



KAT'S NATIONALISM

Actor Katrina Kaif says being a global Indian means staying true to roots and culture

LEISURE P2



XI WOOS ASEAN

Xi Jinping said China will not bully smaller countries as he announced \$1.5 bn development aid for the ASEAN

INTERNATIONAL P10



ZVEREV REIGNS SUPREME

Alexander Zverev overcomes Daniil Medvedev's challenge 6-4, 6-4 to win the season-ending ATP Finals title

SPORTS P12

Andhra bows down, scraps 3-capital law

AGENCIES
Amaravati, Nov 22: Coming on the heels of Centre's climbdown on three new farm laws and the victory of farmers on this score, the Andhra government Monday withdrew its controversial decision to trifurcate the state capital. There have been protests by people, especially farmers to the state government's plan to create three capitals instead of one.

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy told the Assembly that the decision was taken to protect the larger public interest and that the government will come to the house with a comprehensive law, taking into consideration the concerns of all. The Assembly passed Andhra Pradesh Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of All Regions Bill 2021 with a voice vote after the CM made a statement, defending the decision of his government to create three capitals.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



No, sir! Students are not happy at all; only parents are rejoicing!



Vir Chakra for Abhinandan Varthaman

New Delhi: Group Captain Abhinandan Varthaman, who downed an enemy jet during an aerial combat with Pakistan in 2019 and was held captive for three days in that country, was on Monday honoured with the Vir Chakra award by President Ram Nath Kovind. The fighter pilot of the Indian Air Force has been decorated with India's third-highest wartime gallantry medal for displaying an "exceptional sense of duty" during the dogfight, the award citation said. The award ceremony, held at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and several other dignitaries. Several other military officers were also honoured at the event. Earlier this month, the Indian Air Force approved the rank of Group Captain for Varthaman.

MORE P7

Panchayat poll quota challenged in HC

Cuttack: The Orissa High Court Monday directed the State Election Commission to submit an affidavit detailing the reservation policies to be adopted for the upcoming panchayat polls. The direction came from a division bench headed by Chief Justice S Muralidhar while holding preliminary hearings of a writ petition challenging the state government's notification in this connection. The petitioner has stated that the notification issued by the Panchayat Raj secretary, if implemented, will completely take away the constitutional as well as statutory rights of SC and ST people. "The state government notification is also contrary to the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act of 1992, which came into effect in April 1993," the petition said.

Farmers raise the ante

Farmer unions will continue their stir till govt starts talks with them on their six other demands, including a law guaranteeing MSP and arrest of Union Minister Ajay Mishra

AGENCIES

Lucknow, Nov 22: Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU) leader Rakesh Tikait Monday hit out at the government, accusing it of trying to divide the farmers, and said it should talk to them to resolve their issues or else "we are not going away". The farmer leader also said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi should give a clear answer on the demand for a law guaranteeing Minimum Support Price (MSP) that he had "supported" when he was the Chief Minister. "It took one year for us to make them understand. We said our things in our own language but

those sitting in shining bungalows in Delhi had another language," Tikait said, addressing a mahapanchayat called by the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM), an umbrella body of the agitating farmer unions, on the MSP issue. "They understood in one year that these laws are harmful and took the laws back. They did the right thing by withdrawing the laws but tried to divide farmers by saying that they failed to make some people understand the laws. We are some people," Tikait said. He was referring to Prime Minister Modi's apology while announcing the decision Friday to withdraw the three central farm laws against which the SKM was agitating. Tikait said a "sangharsh-vishram" (ceasefire) has been declared by the government and not farmers and that there are many issues before the peasants.



"The struggle will continue. The government should talk to farmers about the issues related to them or else we are not going to go away. Meetings will be held all over the country and we will tell the people about your work," he said. Talks between the government and the agitating unions over the three farm laws were stalled in January after nearly a dozen rounds of discussions failed to break the deadlock. Urging people to join the

SC PANEL TO GO PUBLIC TODAY

The Supreme Court appointed committee on the issue of three contentious farm laws held a meeting Monday and said they would hold a presser Tuesday to announce the fate of the report that they had submitted in March. The Shetkari Sanghatana leader from Maharashtra, Anil Ghanawat, who reached Delhi in the morning, held a meeting with another panel member Ashok Gulati. farmers' movement, Tikait said, "They will entangle you all in Hindu-Muslim, Hindu-Sikh and Jinnah and will keep selling the country." Despite the climbdown by the government, farmer unions said Sunday they will continue their agitation till it starts talks with them on their six other demands, including a law guaranteeing MSP and the arrest of Union Minister Ajay Mishra.

8 biz proposals worth ₹1,872 cr get govt nod

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 22: The State Level Single Window Clearance Authority (SLSWCA) Monday approved eight investment proposals worth ₹1872.11 crore that are expected to generate employment for over 3,461 persons. Industries secretary Hemant Kumar Sharma said the approved proposals were mainly from sectors like food processing, agriculture, animal husbandry, petroleum products, steel and downstream manufacturing. The authority headed by Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra has approved Jindal Coke Limited's expansion proposal of ₹470 crore. The company proposed to double its production from 0.425 million tonne per annum to 0.85 MTPA at its existing unit (coke and petroleum products plant) at

Kalinga Nagar Industrial Complex, Jajpur. This project will generate employment opportunities for 270 persons. The SLSWCA gave its nod to Shyam Metalytics and Energy Limited to set up a 0.108 MTPA Ferro Alloys plant (3x18 MVA) along with a 50 MW captive power plant and railway siding at an investment of ₹328.75 crore at Kalinga Nagar. Over 330 persons are likely to be engaged in this project, sources said. Similarly, the proposal of GV Mines Minerals & Metals Private Limited laying a 9-km iron ore pipe conveying system of 3-MTPA capacity from Roida-II mines to Bolani Railway Siding at Barbil, at an investment of ₹104.48 crore, was also approved at the meeting. This project will generate potential employment opportunities for 238 persons.

SEDATED JUMBO WAKES UP, INJURES 5 OFFICIALS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Nov 22: At least five forest personnel, including two from Karnataka, were injured when a wild elephant, tranquillised to fit a radio collar on its body, suddenly woke up and attacked them in Khurda district Monday. The incident happened near Gayabandha village under Jankia police station limits in Khurda. "When the forest officials went close to the elephant named 'Ram' which was tranquillised to fit a radio collar on its body, it suddenly woke up and attacked them leaving the officials injured," (Principal Chief Conservator of Forest) PCCF (Wildlife) Sashi Paul told media. Of the five injured forest officials, two were attacked by the jumbo where as the others sustained injuries while running away from the animal, the official said. The injured forest officials were admitted to AIIMS, Bhubaneswar. Four of the in-



jured were released after preliminary treatment while one forest guard was undergoing treatment as he sustained grievous injury, the official said. The Odisha government has planned to fit radio collars on the bodies of "problematic" elephants to monitor their movements. The government had invited two wildlife tranquilliser experts from Bengaluru to the state to help the local forest officials fit radio collars on some jumbos, the official said. Ramu, along with a herd of about 30 elephants, has been creating havoc in Khurda and Tangi forest divisions for some days. After this incident, the forest department has put on hold its programme to fit radio collar on seven 'problematic' elephants across the state. While four elephants in Similipal National Park were identified for radio collar, one elephant each in Chandaka, Tangi and Dhenkanal forest ranges were also identified as 'problematic', Paul said.

Edwina Mountbatten had at least 18 lovers: Report

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 22: Rumours that Lord Mountbatten was secretly bisexual have now resurfaced in a 600,000 pounds court battle between the UK Cabinet Office and historian Andrew Lowrie, who is fighting for the release of letters and diaries he believes will back the claims, The Sun, UK reported. Lowrie told a tribunal three of Mountbatten's lovers are still alive, including Oscar-winning actress Shirley MacLaine and an unnamed woman prominent in royal circles. "A stunning but highly-strung socialite, Edwina - who was named the sixth best dressed woman in the world at the time - had at least 18 lovers including singer Leslie 'Hutch' Hutchinson, whom she once gifted a jewel-encrusted penis sheath," The Sun, UK reported. He also demanded the release of private letters to

Edwina, which could contain evidence of bisexuality, and reiterated claims that Edwina had a long affair with former Indian PM Jawaharlal Nehru. Louis - affectionately known by his family as Dickie - was often away with the navy and cracks began to show in their marriage after the birth of their first daughter, Patricia, in 1924. Edwina was so jealous of the attention the baby got that she packed her off to a nanny and embarked on a series of affairs. She soon surrounded herself with a harem of lovers she referred to as "ginks" - including Lord Molyneux, a rich American polo player called Laddie Sandford and newspaper editor Mike Wardell. Daughter Patricia revealed that several admirers were often in tow at the same time, and

even had to be kept apart at the family home, Broom House in Park Lane. "When my mother returned from shopping one day she was met with, 'Mr Larry Gray is in the drawing room, Mr Sandford is in the library, Mr Ted Phillips is in the boudoir, Senor Portago (is) in the anteroom and I don't know what to do with Mr Molyneux,'" she wrote, as per the report. Divorce, especially within the Royal family,

was frowned upon and Pamela said the fallout was "messy and complex". "When my father first heard that she had taken a lover, he was devastated," she said. Edwina enjoyed a fling with American golfer Bobby Sweeney. In 1947, the couple moved to Delhi. "There, Edwina was to find her most enduring love affair - with Indian Prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru who, at 58, was ten years her senior," The Sun reported. As Mountbatten himself wrote to his daughter Patricia, "She and Jawaharlal (Nehru) are so sweet together, they really dote on each other", the report said. When the Mountbattens left India, in 1948, Edwina would return to visit yearly and Nehru would make an annual trip to London whenever she was there, the report added. In between, they wrote long love letters to each other. Edwina died in 1960.



HELLBOUND OUSTS SQUID GAME



The South Korean fantasy horror film *Hellbound* has topped the world's popular TV show rankings on the day after its release ousting *Squid Game*. The Netflix original became the most-watched TV programme on the streaming platform Saturday.

BTS, MEGAN, DOJA TOP WINNERS' LIST AT AMAs

K-pop sensation *BTS* took home the prestigious Artist of the Year title at the *American Music Awards* for their superhit number *Butter* while American rapper Megan Thee Stallion recorded three wins -- Favorite Trending Song for *Body*, Female Hip-Hop Artist and Hip-Hop Album of the Year for *Good News*. Doja Cat garnered the same number of honours, winning Collaboration of the Year for *Kiss Me More* with SZA, as well as Favorite Female R&B Artist and R&B Album for *Planet Her*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES
You are creative, and today you will prove to be resourceful and thereby successful! Okay, you are ambitious, says Ganesh, but don't bite off more than you can chew. Be confident of your abilities, work hard and have faith in providence.

TAURUS
You will feel the burden of financial responsibilities on your shoulders today, says Ganesh. Do not let expenses bother you. Money will come to you from unexpected sources later in the day. If you can maintain an impartial judgement, then you will yield wonderful results on the financial front, advises Ganesh.

GEMINI
Today, you would love to spend as much time alone as possible with your sweetheart, says Ganesh. A casual conversation between the two of you may culminate into a sensuous consummation. In the evening, you will keep people charmed with your wit and wisdom, feels Ganesh.

CANCER
If you are a stockbroker, you may feel that things are not going too well for you. Today, you may regret being a stockbroker. Manufacturers must delay the launch of a new product. However, after a waiting game, you may go on to launch the product with a fanfare.

LEO
The travel bug inside you is itching to be let loose, but things are not so simple when it comes to finding new destinations, says Ganesh. With you, holidaying goes hand in hand with delays. So, although you might be excited at the prospect of going to new places, this excitement will be somewhat curtailed thanks to postponements of travel plans.

VIRGO
Today you may understand the utter uselessness of your dogged efforts and feel extremely anxious about success eluding you constantly. However, Ganesh advises you not to lose hope, but to re-energise your mind, give a boost to your curiosity and pay attention to long-term goals.

LIBRA
It sure is tiring to run with the herd. You may feel the desire to get away from the rat race at work today. Maybe it is the monotonous and stressful environment in office that is pushing you to your limits.

SCORPIO
You shall follow all things to the dot today. Your approach will be methodical and robotic. It is likely that you shall symbolise the saying, 'Actions speak louder than words'. Your powers of persuasion will help you amass the confidences of many, predicts Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
Cupid is hunting and you are the game today. Cupid's arrows will have you adrift on the ocean of love and turbulent emotions. Your rescue is imminent, when a member of the opposite sex answers your SOS calls.

CAPRICORN
The work load may take away all your vigour, leaving you lethargic and dull, but you will come out of the sluggish phase before it can do any harm to your reputation, says Ganesh. Being observant and attentive while in meetings will help you in the long run, and in more ways than you can imagine.

AQUARIUS
Good news from across the seven seas brings cheer! If you're seeking a visa, you may get one today. Everything looks positive and it reflects in your mood. Share your happiness with your family, says Ganesh, and you will find it multiplies manifold.

PISCES
Conflicts galore will come your way at the workplace today. Keep a calm head over your shoulders and do keep tabs on your tongue. Differences only crop up if there are substantial thought processes involved, and keeping this in mind ought to give you the perspective needed to get ahead, says Ganesh.

Katrina on being a global Indian

New Delhi: The Indian Diaspora is a growing and thriving group, estimated at over 30 million people, representing the largest international migrant population in the world.

Actress Katrina Kaif being a Global Indian and a youth icon was on a panel discussion conducted by HSBC Bank. Opening on the issue she said, "According to me, what stands out the most about our country and its people are their emotions of brotherhood and fellowship, whichever part of the world they're in."

To a question whether being a global Indian means that she will embrace other cultures but stay true to your own, or does it mean that a new tribe of Indians with their own culture, own thinking and own goals, the *Sooryavanshi* actor says, "For me, being a global Indian is staying true to your own roots and culture regardless of which part of the globe you live in. Something majority of the Indians I believe can vouch for through their own ways of Indian music, food or cinema to name a few."

On reopening of theatres, Katrina said, she as well as the audience waited for the day cinemas to reopen. "It brings me so much joy to see the love people have for films and as an actor it is so encouraging," added the actress.



DIVINE to set off on 14-city tour

The rapper recently secured the Best India Act honour at the prestigious MTV European Music Awards

Mumbai: Hip-hop star DIVINE is all set to tour 14 cities for his concert showcase where he will share the stage with his frequent collaborators and rappers.

Part of the #ReVibeTheNight campaign presented by Johnnie

Walker and touted to be the biggest album promotion tour of the country so far, the *Punya Paap Tour* is expected to travel across cities like Chandigarh, Ludhiana, Indore, Mumbai, Pune, Jaipur, Udaipur, Goa, Mysore, Bangalore, Hyderabad, New Delhi, Kolkata and Shillong.

The tour will flag off from the last week of November 2021. The rapper recently secured the Best India Act honour at the prestigious MTV European Music Awards. Talking about the tour, DIVINE says, "My second album

released right in the thick of the pandemic and I was unable to tour the length and breadth of the country as much as I would have liked to."

He adds, "I enjoy getting up close and personal with my fans and thrive on the energy at my live performances. I've been waiting to fulfil the long-pending promise to my fans of a full-fledged tour and I'm grateful I can do it now, after almost two years. I am excited to deliver the live format experience of *Punya Paap* before I dive head

first onto my next album."
IANS



Amitabh gushes over Abhishek's Bob Biswas trailer

Mumbai: The excitement has been palpable ever since the trailer of the Abhishek Bachchan-starrer *Bob Biswas* surfaced on the Internet.

The crime thriller directed by Diya Annapurna Ghosh is a spin-off of the critically acclaimed *Kahani* which starred Vidya Balan and it follows the story of a contract killer Bob Biswas essayed by Bachchan Junior.

While Abhishek has been swamped with praises from every possible direction, there's one mention that will make him proud not just as an actor but also as a son. Abhishek's father, megastar Amitabh

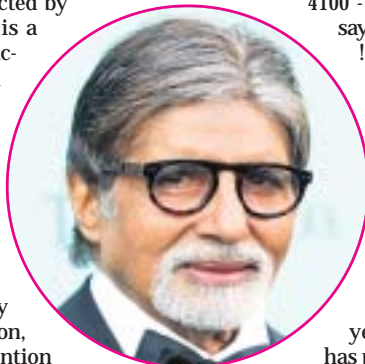
Bachchan took to Twitter to hail his son.

He shared the film's trailer with a special note that read, "T 4100 - I am proud to say you are my Son !... BYCMJBBN."

Abhishek tweeted, "Love you, Pa. But, you'll always be the BIG B(ob) to us."

This is the second time this year that Big B has praised his son.

The hard-to-please legend had earlier praised his son at the start of 2021 when the latter's film *Guru* completed 14 years.



Nawazuddin, Ram Madhvani, Vir Das in line for Int'l Emmys

The event will see awards being handed out in 11 categories for which nominees from 24 countries are in contention

Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Ram Madhvani's Aarya and the now-controversial **Vir Das** are among the host of nominees for the International Emmy Awards, which will honour excellence in televi-

sion programming at its 49th edition at Casa Cipriani in New York City Monday night.

The event will see awards being handed out in 11 categories for which nominees from 24 countries are in contention. Three titles from India have been named in the nomination list this time.

Siddiqui has been nominated in the best performance by an actor category for the Sudhir Mishra directorial *Serious Men*.

The second nomination from India is *Aarya*, a crime thriller series directed by Ram Madhvani (most recently in the news for the Kartik Aryan-starrer *Dhamaka*).



Nawazuddin Siddiqui

It has been nominated in the Best Drama category.

An adaptation of the Dutch series *Penoza*, the series streaming



Ram Madhvani

on Disney+ Hotstar has Sushmita Sen playing the titular role of Aarya Sareen, who becomes a mafia queen after her husband is murdered at



Vir Das

the behest of drug lords. The series also stars Chandrachud Singh, Namit Das and Sikander Kher.

Vir Das, who was recently em-

broiled in a controversy over his 'Two Indias' act at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., has been nominated for the Netflix comedy special *Vir Das: For India*. In it, the comedian celebrates India's history from the time of the Vedas to Bollywood with his unique perspective on the subject.

