



BIG CHANGE
Actor Madhuri Dixit says this is a wonderful time for women to be in films
LEISURE | P2



OMICRON THREAT GROWS
13 cases of the new coronavirus variant Omicron have been found in the Netherlands and two each in Denmark and Australia
INTERNATIONAL | P10



INDIA EYE VICTORY
New Zealand, chasing 284 for a win in the first Test against India, are 4 for 1 at stumps
SPORTS | P12



Parl Winter Session to begin today
New Delhi: The Winter Session of Parliament is set to begin on a stormy note Monday, with the government ready to bring in a bill to repeal the three contentious farm laws. The Farm Laws Repeal Bill is slated to be introduced in the Lok Sabha. Thousands of farmers have been protesting for the past one year to repeal the three legislations. The Bill states that though "only a small group of farmers are protesting" against these legislations, the need of the hour is to take along everyone for inclusive growth.
MORE P9



NZ MP cycles to hospital in labour
Melbourne: New Zealand Member of Parliament Julie Anne Genter got on her bicycle early Sunday and headed to the hospital. She was already in labour and she gave birth an hour later. "Big news!" the Greens politician posted on her Facebook page a few hours later. "At 3.04 am this morning we welcomed the newest member of our family. I genuinely wasn't planning to cycle in labour, but it did end up happening." The island nation of 5 million already has a reputation for down-to-earth politicians.

JSW Cement
The Leaders' Choice
1800 266 266 1 (toll free)

3 Forest personnel injured in attack on patrol vessel
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kendrapara, Nov 28: Three Forest department personnel were injured in an attack by the crew of a trawler who were illegally fishing in the prohibited seawaters of Gahirmatha sanctuary in Kendrapara district, officials said Sunday.
Twelve forest personnel were in the patrol vessel that was attacked on Saturday, they said. The vessel, which was partially damaged, was deployed in the area for the protection of olive ridley turtles.
It was an "organised" attack, a Forest official said, adding that the trawler allegedly chased the patrol vessel and hit it. The Forest personnel were outnumbered by the crew on the trawler and despite provocation, the forest personnel did not open fire, he said.
The Forest personnel, however, managed to overpower the crew of the trawler and arrest nine of them. They were handed over to the Dhamra marine police station for further action, the official said.
The trawler had trespassed into the prohibited sanctuary corridors, contravening the provisions of Wildlife Protection Act and Orissa Marine Fishing Regulation Act, among others.
Fishing activity has been prohibited within a seaward radius of 20 km of Gahirmatha marine sanctuary from November 1 to protect olive ridley turtles.



A hot air balloon, designed in the shape of the coronavirus, floats in the sky during 'Fanush festival' in Kolkata, Sunday
PTI PHOTO

IMD forecasts another cyclone

Bhubaneswar, Nov 28: A fresh low pressure area that is likely to form over South Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal (BoB) around November 30 may intensify into a 'cyclonic storm', a senior IMD official said Sunday.
Speaking to reporters in Delhi, IMD Director General Mrutyunjay Mohapatra said a low pressure area is likely to form over South Andaman Sea and the Bay of Bengal around November 30.
"It is likely to become more marked and move west-north-

westwards during subsequent 48 hours. This could become a cyclonic system in the first week of December, affecting Andhra Pradesh and Odisha," he said.
Under its influence, squally weather with maximum sustained wind speed reaching up to 60 kmph is likely to prevail over South Andaman Sea and adjoining southeast Bay of Bengal from November 30 and December 2, he said.
When the system reaches the central Bay of Bengal, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh States would experience its impact, the DG said.

The system would also bring rainfall in the coastal and adjoining districts of Odisha from December 3. However, the possible location and intensity of the rainfall will be known once the low pressure area takes shape, Mohapatra stated. The IMD DG has advised the farmers to protect their harvested paddy and other produce as rainfall would occur.
The fishermen have been advised not to venture into the deep sea areas of west-central Bay of Bengal from December 2 as the sea condition is likely to be rough.

State gears up to tackle Omicron

■ Collectors, SPs, CDMOs asked to remain fully prepared; strengthen enforcement activities
POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 28: Amid the rising Covid-19 cases in some parts of India and in some foreign countries, state government Sunday geared up to tackle a possible third wave of the pandemic in Odisha.
Chief Secretary SC Mahapatra held a meeting via videoconferencing with all district Collectors, SPs, Chief District Medical Officers (CDMOs) and concerned officials to remain alert for the possible third wave of the pandemic. He directed the officials to remain prepared for the possible third wave.
Schools and colleges have opened in the state and livelihood and economic activities have also started. So, keeping all these in view, all have to remain fully prepared and cautious for another resurgence in the Covid-19 cases, he said.
The Chief Secretary advised all the block officials, ward members, Anganwadi workers and health workers to collect ground reports of Covid infection in their respective areas and immediately take action if signs of Covid spread are seen. Amid the emergence of



Chief Secretary directed all concerned to prioritise door-to-door vaccination and ensure strict actions against Covid norm violators

Mahapatra insisted on streamlining the process of releasing compensation, so that the family members of Covid victims get the financial aid on time

new the Covid variant, Omicron, he directed all to emphasise on door-to-door vaccination and ensure strict actions against Covid norm violators.
The authorities should accelerate the vaccination process by starting door-to-door vaccination campaign and strictly implement all the guidelines like usage of masks and hand sanitizers, said Mahapatra.
Further, he insisted on streamlining the process of releasing compensation, so that the family members of Covid victims get the financial aid on time. Mahapatra further instructed the officials to ensure strict enforcement of Covid-19 protocols like social distance, wearing of mask, hand sanitization, etc.
Development Commissioner Pradeep Kumar Jena said that Odisha has gained international recognition in the management of Covid pandemic. He advised the district Collectors to maintain the reputation on implementation of the vaccination drive also. He said that the village-level vaccination plan be implemented on a priority basis. Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Health and Family Welfare, RK Sharma informed the Collectors about the detection of new variant of Covid-19 in some foreign countries and said it was spreading faster.
Keeping this in mind, 100 per cent vaccination of all above 18 years needs to be the major preventive measure, Sharma pointed out. He also directed to do genome sequencing while sending swabs for Covid-19 test. The Collectors, superintendents of police and district chief medical officers of all the districts presented the latest information on the Covid status and preventive measures in their respective areas taken through videoconferencing. Senior officials from the Health and Family Welfare department attended the meeting.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Of course, he is worried. Not about the new Covid variant but the upcoming elections.

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP. MAX	28.0°C	28.2°C
TEMP. MIN	17.6°C	16.6°C
Humidity	69%	64%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Partly cloudy sky	

Maoist killed in encounter

Bhubaneswar, Nov 28: A senior cadre Maoist has been killed in an encounter with security forces during an anti-Maoist operation in Bolangir district, DGP Abhay said Sunday.
An anti-Maoist operation was launched Saturday evening based on reliable information in the Junanibahal area of Khaprakhol police station in the district. The Maoists first fired at the security personnel and in retaliation, the security personnel returned the fire, he said. In the exchange of fire one Maoist identified as Shankar, a member of the Bolangir-Bargarh-Mahasamund division of the Left-Wing Extremists (LWEs), has been neutralised, the DGP said.
Abhay informed that there were six to eight Naxals in the area dur-

ing the exchange of fire. Arms and ammunition and some incriminating Maoist materials have been seized from the spot. Combing operation is still underway.
Abhay also interacted with the team that conducted the operation. The DGP lauded the police team who participated in the combing operation.
The Odisha Police, in a Twitter post, said that arms and ammunition, and Maoist literature have been seized from the spot. It also appealed to the Maoists to lay down their arms and take benefit of the rehabilitation policy of the state government.
Though the Maoist activities largely declined in the state, there is still some presence in Bolangir and Bargarh. Adequate security personnel have been deployed in these areas to counter the Maoist activities, he added.

PM SKIPS ALL-PARTY MEET

■ All Opposition parties demanded the sacking of Minister of State for Home Ajay Kumar Mishra, whose son is accused of running over farmers in Lakhimpur Kheri
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



New Delhi, Nov 28: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Sunday skipped an all-party meeting called by his government, a day before the start of the Winter Session of Parliament.
Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal were present from the government side. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi denied that the Prime Minister violated a tradition by skipping the all-party meet.
"There was no tradition of Prime Minister attending the all party

meeting it was started by Modiji. He couldn't attend the today's meeting," said 'Joshi, adding 31 parties attended the meeting.
"We were expecting that the Prime Minister will attend the meeting and will share something with us. We wanted to ask more about the farm laws as there are some apprehensions that these three farm laws may again come in some other form," said Mallikarjun Kharge, Congress leader in the Rajya Sabha.

The Congress demanded that compensation be paid to families of farmers who passed away during the protest. The fuel price rise and tensions with China at the Line of Actual Control were also raised by the party.
AAP leader Sanjay Singh walked out of the all-party meeting alleging he was not allowed to speak. Singh wanted to raise the farmers' demand for law on Minimum Support Prices.
"The government don't let any member speak during all-party meeting. I raised the issue of bringing law on MSP guarantee in this session of the Parliament and other issues including extension of BSF's jurisdiction etc. They don't us speak in all-party meet and Parliament," said Sanjay Singh.
MORE ON P3

Fuel prices will fall if 'int'l rates' sustain

New Delhi, Nov 28: Petrol and diesel prices will be reduced only if the current drop in international oil prices is sustained for a few more days, as domestic retail prices are fixed on a 15-day rolling average, official sources said.
Global benchmark Brent crude oil prices remained largely range bound at around \$80 to \$82 per barrel, levels during till November 25.



On November 26, prices fell by around \$4 per barrel till Asian timestamp. However, subsequently after the opening of the US market, with the drastic sell off in Brent Futures, prices fell further by around \$6 to close at \$72.91 a barrel at ICE London.
Sources said, this seems like a knee jerk reaction from fears that the new Covid-19 variant discovered in Southern Africa might dampen economic growth and trigger another demand slump.
State-owned fuel retailers Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) revise petrol and diesel prices on a daily basis.
But this revision is based on the average benchmark international fuel rate in the previous fortnight. So, the price Sunday is decided by the average in the previous 15-days.

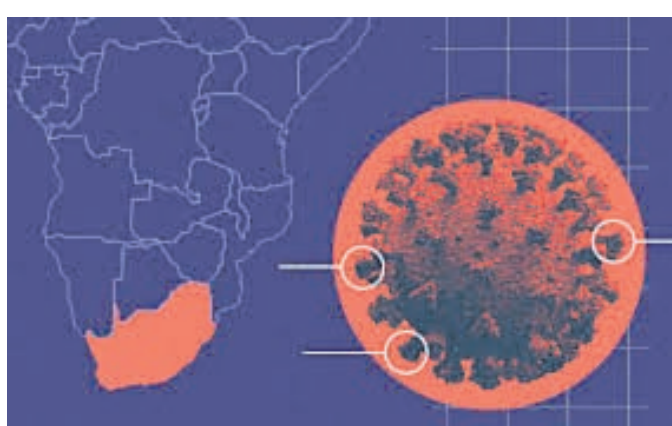
Why WHO named new Covid-19 variant Omicron

■ The decision to skip the two letters and use the next available one to name the latest variant had generated a lot of curiosity and interest on the Internet

AGENCIES

Geneva, Nov 28: While picking a name for the variants of SARS-CoV2, the World Health Organisation has so far skipped two letters of the Greek alphabet, one of which also happens to be a popular surname in China, shared even by Chinese President Xi Jinping.
The WHO has been using Greek

letters to refer to the most widely prevalent coronavirus variants, which otherwise have long scientific names. Before a new variant emerged in South Africa earlier this week, the WHO had already used 12 letters of the Greek alphabet. WHO selected Omicron for this one, instead of Nu or Xi – the two letters that precede it.
According to the WHO, Nu could have been confused with the word 'new', while Xi was not picked up following a convention.
"Two letters were skipped – Nu and Xi – because Nu is too easily confounded with 'new' and Xi was not used because it is a common surname and WHO best practices for naming new diseases (de-



veloped in conjunction with FAO and OIE back in 2015) suggest avoiding 'causing offence to any cultural, social, national, regional, professional or ethnic groups', the organisation said in a state-

ment. The decision to skip the two letters and use the next available one to name the latest variant had generated a lot of curiosity and interest on the Internet.
Depending on the threat they pose, WHO classifies new variants either as 'variants under monitoring (VUMs)', 'variants of interest (VoIs)' or 'variants of concern (VoCs)'. All of them are given scientific names which represent their parentage and the chain of evolution. The Omicron variant, for example, is also known by its more scientific designation B.1.1.529. This designation shows that the variant has evolved from the B.1 variant.
Since the scientific names are not

easy to remember, the more widely prevalent variants started to be named after the country from which they were first reported. Accordingly, there used to be a UK variant, an Indian variant, a South African variant, a Brazilian variant and a few more.
In order to remove the linkage with specific countries, which was triggering a lot of name-calling and blame game, the WHO had decided on a new naming system for easy identification of the prominent variants. It chose to name them after the Greek letters. Accordingly the variant that earlier used to be referred as the 'Indian' got the name Delta, while the UK one was called Alpha.



HALLE BERRY 'DISHEARTENED' AFTER OSCAR WIN AS ROLES DIDN'T COME

Actress Halle Berry picked up an Academy Award in 2002 but said it did not open the door to more satisfying roles for her. The 55-year-old told *The Irish Times*: "I was sure the script truck would just back itself up to my front door. But that was not my reality, I was disheartened."

ELTON JOHN LOVES PLAYING BOARD GAMES AT HOME

Legendary English singer-songwriter Elton John loves playing board games with his sons at home, as his husband David Furnish says he always puts the showbiz persona behind him when he's with his family. Furnish says John loves nothing more than playing card games and board games with the family, reports *femalefirst.co.uk*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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

ARIES
For no reason whatsoever, you may clam up today. Of course, you will give credit to others wherever they've contributed. But you need to be more generous than that, says Ganesh, and share the secrets of your success with your compatriots. Also, do you really need to buy that \$100 wallet?

