting their goal. Cuadrat, on the other hand, brought in Dimas Delgado and Deshorn Brown in the second half to add more firepower to their attack.

The Blues were expected to be more adventurous in their approach as Hyderabad lost two crucial play-

ers in the first half but Cuadrat's men failed to penetrate much in the attacking third.

Brown got a couple of half chances in the end to break the deadlock but the Hyderabad defenders were vigilant to deny him from scoring.

Hyderabad climb up to the third position on the league table with four points from two matches while Bengaluru seat on the sixth position with two draws in their first two outings.

Late penalty costs Liverpool 2 points

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Brighton (UK), Nov 28: Liverpool conceded a goal from a penalty in the third minute of stoppage time to draw 1-1 at Brighton in the Premier League Saturday.

Diogo Jota's eighth goal in his last eight games for Liverpool looked like it would be leading the champions to victory at the Amex Stadium, only for Andrew Robertson to kick the outstretched foot of Brighton forward Danny Welbeck seconds into added-on time.

The penalty was awarded only after the referee checked the incident on the pitchside monitor and Pascal Gross converted Brighton's

second spot-kick of the game, after one was missed by Neal Maupay in the first half.

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp showed his disgust at the decision by sarcastically applauding the assistant referee after Gross scored. Klopp then spoke to officials coming off the field after the game.

On a day when Liverpool lost another player – James Milner – to injury, Jota continued the brilliant start to his career at the club since his move from Wolverhampton by taking on a short pass from Mohamed Salah, cutting across the area and shooting low into the corner in the 60th minute.



Odisha FC look to bounce back after loss

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Vasco, Nov 28: Their campaigns off to disappointing starts, both Odisha FC and Jamshedpur FC would be keen to register their first victory of the season when they take on each other in their second ISL match here Sunday.

While Odisha FC were beaten 0-1 by Hyderabad FC in their tournament opener November 23 at Bambolim, Owern Coyle's

Jamshedpur FC lost 1-2 against Chennaiyin FC a day later here.

And come Sunday, both the sides would be desperate to log their first three points of the season. Both Odisha FC and Jamshedpur FC had targeted fresh beginnings in the ISL season 7 with a new coaching team and new recruits.

Having suffered defeats, both the teams will know the importance of stopping the rut before it turns into an uncontrollable downward spiral.

Odisha will be concerned that they are yet to solve their defensive issues that plagued them last season, after looking shaky at the back against Hyderabad.

Odisha coach Stuart Baxter, though, said there were tactical problems all over the pitch that he had identified in the last game.

"Tactically, the balance was wrong. We ended up being very separated. We couldn't get the ball up to the forward players. We need to relax a

little bit more on the ball," he said.

And the performances of Jamshedpur attackers Nerijus Valskis and Jackichand Singh in their last match mean that Odisha's defence will likely be on their toes Sunday.

"We can defend with more personality and more control," Baxter said. "I will be looking to improve the defending, but it will not be the first thing that you automatically go to after that sort of result."

Coyle, on the other hand, lost more than three points in the previous game with defenders Peter Hartley and Narendra Gahlot going off injured. Both the players are doubtful for Sunday's game while David Grande will miss out.

Coyle will also be concerned by the lack of cohesion that plagued his side often during their opening fixture. But he believes Jamshedpur will get better as the tournament progresses.