Artistes such as Vanessa Williams, Aidan Quinn, Method Man, Piper Perabo, Brian d'Arcy James, Emerald Toubia, Wilson Cruz, Felipe Santana and Angelica will join Yvonne on stage for the presentation. Indian viewers can watch the ceremony from 5:30 am IST Tuesday, November 23. AGENCIES

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

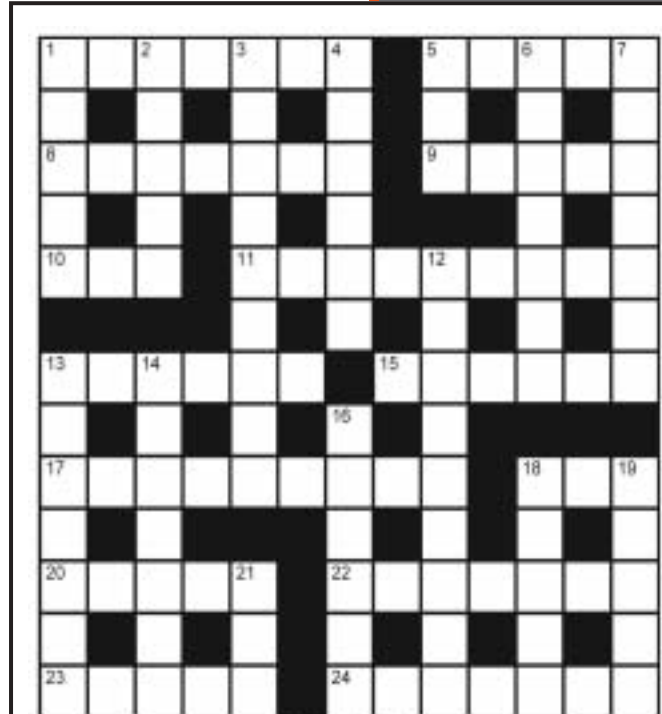


BREVITY



FUN post

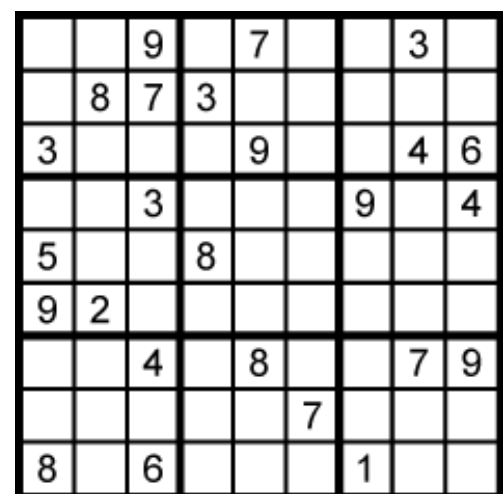
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Wasp's defense
 - 5 Man of morals
 - 8 Novice
 - 9 Look of contempt
 - 10 Dutch city
 - 11 Like a well-known gangster
 - 13 Off course
 - 15 Rushed about
 - 17 Angler's catch
 - 18 Circle segment
 - 20 Flightless birds
 - 22 Effusively emotional
 - 23 Curacao neighbor
 - 24 Shake with fear
 - 4 Blue moon, e.g.
 - 5 Commercials
 - 6 Look for (4,3)
 - 7 Put into words
 - 12 Hostelery
 - 13 Salzburg site
 - 14 Walden author
 - 16 Fortune
 - 18 Wing it (2-3)
 - 19 Camp craft
 - 21 Health resort
- Down**
- 1 Trap
 - 2 Fatuous
 - 3 Largest island in the world

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



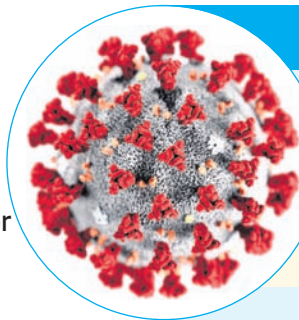
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



TAKING STOCK

5T Secretary VK Pandian and Chief Secretary Suresh Mahapatra along with senior officials take stock of arrangements at the yagya ahead of the ground breaking ceremony for the heritage corridor project of Srimandir in Puri, Monday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	25,79,95,820	23,28,84,134	51,71,044
India	3,45,18,901	3,39,34,547	4,65,911
Odisha	10,47,174	10,36,746	8,394

The confluence of minds at Youth Conclave

The telling effects of climate change are being felt globally and the need for action is being felt now like never before. Dharitri, the leading regional daily of Odisha, will be hosting a Youth Conclave on this subject on the occasion of its 48th birth anniversary at Hotel Swosti Premium in Bhubaneswar November 24. Orissa POST takes this opportunity to introduce the participants who would take part in the mega event.

PRADEEP KUMAR JENA

The Additional Chief Secretary-cum-Development Commissioner of Odisha and Managing Director of OSDMA looks after all aspects of disaster management like prevention, mitigation, preparedness and rescue operations. As operational Head of ODRAF, Jena also looks after equipping and training teams that specialise in search and rescue operations.

NICK LOW

Low is the British Deputy High Commissioner to Kolkata. He represents the UK in 13 Indian states - West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Assam, Sikkim, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands. From 2010 to 2014 Nick was the UK's Deputy High Commissioner in Bangladesh.

MRUTYUNJAY MOHAPATRA

Also known as the 'Cyclone Man of India', Mohapatra presently is the Director General of India Meteorological Department. Born in 1965 in Bhadrak district, Mohapatra joined the IMD, Odisha in 1992.

MONIKA O NIELSEN

Nielsen is the Chief of Field Office - Odisha, India at Unicef. She is an education specialist with a demonstrated history of working in the non-profit organisation management industry. She is adept in international relations, policy analysis, training, gender analysis and staff development

YOUNG MINDS

The youth conclave will be setting the stage for young minds from eminent institutions to brainstorm over the evident climatic drift

POOJA MOHANTY

A student of Political Science at Ravenshaw University, Pooja wants to work for the empowerment of people.

BISHWOKSEN DASH

A second year student of Applied Physics in College of Engineering & Technology, Bishwoksen likes literature and wants a superstition-free society.

SHIRSHITA PATNAIK

Shirshita is a final year student of SCB Medical College & Hospital and a firm believer of Karma.

SONALI GIRI

Sonali is in the second year of her Master's Degree in Environmental Science at Utkal University, Bhubaneswar.

SUCHISMITA SENAPATI

Currently pursuing her BCom at Sai International College of Commerce and Economics, Suchismita's hobby is to transform waste materials into decorative items.

PADMAJA

A first year student in Zoology (Honours) at the BJB Autonomous College, Padmaja is from Kendrapara and a trained Odissi dancer who loves to draw caricatures.

ARADHANA MANOSWINI

A second year student at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Bhubaneswar, Aradhana is into music, art and literature.

PREYRANA MISHRA

Preyvana is pursuing her B.Tech in Computer Science (2nd year) at KIIT University. A book lover, Mishra also has interest in sports.

SANCHITA DAS

Sanchita is pursuing her MBA at Xavier's Institute of Management in Bhubaneswar and has participated in various conferences of national and international levels.

BARSHA PRIYADARSHINI KAR

Barsha is doing her graduation in Microbiology at College of Basic Science & Humanities in Bhubaneswar. She is also a trained Odissi dancer.

RBI GOVERNOR VISITS SRIMANDIR

INDO-ASIAN NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 22: Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das, accompanied by his wife, visited the Srimandir in Puri Monday morning.

Das offered prayers to Lord Jagannath and His sibling deities in the main temple and then visited a few sub-shrines including Mahalakshmi, Maa Bimala and Bata Ganesh on the temple complex, officials said.

Speaking to media in Puri, the RBI Governor said, "I am visiting the temple after almost six years. I and my wife feel fortunate to have had darshan of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Maa Subhadra."

"The country had to go through a very rough phase due to the Covid-19 pandemic and now all feel that the pandemic is at its last stage," he said, adding, "We hope that the entire country will overcome the situation with the blessing of Lord Jagannath."

Das, a retired IAS officer from Odisha, was appointed as RBI Governor in 2018 and recently, his tenure was extended by three years. He is the first Odia to be appointed at the top post in the RBI.

Meanwhile, a three-day yagya has been started in Puri to mark the commencement of 'Bhumi Pujan' (ground breaking ceremony) for the heritage corridor project of the temple. The project is being implemented within a 75-metre radius of the Meghanada Wall of the temple. The state government has earmarked ₹800 crore for the project.

As per religious tradition, Gajapati King Dibyasingha Deb, the foremost servitor of the temple, entrusted five 'shrottriya' Brahmins the responsibility to perform the three-day yagya. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik is scheduled to perform Purnaahuti of the yagya November 24.

KAVISH SETH

Kavish is an Indian poet, singer, lyricist and an inventor. He has created his own musical instrument called 'Noori'. Noori consists of 14 strings and is shaped like a guitar, but with a wooden frame covered in goatskin to produce percussive sound like a Djembe. Kavish graduated from IIT Bombay. He has conceptualised Zubaan, a music project that aims to create platforms for collaboration between independent music artists from different corners of India. Chapters have started in Odisha, Varanasi,

Deoria, Kausani, Khetri, Nagpur/Wardha/Gadchiroli, Mumbai and Kolkata where around 30 artistes have been collaborating and performing all across the mainland.

SAMPAD PATNAIK

As an independent journalist and researcher, Patnaik has previously worked with The Indian Express (Delhi) as Asst Editor. He has also worked with Reuters and PRS (Delhi). He has degrees in politics and history from the universities of Oxford

and Cambridge. He contributes articles for The Diplomat, Wire, Scroll and Khaleej Times.

SUJIT MAHAPATRA

Mahapatra is the founding volunteer of Bakul Foundation which aspires to promote volunteerism as a movement for people both young and old. In 2007, Sujit successfully mobilised more than a thousand people to establish the Bakul Foundation Children's Library which runs today entirely through people's volunteer efforts.



Bike lifters' gang busted

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 22: The Commissionerate Police Monday claimed to have busted a notorious bike lifters' gang with the arrest of five of its members and recovery of at least 34 stolen two-wheelers.

The accused were identified as Prasanta Lenka, 26, and Biju Nayak, 22, of Cuttack's Banki, Dushmanta Behera, 28, of Athagarh in Cuttack, Ramesh Nayak, 28, of Nuagaon in Nayagarh and Deepak Nayak, 26, of Jatni in Khurda.

According to a police official, the crackdown came while investigating a case (545/21) registered on the basis of a complaint lodged by Suman Kumar Behera whose motorcycle was stolen from Kharavela Park area October 8.

Odia Air Force officer conferred with AVSM

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Nov 22: President Ram Nath Kovind Monday conferred Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM) on Odia Air Force officer Air Marshal Dilip Kumar Patnaik at the Defence Investiture Ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhawan here.

Patnaik is the commanding-in-chief of Eastern Air Command of the Indian Air Force. He is alumnus of National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla, Defence

Services Staff College and College of Air Warfare. He was commissioned into fighter stream of Indian Air Force June 8, 1984.

A fighter combat leader, he has more than 2,500 hours of accident-free flying experience on various types of aircraft.

Patnaik has held a number of important positions including command of a frontline fighter base, assistant chief of air staff operations (air defence) and commandant, College of Air Warfare.

BJD, BJP demo over gas price, Mamita



Police personnel obstruct agitating BJP workers from scaling barricade near Sishu Bhawan Square in Bhubaneswar, while BJD workers take out a rally to ADM office in the City protesting the rising LPG prices, Monday

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 22: The ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) and its principal opponent Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Monday resorted to protests against each other over cooking gas price and Mamita Meher murder case.

Continuing its fight against the BJP-led government at the Centre, the BJD launched its three-day dharna-cum-demonstrations against hike in LPG gas cylinder price. On the other hand, the BJP, which is already staging demonstrations across the state over Mamita

Meher murder case, Monday, conducted a 'Halla Bol' demonstration here.

Leaders and activists of BJD and all its frontal organisations, Biju Mahila Janata Dal (BMJD), Biju Yuva Janata Dal (BYJD) and Biju Chhatra Janata Dal (BCJD) staged protests outside the Revenue Divisional Commissioner (RDC), Central, at Cuttack. They also demonstrated before all block offices under the jurisdiction of the RDC Central.

Similar protests and demonstrations were also organised before the IOCL of fice and ADM office in Bhubaneswar by

the party leaders. The BJD workers carried out a funeral procession of LPG cylinders. The members of BMJD were spotted cooking on a chullah (earthen stove) at the protest site.

"The biggest problem women are facing today is LPG price hike. Despite several protests and requests, the Centre is not reducing the price of cooking gas, which made the life of common man miserable," said BJD MLA Ananta Narayan Jena. The demonstrators shouted slogans against the Modi government for its failure in checking the high cooking gas cylinder price and

threatened that the party would intensify its agitation unless the Centre reduced the price.

The party would stage demonstration before the RDC office in Sambalpur and all the block offices under its zone Tuesday while similar protests and dharna will be organised November 24 before the RDC office at Berhampur and also all the block offices under its jurisdiction.

Meanwhile, BJP activists wearing face covers of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and two ministers - Pratap Jena and Dibya Shankar Mishra - with hands tied took out a rally in the state capital.

Taking out the rally from Raj Mahal Square, the saffron party leaders and workers marched towards Naveen Niwas, shouting slogans against the state government and the Minister of State, Home. BJP's Bhubaneswar wing president Babu Singh said, "We are holding this Halla Bol agitation demanding the Chief Minister to remove minister Mishra and give justice to the victim's family."

While marching towards Naveen Niwas, the BJP workers were stopped mid-way by the police at Sishu Bhawan Square.

Singhbhum may be world's first beach

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 22: One of the greatest mysteries around Earth's ancient history is around how and when of land emergence. Even with top-notch technology at our disposal, we have only been able to pinpoint how and when the continents emerged from the ancient waterworld. We can only theorise if a tectonic activity was what brought this about.

But ever so rarely, we dig out some rock-hard evidence (no pun intended) that allows us to peek at our planet's past and offers a tantalising insight into our planet's history. A recent international study led by scientists from India, Australia and South Africa has revealed that the Earth's first continents or "cratons" may have emerged from the ocean around 3.2 billion years ago. This new finding is at odds with previous estimates, which suggested that the first continents emerged 2.5 billion years ago.

Now the existence of weathered and eroded sedimentary rocks more than 3 billion years old led geologists to speculate that partially submerged continents existed around 3.4 billion years ago. This is because



the sedimentary rocks could form only after land broke through the surface of the early Earth's oceans.

However, the precise timing and extent of the emergence of cratons remained ambiguous. This is where the present study comes in. Not only does this new study suggest that the continents emerged 700 million years earlier than previously thought, but it also claims that entire cratons, not just small patches of land, emerged from the oceans 3.3 billion years ago.

All of these bodies of water could only have existed if there had been continental land. They subsequently deduced that the Singhbhum region was above sea level 3.1 billion years ago and suggested that the Singhbhum Craton in eastern India initially rose above the seas around 3.3 billion to 3.2 billion years ago, making the region one of the oldest beaches on the planet.

assessed igneous and sedimentary records of the Singhbhum Craton.

They also used continental fragments from India, Australia, and South Africa to date some of the planet's oldest rocks which are thought to have developed from the world's first beaches.

In order to date the rocks, the researchers looked for zircon grains which consist of uranium. Separating the tiny zircon grains was a tedious process, and Chowdhury likened it to finding a needle in a haystack. But their efforts paid off, and by studying the chemical composition of the zircons, the team discovered that the rocks were produced in ancient rivers, beaches, and shallow oceans and are 3.1 billion years old.

All of these bodies of water could only have existed if there had been continental land. They subsequently deduced that the Singhbhum region was above sea level 3.1 billion years ago and suggested that the Singhbhum Craton in eastern India initially rose above the seas around 3.3 billion to 3.2 billion years ago, making the region one of the oldest beaches on the planet.



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Panchayat poll reservation policy challenged in HC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Cuttack, Nov 22: The Orissa High Court Monday directed the State Election Commission (SEC) to submit an affidavit detailing the reservation policies to be adopted for the upcoming three-tier panchayat elections in the state.

The direction came from a division bench headed by Chief Justice S Muralidhar while holding preliminary hearings of a writ petition challenging the state government's notification issued in this connection October 1.

The petitioner has stated that the notification issued by the Panchayati Raj secretary, if implemented, will completely take away the Constitutional as well as Statutory rights of Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) people.

"The state government notification is also contrary to the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act of 1992, which came into effect in April 1993," the petition said.

"Among other anomalies, the government notification is aimed at changing the percentage of reservation of the seats for SC and ST candidates and it will also alter the rotation principle of reservation of seats," the petitioner's counsel Sukanta Dalei said.

He said the Court has fixed December 20 for the next hearing and the SEC was asked to submit its affidavit by December 14.

Ganjam investors lose ₹1k cr to ponzi schemes

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 22: Several persons from Ganjam who lost their hard-earned money to ponzi schemes of Sahara India Limited Monday lodged a complaint with the Economic Offence Wing (EOW) of state Crime Branch. The victims accused Sahara of duping thousands of more than Rs 1,000 crore.

As many as 10 victims filed complaints at EOW accusing the company authorities of not returning their money despite the lapse of more than two years to the maturity period. One 65-year-old Bijay Kumar Padhi of Berhampur town claimed that he and his daughter deposited more than Rs 7 lakh in various schemes at the local branches of Saharaya Universal Multipurpose Society Private Limited. However, they are yet to get their money return after two years of the maturity of bonds purchased of in 2017.

Similarly, a 56-year-old lady had purchased bonds worth Rs 60,000 of Humara India Credit Cooperative Society Limited. Several others also invested huge amounts in various schemes launched by the company in Berhampur and other places.

Recently, the state government had decided to approach the Union government to get back the money invested in various cooperative societies related to Sahara in the state. On the other hand, the Sahara officials claimed that the release of funds had been delayed due to the ongoing proceedings against the firm by the Security Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

ALLEN Global Studies Centre is now in City

Bhubaneswar: ALLEN Global Studies Monday launched its study centre here and organised a felicitation ceremony for the top students in JEE-Advanced, MD and Whole Time Executive of ALLEN Global Studies Division Keshav Maheshwari, ALLEN Vice President Panjaj Birla and ALLEN Bhubaneswar Center Head Anurag Mishra were present at the function.

WASSUP TODAY

BHUBANESWAR

Event to commemorate comrade Gurucharan Patnaik, Bhagabati Bhawan, 5:30pm

Programmes/announcements for wassup today may be sent to opwassup@gmail.com for record, it must also carry the sender's mobile number for our verification, but not for publication.

Parl panel adopts report on Data Protection Bill

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 22: The Joint Committee of Parliament examining the Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019 has adopted its report on the Bill with several opposition MPs, including those from the Congress, TMC and BJD, submitting their dissent notes.

Sources said the report was adopted after almost two years of setting up of the joint panel, when the bill was referred to it for further scrutiny and recommendations.

Sources said four MPs from Congress and two from Trinamool Congress and one from Biju Janata Dal (BJD) opposed certain provisions of the panel's recommendations. Congress leader and chief whip of party in Rajya Sabha Jai Ram Ramesh gave his dissent note to the committee on the Bill after the panel adopted its report at its meeting here. The former Union minister also lauded the democratic manner in which the panel functioned under PP Chaudhary's chairmanship for past four months.



Besides Ramesh, Congress MPs Manish Tewari, Gaurav Gogoi and Vivek Tankha also submitted their dissent notes, along with TMC's Derek O'Brien and Mohua Moitra and BJD's Amar Patnaik.

The report was delayed by the panel as its former chairperson Meenakshi Lekhi was elevated a minister and Chaudhary was appointed as its new chairperson. The Bill was referred to the JCP for scrutiny before it was taken up by Parliament for consideration and passage.

Ramesh shared the information that the report has been adopted by the panel. "Finally, it is done... There are dissent notes but that is in the best spirit of parliamentary democracy. Sadly, such ex-

amples are few and far between under the Modi regime," he said.

Tewari and Gogoi also said they had submitted their dissent notes to the Secretariat of the committee after the final meeting of the Joint Committee on Data Protection. "We started in December 2019 and finished in November 2021," Tewari said.

A Bill that seeks to provide blanket exemptions, either in perpetuity or even for a limited period, to the 'state' and its instrumentalities is ultra vires of the Fundamental Right to Privacy as laid down by a nine-judge bench of the Supreme Court.

Tewari said he did not think the Bill in its present form, especially most of its exception and exemption clauses, including carve outs for

Four MPs from Congress, two from TMC and one from BJD opposed certain provisions of the panel's recommendations

governments that exempt these behemoths from the ambit of this legislation would stand the test of 'vires' in a court of law. "I, therefore, am constrained to holistically reject the Bill in its present form in entirety for this design flaw," he said.

On his reservations about the bills that were part of his dissent note, Gogoi said there was a lack of attention to harms arising from surveillance and effort to establish a modern surveillance framework.

Ramesh said he had suggested amendments to Section 35, the bill's most crucial provision, as well as to Section 12. He has argued that Section 35 gives almost unbridled powers to the Centre to exempt any government agency from the entire act itself.

Rupala thrust on cost-effective tech for fish farmers



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 22: Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying Parshottam Rupala Monday interacted with researchers of ICAR-Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (ICAR-CIFA) here and motivated them to develop cost-effective technologies that can give more benefits to the fish farmers.

Rupala said this while reviewing the freshwater aquaculture research activities being carried out by the ICAR-CIFA.

The minister planted a sapling on the institute premises and visited CIFA farm facilities. More than 23 different fish varieties like genetically improved Rohu 'Jayanti', catla, scampi, minor carps, catfishes, murrel, anabas, pearl mussel and different aquaculture systems such as pond culture, Bio-floc, Aquaponics were appraised.

Different gadgets, feed formulations, therapeutics developed by the institute were also displayed. An exhaustive display of different publications was also arranged to showcase the knowledge products of the institute available for the farmers.