TAURUS
Ganesh predicts that today, you will be successful in money matters. There is, at best, only an outside chance that any stimulating event or thrilling escapade will occur today. In short, the day may be boring. Fret not as the dreary day may change into an exhilarating evening, feels Ganesh.

GEMINI
Today will be a day of joy, happiness and festivities on the home-front. You will try and spend as much time as possible with the children and will enthusiastically participate in home improvement projects. You will be able to solve pending issues at home by taking an intelligent interest in them, says Ganesh.

CANCER
Your speech will today explode your thoughts. You will ponder over new deals and decide to act only after much thought. Ganesh feels that you met with success in your ambition to achieve a breakthrough.

LEO
You will feel a little uneasy today. You will feel that nothing is going right. You will try to organise yourself and concentrate your scattered energies today. This phase of uncertainty will be gone in a few days, assures Ganesh.

VIRGO
The time today is ripe to venture into a new business. Projects that have been put-off will finally be completed. Looking into the week ahead, you are most likely to give yourself an energy zap. Parties will be all fun and entertainment.

LIBRA
"Efforts made are never in vain, even when they may seem otherwise". Let this be your motto for the day. Today may not seem to be the most productive day, especially when it comes to interviews. You may feel like the rook in the chess set — sometimes coming back to square one despite making many moves forward to the ultimate checkmate! So remember, persistence is the key, says Ganesh.

SCORPIO
Add a pinch of innovation and inventiveness to your daily working style. There shall be order in the chaotic way you perform your tasks — though not apparent to others. Revitalise yourself and plunge into work with new-found zest and vigour, advises Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
You will enjoy the magic of the Midas touch today, feels Ganesh. In business, sheer brilliance will help you derive the best possible results in productivity and clinching new contracts. Your approach, in general, will be methodical, disciplined and systematic for most part of the day.

CAPRICORN
Your power of reasoning will be strong today, says Ganesh. Those of you beginning your career will show a disposition to take up a job in television or print media. The spiritual side of you may also come to the fore and make you feel at peace, especially when visiting a holy place.

AQUARIUS
You will spend the day introspecting, but the mental peace will still seem distant. Some unavoidable circumstances will force you to handle the situations with diligence, feels Ganesh. Due to your devotion to the Almighty and spiritualism, you will be able to deal with problems pretty well.

PISCES
It is difficult for you to be part of one team and to work as a member on two teams, but today you can do anything you want. You will be able to show your expertise to your team today and will be praised by all. Women will make a profit today and will feel encouraged.

Dhanush wins Best Actor trophy at BRICS film fest



The Best Film Award was shared by two movies - South African film 'Barakat' and the Russian film 'The Sun Above Me Never Sets'

Panaji: Actor Dhanush's stellar performance in director Vetrimaran's Tamil film *Asuran* fetched him the Best Actor Award at the BRICS Film Festival, which was held alongside the 52nd edition of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) that came to a close here Sunday.

Interestingly, he had won a National Award for the same film earlier this year.

While Dhanush was adjudged the best actor, Lara Boldorini was awarded the Best Actor (female) at the festival for her performance in the Brazilian film *On Wheels*.

The Best Film Award was shared by two films - South African film *Barakat* and the Russian film *The Sun Above Me Never Sets*. While *Barakat* has been directed by Amy Jeptha, the Russian film has been directed by Lyubov Borisova.

Chinese Director Yan Han was awarded the Special Mention Award for his film *A Little Red Flower* at the festival.

This is the first time that the BRICS Film Festival has been conducted alongside the IFFI. The BRICS festival had films from Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa participating in it.



Salman upset over wastage of milk

Mumbai: Actor Salman Khan Sunday shared another video of fans showering the poster of his film *Antim: The Final Truth* with milk and the actor has now urged them to not waste milk and to give it to poor children instead.

Sunday afternoon, the *Dabang* star shared a video clip, where his fans are seen showering milk on an *Antim: The Final Truth* poster featuring Salman in a Sikh avatar.

Upset with the wastage of milk, the star appealed to his fans.

He wrote: "Kai logon ko paani naseeb nahiin hota aur aap aise doodh waste karr rahe ho.

(Some people don't even get water and you are wasting milk.)"

He added: "Agar aapko doodh dena hi hai toh my request to all my fans is ki Aap gareeb bacchon ko pilayein jinhe doodh peene ko nahiin milta. (If you want to use milk, I request all my fans to give it poor children who cannot afford it)."

Earlier, the actor had raised concerns after a video showed firecrackers being used in a packed cinema hall during the screening of *Antim: The Final Truth*.

Directed by Mahesh Manjrekar, the movie also stars Salman's brother-in-law and actor Aayush Sharma.

Janhvi's funny video leaves fans in splits

Mumbai: Actress Janhvi Kapoor has shared a hilarious video, where she is seen recreating *Bigg Boss 5* contestant Pooja Misra's popular 'Pooja, what is this behaviour?' moment from the controversial reality show with her make-up artist Riviera Lynn. The clip not only tickled the funny bones of fans, it attracted amusing comments from the family members too.

Janhvi took to

Instagram, where she shared the video. In the clip, the actress re-enacted the entire scene, which originally was a fight between contestants Shonali Nagrani and Pooja in *Bigg Boss*.

The clip shows Janhvi, who is dressed in a blue top paired with white shorts, kicking an object which hits Lynn.

Lynn then mouths the line: "Pooja, what is this behaviour?" Janhvi, who essays Pooja's role, replies that she kicked it by mistake.

Janhvi captioned the video: "Do you guys think I need help." To which, her actor-brother Arjun Kapoor replied: "YES." Janhvi's cousin Shanaya Kapoor said "I'm praying for u."

On the work front, Janhvi will be seen in films *Good Luck Jerry*, *Mr and Mrs Mahi* and *Dostana 2*.



Madhuri: Wonderful time for women to be in films

Panaji: Pointing out that with more women entering various departments of the film industry, films were getting better for women, actress Madhuri Dixit Sunday said that this was a wonderful time for women to be in films.

Participating in the closing ceremony of the 52nd edition of the International Film Festival of India here, where she was honoured, Madhuri, while responding to a question on what had changed in the world of cinema, said,

"There are lots of changes but the one big change is when I used to go for shooting earlier, the women on the sets would either be actors or hair dressers. Today, when I go to sets, women are in every department - be it as assistant directors, directors, camerawomen or writers.

"Looking at them, it feels good to know that we are progressing. The films too are becoming better for women. I think this is a wonderful time for women to be in films. That is the biggest change," she said.

Earlier, delivering a speech at the event, the actress said, "It is heartening to note that IFFI provides a global platform to Indian content creators, technicians, allowing them to showcase the prowess of Indian entertainment to the world."

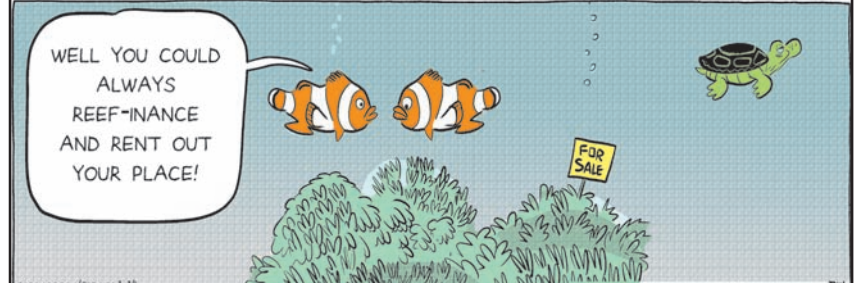
PEANUTS



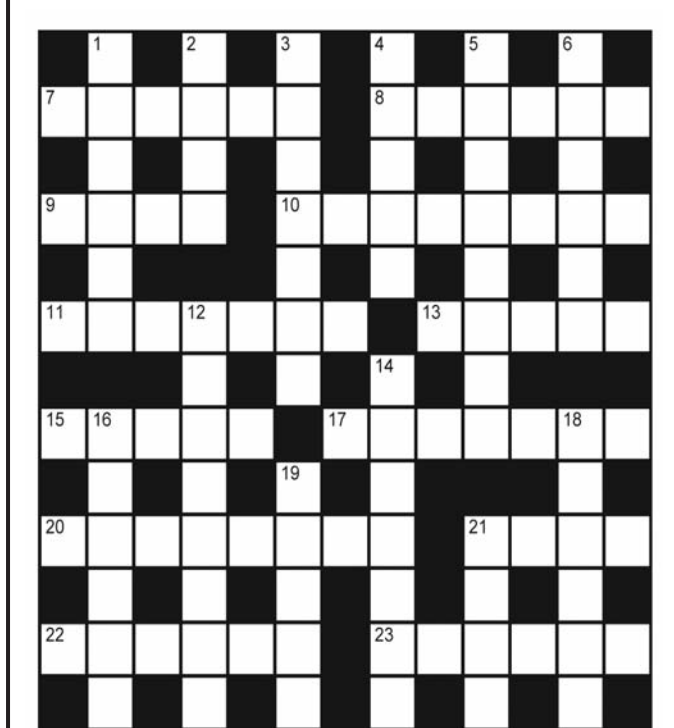
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



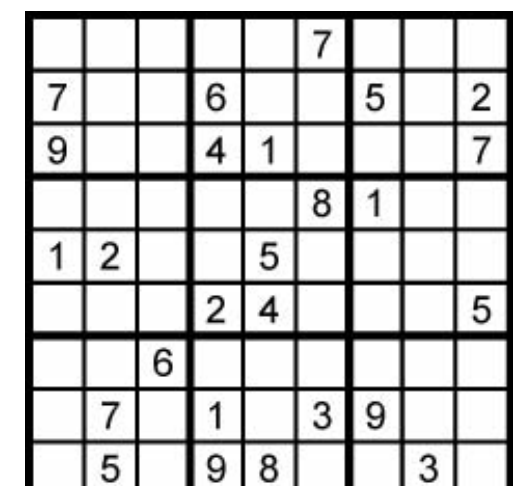
FUN post CROSSWORD



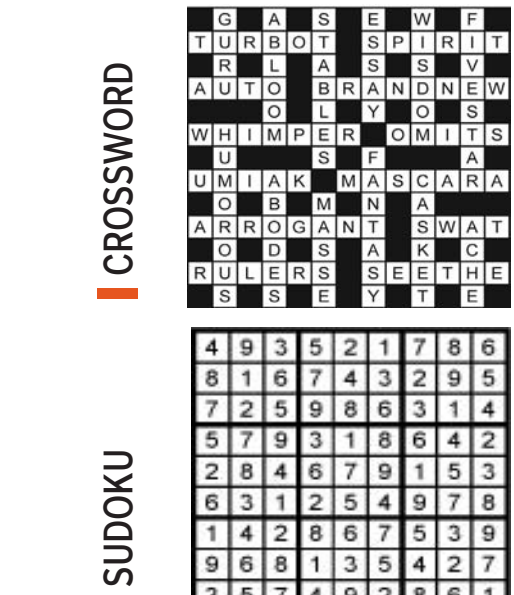
- Across**
- 7 Potent
 - 8 Snapper
 - 9 Relative of an epee
 - 10 Unwelcome visitor
 - 11 Hate
 - 13 Small candies
 - 15 Train stop
 - 17 Fossilise
 - 20 Wine starter
 - 21 Insipid
 - 22 Lowlife
 - 23 Regal fur
- Down**
- 1 Went boldly
 - 2 Essence
 - 3 Opposed to
 - 4 Sports figures, briefly
 - 5 Monte Carlo figure
 - 6 Customer
 - 12 Safeguards
 - 14 Saltwater lake (4,3)
 - 16 Migrator
 - 18 Damon, to
 - 19 Aches
 - 21 High point

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

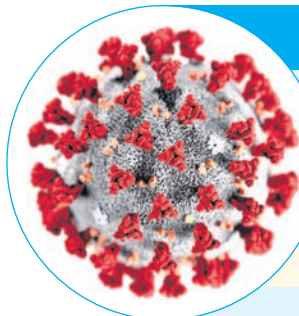


CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



PLATINUM JUBILEE FETE
 Mo College Abhiyan chairperson Akash Dasnayak speaks at the platinum jubilee celebration of SCBMCH in Cuttack, Sunday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	26,15,46,652	23,62,51,921	52,15,799
India	3,45,72,523	3,39,98,278	4,68,554
Odisha	10,48,683	10,38,085	8,407

Hitman planning to kill bizman held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 28: The miscreant, who was arrested by the Commissionerate Police (CP) from IRC Village under Nayapalli police station here, turned out to be a contract killer and was planning to eliminate a businessman.

The arrested criminal has been identified as Sampad Kumar Sahoo, 36, a resident of Krishnanandapur village under Tirtol police limits of Jagatsinghpur.

Sources revealed that some alert locals informed police about two bike-borne miscreants carrying firearms going towards Nayapalli area Friday night. Two cops of the Nayapalli police station rushed to the spot near Swapneswar Temple in IRC village area. The accused persons were captured by the cops



Police will bring the accused, Sampad, on remand to elicit details regarding the businessman whom he was planning to kill

During interrogation, Sampad revealed that he had come to City to kill a businessman

He claimed to have been given contract by an unknown person for the businessman's murder

Sampad is involved in several cases of robbery, murder and other big crimes

while having tea at a nearby Omfed stall.

Sampad quickly took out the rifle and cocked it to fire at the cops who overpowered him after a brief scuffle. However, the miscreant riding the pillion managed to flee the spot taking advantage of

the scuffle. The cops as well as Sampad sustained injuries during the affray.

Police seized another pistol and eight live ammunition and a black Bajaj Pulsar from his possession.