JK Jena, Deputy Director General, Fisheries Science, ICAR and Saroj Kumar Swain, Director, ICAR-CIFA briefed the minister about the different technological

options available for the farmers. He also interacted with researchers and motivated them to develop cost-effective technologies that can give more benefits to the fish farmers of the country. The minister appreciated the tremendous efforts of ICAR-CIFA for diversification of freshwater aquaculture in the country.

He also visited the special display of ornamental fishes. He showed interest to know the different varieties of ornamental fishes and suggested to scale up the ornamental fish farming in different parts of the country especially rural women to help the small-scale farmers to improve their livelihood.

He also visited the Krishi Vigyan Kendra - Khordha situated inside the ICAR-CIFA campus. Ten successful women SHG members displayed their products in exclusive exhibition including honey, handicrafts, value added products, vermi-compost, incense stick, mushroom, applique work and others. He also interacted with the SHG women and keenly noted their issued and problems.

He also felicitated ICAR-CIFA's progressive farmer Padmashri Batakrushna Sahoo on KVK premises. Sahoo, a pioneer fish farmer from Odisha, received the Padmashri award from the President of India on 8th November 2021.



INFRA BOOST

Comptroller and Auditor General of India Girish Chandra Murmu inaugurates a new office building of the Principal Accountant General at Keshari Nagar in Bhubaneswar, Monday

OP PHOTO

CAG unveils new Audit office

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 22: The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) Girish Chandra Murmu Monday inaugurated the new office building for the Principal Accountant General (Audit) at Keshari Nagar in City.

Murmu said that a good working environment is needed to improve efficiency of the organisation. He also said that the main aim of the organisation is to improve the management of the audited establishments and to suggest value addition to the performance of the organisation in delivery of services.

He also mentioned that construction of office building is not as easy as it seems. Identification

of land, obtaining permissions and clearances from various organizations, and timely completion of the building are ordeal tasks, CAG said.

"The nation is looking forward for sustainable development goals to make life better for our future generations. Sequel to this concept, we are proposing District Centric Audits to assess the growth in all sectors and recommend to the local self-governments to improve the developed functions, considering the huge quantum of funds transferred by the Central and State Governments," he added.

Further, the CAG stated, "We are in the process of conceptualising natural resources accounting which would improve the accountability of the executives."

Humans must live in harmony with nature: Tripathy

Over 500 scientists, academicians, researchers and students attended the Congress both in offline and offline modes

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Nov 22: The 22nd session of the Odisha Bigyan 'O' Paribesh Congress, organised collaboratively by the Orissa Environmental Society and Ravenshaw University at the varsity's convention centre, concluded Sunday.

The chief guest of the occasion was Baishnab Charan Tripathy, former vice-chancellor of Ravenshaw University and JC Bose Fellow. In his speech, he highlighted



the changing scenario of the earth subsequent to the industrial revolution and enhanced anthropogenic impacts on natural ecosystems. He emphasised that human beings have to adopt the mindset of living in harmony with nature and apply the outcomes of scientific research for the betterment of mankind and preservation of the quality of our environment.

Guest of Honour Kishore Kumar Basa, VC of Maharaja Sriram Chandra Bhanja Deo University, Baripada, opined that misuse of science and technology has created many problems for the society as well as for nature.

"Our endeavours should be directed to bring about lasting solutions to the basic problems the majority of the population are

confronted with. Scientists need to think creatively, figure out how to address the existing problems and work collaboratively on implementing the solutions," he said.

R&D Head of Ravenshaw University and president of the session Smruti Prava Das, while appreciating the initiatives in organising this Congress, expected that the platform will provide opportunity to the young researchers of the state to strengthen their potential for getting subsequent recognition at national and international levels.

The convener, Jaya Krushna Panigrahi, presented vote of thanks at the end. Over 500 scientists, academicians, researchers and students attended the Congress both in offline and offline modes.

Wildlife sniffer dog force adds 14 newly trained 'super sniffers'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 22: India's wildlife sniffer dogs' force has expanded with the induction of 14 young dogs in the squad.

The latest 'super sniffers' unit of wildlife sniffer dogs passed out November 20 from the Basic Training Centre Indo-Tibetan Border Police Force (BTC-ITBP) camp in Panchkula, Haryana.

This is the ninth batch to be trained since the launch of TRAFFIC and WWF India's pioneering wildlife sniffer dog training programme in 2008 and till date, 88 wildlife sniffer dog squads have been trained, a WWF India release said.

"This programme was carefully designed to accommodate both basic obedience and detection skills specifically to combat the illegal wildlife trade," said a top official

from the BTC-ITBP, Panchkula.

The dogs were taught to detect tiger and leopard skin, elephant tusk, and skin and antlers of spotted deer and sambar at the training institute. The dog handlers also learned how to train their dogs to identify other scents, allowing them to develop skills after the course ended.

Director at the BTC-ITBP, Panchkula said, "The training was scientifically conducted using modern conditioning techniques, including positive reinforcement through food and play rewards. The dogs were exposed to various real-life search scenarios in both populated and forest areas. I am fully confident that the newly trained wildlife dog squads will substantially help officials curbing the illegal wildlife trade."

During the seven months at BTC-

COUNTING ON CANINE



ITBP camp, activities included rugged terrain training such as forests, check posts during luggage search, parking lots, and vehicles. The trainers used small-sized wildlife articles to accustom the dogs to find targets with low scent concentration in these complex environments.

Head of TRAFFIC's India Office Saket Badola said, "The sniffer

dogs trained under the programme are working relentlessly in tough terrains and have so far assisted the agencies in over 400 wildlife crime cases."

Secretary General and CEO of WWF India Ravi Singh added, "The dedication and commitment of the wildlife sniffer dog squads are admirable, and the dogs have been a game-changer in the efforts against

wildlife crime."

The response from the multiple government departments to deploy and use super sniffers to control wildlife crime has been overwhelming. These include Railway Protection Force, Customs and Forest Departments of Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, and Tamil Nadu.

Two dog squads will be deployed by the Southern and the West Central regions of Indian Railways under

TRAFFIC's newly formed alliance with the Railway Protection Force (RPF).

Speaking on behalf of the 28 handlers (two per dog), assistant sub-inspector in the Gujarat Forest Department and wildlife sniffer dog handler Vinay Kumar Sharma said, "The trainers at the training centre and their involvement and support were crucial to our becoming wildlife sniffer dog squad. I am excited to return to my state of deployment along with Topsy (a super sniffer) and contribute towards curbing poaching and illegal wildlife trade."

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SHORT TAKES

Leopard hide seized, 1 held

Boudh: The Special Task Force (STF) of Odisha Police has seized a leopard skin and apprehended one person on charge of trading in wildlife body parts in Boudh district. Based on reliable information, the STF team conducted a raid with the help of Forest officials near Ghantapada village, regarding illegal possession of leopard skin by wildlife criminals Sunday, police said. One accused person was apprehended. During search, one leopard hide and other incriminating materials were seized from his possession, they said. As the accused person could not produce any valid authority in support of possession of such leopard skin, he was held and handed over to Boudh forest officials for necessary legal action at their end, the STF said. During last one year, the STF in a special drive against wildlife criminals has seized 21 leopard skin, 11 elephant tusk, 2 deer skin, 7 live pangolin and 15 kg pangolin scales and arrested 46 wildlife criminals, they said.

Man bludgeoned to death

Joda: Miscreants bludgeoned a person to death and dropped the body in a jungle on Hatidari-Dhatika roadside under Bamebari police limits in Keonjhar district, police said Monday. The matter came to the fore after locals spotted the body in the jungle and alerted the Bamebari Police, Monday morning. Police rushed to the spot and started an investigation but failed to establish the identity of the victim as his face was beyond recognition. Even the local villagers have failed to identify the deceased. Preliminary inquiries indicated that the miscreants have bludgeoned the youth aged within 30 to death with a large stone. Police said that the body will be kept for 96 hours in the hospital for people to identify the deceased and later a post-mortem will be conducted. A case has been registered in this connection and further investigations are on.

Cyber fraudster arrested

Rourkela: Steel City police arrested a cyber fraudster from Gujarat on charge of defrauding a local resident of ₹15.81 lakh on the pretext of investing the money in share market for higher returns. The accused has been identified as Raval Bhavik, 20, alias Vishnu Bhai of Mehsana in Gujarat. According to the report, Shahwaz Shaquil, 24, of Nala road area under Plantsite police station limits in Rourkela was duped of ₹15.81 lakh in 2020 which he had transferred to the accused in online mode. The fraudster allegedly cheated Shahwaz on the pretext of investing the amount in the share market for higher returns. A complaint in this regard was lodged in Rourkela cyber police station by the victim after he failed to get any dividend from the money he had transferred for investment.

Scindia unveils 'UDAN Utsav' at VSS Airport

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jharsuguda, Nov 22: Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia inaugurated the 'UDAN Utsav' at Veer Surendra Sai (VSS) Airport here, Monday. Addressing the gathering, Scindia said an international airport would be set up in Puri while flight operations would start soon from Utkela and Jeypore airstrips. The flight services from these two airstrips would commence under the UDAN scheme of the Central government, informed Scindia. Scindia also spoke about the glory of the rich land of Jharsuguda and touched upon various success stories of UDAN. He released a report on "The Socio Economic Impact of RCS-UDAN Scheme: Phase I" prepared by Indian School of Business. A new logo of UDAN Scheme was also unveiled during

the UDAN Utsav celebration in Jharsuguda. The Minister also interacted with airport directors, officials and flyers through video conferencing. Scindia also inaugurated an exhibition of artefacts portraying the heritage of Jharsuguda and western Odisha at the airport terminal. Scindia, accompanied by Minister of State for Civil Aviation Gen VK Singh, was welcomed to the airport with a traditional dance performed by local artistes. Among others, Padmanabh Behera, minister for commerce and transport in Odisha, Jual Oram, former Union Minister; local MLAs and MPs, Usha Padhee, joint secretary, civil aviation department, senior officials of district administration, police and Pavan Kumar Zutshi, director, VSS Airport were present on the occasion.



Naveen launches projects worth ₹276cr in Kandhamal



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 22: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Monday kick started several developmental projects worth ₹276 crore for Kandhamal district. Naveen launched the projects while visiting the district for distribution of the smart health card to Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY) beneficiaries. Stating that special emphasis is being given on infrastructure development, he said that a 500-bed Medical College & Hospital would be set up in Kandhamal district with an investment of ₹504 crore. The construction of the medical college will be completed on time, he said. The Chief Minister said that

connectivity is a major problem in the district. Therefore, bridges have been constructed in 69 Panchayats with an investment of ₹120 crore under the Biju Setu Yojana. Around 2 lakh people in the district are getting benefits from it, he said. Patnaik further informed that the 220/33 KV under construction Grid Station in Baliguda would be completed soon benefiting 70,000 families in K Nuagaon, Tumudibandh, Kotgarh, Daringbadi and Baliguda blocks. This will also improve the supply of piped water in the area, he added. Around 6.50 lakh people of the district can avail the benefits of the smart health card. With this, the BSKY health cards have been distributed in 16 districts of the state. The CM lauded Kandhamal district for its tourism and organic crops. He said that Kandhamal is a land of gold. Organic crops, especially Kandhamal turmeric, are now one of the most popular brands in the country. Kandhamal has a lot of opportunities in this regard as there is now a growing interest in organic crops, he said.

Rampant poaching poses threats to marine fauna

Unabated sales of stingrays can be seen at Ramnagar Bazaar, Jambu haat, Jagarijor haat and Batighar areas under the block

POST NEWS NETWORK

Mahakalapara, Nov 22: Rampant poaching and smuggling of marine creatures like crabs and stingrays in the coastal pockets of this block in Kendrapara district has posed serious threats to their survival and



population, a report said. This has happened despite provision of rules for protection of marine creatures. The forest department has imposed restrictions on catching stingrays and crabs but these rules hardly deter the fish-

ermen and traders as they carry out their business with impunity. These crabs and stingrays have a very high demand among the seafood lovers, for which fishermen residing along the coast are catching them from the sea and selling them in open markets for a premium. They sail out into the sea in small fishing boats and catch these marine creatures which are mostly found along the coastline and in deep sea. A stingray weighs between 5 to 25 kilograms and sells for ₹100-200 per kg in the market while the crabs sell for anything between ₹500-600. Unabated sales of stingrays can be seen at Ramnagar Bazaar, Jambu haat, Jagarijor haat and Batighar areas under the block. The local traders pack the stingrays in bamboo baskets and transport them to Paradip, Balasore and Kolkata for sale as the fish has very high demand among fish lovers. Locals said that the fishermen mostly harvest the stingrays from Chatkanasi on Hukitola river mouth and from Mahanadi river mouth where these are abundantly available. Locals have blamed the forest officials for this situation.

Students walk 4 km to give online exam inside forest



POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Nov 22: Believe it or not, students of Materu High School under Padia block in this district had to walk four kilometres to appear their examination under a tree in a forest on the fringes of Chhattisgarh due to lack of internet connectivity in their area, a report said. The incident has exposed the soft underbelly of online education and sparked shockwaves in the area. The case in point is that students of Government High School in Materu under Padia block have to walk to a place that is 4 kilometres away to get mobile phone signal to ap-

pear Utkarsh examination amid bushes which is a forest on the borders of Chhattisgarh. The students accompanied by their teachers arrived at the place and accessed internet connectivity by getting mobile phone signal from neighbouring Chhattisgarh through roaming. The students from Materu panchayat under Padia block of Malkangiri district said they were in pain after walking for four kilometres. Moreover, as the area is densely forested the fear of attack by reptiles and wild animals also haunts them while frequent unseasonal rainfall has added to their woes.

FARM WOES



Farmers display paddy shoots damaged due to pest attack before submitting a memorandum to the Bargarh Collector demanding financial assistance from the state government, Monday

Andhra officials' visit to Deomali raises eyebrows

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, Nov 22: Nearly two weeks after the Chief Ministers of Odisha and Andhra Pradesh met November 9, all of a sudden, a large number of administrative officials from the neighbouring state visited Deomali hill, the highest peak in the state, in Koraput, Sunday afternoon.

Although the exact reason behind their visit is said to be informal, it has raised the eyebrows of many in the district and state as well. District Collector of Vizianagaram A Surya Kumari and more than 70 officials reached Deomali hill in around 15 government vehicles. The officials had a feast at Deomali peak before returning to Andhra. According to a source, the activities of Andhra officials have triggered assumptions as the vehicles initially moved towards the fringe villages under Kotia panchayat via Kunduli under Semilguda tehsil of Koraput. Later, their vehicles changed direction and proceeded towards the hill. The Collector along with other officials also visited Galigabdar waterfall under Pottangi block in Koraput. They spent some time at the waterfall and returned to Andhra via Pottangi, the source added. "Koraput Additional Collector had kept a close eye on the ac-



FILE PHOTO

Vizianagaram Collector A Surya Kumari along with more than 70 officials visited Deomali hill in around 15 government vehicles

tivities of the officials at Deomali. Pottangi police and block development officer (BDO) also kept a strict vigil on them at Galigabdar waterfall. Amid the ongoing face-off between the neighbouring state governments over the Kotia region, we have to remain alert," a senior Odisha official said. It is pertinent to mention that Odisha and Andhra governments agreed to set up an institutional

mechanism to deliberate on outstanding issues between the two neighbouring states and find out solutions. This was decided at the meeting between Naveen Patnaik and his Andhra Pradesh counterpart YS Jagan Mohan Reddy at Lok Seva Bhawan in Bhubaneswar. A joint statement later issued by both the Chief Ministers stated that a number of issues of mutual interest were discussed particularly in the fields like water resource, common boundary and left-wing extremism. Both governments will work to resolve disputes pertaining to the Kotia villages, Neradi Barrage, Janjavathi Reservoir and Polavaram. They will also work for the release of water for Bahuda River besides mutual NOCs for the Balimela and Upper Sileru in energy sector, the statement read.

SIX JUVENILES FLEE OBSERVATION HOME

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, Nov 22: Six juvenile inmates of an observation home here escaped early Monday morning after removing a window grille and scaling the wall, police said. "We have registered a case based on the report of the superintendent of the observation home and started an inquiry," said Ram Kumar Murmu, Inspector In-Charge, Baidyanathpur police station. The six minors ran away from the observation home in Ganjam district, functioning under the Berhampur Juvenile Justice Board, between 2 and 3 am, he said.

The boys might have used the railway track after escaping from the observation home, he said. Police have launched a search operation to nab the six boys. "116 inmates were at the observation home. Children having conflict with the law are usually produced in JJB and subsequently sent to the government-run facility," superintendent P Ramesh Rao stated. "When a guard on duty did not find the juveniles inside their room, he immediately contacted me and informed about the incident. Later, I lodged an FIR at Baidyanathpur police station this morning following which the cops launched a manhunt to trace them," Rao added. The escapees, aged between 17 to 18 years, belong to Ganjam (2), Koraput (2), and one each from Gajapati and Puri districts. While one of the inmates was allegedly involved in a murder case, others were allegedly involved in theft cases, he said. All of them were lodged here for less than a year, Rao said.

OFFICE OF THE NOTIFIED AREA COUNCIL, PIPILI
No. C-1349 "e" - Procurement Notice
BID REFERENCE NO. (PIPILI-NAC-5/2021-22)
TENDER CALL NOTICE NO.2354/Dt.20.11.21

- Name of the work- Civil construction works.
- No. of works- 10 (Ten)
- Bid Value and Period of completion- As per DTCN
- Date & time of availability- from 11 A.M. on 24.11.2021 to 5 P.M. on 30.11.2021.
- Opening of Online Received Bid- Dt.02.12.2021 at 2.00 PM onwards.
- Bid Inviting Authority- Executive Officer, Pipili NAC. Further details seen from the e-procurement portal- <https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in>

Sd./- Executive Officer,
Pipili NAC

OIPR-13107/11/0011/2122

GOVERNMENT OF ORISSA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS DIVISION, KARANJIA
E-Mail ID:- eerwkaranjia@yahoo.com

No.6593 Date: 20.11.21

2nd CORRIGENDUM NOTICE
"e" PROCUREMENT NOTICE
BID IDENTIFICATION NO. RWDKNJ-11/2021-22
No. O-979- The date of availability of Tender on-line for bidding of BID IDENTIFICATION NO. RWDKNJ-11/2021-22 vide T.O. Lr. No. 5764 Dt.18.10.2021 has been extended from Dt.23.11.21 to Dt.02.12.21 up to 5.00 PM & Date of opening of tender extended from 24.11.21 to 03.12.21 due to unavoidable technical reason. All other terms and conditions will remain unaltered.

Sd./- Superintending Engineer
R.W. Division, Karanjia

OIPR-25086/11/0010/2122

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
CUTTACK (R&B) DIVISION NO.II, CUTTACK
E-mail ID- eeppwcuttack2@gmail.com, Tele/Fax No. (0671)- 2973399
No.B-643- GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA "e" procurement Notice
e-procurement Notice for Building Works
Bid identification No. E.E. CTC (R&B)-II-20 of 2021-22

- Name of the work :- 3 Nos of Building Works
- Estimated Cost :- Rs.35,21,060/- to 41,74,852/-
- Period of completion :- 4 (Four) calendar Months
- Date & time of sale & receipt of bid document :- From 29.11.2021 to 5 PM of 13.12.2021
- Last date/time of receipt of bids :- 5 PM of 13.12.2021
- Date & time of Opening of Bids :- 11 AM of 14.12.2021
- Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid :- Executive Engineer, Cuttack (R&B) Division-II, Cuttack

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in>. Any addendum/ corrigendum/ cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.

Sd./- A.K. Behera, Executive Engineer,
Cuttack (R&B) Division No.II

OIPR-34091/11/0014/2122

Ranijhula hill cries for tourist tag

Locals have attached importance to the hill as their queen used to worship Lord Ram there. They have set up an idol of the deity atop the hill

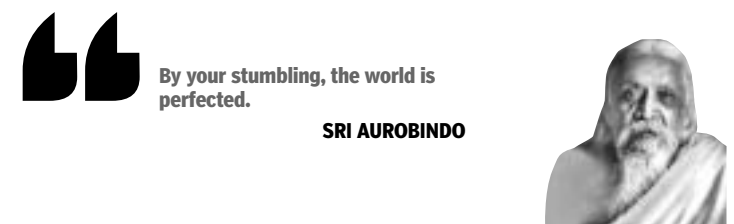
POST NEWS NETWORK

Tarabha, Nov 22: Ranijhula hill near Kamsara village under this block of Subarnapur district is a picture postcard spot. One of the natural bounties of the district, the spot has enough potential to boost tourism in the area. It has all the hallmarks needed for a tourist place, argue the locals.

Over years, locals and a number of socio-cultural outfits have been pressing for tourist spot status to

the place, but their demand has fallen on deaf ears, it was alleged. However, locals have been making active efforts to save the greenery of the hill. Recently, to add to its beauty, locals have installed an idol of Lord Ram atop the hill. The hill has a rich history. It has remains of royal monuments and caves. In 1799, an army led by four commanders of a king of Bhonsle dynasty came to Sonepur royal estate and demanded revenue from the then Sonepur king Prithvi Singh. As the king refused to pay revenue to the Bhonsle king, the latter arrested Prithvi Singh and his son Raghunath Singh. The father-son duo was imprisoned at Chandibhanga in Madhya Pradesh. Queen Laxmipriya was panicked over such development. She sought help of Kamsara landlord. The queen was lodged in a cave in the hill for her safety. Since then, the hill has come to be known as Ranijhula in the region. During her stay in the hill cave, the queen used to worship Lord Ram and Lord Shiva. There are remains of 16 stone houses and a crop threshing room on the hill, probably used by the queen. Locals have attached importance to the hill as their queen used to worship Lord Ram there and have set up an idol of the deity atop the hill. They have demanded that like other tourist places in the district, the government should accord tourism status to the historic Ranijhula hill.





SRI AUROBINDO

Xi-Biden Ping-Pong

The virtual meeting between US President Joe Biden and the Chinese leader Xi Jinping last week may cause some concern for India as it cannot be good news if the USA gravitates towards China or vice versa. Since China has been persistently creating border tension through its open and secret attempts to encroach Indian territory, any closeness between the two will mean bad news for India. But, the fallout of the video conference shows that the relationship between the two countries remains as tense as before. Xi did not agree with Biden's charge of China's human rights violation in Xinjiang, Tibet and Hong Kong and threat to take Taiwan by force. Xi from his side urged Biden to reduce the risk of conflict and suggested cooperation. The two leaders discussed the complex nature of relations between their countries and the importance of managing competition responsibly. President Biden emphasised that the USA would continue to stand up for its interests and values and work with its allies and partners for putting in place an international system that is free, open, and fair.

What should be music to Indian ears is Biden's unequivocal support for a free and open Indo-Pacific region and the US commitments there. This is a reference to the recent AUKUS defence pact signed by Australia, the UK and the USA and the nuclear-powered submarine deal between the USA and Australia to checkmate China's Indo-Pacific ambitions.

As is reported, the way the three-and-a-half hour-long talk progressed, it appears that Biden did not have the bargaining chip and he could not negotiate from a position of strength following the fiasco in Afghanistan, the success of China, Russia and Pakistan in bringing the Taliban within their orbit of influence and the loosening grip of the Democrats in the US domestic politics.

Predictably enough, Biden voiced concerns about cyberattacks, economic coercion of allies, China's activities in the East and South China Seas and across the Taiwan Strait, technology pilferage, unfair trade practices and its unwillingness to cooperate with WHO on identifying Covid-19's origins. Curiously enough, this litany of complaints does not appear to have made much impact on Xi as all these accusations and complaints had been dismissed with disdain by China at the Alaska meeting in March between the US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and China's diplomat and Communist Party of China Politburo member Yang Jiechi.

The question is why, then, was Biden so keen on holding the parley with Xi. Reports so far indicate that Xi, who is believed to be in no mood to leave China at the moment fearing intra-party tussle going out of hand which could possibly put him in a precarious position, lapped up the opportunity of a virtual engagement for his own gain. He seems to have fully exploited the exchange to consolidate his position at home, enhance his strongman image and build confidence in his domestic audience that he alone can take on the US. The proof is the contrast between the White House's 426-word readout of the talks against China's 2,770-word account. The burden of the Chinese document was that Xi had spoken to Biden from a position of confidence and strength. There is not a word on whether China is answerable in any way for the problems that have arisen between the two countries. It is as if all fault lies on America's doort and it is for America to fix them.

On the other hand, according to the US version, Biden spoke of managing the US-China competition responsibly and expressed his resolve to stand by the US allies, while raising the human rights violations by China. What punctures the US' pride is the Chinese assertion that it is for Biden to demonstrate political leadership and steer America's China policy back on track of reason and pragmatism. The implication is China has nothing to do in this regard because the situation is US' creation.

To rub salt into Biden's injuries, Xi even laid out three vague principles, a road map for improving US-China relationship - mutual respect, peaceful coexistence, which means respecting each other's core interests, and win-win cooperation. These are ploys to obfuscate the real issues of China's attitude of hegemony. He also explained no problems can be solved without China-US cooperation and invited the US to join China's global initiatives, including its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). These only point to China's position that the US-China ties can be normalised on China's terms.

It appears Biden had little option but to hold the dialogue with Xi as he needed a major event to divert the attention of the world and his domestic constituency from the failure in Afghanistan and change the gear of his foreign policy narrative towards China. The dip in his party's popularity rating and recent defeat of the Democrats in key states prompted him to meet Xi even if it offered advantage to China.

The future will tell whether the price paid by the US due to the talks will yield any worthwhile political result for Biden domestically.

WISDOM CORNER

- It's no use going back to yesterday, because I was a different person then. LEWIS CARROLL
- Smart people learn from everything and everyone, average people from their experiences, stupid people already has all the answers. SOCRATES
- Do what you feel in your heart to be right - for you'll be criticized anyway. ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

WORDSWORTH

Carnage

Flipping through the Independent recently, I found a reference to "the cost of cleaning up the carnage left in the City of London by violent clashes between anarchist demonstrators and police". Hang on a minute, I thought, piles of dead bodies scattered about the streets? Why haven't we been told? But as I read on, it became clear I'd been duped by some overwrought journalistic language. Stones and concrete blocks had been thrown at police, one motorist had been drenched in bleach for reasons unknown, but casualties had actually been rather light. Nobody dead and only a few injured, though a lot of damage done. So are we to run the risk of losing yet another useful word from our language, just because a sloppy and time-pressed writer wanted an emotive term to pack out a minor update to an oldish story? I very much hope not, but the auguries are not good. And yet carnage is one of the most powerful words in the language - my thesaurus offers me the alternatives of bloodshed, slaughter, massacre, butchery and bloodbath. Carnage derives from Latin caro, meaning flesh or meat, which was the source of the Medieval Latin carnicium for the slaughter of animals and for the meat that resulted. In particular it referred to the ration of flesh that tenants had to provide to their feudal lords. This word moved through Italian and French to appear in English as the figurative term carnage. It was introduced by Philemon Holland early in the seventeenth century, to evoke an image of the bloody butcher's shop transferred to the hand-to-hand hack and slash of the battlefield. He employed it in translations of various Latin and Greek authors, but it was only taken up by other writers many years later. Some other words derived from caro are obvious enough, like carnivore for a meat-eating animal; carrion for the dead flesh of animals; and charnel house, a place in which dead bodies were placed. But would you put that attractive flower the carnation in the same group? One theory is that it was named in the sixteenth century because its flowers were a pink that reminded people of the colour of flesh. But it might just be linguistic confusion, as it had earlier had the name coronation, perhaps because it had been used in chaplets or because its flowers looked like little crowns. And carnival, another odd word derived from caro, came to be so named because such festivities were originally held in the period leading up to Ash Wednesday, the start of the season of Lent in which meat was not eaten (carnival means to put away flesh). But none of these evoke an image of a demonstrator throwing a brick at a policeman. Long may carnage remain so.

FOCUS FARM LAWS

LESSONS IN DEMOCRACY



Ajit Ranade

EVEN THE PM'S ABRUPT DECISION TO REPEAL THE LAWS DID NOT FOLLOW PARLIAMENTARY PROTOCOL. FOR INSTANCE, IT WASN'T CLEAR IF THERE WAS A CABINET RESOLUTION

The Prime Minister in a pre-election address made the rather unexpected announcement that the three contentious farm laws would be repealed in the next session of Parliament. Because this decision comes close to impending state elections it is not possible to shrug off the feeling that the announcement was influenced by electoral calculations. Clearly the ruling party BJP did not want to take political risks on such a divisive issue which had been opposed fiercely by the farmers, mainly from Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh. But thanks to a determined and feisty year-long agitation, the opposition to the farm laws had spread to several states, and even pro-open market, regulation-free farm groups had changed their earlier stance and decided to oppose the laws.

As such, all three laws enlarged the freedoms available to farmers. The first gave them an additional option of selling outside the mandi system. The second allowed them to freely enter into contracts with corporations or large buyers. And the third, removed any restrictions on stocking and storage, implying free pricing of agricultural products. Despite enlarging the freedoms, i.e., providing more options to the farmer how is the fierce and sustained opposition to be explained? It is because the laws were silent on the implications. For instance, if there was freedom to sell outside the mandi system, did it mean that the government would whittle down its support for maintenance of the mandi system? For after all the mandi is where the farmer was able to get an assured Minimum Support Price, with protection against being cheated for quantity or with price fudging. Did the government plan to eventually dismantle the mandi, since it was fiscally unsustainable?

The second law allowed free contractual relationships, but what if there was a dispute? The law was silent, may prohibited the farmer from taking recourse to a



It is misleading to say that the failure of the government was merely because of inadequate communication. The real lacuna was that parliamentary process of lawmaking was not followed. The laws were first introduced as Ordinances, that too in the middle of a devastating pandemic

court. Only the district magistrate was empowered to arbitrate, with every possibility that he or she would side with the large corporate buyer. Why was the law silent on addressing this concern of the farmer? As for the third law, the less said the better. In the same week when the law was passed in Parliament, the Centre imposed a ban on export of onions, fearing a price spike. So, a price development, which would have benefited onion farmers, was negated to protect the interest of urban customers/voters. Thus, how can the farmers be assured that the newfound freedom embodied in the three new laws would not be arbitrarily curtailed to suit the politics of the day? Or that there were hidden implications not visible to a first cut reading?

Of course, the farmers were and are much smarter. They were unconvinced and saw the laws as detrimental to their cause and were willing to literally lay down

their lives to oppose the "reform" laws. And inevitably other forces, some politically opportunistic, jumped on the bandwagon and gave the whole farmers' agitation much greater momentum. The PM said that he was retracting the laws because he was unable to persuade the farmers of the benefits of these reforms. Not just he but a whole machinery of opinion makers, politicians, citizens' groups and pro-government media apparently were unable to convince the agitators.

However, it is misleading to say that the failure was merely because of inadequate communication. The real lacuna was that parliamentary process of lawmaking was not followed. The laws were first introduced as Ordinances, that too in the middle of a devastating pandemic. Then three months later they were converted to Bills in Parliament and were passed by a brute majority, but without any discussion, de-

bate or deliberation. The by now accepted and normal process of referring the Bills to the Standing Committee was dispensed with. Hence the only recourse left for those expressing misgivings was to take to the streets or approach the Supreme Court. The signs of misgivings were there right from June. In fact, on passage of the law, one of the ruling party's allies, the Akali Dal expressed its discomfiture, and its member resigned from the Union Cabinet. It was not a protest resignation, but the signs were clear. The absence of dialogue and feedback, and also dissent, all essential ingredients of a parliamentary democracy were undeniable. The agitation was seeking the support of "janata ki adalat" i.e. the people's court, and petitioners also approached the apex court, which finally stayed the three laws in January 2021.

Even the PM's abrupt decision to repeal the laws did not follow parliamentary protocol. For instance, it wasn't clear if there was a Cabinet resolution. And why could the repealing not wait when Parliament had convened? In a democratic form of government, the procedure is as sacrosanct as the outcome. And it is not merely "tick box" compliance of procedures, but in letter and spirit. The opposition view as well as the wisdom of the Standing Committees must be taken. In a recent debate in the UK Parliament, when the PM was restless and breaking protocol, he was chided by the Speaker who told him sharply, "You may be Prime Minister of the country, but I am in charge in this House".

All said and done, the street action, the Supreme Court's intervention, the PM's acceptance and retracting, and a probably healthy debate in Parliament on these farm laws is a validation of the robustness of India's democratic functioning. That is a cause for celebration.

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

THE BILLION PRESS

SPECTRUM AIR POLLUTION

Why Delhi chokes every winter



Nikunja Bihari Sahu

AS PER A STUDY UNDERTAKEN BY THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION IN 1,600 CITIES, DELHI IS AMONG THE WORST IN TERMS OF AIR POLLUTION

Bringing back horrific memories of Hitler's gas chamber, Delhi residents woke November 15 to find themselves shrouded in toxic smog, with the air quality plummeting several notches below the safety level. The Air Quality Index (AQI) reached 490 mark on this day coming under the 'severe' category. A blanket of thick smog enveloped the skies in the worst ever incidence of air pollution. The pollution level became so dire and menacing that it prompted the Supreme Court to direct the state government and the Centre to take "emergency" measures to tackle the situation. Following this, the Delhi government shut down schools until further notice, ordered work from home and banned non-essential trucks from entering the capital.

The AQI of a locality is generally measured by the presence of Suspended Particulate Matters (SPM) in air. The average level of the deadliest particulate matter (PM) in the National Capital Region reached beyond 400 (over seven times the safe limit) on that day. Inhaling this air has been equated by doctors to smoking 50 cigarettes a day.

New Delhi battles chronic winter smog every year as a drop in the temperature accounts for accumulation of deadly pollutants in the air, mostly from coal-fired power plants outside the city, fumes from vehicles, construction activity, and open burning of rubbish. One of the key contributors to the air pollution in winter is smoke from burning crop residues after harvest in neighbouring states. The situation worsens during the Diwali, which happens around the same time. This year too, air quality in Delhi and surrounding areas deteriorated steadily since the Diwali, leaving the city covered with a thick fog of poisonous gases.

An AQI between 0-50 is considered "good", 51-100 "satisfactory", 101-200 "moderate", 201-300 "poor", 301-400 "very poor", 401-500 "severe" and beyond 500 is "severe-plus emergency" category. Delhi's AQI was 'severe' November 15 and was inching towards the 'severe-plus emergency' category. The situation is expected to deteriorate further due to high humidity and calm surface wind speeds affecting the dispersion of pollutants. At this stage, the quantum of pollution reaches a critical level and the air

is highly unhealthy. Elderly individuals, in particular, can feel its immediate effects and are at risk in falling sick to various respiratory tract diseases like pneumonia, asthma and even lung cancer. Even healthy people may show symptoms for short exposures.

As per a study undertaken by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in 1,600 cities, Delhi is among the worst in terms of air pollution and, according to one estimate, air pollution alone accounts for nearly 10,500 deaths every year on an average. According to another study, on an average, Delhi citizens would live an extra nine years if the city met the WHO air quality standards. A Lancet report in 2020 said almost 17,500 people died in Delhi in 2019 alone because of air pollution. Rising air pollution level has also increased lung-related ailments among children and women in the national capital.

Delhi's population continues to grow unabated as thousands of migrants arrive in the capital city each year in search of better opportunities. Dust-generating construction sites, industrial emissions as well as proliferation of coal-fired power plants contribute

to the increasingly deteriorating air quality in Delhi. Car sales have also been soaring as income of people have been rising with improvements in living standard. This is evident from the fact that nearly 10 million vehicles used to jostle for space on the roads of Delhi every day, while thousands of diesel-guzzling trucks rumble across the capital every night bringing in essential commodities from neighbouring states.

As a long term goal, Delhi must find ways to restrict construction activities in and around the city. Industries located in the region should be relocated to safer places and automobile exhausts should be monitored periodically. Farmers in the neighbouring states must be educated and technologically equipped to dispose their post harvest crop residues in the most eco-friendly manner. Strict rules should be enacted for proper dumping and disposal of solid wastes, since their unregulated burning results in the pile-up of smoke and particulate matter in concentrated form at one place.

The writer is Education Officer, Regional Science Centre, Bhopal.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST
B-15, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Wildlife trade

Sir, Extinctions have been a natural part of our planet's evolutionary history. At least 900 species have gone extinct in the last five centuries. Globally illegal wildlife trade has become a form of organised crime that has been threatening the survival of many vulnerable and endangered wild animals. It includes a diverse range of wildlife products obtained by mercilessly killing or poaching wild animals to cater to high market demands. More than 150 billion animals are slaughtered every year. There is unequivocal evidence that shows nature is unraveling and our planet is flashing red warning signs. The illegal wildlife trade is diverse and includes a wide variety of products. Pangolins are believed to be the world's most trafficked mammal, accounting for as much as 20% of all illegal wildlife trade. According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, more than a million pangolins were poached in the decade prior to 2014. It is alleged that departmental employees are hand in glove with the smugglers. To stop this act the government should provide adequate job opportunities to the unemployed. Moreover, a separate subject should be added in the school and college curriculum with regular awareness campaigning. Stringent punishments should be given to culprits, both the smugglers and guilty officials who are involved this activity. **Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR**

Giants meet

Sir, When a marathon meet between two powerful heads of state takes place, heads are bound to turn. When the two are Joe Biden and Xi Jinping, then political experts are compelled to frantically delve into the "overtone and undertone" of the meet. The United States President and his Chinese counterpart took recourse to a virtual meeting that held great significance because of the circumstances in which it took place. The dialogue, a first of its kind, came at a time when the US oft repeated stand of "One China" on Taiwan has repeatedly gained momentum and the trade standoff between the two countries has shown little signs of reversal. Biden will have to make sure that the US does not flicker in its steadfast stand on peace in Taiwan because Xi reportedly expressed his displeasure on a host of international engagements undertaken by him over the months aimed at creating divisions between China and the rest. Also, Washington's largesse towards Taiwan, through logistics or via words, is viewed as thwarting the Chinese agenda there. **Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA**

national

of the day quote

The retreat of the Modi government with respect to the three contentious farm bills has hopefully taught PM Modi a lesson that ignoring Parliament by using Ordinances as the main legislative tool is bound to fail. Respect Parliament. -Respect Parliamentary ethos. -Respect Democracy. India is watching!

M. MALLIKARJUN KHARGE | LEADER OF OPPOSITION IN RS

We move forward with cultural nationalism and they (opposition) with 'vanshwad' (dyncastic politics). For us nationalism is important and for them 'vanshwad' is everything

J P NADDA | BJP CHIEF

The government will not show any partiality in providing infrastructure and in development projects despite the party not having any MLAs from Coimbatore district

M K STALIN | TN CM

SHORT TAKES

10 Lankans held

Bangalore: The Customs Department has arrested two Sri Lankan men and eight women at the airport here for smuggling gold hidden in their bodies, officials said Monday. Based on a tip-off, the Customs officers made the arrests on Saturday evening. The accused travelled from the Bandaranaike International Airport located in the outskirts of Colombo onboard SriLankan Airlines Flight UL 171 along with 140 other passengers. They had concealed the liquid gold in their rectum and was supposed to be given to handlers in Bangalore.

Man killed

Bangalore: Four assailants hacked a man to death at his residence in front of his two daughters in the wee hours of Monday in Bangalore. The deceased was identified as Deepak Kumar Singh (46), a native of Bihar and residing in Yelahanka New Town. According to the police, four assailants barged into the house of Singh, attacked him with machetes and killed him on the spot. Deepak's wife had gone to Bihar and he was alone with his two daughters at home. The killers also threatened the daughters by putting the machetes on their necks.

Mulayam turns 83

Lucknow: The Samajwadi Party headquarters in Lucknow burst out rejoicing as soon as party patriarch Mulayam Singh Yadav arrived at the party office Monday. It was his 83rd birthday and celebrations had been ringing out loud and clear since morning. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath wished the leader on his birthday.