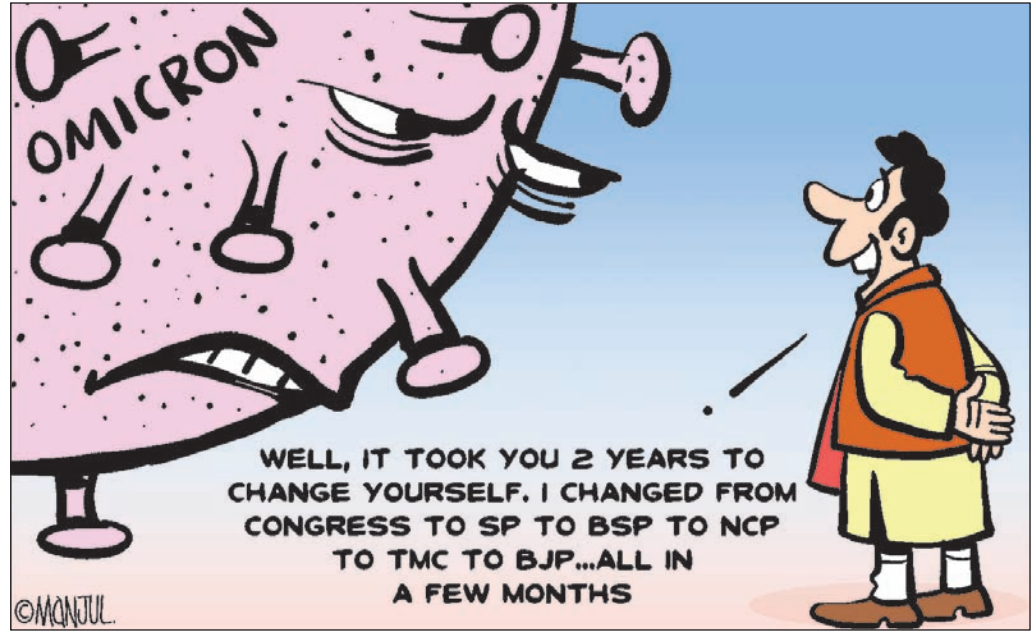
During interrogation, Sampad informed the police that he had

come to City to kill a businessman. He claimed to have been given contract by an unknown person for the businessman's murder. Sampad is involved in several cases of robbery, murder and other serious crimes, said sources.

A case (548/21) has been registered against Sampad who was Sunday sent to judicial custody by a court.

Speaking to media, Commissioner of Police Saumendra Priyadarshi said that Commissionerate Police will bring him on remand to elicit details regarding the businessman whom he was planning to kill and the persons who had given the contract for the murder. The seized firearms are of advanced quality which might have been procured from Bihar.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Artwork creates awareness on turtle conservation

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 28: After creating a 15-ft long art of a turtle made of layered plastics on Puri beach recently, Delhi-based artist Manveer Singh Sunday presented another creation to spread awareness on conservation of Olive Ridley sea turtles.

Singh's new artwork at Utsha Foundation here depicted turtles entangled in fishing nets.

Through his new art, Singh tried to create awareness on how human activities like fishing are killing the turtles.

Plastic wastes near the mass nesting sites are also causing troubles for the baby turtles, Singh said.

Singh presented his new creation during the closing ceremony of his month-long residency programme at Utsha Foundation in association with (Agence Française de Développement (AFD).

The event was attended by Consul General of France in Kolkata Didier Talpain, Regional Director South Asia Agence Française de Développement (AFD) Jacky Amprou, AFD India Director Bruno Bosle and AFD Sector Portfolio Manager Fanny Ragot and eminent artist Jagannath Panda.

During his stay at Utsha Foundation, Singh visited various institutions and offices and distributed 40 habit changer boxes to collect the layered plastics for his art work.

He also organized a workshop with 28 Peer Leaders of the Smart City for the purpose.

BJD joins opposition chorus for legal guarantee of MSP

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Nov 28: The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) along with other opposition parties Sunday demanded that the Union government should bring a Bill in the Winter Session of the Parliament to give legal guarantee on the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for farmers.

Attending the all-party meeting convened by the Union government a day before the commencement of the Winter Session of the Parliament, senior BJD leader and Rajya Sabha MP Prasanna Acharya raised the issue of cost sharing ratio in Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojna (PMFBY). The BJD MP requested the government that



the cost sharing ratio should be 60:40. He said the Centre should bear 60 per cent cost under the scheme.

Apart from MSP and crop insurance scheme, BJD along with other parties raised the long pending issue of Women's Reservation Bill.

BJD MP Prasanna Acharya requested the Centre to bear 60% of the cost under Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojna

The party said that the government should expedite the process for passing of the Bill.

The regional party also reiterated its demand for Special Focus State status to Odisha citing the state's vulnerability to natural calamities.

Significantly, 31 political par-

RS TO TAKE UP DAM SAFETY BILL TODAY

The Winter Session of the Parliament could be stormy as opposition has geared up to corner the government on issues of Pegasus, Chinese intrusion, inflation and farm laws.

Amidst this, the Upper House will pay obituary to sitting Congress MP Oscar Fernandes, who passed away recently, and other former members. New members elected to the House will take oath and the Parliamentary Affairs minister will make a statement about the government business.

The government has listed, "The Dam Safety Bill, 2019 for consideration and passing and to provide for surveillance, inspection, operation and maintenance of the specified dam for prevention of dam failure related disasters and to provide for institutional mechanism to ensure their safe functioning and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, as passed by Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

Some members have decided to petition the House on the need to

conserve dying rivers in country. Biju Janata Dal's Subhash Chandra Singh will take up the matter in the House.

"Subhash Chandra Singh to present to the House, a petition signed by Bibhudendra Pratap Das, President, Odisha Krushak Mahasangha and Shri Manas Ranjan Baboo, President, Seva Samiti, residents of Bhubaneswar (Odisha) praying to conserve and revitalise the dying rivers across the country," the RS bulletin said.

Participants in the discussion. However, Prime Minister Narendra Modi didn't take part in the all-party meeting Sunday.

MESMERISING PERFORMANCE



Guru Meera Das and her troupe perform a dance recital at the concluding ceremony of 25th Gunjan Dance and Music Festival at Saheed Bhawan in Cuttack, Sunday

Abandoned newborn rescued in Pipli

POST NEWS NETWORK

Pipli, Nov 28: A newborn girl was found abandoned at Choropada near Satsankha-Balanga Road under Rupadeipur panchayat here Sunday, an official said.

Sources said a few locals spotted a polythene bag stuffed with clothes lying suspiciously alongside the road. "Anxious locals searched through the bag to find a newborn girl gasping for breath. As the news spread like wildfire, a woman

Locals found the baby in a polythene bag lying suspiciously at Choropada

of the locality reached the spot and took the girl out of the bag," said an eyewitness, adding that the woman took the baby to her house.

As the baby was shivering 'due to prolonged exposure to cold', the woman and her husband rushed the child to the Puri district headquarters hos-

pital (DHH), added the source. Informed, district child protection officer Manoj Tripathy reached the DHH and took custody of the baby. The couple, on the other hand, was hell-bent on keeping the child under their supervision and care.

"The couple wishes to adopt the baby right away. However, we can't hand over the newborn to them without due legal procedures," added Tripathy. Locals, meanwhile, suspect the newborn to be a case of out-of-wedlock birth.

Man dies falling in open drain

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 28: Saheed Nagar police Sunday recovered the body of a 32-year-old man from a roadside drain here. The deceased was identified as Bamadev Barik of Fatehgarh area in Nayagarh.

Barik was residing along with his family at a slum in Saheed Nagar area. Barik worked as a haircutter in a salon near Postal Colony. Barik's body was spotted by locals, who informed the police.

Sources claimed that Barik might have died after falling into the open drain under the influence of liquor Saturday night.

Police have started investigations into the matter by registering an unnatural death case (60/21) in this regard.

Explained: Why risk of stroke rises in winter

THE CHANCES OF A PERSON SUFFERING FROM HEART ATTACK GOES UP NEARLY 33 PER CENT DURING WINTER

Several studies suggest that during winter, risk of stroke, heart failure, cardiovascular issues, arrhythmia and disorders rises several times. Many top cardiologists think that it happens due to body's physiology and the temperature drop that impacts the heart's functionality.

According to a study of JAMA Cardiology, a monthly peer-reviewed medical journal, which analysed information on 2,74,000 people living in Sweden in 2018, the risk of having a heart attack was greatest on days when the temperature was below freezing point.

PLoS One, open access scientific journal, in a study in 2015 found more than 31 per cent increase in heart attacks in the coldest months of the year as compared to the warmest. Several studies suggest that during extreme cold conditions, the risk of getting a stroke increases by 80 per cent, particularly when temperature dips below 15 degree Celsius.

As temperatures drop, the blood vessels tighten and blood flow speeds up to help stay warm. That is why the blood pressure is often higher in colder seasons, opine cardiologists.

"Onset of winters can evoke mixed reactions. As per some study, the chances of a person suffering from heart attack goes up nearly 33 per cent during winters. The coronary arteries like other arteries can constrict during winter which can lead to poor supply of blood to the heart muscle. Decreased blood supply can precipitate myocardial ischemia and



heart attack," said Tarun Kumar, Professor of Cardiology, ABVIMS and RML Hospital.

Tarun said there is increased blood volume during winters. As in summer there is increased fluid loss through sweat which is missing in winters. It can lead to increase salt and fluid retention during winter which can lead to increase in blood pressure and heart attacks.

"Because of hormonal variations during winters there is increase in levels of clotting factors including fibrinogen. Adding fuel to fire is vasoconstriction and platelet aggregability along with clotting factors which can lead to increased tendency for clot formation and heart attacks," he added.

Increased calorie intake and decreased physical activity can induce

As temperatures drop, the blood vessels tighten and blood flow speeds up to help stay warm. That is why the blood pressure is often higher in colder seasons

The coronary arteries like other arteries can constrict during winter which can lead to poor supply of blood to the heart muscle. Decreased blood supply can precipitate myocardial ischemia and heart attack

myriad physical changes in the body including weight gain and vascular changes which can provide a mileu for clot formation and heart attack, he said, adding that elderly, alcoholics, smokers, people with sedentary lifestyles

are more at risk.

While talking about precautions, he advised to reduce exposure to cold, avoid excessive alcohol intake and there should not be coal based or faulty heating appliances in closed rooms. He also advised to go for regular physical activity and blood pressure and blood sugars level check-ups after regular intervals.

Vipul Gupta, Director Neurointervention, Artemis Agrim Institute of Neurosciences, said, "One of the prime reasons can be attributed that during the cold season the blood vessels constrict, which leads to increase in blood pressure, which means that the blood has to be really pumped harder in order to travel around the body, making it one of the major factors for the onset of stroke."

"Also, there are various changes in the chemical balance in our body during winter including cholesterol levels and some other factors that increase the chances of clotting. Changes in the physical activity which usually decreases during the winter as well as weight gain can play a role. Probably this is the reason stroke cases go up by 11 per cent during winter," added Gupta.

Low temperature constricts the blood vessels which in turn increases blood pressure and aggregates blood clotting process, said Cardiologist Praveen Jha.

He said that Vitamin D deficiency is also common in winter which also contributes to cardiovascular diseases. Air pollution and physical inactivity are also reasons for rise in heart attacks during winter, said Jha.

in association with

GOLDEN JUBILEE

43rd ବର୍ଷୀ

Barshia

ରତ୍ନାକାର ବର୍ଷୀର ଅବନ୍ୟ ମହୁର 2021

RABINDRA MANDAP | November 29 | at 4:30 P.M.

ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ସ୍ୱାଗତ କରାଯାଉ

Kindly follow the guidelines of covid-19

Will be inaugurated by:

Prof. Ganesh Lal
Hon'ble Governor of Odisha

Holy Neelachakra Award and National Award Giving Ceremony - 2021

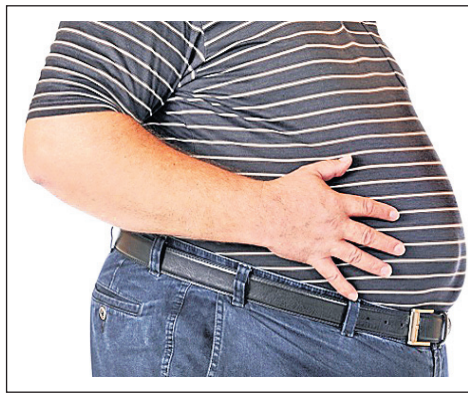
Followed by
Odissi Dance by Srjan & Nritya Naibedya

Folk Songs & Dances of Odisha

BEHIND THE CURVE

Obesity looms large in India: NFHS-5

Men and women were counted as obese whose BMIs were found to be over or equal to 25.0 kg/m² while children's obesity was counted in terms of weight-for-height



The NFHS-5 revealed that several states and UTs including Maharashtra, Gujarat, Mizoram, Tripura, Lakshadweep, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, and Ladakh have registered increase in the percentage of obese children below five years of age in comparison with NFHS-4 conducted between 2015 and 2016

Only Goa, Tamil Nadu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, and Daman and Diu registered a drop in the number of overweight children under five years of age, the data showed.

According to the survey data, 30 states and UTs registered a rise in obesity among women while 33 states and UTs recorded an increase in obesity among men

The NFHS-5 revealed that several states and UTs including Maharashtra, Gujarat, Mizoram, Tripura, Lakshadweep, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, and Ladakh have registered increase in the percentage of obese children below five years of age in comparison to NFHS-4 conducted between 2015 and 2016.

Only Goa, Tamil Nadu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, and Daman and Diu registered a drop in the number of overweight children under five years of age, the data showed.

According to the survey data, 30 states and union territories reg-

istered a rise in obesity among women while 33 states and UTs recorded an increase in obesity among men. Men and women were counted as obese whose body mass indexes were found to be over or equal to 25.0 kg/m² while children's obesity was counted in terms of weight-for-height.

Healthcare experts have attributed the rise in obesity to unhealthy food choices and lack of physical activity among children and even adults.