Three arrested

Chennai: Three persons, including two juveniles, were arrested in connection with the murder of a Sub-Inspector here, police said Monday. Sub-Inspector Bhoominathan, attached with the Keeranur police station, was on patrolling duty on Saturday and early Sunday, when he found youths travelling on bikes with goats. Suspecting theft, the Sub-Inspector chased them, but was hit on the head with a machete. Bhoominathan died on the spot, police said. The assailants included a 19-year-old and two juveniles. Details are awaited.



A lot has been spoken about the possibility of a pre-poll alliance between the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Maharashtra Gomantak Party for the 2022 assembly polls, but you will see action happening on that soon

DEVENDRA FADNIS | FORMER MAHARASHTRA CM

DENGUE CASES RISE

Dengue cases in Delhi this season have jumped to over 7,100, with nearly 5,600 of those being recorded in November alone, according to a civic report released Monday



TMC MPs meet Shah over Tripura violence

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi/Agartala, Nov 22: A delegation of TMC MPs met Union Home Minister Amit Shah Monday alleging police violence in Tripura.

The legislators who were sitting on a dharna outside the Ministry of Home Affairs since Monday morning were given an appointment to meet Shah in the afternoon.

"We told him in detail how leaders were being arrested and MPs being beaten up. He told us that he had spoken to the Tripura CM on phone yesterday and assured us that he would seek a report from the state," TMC MP Kalyan Banerjee said.

Sukhendu Sekhar Roy, Santanu Sen, Kalyan Banerjee, Derek O'Brien, Mala Roy 11 other MPs were part of the delegation that met Shah. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee who is scheduled to land in Delhi in the evening is also planning to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the issue.

Hitting out at Shah, the TMC chief said the Union home minister "is yet to show courtesy" and meet the TMC MPs who have been seeking an audience with him over the violence in Tripura.

"During my visit to Delhi, I will be meeting the prime minister. Apart from various state-related matters, I will be raising issues concerning the enhancement of BSF jurisdiction as well as the Tripura violence," she told reporters before leaving for Delhi.

Banerjee wondered why the



TMC MPs speak to media after meeting Home Minister Amit Shah over alleged police brutality in Tripura, at his residence in New Delhi

human rights commission was "not taking a note" of the ongoing use of brute force in the north-eastern state.

"The chief minister of Tripura (Biplab Deb) and his government are defying the SC's directive. They have to reply to common people. I will appeal to the higher judiciary to act against his government as per law," she said.

The Tripura Police on Sunday arrested actor-turned TMC leader Sayani Ghosh on the charge of attempt to murder after she allegedly disrupted a meeting of Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb

by shouting "Khela hobe" (we will play) on Saturday night.

Ghosh was arrested after being called in for questioning in a police station in Agartala, a police official had said.

The Supreme Court recently directed the Tripura Police to ensure that no political party is prevented from exercising its rights in accordance with the law for campaigning in a peaceful manner.

The TMC has repeatedly alleged that its candidates were being prevented from campaigning by the ruling BJP supporters there.

55 held for liquor ban violation in Patna

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Patna, Nov 22: Fifty-five people have been arrested for violating liquor laws in the state capital, police said Monday.

Following the direction of the divisional commissioner, Patna Police conducted raids at 80 hotels and 12 slum clusters on Sunday night to check on liquor violations. The arrested included a railway guard, hotel manager and a contractor.

Meanwhile, guests coming in the hotels for marriages claimed that the Patna Police breached their privacy by conducting raids.

A video went viral on social media showing a team of Patna Police conducting a raid in a marriage hall without any women cops. The male policemen entered into the rooms of women guests and searched their belongings, including suitcases, cupboards and toilets.

"During the search, an officer of the Patna Police told us that his team is following the orders from higher authorities and that they are under huge pressure," Sunil Kumar, a guest at the marriage party said.

He added that they tried to reason with the police, saying that "the guests from the groom's side drank liquor during the marriage party." Senior Superintendent of Police Upendra Sharma said, "We have arrested over 300 persons ever since the direction given by Sanjay Agrawal, the Divisional Commissioner (DC) of Patna. Such raids will continue in the coming days."

The DC has directed the authorities to strictly implement liquor ban in the state. Under the directives, the operators of marriage halls, banquet halls, Dharamshalas and hotels will have to install CCTV cameras at every place to keep an eye on the activities of guests. The idea is to stop violation of liquor prohibition law.

Param Bir Singh gets protection from arrest

November 18, the Supreme Court asked Singh's counsel to disclose which part of the world or the country he is in, and without these details, the court would not entertain his plea seeking protection

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 22: The Supreme Court Monday granted protection from arrest to former Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh in cases against him in Maharashtra, and directed him to join the investigation.

A bench headed by Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul said: "Wonder what will happen to a common man. Matter has become curiouser and curiouser...first the home minister and then the police commissioner..."

Senior advocate Puneet Bali, representing Singh, told the top court that his client is very much in the country and added that the moment his client touches Maharashtra, there is threat to his life.

The bench told the lawyer that "if you say your client faces threat to life from the Mumbai Police, then what is the hope for other people." Bali submitted that FIRs against his client were lodged by bookies, extortionists, etc., against whom he had taken action.

Bali urged the top court to allow Singh to appear before any officer of the court of the CBI. He emphasized that his client is in India, but apprehends action would be taken by the Maharashtra government against him, and the prayer before the Bombay High Court was to direct the matter to CBI.

After hearing detailed arguments, the top court said the only question to be examined is that the



Former Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh

CBI is already looking into the matter and could the other aspects be entrusted to the CBI. The bench added that the stand of the CBI and state government is not known, as the petition was decided preliminarily. "Notice issued to respondents, returnable on December 6...the petitioner shall join the investigation, but shall not be arrested," said the top court.

On November 18, the Supreme Court asked Singh's counsel to disclose which part of the world or the country he is in, and without these details, the court would not entertain his plea seeking protection.

The top court had told Bali, representing Singh, "where are you... within the country or outside. First, I want to know where are you." Bali replied that his client's whereabouts would be known to the counsel-on-record.

Justice Kaul sought a response from the counsel-on record, who replied that he is not aware about Singh's current location.

Gallantry awards conferred

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 22: Group Captain Abhinandan Varthaman, who downed an enemy jet during an aerial combat with Pakistan on February 27, 2019, was Monday conferred with the Vir Chakra award by President Ram Nath Kovind for displaying an "exceptional sense of duty" during the dogfight.

The award ceremony, held at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and several other dignitaries.

The President also conferred the Kirti Chakra award posthumously to sapper Prakask Jadhav of Rashtriya Rifles and Shaurya Chakra to Major Vibhuti Shankar Dhoundiyal of the 55 battalion of Rashtriya Rifles and Naib Subedar Sombir of the 34th battalion of Rashtriya Rifles (both posthumous).

The Shaurya Chakra awardees included Sepoy Karmdeo Oraon of the eighth battalion of the Bihar Regiment, Rifleman Ajveer Singh Chauhan of the sixth battalion of the Garhwal Rifles, Constable Zaker

Hussain of the CRPF, Jammu and Kashmir Police head constable Subash Chander and Sable Dnyaneshwar Shiram, a CRPF constable.

Lance Naik Sandeep Singh of the fourth battalion of the Parachute regiment, Brajesh Kumar of the Punjab Regiment and Sepoy Hari Singh of the Grenadiers have all been posthumously conferred with the Shaurya Chakra award.

Ashiq Husain Malik and Aman Kumar, both from the J&K Police have also been posthumously conferred with the Shaurya Chakra award. President Kovind, who is the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, conferred two Kirti Chakras, one Vir Chakra and 23 Shaurya Chakras to the personnel of armed forces and paramilitary forces in the first defence investiture ceremony on Monday. "President Kovind presents Vir Chakra to Wing Commander (now Group Captain) Varthaman Abhinandan. He showed conspicuous courage, demonstrated gallantry in the face of the enemy while disregarding personal safety and displayed an exceptional sense of duty," the Rashtrapati Bhavan tweeted.

Bihar man held just before marriage

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Khagaria: A bridegroom, who came to Khagaria in Bihar to marry another girl, was arrested for cheating his girlfriend in Dhanbad, Jharkhand, police said Monday. The Dhanbad police, with the help of the local Khagaria police, arrested the man on charges of sexual exploitation just a few hours before the wedding. A police officer said that a girl, resident of Dhanbad, had lodged a complaint in a Dhanbad police station accusing Rahul Kumar, a resident under Parbatta police station, of sexually exploiting her for five years on the pretext of marriage. The Dhanbad police came to know about Rahul's marriage to another girl on Sunday. Parbatta police station in-charge Sanjay Kumar Mishra said that on Sunday, with the help of local police, Dhanbad police came to Khagaria and arrested the accused.

TAKING TO STREETS



Nurses from various state government hospitals block a road during their protest rally over alleged discrimination in their pay scale in Kolkata

Rlys withdraws dress code for waiters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ujjain (MP)/New Delhi, Nov 22: The Railways Monday changed the uniforms of its serving staff on board the Ramayan Express after seers from Ujjain objected to the saffron attire of the waiters.

The seers said it was an insult to the Hindu religion and threatened to stop the train in Delhi on December 12 if the dress code was not withdrawn. "It is to inform that the dress of service staff is completely changed in

the look of professional attire of service staff. Inconvenience caused is regretted," the Indian Railways said in a statement.

The uniforms have been changed to normal shirts and trousers and traditional headgear. The waiters will, however, wear saffron masks and gloves.

"We wrote a letter to the railway minister two days ago, lodging our protest against waiters serving refreshments and food in the Ramayan Express in saffron. Donning a saffron attire with a

sadhu-like headgear and wearing malas (necklaces) of rudraksha is an insult to the Hindu religion and its seers," Ujjain Akhada Parishad's former general secretary Avdeshpuri said.

He said seers would stop the train at Delhi's Safdarjung railway station if the saffron dress code of the waiters was not changed. "We will sit on the railway tracks. This is necessary for protecting the Hindu religion," he added.

Ujjain city in Madhya Pradesh, where the Mahakaleshwar Shiva

temple is located, hosts the Simhastha Kumbh Mela every 12 years.

The first Ramayan circuit train chugged off on a 17-day journey from the Safdarjung railway station on November 7.

It will visit 15 places associated with the life of Lord Ram. Covering a distance of more than 7,500 km, the train will take pilgrims to places such as Ayodhya, Prayag, Nandigram, Janakpur, Chitrakoot, Sitamarhi, Nasik, Hampi and Rameshwaram.

MODERN EDUCATION UTILITARIAN, SAYS CJI

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 22: Chief Justice of India NV Ramana Monday said the modern education system tends to focus only on the 'utilitarian' function of education and it is not equipped to deal with the moral and spiritual function which builds the character of the students.

Justice Ramana said this while delivering the 40th convocation address of the Andhra Pradesh-based Sri Sathya Sai Institute for Higher Learning.

He said: "Unfortunately, the modern education system tends to focus only on the 'utilitarian' function of education. Such a system is not equipped to deal with the 'moral' or

'spiritual' function of education which builds the character of our students and allows them to develop a social consciousness and a sense of responsibility."

He added that true education is the one which imbibes moral values and virtues of humility, discipline, selflessness, compassion, tolerance, forgiveness and mutual respect.

"You will have to deal with people from different walks of life that may occasionally challenge you. But be tolerant. Hold onto certain core values as you walk through this journey of life, and experience all the richness it can offer you", said Justice Ramana.

Lauding the university's founder



Sathya Sai Baba, the Chief Justice said: "Education in this prestigious Institution has inculcated both ethical and moral values in the students. He promoted a combination of 'worldly learning' and 'spir-

itual learning'. This philosophy radiates in this institution. It flows from our rich mythology and Vedic philosophy."

He emphasized that as educated individuals, "you have the re-

sponsibility to enrich the society and they must educate all those around, and empower people, communities, and societies."

"Prema in action is service. There is no greater proponent of service, no greater mentor to follow, than Baba himself. Sathya Sai means love. Sathya Sai means service. Sathya Sai means sacrifice," he said.

Hailing it as a one-of-a-kind university built around the concept of a modern gurukula, the Chief Justice said: "It is also a 'Gurukula' where the essence of Indian culture, values and lifestyle is inculcated in the students while at the institution. This ensures all-round development and mental fortitude."

He said "Baba has showed us the righteous path. This is a concept embedded in our cultural ethos, of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam." Justice Ramana emphasised that the pandemic has exposed and highlighted the deep-rooted vulnerabilities and has increased the inequalities in society.

He added: "In such times, selfless service is the need of the hour. I feel so encouraged by the fact that this idea of service is still strong in the hearts and minds of the people. This is evident when people came together, including the students of this institution, to provide relief to those in need. I congratulate all of you for rendering service to the needy."

WILL SIDHU ACCEPT AMARINDER'S CHALLENGE TO CONTEST PATIALA SEAT

FORMER PUNJAB CM CAPTAIN AMARINDER SINGH SUNDAY ANNOUNCED THAT HE WILL CONTEST THE 2022 PUNJAB ASSEMBLY POLLS FROM PATIALA

AGENCIES

Chandigarh, Nov 22: The Patiala Assembly seat has been the family bastion of the former Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh. He has represented the seat four times - 2002, 2007, 2012 and 2017.

"I will contest election from Patiala. The people of Patiala have been with us for the past 400 years. Hence, I will not leave Patiala because of Sidhu," Amarinder Singh said in an interview.

Amarinder Singh had resigned as MLA in 2014 after being elected from the Amritsar Lok Sabha seat. His wife Preet Kaur then contested from Patiala and represented the seat for three years.

It is worth mentioning that earlier, in April this year, Amarinder Singh had challenged Navjot Singh Sidhu to contest the elections against him from Patiala, saying that he would also lose his security deposit like General JJ Singh.

"If Sidhu has doubts about my capability, he can come and contest from Patiala. He will also lose his deposit like General JJ Singh," Amarinder Singh had said in an interview to a regional channel.

Interestingly, Navjot Singh Sidhu has stationed himself in Patiala



for quite some time. There were speculations that either he would contest election from Patiala himself or his wife, Navjot Kaur Sidhu.

Sidhu has maintained silence over the speculations but had clarified that Patiala happens to be his ancestral house.

Supporter turned adversary, Deputy Chief Minister Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa Sunday, took a potshot at Amarinder Singh and reminded him of his 2017 election statement in which he had said that this was his last election.

Patiala has been a pocket borough of Amarinder Singh, who has a

strong hold in his home district. Amarinder Singh resigned as the Punjab Chief Minister in September amid a bitter power tussle with Sidhu. Charanjit Singh Channi had replaced Amarinder Singh.

After his unceremonious exit from the state government, Amarinder Singh had said that he would pit a strong candidate against Sidhu in the 2022 assembly polls to ensure his defeat.

Amarinder Singh, who named his political party as the Punjab Lok Congress, is hoping for a seat arrangement with the BJP for the upcoming elections.

'Deshmukh's son active in money laundering'

The Enforcement Directorate submitted an affidavit before the court designated to hear the cases of the PMLA opposing the pre-arrest bail plea filed by Hrishikesh Deshmukh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 22: Former Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh's son Hrishikesh Deshmukh was an active participant in money laundering and had assisted his father in projecting the ill-gotten money as an untainted donation, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) told a special court here Monday.

The anti-money laundering agency submitted an affidavit before the court designated to hear the cases of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) opposing the pre-arrest bail plea filed by Hrishikesh Deshmukh.

The special court has posted the pre-arrest bail plea for hearing December 4.

"The applicant (Hrishikesh Deshmukh) was an active participant in the laundering of proceeds of crime. The applicant assisted his father Anil Deshmukh to launder ill-gotten money into a complex web of companies," it said.

The agency said if Hrishikesh Deshmukh is granted protection from arrest then there is a likelihood of him tampering



with evidence or attempting to obfuscate the trail of the proceeds of crime.

The ED said the preliminary probe has revealed that 11 companies were controlled by the former Home Minister and his family members.

"In the majority of these companies, the applicant (Hrishikesh Deshmukh) is either a director of the company or a shareholder in it," the affidavit said.

It added that Hrishikesh Deshmukh had connived with his father and transferred part of the ₹4.70 crore

bribe amount received from various bars and restaurants via dismissed police officer Sachin Waze through hawala to his associates. That money was then transferred as donations by the associates to a trust run by the Deshmukh family.

"With the help of Delhi-based shell companies, the applicant (Hrishikesh Deshmukh) assisted his father Anil Deshmukh to launder the tainted money and projected it as untainted money by showing the same as donation," the ED said.

It added that Hrishikesh

Deshmukh along with other family members created a complex web of companies in which suspicious transactions had taken place.

The ED told the court that Hrishikesh Deshmukh had not cooperated in the probe despite six summonses sent to him.

In his anticipatory bail plea, Hrishikesh Deshmukh had stated that the "entire proceedings are actuated with malice".

He had claimed that the investigations against him and his father commenced in a shady manner.

The plea had said that there is a "witch-hunt campaign launched at the instance of certain vested inimical interests, some blatantly false allegations have been leveled by persons like dismissed cop Sachin Waze and former Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh, who have absolutely no credibility".

"These unscrupulous persons are themselves knee-deep involved in several rackets of extortion, fraud and even murder," the pre-arrest bail plea had said. Anil Deshmukh was arrested in the case by the ED November 1. He is presently in judicial custody.

PUNJAB POLLS

Kejriwal woos women electorate

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Moga (Pb), Nov 22: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said Monday that ₹1,000 per month will be transferred into the accounts of all women in Punjab if his party AAP is voted to power in the 2022 assembly polls.

"Today I want to make an announcement. Aam Aadmi Party will form the government in Punjab. We will transfer ₹1,000 every month into the accounts of every woman who is more than 18 years old in the state", he said, adding to the list of freebies promised by him.

Elderly women who are getting

NCB officers trying to extort money by framing youths: Sena

Hitting out at Central agencies in the party mouthpiece 'Saamana', the Sena said their actions in Maharashtra smell like some kind of a conspiracy



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 22: The Shiv Sena Monday said every officer who was trying to extort money by falsely implicating youngsters should be put behind bars, days after the Bombay High Court in its detailed order granting bail to Aryan Khan and two others in the drugs-on-cruise case observed that prima facie it had not found any positive evidence against the accused to show that they had conspired to commit an offence.

Hitting out at Central agencies in the party mouthpiece 'Saamana', the Sena said their actions in Maharashtra smell like some kind of a conspiracy and cited the arrest of Aryan Khan, son of actor Shah Rukh Khan, and former home minister

Anil Deshmukh, currently in judicial custody in connection with a money laundering case registered by the ED.

Flagging the Aryan Khan's case, the Sena said the High Court in its order has observed that there is no truth in the charges levelled by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB). Aryan Khan was arrested by the NCB allegedly during a raid on a cruise ship last month in Mumbai. He was in jail for nearly a month before the HC granted him bail.

In its detailed order, the high court had said that prima facie no positive evidence was found against the accused to show that they had conspired to commit an offence.

"If this (the observations of the Bombay High Court) is true then every officer who was trying to extort money for falsely implicating youngsters should be arrested," the Sena said.

A Delhi NCB team is currently probing the allegations of pay-off against its Mumbai zonal director Sameer Wankhede, who has been in the eye of a political storm after Aryan was arrested.

The Shiv Sena, which heads the Maha Vikas Aghadi, also lauded NCP minister Nawab Malik for bringing out new evidences.

IGNORING WARNING



A farmer burns paddy stubble at a farm on the outskirts of Amritsar, Monday. The pollution and haze around the adjoining states of Punjab and Haryana, especially New Delhi, has been linked with stubble burning and is said to be a contributing factor for increasing air pollution

PTI PHOTO

Mumbai Sikh body seeks FIR against Kangana over 'derogatory' language

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 22: A Sikh organisation Monday submitted a complaint seeking registration of an FIR against Hindi film actor Kangana Ranaut in Mumbai alleging that she had used derogatory language against the Sikh community in her social media post.