Poonam Muttreja, Executive Director at the Population Foundation of India, said that rising incomes, poor dietary habits and unhealthy life choices are behind

the trend of increasing obesity among Indian women, men and children over the past 15 years as confirmed by NFHS-5.

"Sustained economic growth over the past 15 years has led to a marked increase in people's incomes. We know that obesity among Indians goes up as they become wealthier. In 2015-16, according to NFHS-4, the proportion of overweight or obese men was five per cent among families in the lowest wealth quintile and 33 per cent in the highest wealth quintile," she said.

"Similarly, the proportion of overweight or obese women was six per cent among families in the low-

est wealth quintile and 36 per cent in the highest wealth quintile," she added.

"However, blaming rising incomes is not fair. Much have also to do with poor eating habits. The consumption of unhealthy foods (popularly termed junk foods) that are high in calories from sugar or fat and contain little dietary fibre, protein, vitamins, and minerals is known to increase as families become wealthier," Muttreja explained.

Besides these problems, a vast majority of Indians do not seem to recognise the importance of leading a healthy and active life. They tend to lead sedentary lives and lack the motivation to do exercise of any kind including walking.

Dr Antaryami Dash, Head of Nutrition, Save the Children, India, said every nation is entering into a situation with double burden of malnutrition where there is a co-existence of under-nutrition (stunting/wasting/underweight) and over-nutrition (overweight/obesity) at the population level. The prevalence is highest in western and industrialised countries, but gradually catching up in developing countries too.

MoHUA secy pat for Mission Shakti SHGs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 28: Secretary to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Durga Shanker Mishra, Sunday appreciated the effective participation of Mission Shakti self-help groups (SHGs) and transgender groups in urban development and livelihood generation programmes in Odisha.

Mishra, who was on a visit to the state for the launch of the Association of Water Supply and Sanitation Organisation (AWSSAR), interacted with the members of several SHGs in the state capital and Puri.

He appreciated the efforts of State Urban Development Agency (SUDA) in transforming the lives of underprivileged women and ensuring their social and economic empowerment through partnership.

During his interaction with the members of the Kiran Area Level Federation (ALF) of SHGs at the Diamond Appliqué Centre in Puri, Mishra came to know about the details regarding the appliqué products. The centre is being run under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM).

"It is promising to see more women SHGs are being recognised for their good work. We need to link the SHGs with the e-Commerce platforms," Mishra said.

Centurion Univ offers skill training to Ch'garh youths



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 28: Centurion University with CSR support from National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) has undertaken skill training of 60 candidates, belonging to the Left Wing Extremism (LWE) areas of Dantewada and Bastar districts of Chhattisgarh, at its Jatni Campus.

These 60 young candidates will be trained in skills of OT Technician and Blood Bank Technician.

Sunil Upadhyay, General Manager and CSR Head of NMDC, addressed the students and staff mentioning the different CSR activities that NMDC is undertaking in Chhattisgarh such as education and skill development programs, hospitals and health care, and schools for differently abled students among others.

Upadhyay also applauded the efforts of Centurion University and NMDC for arranging such a skill training program linked to employability in the healthcare sector.

Sunil Kumar Jha, Dean, School of Paramedics and Allied Health Sciences, Centurion University spoke about the courses available in School of Pharmacy, their achievements, and relevance in the current time.

The Comptroller of Finance of Centurion University Debasish Panda emphasised on various aspects of the unique skill development program, and options for further education in the health sector through multiple-entry and multiple exit options. He also spoke in his vote of thanks about strengthening the collaboration of Centurion University and NMDC to deliver more such programs for the benefit of the society.

High Court Chief Justice unveils e-Service centre

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

Puri, Nov 28: Orissa High Court Chief Justice S Muralidhar Sunday inaugurated e-Service and e-Filing centre in the district judge court premises here.

Addressing the lawyers and litigants present on the occasion, the Chief Justice said that the centre will help lawyers work with efficiency, accuracy and speed.

With changing circumstances, it is important to adopt digital technology to make the judicial system efficient to address cases of the litigants. This will help accomplish our motto 'Justice at Doorsteps', he said.

Lawyers of Khurda and Puri districts, and the officials concerned were imparted training on e-Filing, e-Payment and single-window operation online.

Lawyers should get trained and develop their skills in information technology to facilitate the conduct of cases in the court more quickly and effectively, the Chief Justice said.

Khurda admin thrust on facemasks, distancing

POST NEWS NETWORK

Khurda, Nov 28: In the wake detection of new Covid variant, Omicron, in some parts of the world, the district administration has put emphasis on strict adherence to the precautionary measures like facemask, social distance and hand washing.

The administration has directed the officials to enforce Covid-appropriate behaviour at offices, shops and public places.

The civic authorities in Khurda town have asked the shopkeepers not to sell grocery items, vegetables and other essential goods to people who do not wear facemasks. The shopkeepers have also been told to ensure social distancing among



their customers.

"The shopkeepers have been asked to wear facemasks and maintain hand hygiene. Any violation of the Covid norms by the shopkeep-

ers will invite stringent action. If required, we may seal a shop for violation of Covid norms," said Khurda Sub-Collector I Gourab Shivaji.

Collector Sangram Keshari

Mahapatra, meanwhile, urged the people to follow Covid norms to keep the deadly virus at bay. "We have discussed the issue with the officials of various departments. Steps are being taken to create awareness on the new Covid variant," he said.

The Collector also directed the district education officer (DEO) to ensure safety of children in schools.

"Multiple Covid cases have been reported from certain educational institutes in the state. We have taken the issue seriously. All schools in the district have been asked to follow Covid norms strictly during physical classes. Classrooms must be sanitised on regular basis. Students should undergo thermal screening before entering the school premises," said DEO Bandana Mahapatra.

Odisha records below 200 Covid-19 cases after 6 days



MLAs Prafulla Samal and Narasingha Mishra undergo Covid tests ahead of the Winter Session of Odisha Assembly, Sunday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Nov 28: Odisha Sunday registered 191 new infections, 73 less than the previous day, taking the state's caseload to 10,48,683 while one more fatality pushed the coronavirus death toll to 8,407, a Health department official said.

The coastal state has registered new infections below 200 after a gap of six days. The state had recorded 264 new cases Saturday, 219 Friday, 335 Thursday and 288 cases Wednesday.

The new infections included 33 children and adolescents in the age group of 0 to 18 years, which is 17.27 per cent of the total cases of the day. The rate of infection in the 0 to 18 years age group was 16 per cent Saturday.

Of the 191 new infections, Khurda district, of which the state Capital Bhubaneswar is a part, reported the highest 87 cases, followed by 13 each in Sundargarh and Cuttack. Nine other districts did not report any new cases in the last 24 hours.

The state's Covid-19 death toll increased to 8,407 after one fatality was reported from Bargarh district. This apart, 53 Covid-19 patients have also died due to comorbidities, the Health official said.

The Odisha government has issued an advisory to the district Collectors to focus on strategy of testing-tracking-treatment-vaccination-enforcement of Covid appropriate behaviour and containment measures

Collectors have been asked for constant and close surveillance over hostels, schools, colleges and other congregations following the spread of Covid in certain educational institutions

The state's daily test positivity rate (TPR) stands at 0.33 per cent as 191 people tested positive for infection out of 56,199 samples tested Saturday. The TPR was 0.47 per cent Saturday, 0.37 per cent Friday and 0.53 per cent Thursday.

Odisha currently has 2,359 active Covid-19 cases while 10,37,864 patients including 255 Saturday recovered from the disease.

The state has thus far conducted over 2.36 crore sample tests including 56,199 Saturday. The positivity rate now is 4.43 per cent.

More than 1.51 crore people have so far been inoculated with double doses of Covid-19 vaccines.

LAWYERS' MEET



Orissa High Court Chief Justice S Muralidhar interacts with the members of Bhubaneswar Bar Association in the Capital City, Sunday

OP PHOTO

MAJOR HURDLE CLEARED IN TALCHER-BIMLAGARH RAIL LINE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 28: The Talcher-Bimlagarh new broad gauge (BG) Rail Link Project (149.78 km) sanctioned in 2003-04 has achieved a major milestone as the Engineering Team of ECoR Construction wing conducted the final detonation to force the breakthrough in the 840-metre long tunnel in Baruan Hill between Sunakhani and Samal Stations.

The project has faced major road-blocks due to slow progress of land acquisition in Deogarh and Sundargarh districts. East Coast

Railway (ECoR) administration is in constant touch with state and district administrations to expedite the land acquisition work in the above two districts.

The Railways has completed and commissioned 20km of the rail line between Talcher and Sunakhani Railway Station in the ongoing new rail line between Talcher and Bimalagarh in December 2019.

Work is going on for another 16.30 km stretch between Sunakhani and Parabil in Angul district. Out of 149.78 km of the total project, about 79 km falls in Angul district, while Deogarh has about 32km



Completion of the Railway proj-

ects depends on various factors like early land acquisition, forest clearance, shifting of infringing utilities, statutory clearances from various authorities, geological and topographical conditions of area, law and order situation in the project site, apart from weather conditions.

Once the project is completed, the Link will reduce the distance between Raurkela and Talcher by about 126 km. This line will help movement of export quality iron ore through ports. This project will boost economic development of interior districts Angul, Deogarh and Sundargarh.



WASSUP TODAY

BHUBANESWAR

- Inauguration of dance and song fest by 'Chinta O Chetana', Rabindra Mandap, 4:30pm
- Press meet by Bharatiya Bikash Parishad, Unit-1, 12noon
- Fourth Gitanjali Excellence Award, Guru Kelu Charan Mohapatra Odissi Research Centre, 6pm

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.

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech- Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8995550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8280697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemann-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.

SHORT TAKES

10 injured as bus overturns

Rairangpur: As many as 10 passengers were injured after a bus overturned at Tolaka village under Gorumahisani police limits in Mayurbhanj district in wee hours of Sunday. Locals rushed to the mishap site and rescued the injured persons. Out of them, the condition of two persons is stated to be critical. The injured persons have been shifted to Gorumahisani hospital. The incident took place as the bus travelling from Rairangpur to Guhaldangari lost balance and overturned. The driver of the vehicle fled the spot. Local police registered a case and are investigating the case.

Sarangi attacks govt over poverty

Keonjhar: Bhubaneswar MP and BJP's spokesperson Aparajita Sarangi, who came to Keonjhar on a two-day visit Sunday, said that the mineral-rich district has remained poor despite having huge reserves of minerals. Launching a tirade at the state government, she observed, "About 42 percent of the population in the district is living below the poverty line. One in three people in Odisha is poor. Even though a government has been in power for more than 20 years, poverty is not going down." Citing a report of the NITI Ayog at a presser at the circuit house here, Sarangi put forth various data of the district, pointing to the failure of the government. She pointed out a number of problems in various sectors in the district and sought to know why the Kanpur mega irrigation project has remained incomplete over years.

Crop loss: Farmers seek damages

Padmapur: Unseasonal rains and pests have extensively damaged paddy crop in various parts of Bhadrak district. Scores of farmers affected by the crop loss from Erada, Sabaranga and Chandigaon panchayats under Sadar block met the Collector and the tehsildar. They have demanded immediate survey on the crop loss and payment of compensation. Collector Trilochan Majhi said that the agriculture department and the Bhadrak tehsildar have been asked to assess the extent of the crop loss in next seven days by making field visits to the affected areas.

Bid to encroach Odisha land foiled

Bhogarai: Days after tehsil officials imposed prohibitory orders under Section-144 and put up a red flag around a patch of land illegally occupied by West Bengal irrigation department on Udaipur beach under this block in Balasore district, the revenue officials of the Balasore demolished a house illegally built by a West Bengal resident inside the Odisha territory on the beach, Sunday. He was constructing a house on the illegally occupied land on Udaipur beach by violating prohibitory orders under Section-144 imposed in the area. The revenue department had earlier issued a notice to him for eviction from the area. However, the man from West Bengal reportedly refused to obey the order of the administration and abused the revenue officials.

Jumbo dies after falling off hilltop in Similipal



POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, Nov 28: Forest officials recovered the carcass of a female elephant from the core area of Nana forest range inside Similipal wildlife sanctuary in Mayurbhanj district, Sunday. The animal, aged about 40, is suspected to have died after falling down from hilltop inside the sanctuary. The matter came to the fore when the forest officials were carrying out an enumeration drive of tigers and birds inside the wildlife sanctuary, according to the forest department.

The forest officials noticed the carcass stuck on a tree and recovered it. Sai Kiran, deputy director of North Similipal wildlife sanctuary and Jashipur forest officials launched an investigation into its death. Circumstantial evidences indicated that the animal might have died after sliding down from a height of 30-ft of hilly slope inside the sanctuary. A post-mortem was conducted on the carcass and the actual reason behind its death could be ascertained only after the report is available to the forest department, forest officials added.

NAIL-BITING FINISH



The final match of the 69th State-level Senior Men and Women's Kabbadi Championship was held at Sundargarh, Sunday. In the women category, East Coast Railways (Yellow jersey) emerged champions by beating Dhenkanal (Orange jersey) in a nail-biting finish

Rice mills throw NGT norms to the wind

SPCB WAS ACCUSED OF SHOWING UNDUE FAVOUR TO THE POLLUTING RICE PROCESSING UNITS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, Nov 28: Severe pollution has made life intolerable for the residents in Sambalpur district, said a report. Presence of many large industries outside the Sambalpur town and rice mills operating inside the town are allegedly contributing to air and water pollution in the area.

Both human beings and animals are getting affected and suffering from various diseases as they get exposed to the toxic effluents and smoke emanating from these rice mills. Reports said there are around 52 rice mills in the district but none are allegedly adhering to the rules laid down by the National Green Tribunal (NGT).

On the other hand, the tribunal has directed the State Pollution Control Board (SPCB) to periodically review the pollution control measures in rice mills but the SPCB has allegedly failed to do so. The SPCB, instead of verifying the pollution control measures in the rice mills, is allegedly showing them undue favour.