A Khar police station official said a complaint was received from the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (DSGMC) and they are looking into it.

He said a delegation led by Manjinder Singh Sirsa, a Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) leader and presi-



dent of the DSGMC, submitted the complaint against Ranaut.

In the complaint, the DSGMC mentioned that Ranaut had intentionally and deliberately portrayed the farmers' protest (Kisan Morcha) as a Khalistani movement and also dubbed the Sikh community as Khalistani terrorists.

It claimed that she had recalled the massacre and genocide that happened during 1984 and earlier, as a planned and calculated move on part of the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, the official said quoting the complaint.

Ranaut has used very derogatory and insulting language against the Sikh community as much as she has said that they were crushed under her (Indira Gandhi's) shoes. This act on her part is most degrading, disrespectful and contemptuous, which has hurt the sentiments of the Sikh community across the world, the official said.

Grenade blast near Army camp in Pathankot



AGENCIES

Chandigarh, Nov 22: A grenade blast occurred near an Indian Army camp in Punjab's highly sensitive Pathankot town Monday.

No one was injured in the explosion.

Police reached the spot and recovered parts of the grenade.

Senior Superintendent of Police Surendra Lamba told the media that investigation was underway and CCTV footage from the spot has been obtained.

It is believed that motorcyclists lobbied the grenade in front of the Triveni gate of the army cantonment.

Security was tightened, particularly in Punjab's border districts of Pathankot and Gurdaspur, including near the Indian Air Force base in Pathankot, which bore the brunt of terror attack January 2, 2016, as well as nearby Mamoon Cantonment of the Army. Apart from the Punjab Police, men of the Border Security Force (BSF) and personnel of different security agencies have been put on alert following the blast.

Suspected Pakistani terrorists had July 27, 2015, attacked Dinanagar town in neighbouring Gurdaspur district, around 225 km from here, killing seven persons, including a Punjab Police officer, three Home Guards and three civilians.

The three terrorists were killed after an 11-hour gun battle with the security forces at the Dinanagar police station.

India's salesmen are up in arms against JioMart

In Maharashtra - home to Vita - and Tamil Nadu, traditional salesmen have organised blockades of some JioMart delivery vehicles

REUTERS

Sangli (Maharashtra), Nov 22: For eight straight days, household goods salesman Vipresh Shah has failed to sell a single pack of Dettol soap to the storekeepers who have been buying from him ever since he took over his family business as a teenager, 14 years ago.

Shah is an official distributor for Britain's Reckitt Benckiser in Vita, near Sangli city south of Mumbai. But he said once-loyal customers now point to an app - JioMart Partner - on their smartphones showing prices up to 15% lower, instead of placing orders.

"As Reckitt's distributor, I used to be like a prince in the market," said Shah. "Now the buyer tells me, 'See how much you've been ripping us off!'"

The 31-year-old said he lost \$2,000 of his own money as he discounted products to match prices on JioMart, the app rolled out by Reliance Industries billionaire Mukesh Ambani in his



A shopkeeper shows Reliance's JioMart Partner app on his mobile phone that he uses to order supplies for his store in Sangli, Maharashtra

REUTERS PHOTO

drive to revolutionise retail distribution in India.

Up and down India in places like small town Vita, the mom-and-pop stores that account for four-fifths of a near-\$900 billion retail market - more than \$700 bil-

lion - are increasingly turning to JioMart to stock up on foreign and domestic brands.

Just as Ambani has disrupted the country's telecom industry, the tycoon is intent on shaking up retail distribution, taking on

US e-commerce giants like Amazon and Walmart Inc, expanding fast in India.

The country has around 4,50,000 traditional distributors, who have legions of salespeople to service every corner of the vast nation, including 6,00,000 villages. They typically earn a margin of 3-5% on product prices and mostly take orders physically once a week, making deliveries to retailers within a couple of days.

But Reliance's model throws a wrench in that supply chain: the mom-and-pop stores, known as 'kiranas', can order goods on JioMart Partner with deliveries promised within 24 hours. Reliance also offers training on ordering, credit facilities and free product samples for affiliated kiranas' customers.

That means hundreds of thousands of salesmen representing consumer giants like Reckitt, Unilever and Colgate-Palmolive face an existential threat to their business, according to interviews with salespeople, 20 distributors

and a trader group with members across India.

'Guerrilla tactics'

The scale and speed of the disruption have triggered tensions between traditional distributors and Reliance that have boiled over into physical confrontation in some cases.

In Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, traditional salesmen have organised blockades of some JioMart delivery vehicles.

"We will employ guerrilla tactics," said Dhairyashil Patil, president of the All-India Consumer Products Distributors Federation, which represents 4,00,000 agents of local and foreign consumer firms. "We will continue to agitate," he said, adding, "We want (consumer goods) companies to realise our value."

Reliance remains undeterred in pushing ahead with Ambani's "new commerce" retail venture, first announced in 2018. Last year it raised funds from marquee investors including Silver Lake Partners and

KKR & Co Inc as it seeks to integrate mom-and-pop stores in what it has touted as a more inclusive approach to digital commerce. That push is widely seen countering the likes of Amazon, which have for years faced - and denied - claims in India of favouring select big sellers at the expense of smaller retailers.

A source close to Reliance said the company was determined to keep expanding its business for mom-and-pop stores. It believes its model can co-exist alongside the traditional approach in one of the world's biggest retail markets, the person said, declining to be identified because of lack of authority to disclose company plans.

In 2018, Ambani said he eventually wanted to connect 30 million small merchants to the Reliance network. So far, it has 3,00,000 merchant partners in 150 cities who order consumer goods from Reliance, but the transformation will be magnified many times over if it meets a target of adding 10 million partner stores by 2024.

of the day quote

CAA is against the Constitution. If the BJP government does not take back this law, we will come out on the streets



ASADUDDIN OWAISSI | AIMIM PRESIDENT

Before coming to power in Manipur, we had promised to end bandh, hartal and blockade. We have ended all the three and significantly improved the law and order situation in Manipur



AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

Previous governments did not have any idea about how development works should be done for the poor. The poor did not get houses owing to lack of willpower. Our government provided houses to 45 lakh people



YOGI ADITYANATH | UP CM

SHORT TAKES

5 die in accident

Aizawl: Five people, including three women, were killed and 11 others injured after a pick-up truck they were travelling in fell into a gorge near Rabung village in east Mizoram's Khawzawl district, police said. The incident occurred around 9.30 am when they were travelling from their village towards Rabung to attend a funeral, SP Lalchunglura said. Brake failure of the vehicle, which was carrying at least 19 people, is the likely cause of the accident, he said.

Leopard kills boy

Seoni (MP): A 10-year-old tribal boy was mauled to death by a leopard in Madhya Pradesh's Seoni district on Monday morning, officials said. The incident occurred when a group of boys, all residents of Ghorlatola (Pandiwada), was playing on a road near the village.

Nigerian held

Palghar: A Nigerian drug peddler was arrested for illegal possession of the banned drug, MD, from Nallasopara in Palghar district of Maharashtra, police said Monday. A police officer said his team had stopped a man on suspicion while patrolling in the Pragati Nagar area of Nallasopara on Saturday and found 3 gm of MD in his possession. He led the police to a Nigerian, currently staying in Nallasopara, identified as Puikhe Okey.

11 tourists hurt

Banihal/Jammu: Eleven tourists were injured on Monday when a private passenger vehicle overturned on the Jammu-Srinagar national highway, police said. The tourists from Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh were returning from Kashmir when the driver of their vehicle lost control due to a tyre burst on reaching Ramsu in Ramban district, they said. The vehicle turned upside down, resulting in injuries to the tourists. They were rushed to a nearby hospital, the police said. Their condition was stated to be stable, they added.

12-yr-old injured

Thiruvananthapuram: In Pinarayi Vijayan's home district Kannur and near to his constituency in Dharmadam, a 12-year-old boy who was playing cricket got injured when he found three ice cream balls and when throwing it, it exploded and injured him. Boy Shriward is presently at a private hospital and the doctors treating him said there are injuries on his leg and chest, but there is no reason to worry.



In order to instill confidence among farmers about the announcement to withdraw agricultural laws, it is necessary to rein in rhetorics of BJP leaders who, despite the announcement by the PM, create suspicion among the people and are spoiling the atmosphere with their provocative statements

MAYAWATI | BSP PRESIDENT

KAMAL HAASAN HOSPITALISED

Makkal Needhi Maiam president and actor Kamal Haasan Monday said he has tested positive for COVID-19 and has been admitted to a hospital



Raj CM allocates portfolios

The Chief Minister along with the finance and home portfolios, has kept taxation, personnel, general administration cabinet secretariat, information and public relation, and information technology and communication

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, Nov 22: Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot Monday allocated portfolios to ministers of his expanded cabinet, retaining home and finance with him.

Twelve new ministers were inducted and three ministers of state were elevated to the cabinet rank. The 15 ministers were sworn in on Sunday for the expanded Gehlot cabinet, fulfilling a key demand of former deputy chief minister Sachin Pilot whose rebellion last year shook the state's Congress government.

The Chief Minister along with the finance and home portfolios, has kept taxation, personnel, general administration cabinet secretariat, information and public relation, and information technology and communication.

The department for NRI and the Rajasthan State Investigation Bureau are under Gehlot. Following the expansion, the council of ministers in the state has 19 cabinet ministers and 10 ministers of state. The Rajasthan Cabinet can have a maximum of 30 ministers, including the chief minister.

From the old cabinet -- Pratap Singh Khachariyawas was allocated food and civil supplies, Shanti Dhariwal retained urban development and housing, and parliamentary affairs, Lal Chand Kataria retained agriculture and Pramod Jain Bhaya retained mines and petroleum.

BD Kalla and Parsadi Lal Meena were allocated education, and health and excise respectively. The new ministers who got portfolios in the cabinet rank include Hemaram Choudhary (forest), Mahesh Joshi (PHED), Ram Lal Jat (revenue), Ramesh Meena (panchayati raj and rural development), Vishvendra Singh (tourism and civil aviation), Govindram Meghwal (disaster management and relief) and Shakuntala Rawat (industries) and Mahendrajeet Singh Malviya (water resources).

Vishvendra Singh and Ramesh Meena were sacked last year from the Rajasthan cabinet along with



Twelve new ministers were inducted and three ministers of state were elevated to the Cabinet rank. The 15 ministers were sworn in Sunday for the expanded Gehlot Cabinet, fulfilling a key demand of former deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot whose rebellion last year shook the state's Congress government

Following the expansion, the council of ministers in the state has 19 Cabinet ministers and 10 ministers of state. The Rajasthan Cabinet can have a maximum of 30 ministers, including the Chief Minister

Pilot for rebelling against Gehlot's leadership. Vishvendra Singh in this expanded cabinet got back his old portfolio of tourism.

Pilot and 18 other MLAs rebelled against Gehlot last year. Mamta Bhupesh was allocated women and child development, Bhajan Lal PWD, Tikaram Jolly social justice and empowerment, as they were elevated to cabinet rank from minister of state.

The newly inducted ministers of state and their portfolios are Brijendra Ola (transport, devasthan and state enterprises), Murari Lal Meena (agriculture marketing, estate, tourism and civil aviation) and Rajendra Singh Gudha (sainik kalyan, home guards, panchayati raj and rural

development). Zahida Khan (science and technology, printing and stationary, primary and secondary education, art, literature and culture) is also a new minister of state in the Gehlot cabinet.

The ministers of state from the old cabinet who retained their portfolios are Arjun Singh Bamaniya (tribal area development), Ashok Chandna (sports and youth affairs) and Subhash Garg (technical education).

Those who got new portfolios are Sukhran (revenue and labour), Bhanwar Singh Bhati (power-independent charge) and Rajendra Yadav (higher education). In the new and expanded cabinet, the three women ministers are Mamta Bhupesh and Shakuntala Rawat (cabinet rank) and Zahida (minister of state).

Cabinet minister Mahesh Joshi is also chief whip while Minister of State Brijendra Ola is the son of former Union minister Sisiram Ola. Minister of State Rajendra Gudha is one of the six MLAs who defected from BSP to the Congress.

Among the 15 ministers who took oath on Sunday, Hemaram Choudhary is the senior-most MLA. He is a six-time MLA. Ram Lal Jat is a four-time MLA, Mahendrajeet Singh Malviya, Vishvendra Singh, Ramesh Meena, Brijendra Ola and Murari Meena are three-time MLAs, while rest of the ministers who took oath on Sunday are two-time MLAs.

Illegal arms supplier with Pak links held

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 22: The Special Cell of Delhi Police have busted a module involved in the sale of illegal firearms through Facebook and other social media platforms and arrested one person in this connection, an official said Monday.

The investigation revealed that the accused was having linkages across the border in Pakistan and with anti-national elements through virtual numbers on WhatsApp and through social media platforms.

The arrested accused has been identified as Hitesh Singh Rajput alias Hirpal Singh, a resident of Rajasthan. Furnishing details about the operation, a senior official said, the incident came to the fore during routine monitoring of social media.

It came to notice that some Facebook profiles had shared the videos in which they are offering sale of illegal arms and weapons. They had displayed photographs and videos of weapons and ammunition on their Facebook pages. The most prominent group out of these was a group in the name of Lawrence Bishnoi Group.

As the matter was of utmost importance after the killing of Gangster Jitender Gogi in Delhi's Rohini Court Shoot out on September 24, the matter was taken up by the Special Cell and a case under appropriate sections of law was registered.

Through technical surveillance and human intelligence, the active profiles of Hirpal Singh were identified. "A deal was struck with the Facebook profile Ids & communication was undertaken on various social media platforms. During communication, advance money for the weapons was deposited in the bank account provided by him," the official said.

The accused Hitesh was apprehended from Manesar, Haryana, when he came to receive the remaining amount and was arrested. The police said his mobile phone was forensically examined, which generated further workable inputs and leads. Further, it was revealed that the accused used to cheat the budding criminals and only supplied arms to the notorious criminals.

'No evidence underlines need for booster dose'



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 22: There is no scientific evidence so far to support the need for a booster vaccine dose against COVID-19, ICMR Director General Dr Balram Bhargava said on Monday underlining the completion of second dose for India's adult population is the priority for the government for now.

According to sources, the booster dose issue is likely to be discussed in the next meeting of the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation in India (NTAGI). "Administering the second dose of COVID-19 vaccine to all adult population and ensuring that not only India but the entire world gets vaccinated is the priority of the government for now.

"More so, there is no scientific evidence so far to support the need for a booster vaccine dose against COVID-19," Bhargava said.

On the probability of administering a booster dose, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya recently said that adequate stocks are available and the aim is to complete the vaccination of the target population with two doses. After that, a decision on booster dose would be taken based on expert recommendation, he had said.

"The government cannot take a direct decision in such a matter. When the Indian Council of Medical Research and expert team will say that a booster dose should be given, we will consider it then," he had

said, adding that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has always depended on expert opinion, be it vaccine research, manufacturing or approval.

According to officials, around 82 per cent of the eligible population in India has received the first dose of the vaccine while around 43 per cent have been fully inoculated. The total number of COVID-19 vaccine doses administered in the country has exceeded 116.87 crore, according to provisional reports till 7 am.

The government has launched a month-long 'Har Ghar Dastak' campaign for house-to-house COVID-19 vaccination of those who are yet to take a dose and for people whose second dose is overdue.

According to officials, over 12 crore beneficiaries are overdue for their second dose of COVID-19 vaccine after the expiry of the prescribed interval between the two doses.

Two full-body X-ray scanners in Bihar soon

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 22: The high-security prison in the national capital -- Bihar Jail -- will soon have two X-ray based human body scanners that can prevent infiltration of illegal articles and gadgets inside the prison premises.

"The process to procure two full-body scanners is underway. The technical evaluation is going on and we may have it in the next three months," Director General (Prisons) Sandeep Goyal said.

The Bihar Jail is strengthening its security arrangements following the major backlash it has received over its officials being caught providing facilities to the inmates. Over three dozen officials at the prison have been booked by various law enforcement agencies during the past six months for extending benefits to the prisoners in one or the other way.

JOY RIDE



Tourists ride a horse pulled cart at Dadar Beach in Mumbai

PTI PHOTO

AIR POLLUTION

Delhi lifts ban on construction

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 22: The Delhi government has lifted the ban on construction and demolition activities in view of an improvement in the air quality and inconvenience caused to workers, Environment Minister Gopal Rai said Monday.

Rai also said the government will take a call on the reopening of schools, colleges and other educational institutions and work-from-home for government staff during a review meeting on Wednesday. "We will also discuss if CNG-operated trucks carrying non-essential items can be allowed to enter Delhi if the situation continues to improve," he said.

The Delhi government Sunday night extended the ban on the entry of trucks carrying non-essential items and work-from-home for its employees till November 26 to combat air pollution and minimise its



health effects. "For some time, the air quality index remained above the 600-mark. However, steps taken to contain air pollution and change in the wind pattern have resulted in a gradual decline in air pollution levels," he said. "In view of the improvement in the air quality and inconvenience caused to workers, we have decided to lift the ban on construction and demolition activities. However, the government will continue to monitor the implementation of dust control measures by all agencies," Rai said at a press conference.

SC orders creation of seat in IIT-Bombay for Dalit student

THE BENCH OBSERVED THAT IT WILL BE A GREAT TRAVESTY OF JUSTICE, IF A DALIT BOY MISSES OUT ON ADMISSION DUE TO A TECHNICAL GLITCH

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 22: The Supreme Court Monday exercised its power under Article 142 of the Constitution to create a seat for a Dalit student at IIT-Bombay, who passed the exam but could not deposit fee on time due to technical glitches.

A bench comprising Justices D.Y. Chandrachud and A.S. Bopanna told the counsel appearing for Joint Seat Allocation Authority (JOSAA) that they should not be "waa'den on the issue and understand the realities of social life -- the practical difficulties on ground".

The bench said: "The student did not have money, then sister had to transfer money and then

there were technical issues. The boy cleared the exam. If it was his negligence then we would not have asked you... The bench further added that the matter should be dealt with a humanitarian approach and not admitting the student -- is just bureaucracy."

JOSAA submitted before the bench that all seats have been filled and no vacant seats are available. The top court exercised its powers under Article 142 of the Constitution to direct the JOSAA to earmark a seat for the student.

The bench observed that it will be a great travesty of justice, if a Dalit boy misses out on admission due to a technical glitch. The bench



said: "This court has before it a young Dalit student who is on the verge of losing a valued seat which

has been allocated in IIT Bombay..Hence, we are of the view that it's a fit case of Article 142 in

The bench ordered a seat should be allocated to the boy without disturbing the admission of any other student

the interim stage."

During the hearing, the top court had told JOSAA counsel to find a way to resolve the matter. Citing the excellent track record of the boy, the bench said the court would not come to aid of a candidate, who is not deserving.

The bench ordered a seat should be allocated to the boy without

disturbing the admission of any other student, and the creation of this seat will be subject to admission being regularised if (any other) seat falls vacant.

The student got a seat allocated at IIT-Bombay in the civil engineering branch on October 27. The petitioner had logged into the JOSAA website on October 29 and uploaded the requisite documents, but he fell short of money to pay the seat acceptance fee. His sister transferred the money to him on October 30 and he again tried to make payment several times, but failed. The student's counsel had informed the bench that he failed to submit the fee due to technical glitches.

international

of the day quote

We still have about 60 million people in this country who are eligible to be vaccinated who have not been, and that results in the dynamic of virus in the community that not only is dangerous and makes people who are unvaccinated vulnerable, but it also spills over into the vaccinated people

ANTHONY FAUCI | CHIEF MEDICAL ADVISOR TO THE PRESIDENT OF US

Pakistan and China have been connected not only in the past or present but they will remain united through our future generations also. We appreciate the valuable relationship of the peoples of the two countries

IMRAN KHAN | PAKISTAN PRIME MINISTER

The political solution for Palestine lies in a referendum among the indigenous residents (Muslim, Jewish and Christian)

HOSSEIN AMIR ABDOLLAHIAN | IRANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

UK to host G7 Summit next month

London: The UK will host a summit of G7 Foreign and Development Ministers next month in the city of Liverpool, the government announced in a statement. According to the statement issued late Sunday, Foreign Secretary Liz Truss will welcome counterparts from the US, France, Germany, Italy, Canada, Japan and the European Union (EU) from December 10-12. The UK is holding the G7 Presidency in 2021 and this is the second in-person gathering of G7 Foreign Ministers this year, following May's meeting in London.