Rice mills discharge toxic effluents, waste materials and smoke which contribute to air and water pollution. To check and measure



air pollution, the mills install particulate matter emission machine in their premises. These machines, if properly working, will help in checking pollution and presence of particulate matter in the atmosphere.

These machines also help in spillage of the paddy husk, stone granules and dust when paddy is being milled in the boiler machine. Most of the exhaust chimneys lack proper mechanism to check black toxic smoke. Moreover, many of the rice mills throw up waste materials in the open which has led to pollution in the area, locals alleged.

The effluents and discharged waste materials pollute the ground and air in the surroundings and spread to farmlands and human habitats. Things have come to such a pass that it has become difficult to pass by the rice mills on the road. These pollutants have become health hazards for scores of labourers and officials working in these rice mills. Many of them have been affected with respiratory diseases and other problems.

Moreover, water pollution is another major cause of concern. The waste water gives out foul smell which has made life hell for the nearby residents.

The milling of paddy for rice needs water for which the mills are required to install effluent treatment plants (ETP) on their premises. However, nobody is adhering to the rules which have remained only on pen and papers. The ETPs recycle the waste water for use in farm works.

The mill owners however, are allegedly not installing the machines to save money on electricity bills, labour wages and repairing. The SPCB which needs to launch a crackdown on errant rice mills has chosen to remain silent on the issue for reasons known best to it. It is alleged that the pollution board is allegedly forcing the rice mills to buy and install an ETP of a particular firm which is becoming defunct after some time.

When contacted, Ramesh Ekka, regional director, SPCB said the rice mills have been asked to adhere to the NGT rules while raids are being conducted at regular intervals. He warned of taking action against any mill found violating these rules.

Collector takes stock of Covid scene at VIMSAR

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, Nov 28: Three more students have tested positive for Covid-19 at Veer Surendra Sai Institute of Medical Sciences and Research (VIMSAR) in Burla town of this district Sunday, taking the tally to 60. Collector Subham Saxena visited VIMSAR to take stock of the situation.

60 students have been infected, but their condition is stable, said VIMSAR Director Lalit Meher, adding that the infected students did not have Covid symptoms. However, contact tracing has been carried out and students have gone through tests.

He exuded hope that infection will be controlled at VIMSAR. The Collector took stock of the Covid situation at VIMSAR, visited micro containment zones and various parts of the medical college and hospital.

He asked the VIMSAR authorities to carry out renovation of toilets and the dining hall. Sub-collector Suryawanshi Mayur Vikash, Dean Jaysree Dora, ASP Amresh Panda and many officials of the VIMSAR were present.

Meanwhile, VIMSAR has sent least 21 swab samples for genome



sequencing to Institute of Life Sciences in Bhubaneswar Sunday morning. The main purpose is to detect the presence of new variant(s), if any.

"Most of the students have taken the second dose of vaccination for Covid-19. We wonder how such a large number of students got infected despite receiving both the doses. We are conducting the genome sequencing to know the presence of any new kind of Covid-19 variants among the recently infected hostel students," said Lalmohan Nayak, VIMSAR Superintendent and Senior Professor.

Sambalpur district administration has declared several hostels and staff quarters of VIMSAR as micro containment zones and buffer zones after a number of students tested positive for Covid-19, recently.

Major exodus stares at Congress in Sambalpur

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, Nov 28: Ahead of panchayat elections, political activities have intensified in parts of Sambalpur. It is learnt that many Congress leaders are headed towards the Biju Janata Dal (BJD). Two of the frontline leaders of Congress in Jujumara block are likely to join the BJD soon.

Samiti member Sasmita Dehuri and youth leader of Jujumara Barun Dehuri are said to be keen on joining the BJD. Barun has talked to a BJD leader of the neighbouring district in this regard. Rairakhole MLA Rohit Pujari

has been apprised of the development. It was learnt that the BJD is planning a merger meeting in the area in the first week of December when thousands of party workers from the Congress and other parties will join the ruling party.

However, Sasmita Dehuri, who is known as a good organizer of the Congress and was earlier a Zilla Parishad member, has denied the report. Nalinikant Pradhan, BJD observer for Sambalpur, said the BJD is a disciplined party and people have faith in the leadership of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. "Those who want to join the BJD will be welcome," he added.

School merger stokes controversy students deprived of classes

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chikiti, Nov 28: Students of Class VI and VII have started attending classes after the state government eased restrictions following a decline in spread of Covid-19, a report said.

The reopening of classes had spread cheers among the students. However, students of Class VI of Birakhempur UP School under this block in Ganjam district were not that fortunate. These students

have been freshly promoted from Class V to Class VI. It is alleged that they have been deprived from attending classes as their parents have filed a case in the Orissa High Court opposing the merger of schools. The school authorities have allegedly denied them admission to the next higher class which is Class VI following the development. When contacted, Kuresh Sethi, block education officer refused to speak on the issue stating that he was unaware of it.

MUKHYAMANTRI BUNAKAR KALYAN YOJANA

A ray of hope for this weavers' village

As many as 612 weavers, all residents of weaver village Gopalpur, will be benefitted by this scheme launched by the state government

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rasulpur, Nov 28: The newly launched Mukhyamantri Bunakar Kalyan Yojana has turned out to be a ray of hope for scores of weavers under this block in Jajpur district who are battling for survival after imposition of Covid restrictions and other reasons.

As many as 612 weavers, all residents of weaver village Gopalpur under this block will be benefitted by this scheme launched by the state government. Financial assistance will be given to over 422 weavers for development of infrastructure while the rest 190 weavers will be provided training for skill upgradation.

Seeking government assistance, these weavers had earlier applied in various schemes. These schemes will bring in improvement in the financial condition of the weavers. The weavers undergoing training will be provided with financial as-



sistance to help them become self-reliant. Moreover, many of the weavers who have applied for government assistance will be included under the scheme in phases. The Handloom, Textiles & Handicrafts department has informed that efforts are on to remove the problems of the weaver families.

Reports said that the state government has launched a six-point programme for the welfare of the weavers. The weavers of Gopalpur will receive ₹36,56,000 which will benefit them in improving their condition. The scheme is participatory where the government share will be ₹23.90 lakh, whereas the weavers' share will be ₹3.65 lakh.

Under this scheme, 66 weaver families will get ₹24,000 each to buy loom and other materials. Over 280 families will get ₹20,000 each to buy loom materials.

Similarly, 20 families will receive ₹5,000 each to buy dobbie machines (used in making the borders of a cloth or saree) while 40 families will receive ₹1,500 each to buy Jakad (a machine used in designing and weaving) while 4 families will get ₹3,000 each to buy Bishnupuri spinning wheel (Charkha). The financial assistance provided by the government will be credited to the savings bank accounts of weavers.

To receive the assistance, the el-

igible weavers will have to deposit 10 per cent of the financial assistance in savings back account of Handloom, Textiles & Handicrafts department in advance.

As many as 13 training camps will be organised where 190 weavers will undergo skill development training. Seven camps will be exclusively taken up for Jakad training. At least 60 weavers will be trained on weaving.

Moreover, 60 weavers will receive training on dyeing and embroidery and other art forms.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
File No. DRM/Engg/KUR/21-22/E-Tender/76, Dt.:24.11.2021
Tender No.:e-tender-HQ-KUR-209-2021, Dt.: 22.11.2021
Description: PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF 8 UNITS TYPE-V QUARTERS AT KHURDA ROAD.
Approx cost of the work: ₹425.13 Lakhs, Completion Period: 12 (twelve) Months.
Tender Closing Date & Time: at 1500 hrs. of 13.12.2021.
No manual offers sent by Post / Courier / Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letterhead and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website: <http://www.reps.gov.in>
Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 10 (Ten) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/ corrigenda issued for this tender.
Divisional Railway Manager (Engg), PR-581/M/21-22, Khurda Road

New albino croc at Dangmala draws tourists

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rajnagar, Nov 28: The crocodile research and breeding centre at Dangamala inside the Bhitarkanika national park in Kendrapara district is a tourist draw, but a three-year-old albino crocodile has now been the star attraction for tourists, a report said.

With the tourism season in, tourists are thronging the crocodile breeding centre to take a glimpse of the white crocodile. The number of white crocodiles in Bhitarkanika touched three. Gori and Malli, two white crocodiles of Bhitarkanika, used to be the centre of tourists' attraction.



It may be noted here that the country's first crocodile research and breeding centre was set up on 115 sqkm in Bhitarkanika park in

1975 at a cost of ₹50 lakh. First, 25 crocodile eggs had been collected from Kalibhanjadia reserve forest and were hatched artificially at

In 2018, a crocodile nest at Ganjeikhia was damaged by tridal waves. 58 eggs were retrieved from there and put in the artificial hatchery. One of the hatchlings was white

the research centre. One of the hatchlings was white, christened as Gori. For many years after Gori was born, no other white crocodile was born here. In 2003, two white crocodile babies

were spotted at Bankuala forest. One of them was christened as Malli. Later Malli began to draw attention of tourists.

In 2018, a nest of a crocodile at Ganjeikhia was damaged by tridal waves. Forest officials and researchers recovered 58 eggs from the nest and put in the artificial hatchery. Only 32 eggs hatched. However, the forest department could not find any white hatchling. Surprisingly, one of them was later found to be white. It's age is three years and four months and is two metre long. Forest officials say, the white crocodile, which is fed 150 gm of shrimp every day, is now the centre of tourists' attraction.

Government of Odisha
Office of the Executive Engineer,
Rural Works Division, Dhenkanal
E-mail: eervdki@yahoo.co.in

e-procurement Notice No. 13 / Road Work / 2021-22
No.- O-997-
1. Name of the work : Road Work
2. Total No. of Works : 1 (One) No.
3. Estimated Cost : Rs.22.73 lakhs (approx.)
4. Class Contractor : "C", "B" Class
5. Period of Completion : 2 (Two) Calendar months.
6. Availability of Tender : 30.11.2021 at 11.00 A.M to online for bidding : 09.12.2021 up to 5.00 P.M
7. Last Date & Time of seeking : 07.12.2021 upto 4.00 P.M tender clarification
8. Date & Time of opening : 10.12.2021 at 11.00AM of tender
Other details can be seen from the website <http://tendersorissa.gov.in>.
Executive Engineer, R.W. Division, Dhenkanal
OIPR-25101/11/0009/2122

FOCUS ECONOMY

GROWTH ON HIGH DEBT



The IMF notes that fiscal policy continues to support the economy. But it is concerned that despite policy support, bank credit growth has remained subdued, while large corporates have benefited from easier conditions in capital markets

car uses across the country. The silliest is the clampdown on outside state registered vehicles in Bihar, and HSRP plates. These are ignored as small issues but these small things are making lives of people difficult. User charges are being recklessly increased. At some railway stations, parking charges are going through the roof. Ostensibly, nobody can be blamed as 'the prices are rising' but that needs a holistic review.

The IMF projects growth at 9.5 per cent in FY2021-22 and 8.5 per cent in FY2022-23. The contraction in economic activity, lower revenue, and pandemic-related support measures are estimated to have led to a widening of the fiscal deficit to 8.6 and 12.8 per cent of GDP in FY2020-21 for the Central and State governments, respectively.

It notes that fiscal policy continues to support the economy. But the IMF is concerned that despite policy support, bank credit growth has remained subdued, while large corporates have benefited from easier conditions in capital markets. Net inflows and improvement in the current account have supported an increase in foreign exchange reserves. The current account balance is projected to remain in deficit as oil prices rise.

The overall toned down IMF report indicates not an easy situation in the coming years. The concern of the Narendra Modi government is high. It wants to take the economy to a new level through high cost push projects in the hope that there is relief and the government could take credit for solving a difficult situation. It would do well to review the situation once again though it may not be easy in a country where people look for fast solutions.

Steering the country to stability is not easy. It is true that international organisations are cautious while performing governments feel their efforts are being tried to be stymied. India hopes that Modi's efforts belie IMF projections and infra push takes the country to the targeted growth.

INFA

India joins the world aiming for a super growth on a high debt and infra push for an economic panacea. India's heavy investment over ₹233.08 lakh crore investment in infrastructure, of which the ₹10500 crore Jewar airport in Uttar Pradesh, is officially expected to give a major boost to the economy.

India is not alone as the entire world is trying to do give that needed push. The result is hyper growth in world debt to \$226 trillion. In its 2021 Fiscal Monitor report, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said India's debt increased from 68.9 per cent of its GDP in 2016 to 89.6 per cent in 2020. It is projected to jump to 90.6 per cent in 2021 and then decline to 88.8 per cent in 2022, to gradually reach 85.2 per cent in 2026. After that, it's projected to stabilise at about 97 per cent of GDP. In a year, India's external debt alone increased by \$11.6 billion.

Jewar international airport has accelerated a process of development in UP with an eye on the ensuing Assembly elections. It may make this part of the National Capital Region one of the most crowded places, inviting large number of migrants that may stress the local resources. Still hopes have been raised and it is certain that cash flow in the region would increase for now.

The withdrawal of the three farm laws has raised aspirations but also rivets eyes to the continuing farm unrest, which the officials say is no more warranted. But severe crash in the stock market has added to a new nagging concern.

The nation hopes to fly on expectations. Similar airport projects, high altitude Himalayan development, large tree felling and acquisition of farm lands across have ecological concerns. But a nation striving hard to come out of the pandemic is certainly looking for a fast development course so that there is cash flow.

The government expanded the National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) to 7,400 projects. According

to Department of Industry and Internal Trade, 217 projects worth ₹1.10 lakh crore (US \$15.09 billion) were completed as of 2020. Through the NIP the government invested US\$ 1.4 trillion in infrastructure development as of July 2021.

A major aspect of this development is infrastructure. It looks good but it is also true that more the investment is made in infrastructure, the nation's cost to delivery increases and in the long run unless there is an overall growth in activities -- from industry to agriculture -- the benefits become expensive to afford.