6 killed in Nepal road accident

Kathmandu: At least six persons have been killed after a jeep lost control and fell down the hilly road in Nepal's Baitadi district, police said. The jeep met with an accident at Dasharathchand Municipality-4 in the district of far-West Nepal Sunday night. It was going from Dehimadai to Simayal of the municipality, 600 km west of Kathmandu. According to the police, five persons died on the spot while the jeep driver died on the way to the Dhangadhi hospital.

Covaxin now on UK's approved travel list

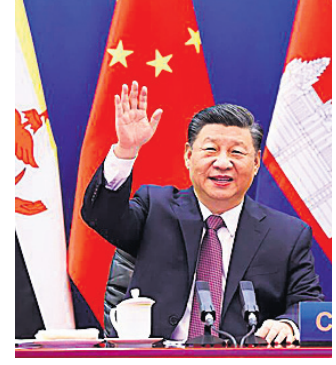
London: India's indigenously-made 'Covaxin', one of the vaccines being used nationwide in the inoculation campaign against the pandemic, is on the UK's list of approved Covid-19 vaccines for international travellers from Monday. It will benefit more fully vaccinated Indians planning travel to the UK without the need for a pre-departure PCR test or self-isolation at the address declared on their compulsory Passenger Locator Forms.

41 killed since Sudan coup

Cairo: Security forces have targeted hospitals and blocked injured protesters from treatment since the military seized control of the country last month, Sudanese doctors said Monday, after raising the total number of anti-coup protesters killed to 41. Security forces have stopped ambulances, entered emergency rooms to arrest patients, and fired tear gas inside at least two hospitals in Khartoum since the October 25 coup, according to a report from The Unified Office of Sudanese Doctors, a coalition of medical workers.

China will not bully the small: Xi to ASEAN

China, which was the first to establish a special relationship with the ASEAN countries Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, & Vietnam, reaped big benefits as the trade with the bloc touched over \$732bn last year



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, Nov 22: President Xi Jinping said Monday that China will not seek "hegemony" or bully smaller countries as he announced \$ 1.5 billion development assistance for the ASEAN besides the elevation of the ties to a comprehensive strategic partnership to strengthen security cooperation with the 10-nation bloc, amid the US push into the resource rich Indo-Pacific.

Addressing the summit via video link, President Xi reiterated that China "resolutely opposes hegemonism and power politics, wishes to maintain friendly relations with its neighbours and jointly nurture lasting peace in the region and absolutely will not seek hegemony or even less, bully the small." "As distance tests a horse's strength, time reveals a person's heart," Xi said. "China was, is and will always be ASEAN's good neighbour, good friend and good partner. I want to stress that China will unwaveringly make ASEAN the priority of its neighbouring diplo-

macy" India, which shares a special relationship with the ASEAN countries, too held its India-ASEAN summit last month in which Prime Minister Narendra Modi said 2022 would be celebrated as the ASEAN-India Friendship Year to mark 30 years of their partnership. Addressing the summit, President Xi announced the establishment of a comprehensive strategic partnership, which is diplomatic jargon to elevate the relations to a higher level. China has several categories to label its ties with different countries. The lowest is partnership, while the highest level is comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for a new era which is specific to its ties with Russia, Beijing's emerging close ally. "This is a new milestone in the history of our relations and will inject new impetus into peace, stability, prosperity and development of our region and the world," Xi said. "China is ready to provide ASEAN with another \$1.5 billion of development assistance in the next three years to support ASEAN countries' fight against Covid-19 and economic recovery," he said. China is ready to import more quality products from ASEAN countries, including buying up to \$ 150 billion worth of agricultural products from ASEAN in the next five years, he said.

In order to achieve more beneficial relations, Xi proposed close security cooperation with ASEAN countries, notwithstanding the South China Sea (SCS) dispute involving a number of ASEAN countries.



Spanish sparrows forage in Jahra Governorate, Kuwait

UNI PHOTO

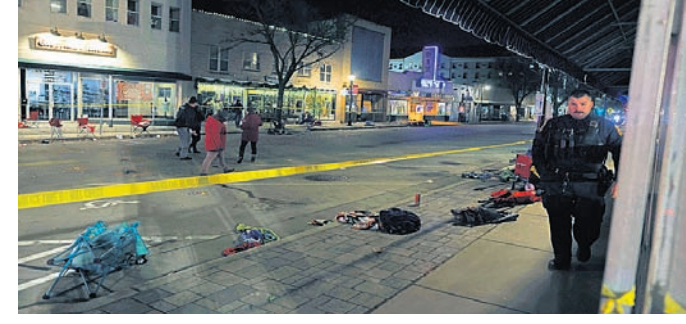
5 dead, 40 hurt after SUV speeds into crowd

AGENCIES

Washington, Nov 22: At least five people were killed and more than 40 others injured after a vehicle rammed into a crowd at an annual holiday parade in Waukesha, a city in the US state of Wisconsin, authorities said Monday.

On its official Twitter handle, the City of Waukesha said: "At this time, we can confirm that five people are deceased and over 40 are injured. However, these numbers may change as we collect additional information. Many people have self-transported to area hospitals. The Police Department has the person of interest in custody." It added that the "scene is still fluid, and the investigation is ongoing". The incident took place at around 4.30 p.m. Sunday in Waukesha, part of the Milwaukee metropolitan area, when an SUV broke through the barriers and sped into the roadway where the

Waukesha Christmas Parade



Police canvass the streets in downtown Waukesha

PTI PHOTO

Christmas parade was taking place, according to local media reports. Police have shut down nearby streets and urged the public to avoid the downtown area until further notice. Addressing a press conference on Sunday night, Waukesha Police Chief Dan Thompson had said that some of the individuals struck by the ve-

hicle were children. He had also confirmed that a person of interest was in custody, but gave no further details. Meanwhile, a White House official has confirmed that President Joe Biden has been on the incident. Waukesha Mayor Shawn Reilly said it was a "traumatic" time for the city, and called the incident a "senseless act".

A smartphone video captured the vehicle running through the crowd, hitting pedestrians and accelerating throughout the route

DEAFENING CRIES President Joe Biden has received a briefing on the situation and the White House is "closely monitoring the situation in Waukesha and our hearts go out to everyone who has been impacted by this terrible incident," said an official. "We have reached out to state and local officials to offer any support and assistance as needed," added the official.

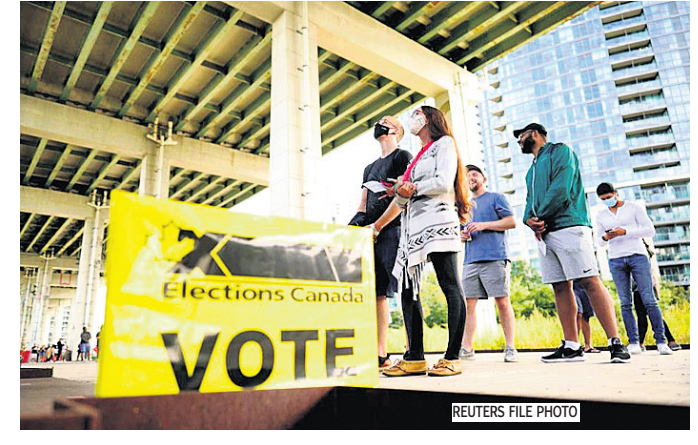
'Democracy slipping away at record rate'

'MORE COUNTRIES THAN EVER ARE SUFFERING FROM 'DEMOCRATIC EROSION', IDEA SAID IN ITS 2021 STUDY ON THE STATE OF DEMOCRACY, RELYING ON DATA COMPILED SINCE 1975

REUTERS

Brussels, Nov 22: A greater number of countries are sliding towards authoritarianism, while the number of established democracies under threat has never been so high, the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) said Monday. Populist politics, the use of Covid-19 pandemic restrictions to silence critics, a tendency of countries to mimic the anti-democratic behaviour of others, and disinformation used to divide societies are mainly to blame, the Stockholm-based intergovernmental organisation said in a report.

"More countries than ever are suffering from 'democratic erosion'," IDEA said in its 2021 study on the state of democracy, relying on data compiled since 1975. "The number of countries undergoing 'democratic backsliding' has never been as high," it said, referring to the regressive turn in



REUTERS FILE PHOTO

areas including checks on government and judicial independence, as well as media freedom and human rights. Afghanistan, which was taken over by Taliban militants in August after international troops withdrew, is the most dramatic case this year, while Myanmar's February 1 coup marked the col-

lapse of a fragile democracy. Other examples include Mali, which has suffered two coups since 2020, and Tunisia, where the president has dissolved parliament and assumed emergency powers.

Large democracies such as Brazil and the United States have seen presidents question the validity of election results, while

India has witnessed the prosecution of groups of people critical of government policies.

Hungary, Poland, Slovenia and Serbia are the European countries with the greatest declines in democracy. Turkey has seen one of the largest declines between 2010 and 2020. "In fact, 70 per cent of the global population now live either in non-democratic regimes or in democratically backsliding countries," the report said. The Covid-19 pandemic has led to a surge in authoritarian behaviour by governments. The study said that there was no evidence that authoritarian regimes were better at fighting the pandemic, despite Chinese state media reports to the contrary. "The pandemic provides additional tools and justification for repressive tactics and silencing of dissent in countries as diverse as Belarus, Cuba, Myanmar, Nicaragua and Venezuela," the report said.

SL ex-police chief indicted in Easter Sunday terror attack

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, Nov 22: Sri Lanka's former police chief Pujith Jayasundera was Monday indicted with 855 charges of criminal negligence for failing to act despite receiving prior intelligence warnings in the 2019 Easter Sunday terror attack that killed nearly 270 people, including 11 Indians.

The Attorney General read out the charges when the case was taken up before a three-judge High Court bench comprising Justices Namal Balalle, Aditya Patabendige and Mohamed Irshadeen Monday. A total of 855 charges of criminal negligence were levelled against Jayasundera, who pleaded not guilty. Jayasundera was present in the courtroom when the charges were read out against him in the case, which has over 1,200 witnesses, lawyers said. His lawyers insisted that the former Inspector General was not guilty of ignoring prior intelligence. Former defence secretary Hemasiri Fernando, who was a key member in the defence ministry when the attack took place



PUJITH JAYASUNDERA

in April 2019, also faces similar charges. Jayasundera and Fernando were suspended from service and arrested in connection with the case. However, they were later released on bail. Both were accused by the then President Maithripala Sirisena for negligence over alleged inaction to prevent attacks despite the availability of prior intelligence on the attacks. Nine suicide bombers belonging to local Islamist extremist group National Thawheed Jamaat (NTJ) linked to ISIS carried out a series of devastating blasts that tore through three churches and as many luxury hotels April 21, 2019, killing nearly 270 people, and injuring over 500.

Jobs lost, middle class Afghans slide into poverty, hunger

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kabul, Nov 22: Not long ago, Ferishta Salihi and her family had enough for a decent life. Her husband was working and earned a good salary. She could send several of her daughters to private schools. But now, after her husband lost his job following the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, she was lined up with hundreds of other Afghans, registering with the UN's World Food Program to receive food and cash that her family desperately needs just for survival. "We have lost everything. We've lost our minds," Salihi said after her registration was complete. With her was her eldest daughter, 17-year-old Fatima, whom she had to

take out of school. She can't afford to pay the fees at a private school, and the Taliban so far is not allowing teenage girls to go to public schools.

"I don't want anything for myself, I just want my children to get an education," Salihi said. "In a matter of months as Afghanistan's economy craters, many stable, middle-class families like Salihi's have plummeted into desperation, uncertain of how they will pay for their next meal. That is one reason the United Nations is raising alarm over a hunger crisis, with 22% of the population of 38 million already near-famine and another 36% facing acute food insecurity - mainly because people can't afford food. "The economy was already in trouble under the previous, US-



Representational image

backed government, which often could not pay its employees. The situation was worsened by the coronavirus pandemic and by a punishing drought that drove up food prices. Already in 2020, nearly half of Afghanistan's population was living in poverty. Then the world's

shutdown of funding to Afghanistan after the Taliban's August 15 seizure of power pulled the rug out from under the country's small middle class. International funding once paid for much of the government budget—and without it, the Taliban have largely been unable to pay

MATTER OF CONCERN

The economy was already in trouble under the previous, US-backed government, which often could not pay its employees

The situation was worsened by the coronavirus pandemic and by a punishing drought that drove up food prices

salaries or provide public services. The international community has not recognized Taliban rule, demanding the militants form a more inclusive government and respect human rights. International aid also fueled projects around the country that provided jobs, most of which are now on hold. The country's banks are cut off from the inter-

national banking system, further snarling the private sector. The country's economy is estimated to have contracted 40% in just three months. Hospitals are seeing increasing numbers of emaciated, malnourished children, mostly from the country's poorest families who were already barely getting by. Now families that have seen their once-stable livelihoods wrecked also find themselves with nothing and must scrape for ways to cover costs of food, rent and medical expenses. The US and other international donors are funneling money to Afghanistan for humanitarian aid through UN Agencies, which ensure the money doesn't go into the coffers of the Taliban government. The main focus has been on two tracks.

of the day quote

Cairn is working on it... now the ball is in their court. As soon as they take the cases back, we will give them the cheque. In those cases where there is no money to be refunded, settlement there would be faster

TARUN BAJAJ | REVENUE SECRETARY

One of the prominent functions of the securities market is to ensure that savings get channelised into investments and result into capital formation and wealth creation for all the stakeholders through a well-regulated capital market

GP GARG | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SEBI

We are placed in a strategically sound position owing to our understanding of tech, the real pulse of India that is at the centre of online gaming evolution that we as a nation are witnessing

SAUMYA SINGH RATHORE | CO-FOUNDER, WINZO

SHORT TAKES

Six firms get Sebi approval for IPOs

New Delhi: Six companies, including pharmacy retail chain MedPlus Health Services, travel technology services firm RateGain Travel Technologies and microlender Fusion Micro Finance, have received markets regulator Sebi's go ahead to raise funds through IPOs.

Exports rise 18.8% to \$20bn in Nov

New Delhi: The country's exports rose 18.8 per cent to \$20.01 billion during the three-week period of this month, due to healthy growth in sectors such as petroleum products, engineering goods, chemicals and gems and jewellery, according to the preliminary data of the commerce ministry.

MMT partners with Aviation Ministry

New Delhi: Online travel services firm MakeMyTrip Monday said it will partner with the Ministry of Civil Aviation to promote regional air connectivity through the UDAN scheme.

RBI's draft to merge PMC, USFB out

New Delhi: Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Monday unveiled a draft scheme for amalgamation of the troubled Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative Bank (PMC) and Unity Small Finance Bank (USFB).



You did a ₹18,300 crore IPO out of which 55 percent was secondary. You did a price optimisation. It's the Chinese investors who sold their shares through this IPO

ASHNEER GROVER | FOUNDER, BHARATPE

MILESTONE MOMENT FOR TRUECALLER

Caller identification app Truecaller Monday said it has crossed the milestone of 300 million monthly users with India. "Just over a year ago, we were 250 million strong, which means 50 million new users have adopted Truecaller globally since October 2020 in order to build their safety net," a statement said.



Airtel hikes prepaid tariffs by 20-25%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 22: Telecom operator Bharti Airtel Monday announced 20-25 per cent tariff hikes for various prepaid offerings, including tariffed voice plans, unlimited voice bundles and data top-ups, and said the new rates will come into effect from November 26.

In a statement announcing the revised mobile tariffs, "Airtel said it has always maintained that the mobile Average Revenue Per User (ARPU) needs to be at ₹200 and ultimately at ₹300 to provide a reasonable return on capital that allows for a financially healthy business model."

Unregulated crypto fuelling ransomware attacks globally

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 22: Fuelled by cryptocurrencies, ransomware was involved in 79 per cent of the global cyber security incidents in the last 18 months of pandemic, led by Conti and REvil ransomware attacks, a new report showed Monday.

global cyber security firm Sophos. "Over the coming year, the ransomware landscape will become both more modular and uniform, with attack specialists offering different elements of an attack as-a-service and providing playbooks with tools and techniques that enable different adversary groups to implement very similar attacks."



An affiliate of Conti ransomware leaked the implementation guide provided by the operators, revealing the step-by-step tools and techniques that attackers could use to deploy the ransomware.

Ransomware thrives because of its ability to adapt and innovate. It is no longer enough for organisations to assume they're safe by simply monitoring security tools and ensuring they are detecting malicious code

CHESTER WISNIEWSKI | PRINCIPAL RESEARCH SCIENTIST, SOPHOS

termining how best to extract the largest payments from victims, insurance companies, and negotiators,

Wisniewski said in a statement. During 2021, Sophos researchers uncovered cryptominers such as Lemon Duck and the less common, MrbMiner, taking advantage of the access provided by newly-reported vulnerabilities and targets already breached by ransomware operators to install cryptominers on computers and servers.

CENTRE'S FY22 FISCAL DEFICIT MAY BE BETTER AT 6.6%: FITCH

Fitch noted that the risks to India's medium-term growth outlook are narrowing with rapid economic recovery from the pandemic and easing financial sector pressures



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 22: The Centre could better its fiscal deficit at 6.6 per cent of GDP in this financial year on stronger-than-expected revenue buoyancy, even if the budgeted disinvestment target is not met, Fitch Ratings has said.

The international rating agency had last week kept the sovereign rating unchanged at 'BBB-' with a negative outlook, and said that the risks to India's medium-term growth outlook are narrowing with rapid economic recovery from the pandemic and easing financial sector pressures.

"We forecast that the central government will achieve a deficit of 6.6 per cent of GDP in the current fiscal year, largely as a result of stronger-than-expected revenue buoyancy. Our forecasts assume that the government does fall short of its budget target for disinvestment," Fitch Ratings Director (Asia-Pacific Sovereigns) Jeremy Zook said in an

GDP may grow 8.1% in Q2: SBI

MUMBAI: The country's GDP growth is likely to be around 8.1 per cent in the second quarter of the current financial year and in the range of 9.3-9.6 per cent during fiscal 2022, according to an SBI research report. In the first quarter of FY 22, the economy grew 20.1 per cent. For the fiscal 2022, SBI has estimated real GDP growth to be at 9.5 per cent -- 7.9 per cent in Q2, 6.8 per cent in Q3 and 6.1 per cent in Q4.

India's general government debt rose to 89.6% of GDP in FY21. Fitch forecasts the ratio to decline slightly to 89%, still well above the 60.35 'BBB' median in 2021

The two key positive triggers could lead to a revision of the outlook to stable. First, implementation of a credible medium-term fiscal strategy to bring post-pandemic general government debt down toward 'BBB' category peers levels

Second, higher medium-term investment and growth rates without the creation of macroeconomic imbalances, such as from successful structural reform implementation and a healthier financial sector

email interview with PTI. In the 2021-22 (April-March) Budget presented February 1, the government had pegged the fiscal

deficit, or gap between the Centre's expenditure and revenue, at 6.8 per cent of GDP or ₹15.06 lakh crore. At the end of September, which is six months in the financial year, the fiscal deficit touched 35 per cent of budget estimates.

Asked when Fitch expects a reversal in India's rating outlook to stable, Zook said, "We do not have a specific timetable for resolving the negative outlook -- which could result in a rating downgrade or stabilisation of the outlook at the current rating level. We normally aim to resolve such outlooks within a two-year time horizon, but it can take longer. We seek to review India's sovereign rating twice annually."

Co-op societies can't use bank in their names: RBI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 22: The RBI Monday cautioned the public against co-operative societies using 'bank' in their names as well as accepting deposits from people who are not their members.