The IMF says that constraints on financing are particularly severe for poorer countries. Noting that in 2020, the fiscal policy proved its worth, IMF Director for fiscal affairs Vitor Gaspar, says the increase in public debt then was fully justified by the need to respond to COVID-19 and its economic, social, and financial consequences. But the increase is expected to be one-off, he added. So

how to scale down the debt needs to be of concern.

These debt dynamics are driven by a strong contribution from nominal GDP growth, accompanied by a much more gradual reduction in the primary deficit, said Gaspar. This is a matter of long term concern. It is indicative of a difficult situation continuing for some time. Besides, in its report, the IMF said risks to the fiscal outlook are elevated. This calls for India to review its policies. Let us not forget the 2007-08 global economic meltdown that followed an unsustainable financial behaviour.

The results would be high inflationary tendencies that would add to the costs further and create an unstable global economy leading to more conflicts and further costs. India's inflation has risen to 12.5 per cent. It is adding to a number of costs, as prices rise wages too rise and a cycle of inflation may well continue. It is also being seen in a regime of high taxations and high penalties on cars and



Shivaji Sarkar

IT IS TRUE THAT INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS ARE CAUTIOUS WHILE PERFORMING GOVERNMENTS FEEL THEIR EFFORTS ARE BEING TRIED TO BE STYMIED

SPECTRUM MIDDLE EAST

Iran's push for nuclear weapons



Richard Haass

BOTH TRUMP AND BIDEN MADE CLEAR THEIR DESIRE TO REDUCE AMERICAN MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST. BECAUSE OF IRAN, MAKING GOOD ON THIS AIM LOOKS INCREASINGLY UNLIKELY

Negotiations between Iran and the United States on Iran's nuclear activities are set to resume November 29. But while many will welcome this development, they should bear in mind that the talks are unlikely to succeed. And even if they do, any agreement will not resolve Iran's push for regional primacy -- or for nuclear weapons.

First, some history. In 2015, Iran and the US, along with China, France, Germany, Russia, the European Union, and the United Kingdom, entered into the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), an agreement that reduced Iran's stockpile of uranium, the level to which it could enrich its uranium, and the number of centrifuges it could operate. Extensive international inspections were put in place. Iran pledged never to develop nuclear weapons.

Experts estimated that these arrangements meant Iran would need up to a year to produce nuclear weapons if it chose to do so and that inspectors would likely catch it in the process. Most of the constraints central to the 2015 accord, however, included 'sunset' provisions, meaning they expire over a 10-15-year period.

Once those restrictions disappeared, Iran would need considerably less time to develop a full-

fledged nuclear-weapons programme. Still, billions of dollars of Iranian funds were unfrozen following the signing of the JCPOA, and Iran was given considerable relief from extensive economic sanctions.

Iran chose to comply with the JCPOA. Nevertheless, three years later, in 2018, under President Donald Trump, the US unilaterally exited the accord, which Trump described as 'horrible' and 'one of the worst and most one-sided transactions.' He then imposed a new set of draconian sanctions. Shortly thereafter, Iran moved to keep international inspectors at a distance and steadily edged closer to being in a position to produce nuclear weapons. There is strong evidence that it has enriched sufficient uranium to near the level one or more weapons would require.

Under President Joe Biden, the US has expressed its desire to re-enter the pact (negotiated while Biden was vice president) and has urged Iran to do the same. With a new president of its own (Ebrahim Raisi) in place, Iran has declared its readiness to do so, but only if the Trump-era sanctions are first rescinded. If the negotiations lead both sides back into the JCPOA, it would buy close to a decade of limits on Iran's nuclear programme in exchange for lifting many but not

all of the economic sanctions.

But there are problems with this scenario. First, lifting sanctions would make it easier for Iran to acquire financial resources that would allow it to do more of what it is already doing to undermine stability in Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Gaza, and elsewhere in the region. Such activity was not restrained by the 2015 accord.

Second, there is no reason to believe that Iran would ever sign on to a 'longer, stronger' nuclear deal (a JCPOA 2.0) that places more severe constraints on its nuclear program for a longer period. Nor is there reason to believe that Iran a decade hence will be fundamentally different in its political make-up or in what it seeks.

In addition, Iran could carry out relevant weapons development in hidden locations that would build on what it has learned in the last few years -- activity that could augment the quality and quantity of any nuclear weapons should it decide to pursue them.

The question is not if, but when, we reach this juncture: in months if the negotiations fail, or in less than a decade if they succeed. An Iran allowed to field nuclear weapons or get close to such a point (becoming a threshold nuclear-weapons country) would likely be even more aggressive in its efforts

to shape the region in its image.

At the same time, an Iran with nuclear weapons or the capacity to produce them in days or weeks could prompt one or more of its neighbours -- most likely Saudi Arabia, Egypt, or Turkey -- to follow suit. It would put a conflict-riven region on a hair trigger.

The alternative is to replace formal diplomacy with something less formal. Call it tacit diplomacy or arms control without agreements. The US and other concerned governments (including Israel) would communicate to Iran the limits to their tolerance regarding its nuclear capacity.

If Iran were to cross these quantitative or qualitative red lines, it would pay a substantial price. In addition to increased sanctions, it could expect cyber as well as conventional military attacks on nuclear facilities and possibly targets of economic and military value.

Both Trump and Biden made clear their desire to reduce American military involvement in the Middle East. Because of Iran, making good on this aim looks increasingly unlikely.

The writer is President of the Council on Foreign Relations.

©PROJECT SYNDICATE

“A thought is an arrow shot at the truth; it can hit a point, but not cover the whole target. But the archer is too well satisfied with his success to ask anything farther.”

SRJ AUROBINDO



Anglo-French Slugfest

Caught in the political crossfire between France and the UK, thousands of migrants, trying to escape poverty and persecution, are risking their lives in the perilous water of the English Channel. These migrants are mainly from Afghanistan, Iran, Eritrea and Sudan.

A humanitarian crisis is snowballing in Europe, but France and the UK are busy playing a blame game. The flashpoint came after 27 migrants including 17 men, seven women and three teenagers, perished November 24 when their boat, an inflated dinghy, sank in the English Channel. This is the biggest tragedy ever, as France's Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin said, involving migrants on the dangerous crossing till date. In all, 31 people were believed to have been on the boat. Their nationalities are still not known. The disaster was only waiting to happen. There seems to be an endless stream of people who have been risking their lives in perilous journeys in small inflated tubes that are not seaworthy at all. This is being done in the hope of getting asylum or better opportunities in Britain. In the latest mishap four suspected traffickers were arrested on suspicion of being linked to the sunken boat. 'Human smugglers' have been operating in this lucrative business of ferrying migrants to European countries. As Darmanin pointed out, "It's a day of great mourning for France and Europe for humanity to see these people die at sea."

The minister also lashed out at criminal traffickers luring thousands to cross the English Channel at great risk to their lives. Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson did not lag behind when he expressed his shock and urged France to step up efforts to stem the flow of migrants across the English Channel. He did not waste time blaming France for the tragedy which, according to him, highlighted how efforts by French authorities to patrol their beaches "have not been enough." The two governments have long been at loggerheads over how to prevent the crossings, with each side blaming the other for not doing enough.

Both, French President Emmanuel Macron and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson are busy furthering their political interests as a diplomatic row has erupted between the two countries. France has cancelled its invitation to British home secretary Priti Patel who was scheduled to hold talks on this issue in Paris November 28. Macron is going to face the electorate soon in the Presidential election and migrants' plight is a major issue. On the other hand, Johnson has to serve his supporters with huge funds who are dead against the tide of migrants flowing into the country which the pro-Brexit Johnson-government is committed to stem.

Migrants from around the world have long been using northern France as a launching pad to reach Britain. They have been stowing away in trucks or in dinghies and other small boats organised by smugglers to reach the UK. People fleeing conflict at home have been flocking to towns in northern France for the past few years. The number of such migrants using small boats to cross the channel has grown sharply this year, despite the high risks that are worsening in autumn weather. This is because the COVID-19 pandemic has made it virtually impossible for the migrants to hide themselves in trucks and cross over to the UK, as the pandemic has taken a heavy toll on the movement of trucks. Over 25,700 people have made the dangerous journey in small boats this year alone. This is three times the total for the whole of 2020. French and British authorities have picked up thousands of migrants off both the French and British coasts in recent weeks in scores of rescue operations.

But, their efforts are not good enough and there is need for devising better ways to avert repeated human tragedies. Tom Davies, Amnesty International UK's refugee and migrant rights campaign manager, has eloquently summed up the situation when he lamented, "How many more times must we see people lose their life trying to reach safety in the UK because of the woeful lack of safe means to do so?" For years, smugglers have been at work sending migrants to Europe, especially in the UK where the labour policy is such that hired workers need not produce identity cards. This makes the UK the most coveted destination for such migrants leading to tragedies on both land and sea routes. The most horrific case was the death of 39 Vietnamese people who were found dead in a refrigerated truck in 2019.

Europe's migration policy is undoubtedly flawed as the flow of migrants is continuing despite the European countries grudgingly accepting migrants into their soils. For example, 83,000 asylum applications were lodged in France over the past year against 31,000 in the UK. In 2020, the UK registered 5.78 asylum seekers and refugees per 10,000 inhabitants against 16.93 by France, 19.52 by Germany and 60.57 by Greece.

The Anglo-French tussle stems from the fact that the rule for detecting and handling migrants in a humane way that was being followed in the European Union is no longer valid for the UK after the latter implemented its Brexit policy. Under that rule France cooperated with Britain as the onus of bearing the burden of migrants is on the first country where they are found. But after Brexit, the UK is not bound to accept the migrants who set their feet first on its soil. For this reason, it wants stricter vigilance in northern France and is ready to work jointly with France. This runs counter to France's interests of letting its territory to be used as the migrants' gateway to the UK.

The war of words -- Johnson's letter to France on the migrants' death posted in his Twitter handle and Macron's sharp reaction -- does not help matters apart from scoring political brownie points. The two countries need to put their heads together and find a way out of the human tragedy being enacted on both their territories.

WISDOM CORNER

“Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage.” LAO TZU

“Your living is determined not so much by what life brings to you as by the attitude you bring to life; not so much by what happens to you as by the way your mind looks at what happens.” KAHILL GIBRAN

“Every experience is a paradox in that it means to be absolute, and yet is relative; in that it somehow always goes beyond itself and yet never escapes itself.” TS ELIOT

WORDSWORTH

Procrastination

Many of us are procrastinators, putting off inescapable tasks as long as possible. At Pennsylvania State University, David Rosenbaum and colleagues Lanyun Gong and Cory Adam Potts carried out experiments on the matter which they wrote up in the July 2014 issue of Psychological Science. Subjects were asked to pick up a plastic bucket and take it to the end of an alley. One bucket was close to the starting point, the other much nearer the goal. Surprisingly, the experimenters found that subjects tended to pick up the bucket closer to them and carry it a greater distance to the goal. This persisted even when the experimenters loaded the buckets with seven pounds weight of pennies. When asked why they did this, rather than picking up the bucket nearer the goal and so doing less work, the subjects tended to say that they "wanted to get the task done sooner". The research report suggests that these results imply we often begin jobs earlier than needed in order to get them out of the way, even if it means additional effort. People appear wired to incur a significant physical cost to eliminate the mental burden of knowing that something has to be done. The researchers invented the term procrastination, supposedly the opposite of procrastination. This attitude might seem desirable, but it has been suggested it can be a disguised form of procrastination, by which we tire ourselves out doing trivial and non-urgent tasks which we think of as clearing the decks before getting down to the really important stuff.

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

Variant of concern

Sir, The new COVID-19 variant Omicron which has been found in South Africa, Botswana and Hong Kong, is now a global concern. This variant is said to be more dangerous than the Delta variant which is the dominant variant till now and the reason behind the surge in cases in different countries. The new variant is of a heavily mutated version of the virus and spreads quickly. Research is going on to know its other properties such as whether it can evade the immune response triggered by vaccines. The Indian government should need to trace the passengers coming from those countries which have already detected cases with the new variant. The people need to adhere to COVID-19 guidelines and maintain social distancing. We can soon witness a third wave if we don't remain cautious of this new variant. Our behaviour in the next few days will determine the severity of the third wave. The government should ramp up vaccination as well.

Deba Prasad Nayak, CUTTACK

Tobacco menace

Sir, The Odisha government has banned the sale and manufacture of gutkha and paan masala. The then state Health Minister Damodar Rout had said that the government would issue required notification under the Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restrictions on Sales) Regulations, 2011, in two to three days, but the present scenario is quite different now. Almost half of the population of Odisha is addicted to tobacco in one form or the other, as per the latest National Family Health Survey (NFHS-2021). According to the survey, 51.6% men of 15 years and above and 26% women in same age category in Odisha are exposed to the use of tobacco. Interestingly, the survey highlighted that the use of tobacco in rural areas is more than that of urban areas. The survey has revealed that approximately 54.1 per cent men and 28 per cent women use tobacco in rural areas as compared to 40.5 per cent men and 16.6 per cent women in urban areas. The state government has banned sale and manufacturing of gutkhas and paan masala but no effort was made to execute it and finally tobacco and alcohol menace has increased in the state. The state government must ban the use of gutkhas and liquor to save the villages from getting ruined completely.

Hitesh Kumar Parida, PANIKOILI (JAJPUR)

of the day quote

Fear, concern is necessary about the new variant of COVID-19. All government departments are on high alert. I appeal to people to not unnecessarily mingle and to take all precautions

MANISH SISODIA | DELHI DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER

All BSP MPs have been instructed to raise important issues pertaining to the country and public interest with full preparations under the rules of the House. It is best that the government takes the House into confidence

MAWATI | BSP CHIEF

Corruption in recruitment, paper leak has become the identity of the BJP government. Today the hardwork of lakhs of youths was ruined due to the paper leak of UPTET

PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA | CONGRESS LEADER

SHORT TAKES

TN on alert over Omicron

Chennai: The Tamil Nadu health department has issued advisories to all the district collectors to be on high alert over the new variant of Covid-19 virus, Omicron. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has already stated that this is a highly dangerous variant and hence the state government has issued advisories to all the district collectors of the state. The state health department has also issued alerts to all the major airports in the state and testing facilities are being ramped up at Chennai airport.

Elephants' death: 2 loco pilots booked

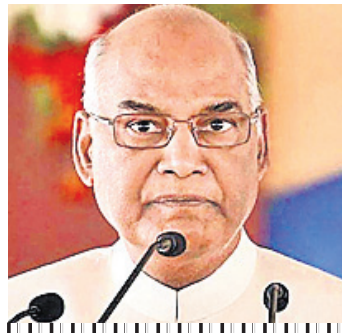
Chennai: The Tamil Nadu forest department has registered a case under Section 9 of the Wildlife Protection Act against two loco pilots over knocking three elephants to death while they were crossing the rail track. The case was filed Saturday and the incident happened Friday at 9 p.m. The main loco pilot MT Subair of Kozhikode and assistant loco pilot, MC Akhil of Thrissur, who was running the Mangalore-Chennai Express (12602) Friday, were charged under the Wildlife Act.

Ex-CM's PA held in cheating case

Coimbatore: A Personal Assistant (PA) of former Tamil Nadu chief minister K Palaniswami was arrested in Omalur in neighbouring Salem district on Sunday on charges of collecting lakhs of rupees from many people by promising to secure them government jobs. Based on a complaint from Tamilselvan of Neyveli that the personal assistant Mani had taken Rs 17 lakh from him on the promise of getting assistant engineer post in the Transport department but failed to fulfil his promise and reportedly threatened him of dire consequences if he complained, the Salem Crime Branch registered a case against him a month ago.

Two labourers die

Hyderabad: Two labourers were suffocated to death and two others taken ill while cleaning a septic tank in Hyderabad Sunday, police said. The incident occurred at Gautami Enclave in the Kondapur area. Police said the labourers were cleaning the septic tank in an apartment building when they fell unconscious and died.



Yoga belongs to all and is meant for all. It is a system to keep our mind and body healthy
RAM NATH KOVIND | PRESIDENT

EXPENSIVE TOMATOES

Prices of staple vegetable tomato are likely to stay elevated for two more months, CRISIL said. Tomatoes account for 10 per cent of the total vegetable production in India



Govt revises guidelines for int'l arrivals

INDIA, WHICH BATTLED THE 2ND WAVE IN APRIL-MAY, FACES THE OMICRON CHALLENGE AFTER EASING CURBS TO A LARGE EXTENT FOLLOWING AN IMPROVEMENT IN THE SITUATION

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 28: As concerns mounted over a potentially more contagious coronavirus variant spreading to many countries, the Centre Sunday decided to review the resumption of international flights, introduced stricter guidelines for people travelling from or transiting through 'at-risk' countries and issued a slew of directions to the states for ramping up testing-surveillance measures and health facilities. The Union Health Ministry Sunday revised the guidelines for the international arrivals in the wake of new Covid variant, Omicron - designated as a Variant of Concern (VOC) by the World Health Organization (WHO). The new guidelines will be effective from December 1.

The Health Ministry, in a statement, said: "The existing guidelines have been revised in view of reporting of a new variant of SARS-CoV-2 (B.1.1.529; named Omicron) which has been now classified as VOC by the WHO."

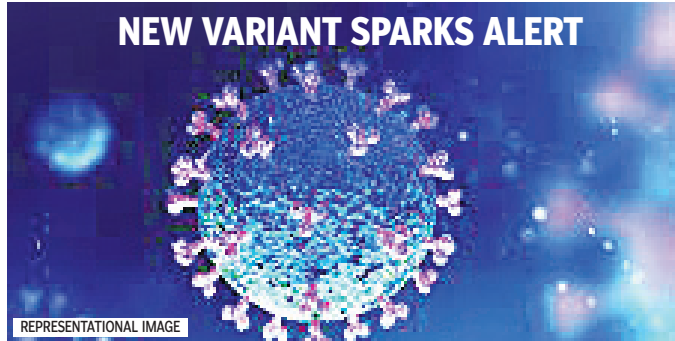
The government said that international arrivals will now have to upload their 14-day travel history and valid negative RT-PCR test reports on Air Suvidha portal

before embarking on their journey to India. The RT-PCR test report should not be more than 72 hours old, added the statement.

According to the new guidelines, the passengers travelling from countries that are categorised as 'at-risk' will have to undergo testing on arrival. If the passengers test positive, their samples will be sent for genomic sequencing, and they will be sent to institutional quarantine. If they test negative, they will be asked to remain in home quarantine for seven days following which they will take a test on the 8th day and continue monitoring their health for the next 7 days.

The government has listed - South Africa, China, the United Kingdom, European countries, Bangladesh, Brazil, Botswana, Mauritius, New Zealand, Zimbabwe, Hong Kong, Singapore and Israel on 'At Risk' segment. The tests for passengers from 'at-risk' nations will be self-paid while the cost of the random tests will be borne by the Civil Aviation Ministry.

"Travellers from countries excluding the 'at risk' countries will be allowed to leave the airport and shall self-monitor their health for 14 days post arrival," said the statement.



Vax best available option: Experts

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 28: The newly detected Covid variant from South Africa this week - omicron - might affect those severely who have not yet taken their Covid-19 shot, health experts said Sunday.

According to experts, getting vaccinated looks like the best available option at present and it can be a game-changer in fighting against the new variant of Covid. "So far, it appears that those who are not vaccinated are at very high risk of getting affected by the severe disease," Ravi Shekhar Jha, Additional Director Pulmonology, Fortis Escorts Hospital, Faridabad, told IANS.

"Therefore, vaccination is the best available option at present which can be a game-changer," Jha added. The experts said that we need to understand that the pan-

demic is not yet over and therefore we should not lower our guards and restart taking full precautions as before including social distancing.

OMICRON CONCERN

"The new variant of Covid Omicron has several mutations from previous Covid-19 strains," said Animesh Arya, Senior Consultant in Respiratory Medicine, Sri Balaji Action Medical Institute, New Delhi. "People need to understand that Covid appropriate behaviour and vaccination are the only ways to stay safe from this variant," Arya added.

The new variant identified in South Africa has left the scientific community worried, as they fear that this new strain could fuel outbreaks in several countries and cripple health systems once again.

SEEKING PROTECTION



Commuters use a plastic sheet to cover themselves during rain in Kanyakumari

PTI PHOTO

18 killed in WB road mishap

AGENCIES

Kolkata, Nov 28: At least 18 people were killed during a funeral procession when a vehicle carrying the remains of the deceased rammed into a stationary truck in West Bengal's Nadia district early Sunday, a police officer said.

The victims included six women and a child, he said. Top leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, have condoled the loss of lives. A mini truck, carrying over 35 people and the bier, hit another stone-laden truck parked on one side of a state highway in Hanskhali around 3 am, killing 12 on the spot, the officer explained. Six others succumbed to their injuries on the way to the hospital or during treatment. Local people and the police shifted the injured to Shaktinagar General Hospital, where doctors, after examining their condition, referred the critical ones to another



IANS

medical institution in Krishnanagar. According to the police officer, low visibility due to fog may have led to the accident.

One of those injured said he and others were heading to Nabadwip cremation ground from Chakdah when the accident took place. The PM, taking to Twitter, said, "Extremely pained by the loss of lives due to a road accident in Nadia, West Bengal. My thoughts are with the bereaved families. May the injured recover at the earliest." Shah, too, prayed for strength and well-being of the grieving families.

"I express my condolences to the families of those who lost their lives in this. May God give them the strength to bear this grief. I wish the injured a speedy recovery," he tweeted. The CM, on her part, promised to "provide necessary assistance to the families" of the victims.

"Heartbroken to hear about the road accident in Nadia. I offer my deepest condolences to the bereaved families and pray for the speedy recovery of those who were injured. May God give them the strength to get past this difficult time," she wrote on the microblogging platform. Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar stressed on promotion of road safety measures.

"Deeply pained at reported death of 18 people and 5 others injured in Nadia District after the vehicle they were travelling in collided with a truck parked on the side of road. Expect all efforts @MamataOfficial to the family of deceased and injured. Need to promote Road Safety," he stated.

Rains continue to lash TN

AGENCIES

Chennai, Nov 28: Heavy rains continued to lash several parts of Tamil Nadu, including Chennai and adjoining districts, Sunday, leading to waterlogging and inundation in many parts of the state.

Several areas in Chennai like Pammal, T Nagar, Ashok Nagar witnessed heavy rains till 1 p.m. while other areas had moderate rains. Vellore, Tiruvannamalai, Ranipet, and Tirupattur are on high alert following heavy rains and most of the water bodies in these districts are reaching their full capacity. In Tiruvannamalai, most of the 1886 water bodies including the 600 PWD maintained irrigation tanks in the district are nearing full capacity. A complete ban on crossing the Palar river, check dams, and low-

Water levels in ponds and lakes in the city have also raised to the optimum level and people are expecting that this would lead to increase recharging of groundwater levels

level bridges have been imposed in Vellore, Ranipet, and Tirupattur districts of the state. A holiday was declared for schools and colleges in Chennai Monday after incessant rains and water-logging in several parts of the district. About 700 people were shifted to relief camps in Chennai and 392 streets in 108 neighbourhoods in the city were inundated.

UPTET CANCELLED AFTER PAPER LEAK, 26 ARRESTED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, Nov 28: The UPTET scheduled to be held Sunday was cancelled after a question paper for the exam was leaked, an officer here announced shortly before the exam was to begin.

In a statement issued here, the UP Government said that more than 26 persons have been arrested in this connection. Those arrested in Prayagraj include Satya Prakash Singh, an assistant teacher at a primary school in the city's Shankargarh area.

When searched, he was found to have the solved question paper in his WhatsApp. Rajendra Patel - the alleged mastermind of the whole operation - and Chaturbhuj Singh, one of the key players, were also among those arrested from Prayagraj, according to the statement. Besides them, police arrested other members of the gang, including one Sunny Singh, who was instrumental in sourcing solvers from Bihar, the statement said. Four persons were arrested from Lucknow district, and one each from Kaushambi, Ayodhya, and Ambedkarnagar district. Three persons were arrested from Shamli district. These three had procured 10 copies of the question paper for Rs 5 lakh, and had taken Rs 50,000 from 50-60 candidates each to give them access to the papers for reading and memorising. Search is on for the rest of the members of the gang, the government said.

UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said the culprits will be booked under the National Security Act and Gangster Act. He also ordered reconvening of the exam within a month.



Casteism not annihilated after 75 yrs of Independence: SC

THE TOP COURT SAID THAT 'BIGOTRY' PERPETUATED BY CASTE-BASED PRACTICES IS PREVALENT EVEN TODAY AND IT IMPEDES THE CONSTITUTION'S OBJECTIVE OF EQUALITY FOR ALL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 28: Incidents of caste-motivated violence show that casteism has not been annihilated

even after 75 years of independence and it is high time civil society reacts and responds with "strong disapproval" about the ghastly crimes committed in the name of caste, the Supreme Court has said.

The apex court, which delivered its verdict on a batch of pleas in a 1991 Uttar Pradesh honour killing case, in which three persons, including a woman were killed, said it had earlier issued several directions to authorities to take strong measures to prevent honour killings. Those directives should be carried out without any further delay, it said.

A bench headed by Justice L Nageswara Rao also said that to avert trial getting tainted and "truth becoming a casualty", the State has a definite role to play in protecting witnesses, to start with, at least in sensitive cases involving



those in power who have political patronage and would wield muscle and money power.

"Two young men and a woman were physically assaulted for nearly 12 hours and killed by the accused

for violating caste-ridden societal norms. These episodes of caste-motivated violence in the country demonstrates the fact that casteism has not been annihilated even after 75 years of independence," the

bench, also comprising justices Sanjiv Khanna and B R Gavai, said.

The top court, while upholding the Allahabad High Court verdict with regard to conviction of 23 accused in the case, acquitted three persons in view of ambiguity in their identity. Referring to the aspect of witness protection, the bench noted that 12 prosecution witnesses in the case turned hostile.

"Even if the witnesses have turned hostile, their evidence can be accepted, if they are natural and independent witnesses and have no reason to falsely implicate the accused," it said. The apex court said the right to testify in courts in a free and fair manner, without any pressure and threat whatsoever, is "under serious attack today", and if one is unable to testify in courts due to threats or other pressures, then it is a clear

violation of the rights under articles 19 (1) (a) and 21 of the Constitution.

The bench said one of the main reasons why witnesses turn hostile is that they are not accorded appropriate protection by the State. It is a "harsh reality", particularly, in cases where the accused are influential people and are tried for heinous offences and they make attempts to terrorise or intimidate witnesses, the bench said.

The bench said that as a protector of its citizens, the State has to ensure that during a trial a witness can safely depose the truth, without any fear of being haunted by those against whom he or she has deposed. It noted that according to Dr B R Ambedkar, inter-caste marriage is one remedy to get rid of casteism in order to achieve equality.



BJP sweeps Tripura civic polls

With the resounding victory, BJP has in its kitty 329 of the state's 324 wards of urban civic bodies, the CPI-M three, Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress and Independent one each

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Agartala, Nov 28: Tripura's ruling BJP pulverised Mamata Banerjee's TMC and the Left Sunday, capturing with surprising ease the Agartala Municipal Corporation and 13 other civic bodies where it now has 329 of the 324 seats.

Contesting its first civic polls after it stormed to power in the northeastern state in 2018, the saffron party steamrollered a feeble challenge from the opposition after a vitriol-filled campaign marked by communal tension, clashes and court battles that forced the Supreme Court to intervene and order peaceful polls.

Not a single opposition candidate could win from any ward of the 51-member Agartala Municipal Corporation all of which went to the BJP.