After the amendment in the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, effective September 29, 2020, co-operative societies cannot use the words "bank", "banker" or "banking" as part of their names, except as permitted under the provisions or by the Reserve Bank of India.

In a statement, RBI said it has come to notice that some cooperative societies are using the word 'bank' in their names in violation of the Banking Regulation Act.



It has also come to the notice of RBI that some co-operative societies are accepting deposits from non-members nominal members associate members which is tantamount to conducting banking business in violation of the provisions. "Members of the public are hereby informed that such societies have neither been issued any licence under BR Act, 1949 nor are they authorised by the RBI for doing banking business," RBI said.

SBI LISTS \$650MN GREEN BONDS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

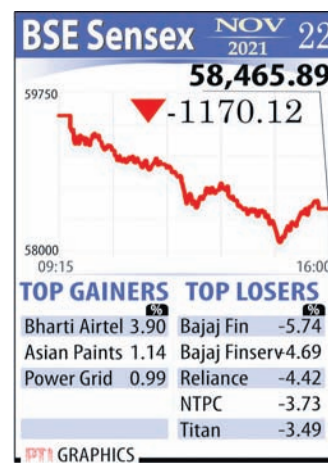
Mumbai, Nov 22: State Bank of India (SBI) Monday listed its \$650-million green bonds simultaneously on the India International Exchange (India INX) and the Luxembourg Stock Exchange.

This dual listing is in line with this year's topic of the World Investor Week (WIW), 'sustainable finance', as indicated by regulatory body International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA), India INX said in a statement.

The WIW 2021 is being observed starting today till November 28. Last year in November, India INX, had announced its MoU with the Luxembourg Stock Exchange for cooperation in financial services industry, maintenance of orderly markets in securities respective country, ESG and green finance in the local market.

MARKET IN BEAR GRIP

Sensex nosedives; worst in 7 months



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 22: Equity benchmark Sensex plummeted 1,170 points Monday, dragged by losses in Reliance Industries, Bajaj Finance and Kotak Bank.

The 30-share BSE index ended 1,170.12 points or 1.96 per cent lower at 58,465.89. Similarly, the NSE Nifty fell 348.25 points or 1.96 per cent to 17,416.55.

Among top losers, Reliance Industries (RIL) sank over 4 per cent, after the company shelved a proposed deal to sell a 20 per cent stake in its oil refinery and petrochemical business to Saudi Aramco for an asking of \$15 billion.

Shares of newly-listed One97 Communications, Paytm's parent company, continued to decline for the second day in a row Monday,

tumbling nearly 14 per cent. Other laggards included Bajaj Finance, Bajaj Finserv, NTPC, SBI and Titan. On the other hand, Bharti Airtel, Asian Paints, PowerGrid and IndusInd Bank were the gainers.

"Finally the bears got their act together after a long wait as a series of events over the weekend gave them the upper hand with almost all the sectoral indices barring the metal index plunging," said S Ranganathan, Head of Research at LKP Securities.

The repealing of the agriculture laws had an impact on the PSU stocks while the O2C deal not going through left a 4.5 per cent cut on Reliance, he noted.

Meanwhile, international oil benchmark Brent crude rose 0.34 per cent to \$79.16 per barrel.

JSW ISP coordination meet sabotaged

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 22: Handful of vested people sabotaged the coordination meeting held for JSW Integrated Steel Plant (ISP) roll out during a recent event held at Dhinkia, Jagatsinghpur, sources said.

Such incident raises many questions on the value addition possibility of minerals within the state of Odisha.

"When not even a single household is being displaced from Dhinkia village by the said project, it is surprising that a few people from the village went on overdrive to dis-



rupt the coordination meeting by not allowing the district administration, supporters or company officials to put forth their views. Unfortunately, it is observed that

opposition to big ticket projects has become a norm," sources claimed. Odisha is the major supplier of raw materials to other states.

Unfortunately, a minuscule percentage of this resource undergoes value addition within the state. In FY20-21, 20% of the iron ore despatch was exported; 41 % was despatched toward industries within the state and 39% was routed to industries outside the state, as per official sources.

"The value of iron ore lying beneath the ground is minuscule, however, when processed by an integrated steel plant, it is changed

into a high quality steel product and here lies a difference in value. Much of created value is deserved by the state and should stay within the state," sources stated.

Odisha is considered a major steel hub because of RSP & NINL. These plants show how steel plant can transform the socio-economic reality of a place. Rourkela Steel Plant being a 4.85MTPA gives direct employment to approximately 15,000 people in the vicinity so it is derived that a plant with 13.5MTPA (JSW proposed project) capacity can generate about three times the employment potential.

Domestic two-wheeler volume to shrink this fiscal: ICRA

ICRA SAID THAT THE LACKLUSTRE FESTIVE SEASON PERFORMANCE ALSO HIGHLIGHTS THE CONTINUED WARINESS AMONG THE LOW-INCOME POPULATION REGARDING BIG-TICKET PURCHASES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 22: Domestic two-wheeler (2W) volume is expected to shrink by 1-4 per cent year-on-year this fiscal, impacted by relentless increase in 2W prices as well as record high petrol cost, among others, said credit ratings agency ICRA.

"While the demand for premium two-wheelers, which comprise around 15 per cent of the overall domestic volumes, has fared relatively better, the OEMs (Original equipment manufacturers) have faced supply constraints due to semi-conductor chip shortages," ICRA said, adding, overall, given the existing inventory at dealerships post-festive season (40-45

days), a high growth in wholesale dispatches in the remaining part of the fiscal is unlikely.

"The entry-segment (75-110cc), which dominates two-wheeler sales in India, has remained subdued this year, reflecting extensive (and extended) impact of the second wave of the pandemic. The lacklustre festive season performance also highlighted continued wariness among the low-income population regarding big-ticket purchases," said Rohan Kanwar Gupta, Vice President and Sector Head for Corporate Ratings at ICRA.

Income uncertainties, caused by job losses, salary cuts or limited increments, while facing Covid-related medical expenses (actual or



anticipated) and skyrocketing cost of two-wheeler ownership, have led to purchase deferrals this fes-

tive season, he said. According to ICRA, the rural offtake has lagged urban, possibly

due to moderated agri-sentiments caused by uneven monsoons and delayed harvesting across regions.

ICRA Ratings expects domestic two-wheeler volumes to contract by 1-4% YoY in FY2022, following a weak festive season performance for the industry

Also, the sales of 8.05 million two-wheelers in the domestic market in April-October period of FY2022 are flattish on a YoY basis despite a severely contracted base, ICRA stated

The relentless increase in 2W prices during the year and record-high petrol rates have kept consumers away from dealerships, according to the credit ratings agency

Additionally, the financiers have remained cautious, after witnessing an increase in delinquency levels

In the urban markets, the delay in reopening of schools and colleges, weak income sentiments due to job losses or salary cuts (in the aftermath of the pandemic) and extended work-from-home policies by corporates, have impacted sales, it added.

Noting that while the recent cut in petrol prices, the upcoming wedding season (typically lends itself to increase in rural markets) and opening up of labour-intensive industries like travel, tourism, and hospitality are favourable for demand recovery in the forthcoming months, the ratings agency said that a meaningful growth is likely to be seen only in the next fiscal.

Zverev ends '21 on high

Rohit lauds Venkatesh Iyer's bowling efficacy

ASSOCIATED PRESS
Turin, Nov 22: Audacious swing-volley winners. Serve-and-volleying. An ace out wide on his first match point — with his second serve.

Alexander Zverev showed off new, more aggressive, tactics in a dominant 6-4, 6-4 win over second-ranked Daniil Medvedev Sunday to lift the trophy at the ATP Finals for the second time.

A day after beating top-ranked Novak Djokovic over three sets in the semifinals, Zverev raised his game to a new dimension.

"It was definitely a game plan," Zverev said. "He's one of the best baseline players in the world, and against him you need to take control over the points, and I did that today and that's why it worked out very well for me."

It was a similar approach to how Djokovic beat Medvedev in the Paris Masters final earlier this month, when the Serb attacked the net more often than usual.

"He's been playing great tennis for a while but now he's also playing very intelligent tennis," said Zverev's older brother and fellow pro, Mischa, who has been coaching him in the absence of Alexander Zverev Sr.

"He's improving his game," Mischa said in an on-court interview shortly after the final, as Zverev was still basking in the crowd and signing autographs. "I've seen him hit his backhand slice approach shot and hit a volley drop shot to finish off the point, serve-and-volley. I really

enjoyed watching it." Mischa, a pure serve-and-volleyer who reached a career-high ranking of No.25 in 2017, is clearly urging his brother to come forward more.

At 6-foot-6 (1.98-meters) and with a huge wingspan, Zverev can be quite an imposing figure at the net. "That's what I told him. I'm like, 'Just be creative and play smart, play with your heart and your brain,'" Mischa said. "That's what he was doing. He wasn't just playing solid tennis, he was playing mostly creative tennis."

Medvedev, the US Open champion, won this event last year and had beaten Zverev five consecutive times.

The title culminates quite a year for Zverev, who also won the gold medal at the Tokyo Olympics and who has now finished 2021 with more wins on tour — 59, one more than Medvedev — than anyone else.

The main thing missing in



Zverev's trophy collection is a Grand Slam title, having lost an epic final to Dominic Thiem in

last year's US Open final, when Zverev served for the title in the deciding fifth set.

Medvedev said that Zverev is capable of beating anybody. "He definitely can win a Grand Slam because it's just obvious," the Russian said. "But he's not the only one. That's where it gets tough. You need to win seven matches to be a Grand Slam champion. Is he capable? Yes. Is he going to do it? We never know."

The final was a rematch of a round-robin encounter Tuesday, when Medvedev beat Zverev in a third-set tie-breaker.

This one went Zverev's way from the start, as the German crushed a huge backhand to the corner then benefitted from a net-corer winner to break Medvedev's serve in the third game of the match.

Helped by fast conditions inside the Pala Alpitour, Zverev was virtually untouchable on his serve, winning 20 of 25 service points in the first set.

Zverev broke again in the opening game of the second set and hardly wavered the rest of the way. This marked the first edition of the season-ending event for the top eight players in Turin — after 12 years in London, where Zverev won his first finals title in 2018.

"Obviously London was an incredible event but I think... Italy has topped it," Zverev said. "What makes it so special here in Italy is the fans, because the fans are absolutely insane," Zverev added. "It's the loudest crowd, it's the most energetic crowd."

Earlier, Pierre-Hugues Herbert and Nicolas Mahut won the doubles title by beating Rajeev Ram and Joe Salisbury 6-4, 7-6 (7-0).



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Nov 22: Captain Rohit Sharma was Sunday pleased to see up and coming all-rounder Venkatesh Iyer returning with tidy figures as India completed an easy 3-0 clean sweep of the T20I series against the visiting New Zealand here.

One of the bright spots of the win was Venkatesh Iyer who bowled for the first time in his career and returned with a tidy figures of 3-0-12-1, bowling in the crucial middle overs.

"Good to see Venkatesh Iyer bowling those overs with the skills he has. Important for us going forward. I would prefer that going forward," Rohit said at the post-match presentation.

After shining bright for Kolkata Knight Riders in the UAE leg of the IPL, Venkatesh made his India debut in the series. It is widely seen that he's being groomed for the pace-bowling all-rounder's role.

Talking about the positives of the series, Rohit hailed Harshal Patel who had a dream debut in Ranchi returning with a match-

winning 2/25. The RCB and Haryana all-rounder also impressed with the bat lower down the order with an 11-ball 18.

"Teams around the world bat deep till No.8 and No.9. Harshal, when he plays for Haryana, opens the batting for them. And then Deepak, we've seen what he did in Sri Lanka. Chahal was looking forward to bat as well," he said.

The captain said his spinners did well in the entire series. "The way Ravichandran Ashwin bowled, Axar Patel and how Yuzvendra Chahal came back. I wouldn't say it worked out well. Room for improvement in the middle order. The batting front — KL missed out today but his form is critical. Middle order didn't get much opportunity except today."

Mitchell Santner, who stood-in as captain for New Zealand in the final T20I, said they were outplayed by an all-round India.

"They bowled very well at the top, especially Axar. Credit to India for the way they played throughout the series. We were probably off. Came up against a very good Indian side," he said.

Spurs rally to win; stroll for City

REAL RETAKE LEAGUE LEAD AFTER VICTORY



STEPPING UP: Antonio Conte is ecstatic after the match as he congratulates one of Spurs' goal scorers — Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg, Sunday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Nov 22: The boos rang out as Tottenham's players left the field after going a sixth straight half of play in the Premier League without a shot on target.

His team trailing 1-0 and being outplayed at home by an injury-hit Leeds, it likely dawned on Antonio Conte that he had a bigger job on his hands at Tottenham than he might have imagined.

The Italian's halftime team talk made all the difference. Tottenham came out with much more intensity and delivered a second-half performance more in its new manager's image as goals by two unlikely sources — Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg and Sergio Reguilon — secured a 2-1 win Sunday.

In the earlier game, Manchester City swept past Everton 3-0 to move

back to second place, three points behind Chelsea.

It was a first league win under Conte since the Italian replaced Nuno Espirito Santo as Tottenham manager before the international break. His renowned passion was evident in the final minutes as he whirled his arms, urging fans to get behind the players to see out victory.

They did, and Spurs climbed to seventh place — above Manchester United, which plunged even lower in the standings on the day it fired manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer after a string of humiliating results.

Conte was once linked with potentially replacing Solskjaer at United but he has ended up at Tottenham and has yet to lose, having started with a win in the Europa Conference League and a 0-0 draw at Everton in the Premier League.

Man City's main creative threat

this season is coming from a defender: Portugal full back Joao Cancelo set up five goals in two games for City before the most recent international break and he was at it again against Everton, providing a sumptuous outside-of-the-boot pass for the 44th-minute goal by Raheem Sterling that set up a routine win at Etihad Stadium.

If that got City fans excited, Rodri's thunderbolt from 30 meters (yards) in the 55th was another moment to get them off their seats. Bernardo Silva added a third goal in the 86th.

It was a solid response by City to big wins by title rivals Chelsea (3-0 at Leicester) and Liverpool (4-0 at home to Arsenal) on Saturday and achieved without key players like Ruben Dias, who was rested, and Kevin De Bruyne, who is isolating after contracting the coronavirus.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Madrid, Nov 22: Real Madrid kept their momentum from before the international break by winning their fourth game in a row and getting back to the top of the Spanish league. Madrid cruised to a 4-1 win over 10-man Granada Sunday after dominating from the start to reclaim first place.

Marco Asensio, Nacho Fernandez, Vinicius Junior and Ferland Mendy all scored to give Madrid its fourth straight victory in all competitions.

Carlo Ancelotti's team reached 30 points from 13 league matches, one more point than Real Sociedad, which was held to a 0-0 draw at home against Valencia. Madrid is two points in front of Sevilla, which drew 2-2 at home



Vinicius Junior reacts after scoring against Granada, Sunday

Inter revive Serie A title bid

Kaur included in WBBL team of the tourney

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Milan, Nov 22: And then there were none. Serie A leaders Napoli lost for the first time this season as Inter Milan reinvigorated their Italian title bid with a 3-2 win Sunday.

Inter, the defending champion, cut the gap on Napoli and AC Milan to four points after 13 rounds and ended Napoli's status as the last remaining unbeaten team across Europe's five major leagues.

Dries Mertens, who had set up a pulsating finale with his club-record 137th goal for Napoli, missed the chance to equalise in injury time when he blazed his shot over.

Spalletti's players wore jerseys paying tribute to soccer great Diego Maradona, who died November 25



Lautaro Martinez paying tribute to late Diego Maradona after scoring

last year: It was another Argentine who scored the winning goal. Lautaro Martinez scored Inter's third on a counterattack in the 61st minute,

set up by compatriot Joaquín Correa. Inter goalkeeper Samir Handanovic preserved the result with a brilliant save to deny Mário Rui in injury time, forcing the ball onto the crossbar, before Mertens' miss.

The visitors had struck first in the 17th when Piotr Zielinski won the ball off Nicolò Barella and ran forward to score from Lorenzo Insigne's pass.

Hakan Çalhanoğlu equalised with a penalty in the 25th, awarded after Kalidou Koulibaly was penalised through VAR for hand ball, and Ivan Perišić headed Inter's second before the break.

Martinez scored but Mertens ensured a lively finale when he pulled one back in the 78th with a brilliant shot under the crossbar.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Adelaide, Nov 22: Indian T20 skipper Harmanpreet Kaur has been named in the Women's Big Bash League's (WBBL) official "Team of the Tournament" after her stellar all-round performance for Melbourne Renegades this season.

Kaur has shone bright with both bat and ball for the Renegades, scoring 399 runs with three half centuries. Her strike rate has been an impressive 135.25 while her average is 66.5. Her highest score was an unbeaten 81-run knock against the Sydney Thunder last week. She has also hit a competition-best 18 sixes till now.

Kaur has also proved her mettle with the ball following an injury to the team's star leg-spinner, Georgia Wareham. The 32-year-old has been brilliant in the power play and has snared 15 wickets.

Kaur is the only Indian to feature in the best XI of WBBL despite some quality performances by the likes of Smriti Mandhana, who became the first from the country to hit a century in the league with a record-equalling 114 not out.

Apart from Kaur, New Zealand all-rounder Sophie Devine, who plays for Perth Scorchers, was the only other international player in the best XI. The selection panel included cricket.com.au journalist Laura Jolly, former Australia players Lisa Sthalekar and Mel Jones and Australia national selector Shawn Flegler.

Fans shift focus to hockey, wait for a possible Indo-Pak clash



INDO-ASIA NEWS AGENCY

New Delhi, Nov 22: Following India's 10-wicket defeat to Pakistan in the ICC T20 World Cup recently, fans here are looking forward to another clash — albeit on a different turf — and hoping India get a 'chance' to beat the arch-rivals when the FIH Junior Hockey World Cup begins in Bhubaneswar November 24.

Soon after the Pakistan junior hockey team landed in Delhi November 20, fans started talking about a possible India-Pakistan

clash. While that will depend on the two teams' performance in their respective pools, there is no denying that it has created quite a buzz in hockey circles.

Every time India and Pakistan have played on the hockey turf, expectations are sky high on either side of the border, and it's going to be no different this time around as well when — and if — the two young teams meet at the iconic Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar.

For the players, it will be a contest to beat the opponents with stamina and stick-work.



The Junior World Cup will begin with the match between Belgium and South Africa November 24. India will also start its campaign against France the same day.

Teams from 16 top countries are participating in the tournament. Canada, France and Poland are in Pool B along with India. In Pool D, Pakistan have to deal with Argentina, Egypt and Germany. Pool A consists of Belgium, Chile, Malaysia and South Africa, while Pool C has South Korea, Netherlands, Spain and the United States.

Teams from Australia, New

Zealand and England have withdrawn due to the COVID-19 regulations in their respective countries. Obviously, the competition level of the tournament has dipped a little because of major teams pulling out, but the curiosity around a possible Indo-Pak match has brought back the enthusiasm.

A clash between the arch-rivals is only possible if both teams advance from their respective groups — and that can only happen if they finish among the top two in their pools.

In the event of India and Pakistan achieving either first or second

TEAMS PRACTICE AT KIIT & KISS STADIUM

BHUBANESWAR: The FIH Odisha Men's Junior World Cup Bhubaneswar 2021 is all set to start in a day's time at the iconic Kalinga Stadium. However, to give the participating 16 teams more time and space for their practice, Government of Odisha added KIIT & KISS Hockey Stadium as a practice ground for the mega event. The venue will be available for practice from 8 am to 10 pm throughout the event.



positions in their respective pools, they can meet in the semifinals or the final.

While it's actually hard to predict an India-Pakistan clash, given that teams like Germany, Argentina, Belgium and Netherlands are also in the fray, anything is possible in

sports, and fans would be hoping and praying for their favourite teams to top their respective pools.

After missing the 2016 edition of the junior World Cup in Lucknow, Pakistan will be only too happy to be here playing in the global tournament.