The saffron party's domination was so complete that it secured all the wards in the 15-member Khawai Municipal Council, 17-seat Belonia Municipal Council, 15-member Kumarghat Municipal Council and nine-member Sabroom Nagar Panchayat, state election commission officials said.

The party made a clean sweep in the 25-ward Dharmanagar



Those who tried to malign Tripura should see... People from majority and minority communities have together voted in favour of development under Narendra Modi ji

BIPLAB KUMAR DEB | CHIEF MINISTER

Sonamura Nagar Panchayat and Melaghar Nagar Panchayat will be without opposition with the BJP having won all the 13 seats each. It also bagged the 11-member Jirania Nagar Panchayat.

The party secured 12 seats of Ambassa Municipal Council, while the TMC and the CPI-M won one seat each and another went to an independent candidate. The BJP also won 16 seats of Kailashahar Municipal Council and the CPI(M) got one. In Panisagar Nagar Panchayat, the BJP emerged victorious in 12

seats and the CPI (M) bagged one. The BJP had won seven wards of Khawai Municipal Council, one of Dharmanagar Municipality, two of Melaghar Municipal Council and 10 of Jirania uncontested. It had also won without a contest the civic bodies of Ranirbazar, Bishal Ganj, Mohanpur, Kamalpur, Udaipur and Shantirbazar, which together account for 92 wards.

With the resounding victory, BJP has in its kitty 329 of the state's 324 wards of urban civic bodies, the CPI-M, which ruled Tripura with an iron fist for decades, three, Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress and Independent (one each).

Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb, in the line of opposition fire over communal violence in the state, dubbed the victory as 'historic' and said people of Tripura gave a 'sothik jawab' (the right answer) to those opposed to the BJP.

"Those who tried to malign Tripura should see... People from majority and minority communities have together voted in favour of development under Narendra Modi ji," Deb said, smiling broadly as BJP supporters gathered on the streets of Agartala, distributing sweets and dancing to drum beats.

KCR's moves trigger buzz over his national ambitions

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, Nov 28: Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao's secret visit to Delhi has created a buzz in the political circles that he is renewing attempts to play a role in national politics by forging an alliance against the Narendra Modi-led BJP government at the Centre.

KCR, as the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) chief is popularly known, had left for the national capital November 21 with some state ministers and top officials to meet some Union ministers to mount pressure on the Centre to come clean over the issue of paddy procurement from the state.

KCR had declared before leaving that he would also try to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi. While his cabinet colleagues called on Central ministers Narendra Singh Tomar and Piyush Goyal, KCR returned to Hyderabad four days later without meeting the Prime Minister or any other Union minister.

State Minister for Panchayat Raj and Rural Development, E. Dayakar Rao, alleged that the Centre humiliated Telangana by not giving appointment to the Chief Minister or a delegation of ministers led by K.T. Rama Rao. They were forced to wait for four hours

A day before leaving for Delhi, KCR announced Rs 3 lakh financial assistance each to the families of 700-750 farmers, who were killed during the nationwide agitation against the three farm laws

SUPPORT FOR FARMERS



Terming the Centre's decision to repeal the three farm laws a great victory for the farmers, he also demanded withdrawal of all cases booked against the farmers. He told the Modi that a mere apology will not help, and that the PM should announce withdrawal of all cases against farmers

The TRS chief demanded that the Centre should bring the Minimum Support Price Act in the ensuing Parliament session

in New Delhi, he claimed. State BJP President Bandi Sanjay Kumar said that nobody knows why KCR went to Delhi. He alleged that the CM went to the national capital to divert public attention from the failure of his government to procure paddy from the farmers. He also claimed that KCR went to Delhi for his personal work, but was trying to malign the BJP government.

Telangana Congress chief Revanth Reddy also slammed KCR for his visit to Delhi, and wondered why he was sitting in the national capital for four days rather than giving confidence to the farmers battling with damaged and sprouted paddy due to heavy rains. He also

alleged that the Chief Minister was in the national capital for a secret deal with the BJP government.

While KCR is yet to respond to the allegations, his visit definitely set off a fresh debate on his ambitions to play a role in national politics. The visit came close on the heels of KCR declaring a war on the Modi government over paddy procurement and other issues related to the farmers and the state.

The TRS chief not only dashed off a letter to the PM and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, but also led a 'dharma', demanding the Centre to procure paddy from Telangana and announce a procurement target for entire year.

Telangana's paddy crisis may deepen as Centre rejects demands

The TRS government is coming under criticism from opposition for tardy pace of paddy procurement, leading to unrest among farmers. The state government, however, is blaming the Centre for the situation

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, Nov 28: The ongoing crisis in Telangana over paddy procurement from farmers is likely to deepen further with the state government failing to get an assurance from the Centre to lift the paddy.

Amid the mounting criticism of the state government over sluggish procurement of paddy from farmers during the current Kharif season, the Centre has turned down the state's demand to enhance the target.

During the meeting with a delegation of state ministers led by irrigation minister S. Niranjan Reddy in Delhi last night, union minister for food and public distribution Piyush Goyal also made it clear that the Centre will not procure parboiled rice from the state during the ensuing Rabi season.

After the meeting, Reddy told reporters that the stand taken by the Centre is unfortunate. He said they were returning disappointed from the national capital. The minister said the Centre



gave no clarity on the quantity of paddy to be procured during the ongoing Kharif season. Stating that the Food Corporation of India (FCI) had assured the state that 45 lakh tonnes of paddy will be procured, he said the Centre was now dodging the issue. Niranjan Reddy said the state's claim that paddy was grown over 62 lakh acres was not accepted and the Centre adopted delaying tactics but it has now accepted this after the satellite survey.

The central minister also turned down the demand of the state government to fix procurement targets for the two crops during the entire year saying this was not feasible.

Piyush Goyal told the delegation that the issue may be addressed by a proposed committee to be constituted by the Centre on agricultural issues in the wake of withdrawal of three new farm laws. The committee would come up with suggestions on MSP, annual target and alternate crops.

On the repeated demand by the

state to make its stand clear over procurement in the next season, the union minister told the delegation that parboiled rice will not be procured. The delegation brought to his notice the statements by state BJP leaders urging the state farmers to grow paddy. To this, Goyal assured that the state BJP leaders will be advised not to do so.

With the Centre rejecting the state's demand to increase procurement during the current season, CM K. Chandrasekhar Rao is likely to hold a meeting with his cabinet colleagues and top officials in a day or two to chalk out future course of action.

The chief minister had last week led a 'dharma' in Hyderabad to demand the Centre to lift entire paddy produced in the state. He also visited Delhi but could not meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The TRS government is coming under criticism from opposition for tardy pace of paddy procurement, leading to unrest among farmers.

Assam rolls out MF loan waiver scheme for 24 lakh women

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Tezpur, Nov 28: In a bid to fulfil a major poll promise, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma Sunday rolled out an ambitious microfinance loan waiver scheme, which is likely to benefit around 24 lakh women across the state.

Sarma, at a function here, announced the beginning of the Assam Micro Finance Incentive and Relief Scheme 2021 (AMFIRS) and ceremonially handed over cheques to five beneficiaries from Sonitpur district.

"We are able to fulfil our election promise of microfinance loan relief within six months from returning to power and the state government will continue to march forward with the same zeal in the future as well," he said.

The scheme will benefit 24 lakh women in the state, and 59,468 of them in Sonitpur district will receive a one-time incentive amounting from Rs 16,000 to Rs 25,000 each.

The CM inaugurated the first phase of the scheme for those borrowers, who have been repaying their debt regularly.

"They will be provided with a one-time incentive up to Rs 25,000 or the outstanding balance, whichever is less. This is an incentive for them to maintain good credit discipline. Altogether, 11 lakh women will benefit in this phase of the programme," Sarma said. In next two days, beneficiaries of Sonitpur, Charaideo, Sivasagar, Jorhat, Majuli, Golaghat, West Karbi Anglong and Dima Hasao - will be provided with their due incentives through account payee cheques.

Snail species discovered in Meghalaya

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Shillong/Agartala, Nov 28: The scientists, who recently discovered a new micro snail species with less than 2 mm in length (adult) in a Meghalaya cave, are conducting a study on mollusc across northeast under a mega project funded by the Department of Biotechnology under the Central government.

Scientists Nipu Kumar Das and NA Aravind, both associated with the Bangalore-based Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and Environment (ATREE), recently discovered the new micro snail species, found deep inside a limestone cave at Mawmsai village in Meghalaya's East Khasi Hills district.

"We have named this species after the limestone cave. Our species Georissa mawmsaiensis is unique from Georissa sarrita, the closest congener (meaning other members of the same genus), which was earlier described from the Mawmsai valley of Meghalaya, in its shell morphology starting from shell size variation to the presence of four very prominent spiral striations on body whorls of the shell (counting from the suture to aperture, in apertural view), compared to seven in Georissa sarrita," Das told IANS.

He said the team compared the morphological characters of the collected snails on the moist limestone rocks, 45 metre inside the cave entrance. "However, at present, we don't know whether our species is a true cave species. Further extensive surveys may reveal more interesting facts about natural history, its true distributional patterns, and so on." According to ATREE, the micro snail species



GEO-TOURISM

THERE ARE A LARGE NUMBER OF CAVES IN DIFFERENT NORTHEASTERN STATES, INCLUDING MEGHALAYA AND MIZORAM

Though proper study about the flora and fauna available inside these caves has not been done yet, the Geological Survey of India has identified certain geological sites across northeast India for promotion of geo-tourism

was discovered 170 years after the last such discovery was made.

Das, a resident of Assam, said that the cave has a very unique environment that can harbour unique faunal diversity. "There are several studies on cave biodiversity from Southeast Asian countries and other parts of the world, which reported various animals, including snails, but very few studies are from Indian caves," he said.

"The rich calcium minerals in limestone caves provide suitable habitat for shell-bearing snails. These caves are very sensitive to the change in environmental conditions resulting from anthropogenic activities (mining, cave tourism), climate change, and so on, causing negative impacts on cave-dwelling animals," he added. Das said that in the case of the Mawmsai cave in

Meghalaya, one of the major tourist attractions in the state, some changes have been made to increase the aesthetics of the cave, such as artificial lights and cemented floor and steps.

According to the scientist, these anthropogenic changes along with high tourist influx may pose a threat to this micro snail species, as well as other cave biodiversities.

"Till now, only five snail species have been reported from Meghalayan caves, while there may be many more awaiting discovery. Even though there are so many limestone caves in Meghalaya, very few studies have been conducted on snails from these caves. More studies would help us understand the snail diversity present in these unique cave ecosystems," Das said.

Black rice production gets a boost in Assam

Black rice has seen increasing market demand in different parts of the country due to its high nutritional value

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi/Guwahati, Nov 28: Black rice is well suited for Assam soils and weather conditions, carrying a huge opportunity for its commercial production. The World Bank-funded Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation project (APART), has begun production of new black rice varieties from different states of India.

The crop is expected to be harvested within the next week from the project wherein the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) has embarked on this ambitious collaboration with the Government of Assam under the APART, IRRI said in a release.

Amongst the many varieties available, black rice has seen increasing market demand in different parts of the country due to its high nutritional value. India being a predominantly rice pro-



ducing nation, has a plethora of varieties, each having different nutritional properties, characteristics, and climatic preferences.

"In this Sali season (rice grown in winters), IRRI - under APART - provided 60 kg of Manipuri black rice, 30 kg of Kalamalfula and 22 kg of Kalavati amongst a few selected farmers of Goalpara district in Assam. The Manipuri black rice variety is introduced from Manipur whereas other two black rice varieties namely Kalamalfula and Kalavati were introduced from Odisha," the release said.

NAGALAND PUSHES FOR OFF-ROAD TOURISM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kohima, Nov 28: Sturgis, a city in South Dakota, USA, has inspired the Nagaland government to use the state's rugged terrain and bad roads to its advantage and turn them into an off-roading business model which, officials said, has the potential to generate an annual revenue of Rs 100 crore once it hits the roads.

Turning its disadvantage of rugged terrain into an opportunity, the state government has devised a plan to promote off-roading, an activity which entails driving or riding a vehicle on unsurfaced roads or tracks, made of materials such as sand, gravel, riverbeds, mud, snow, rocks, and other natural terrain.

"We want to make Nagaland the off-road capital of the world. Sturgis, a city in the USA, generates a revenue of USD 800 million and sustains the livelihoods of 10,000 people through a 10-day motorcycle festival. We are going to do a similar thing here. We have good roads for off-roading and need virtually no investment in terms of infrastructure. All we need is to build

Turning its disadvantage of rugged terrain into an opportunity, the state government has devised a plan to promote off-roading, an activity which entails driving or riding a vehicle on unsurfaced roads or tracks



capacities in villages. Once it's operational, it has the potential to generate Rs 100 crore revenue annually," said I Kitto Zhimomi, Commissioner and Secretary Tourism, Government of Nagaland on the sidelines of the International

Tourism Mart being held in Kohima. While the concept is in the works with a tie-up with Google to chart out the routes that can be used and with Wander Beyond Boundaries curating the circuits, a group of

10 people participated in a 10-day off-roading expedition in the interiors of the state in September. "The off-roading trip of 10 people had them spend around Rs 20 lakh for the experience. We have

to target homesteads in villages, raise funds for clean toilets and clean linens, that's it. We don't want volumes, we want the niche traveller to visit and experience off-roading," said Zhimomi, who has also brought out a coffee book on his concept. He also said that the idea is to have around 10 such circuits each for 13 of its districts. Nagaland, which is currently hosting the 9th edition of the International Tourism Mart, being organised by the Ministry of Tourism, saw over 1.12 lakh tourists during the Hornbill Festival in 2016. As many as 2.82 lakh travellers, including 3,015 foreigners, visited the state during the event in 2019. The festival was celebrated virtually last year, amid the surge in COVID-19 cases in the country. This year's edition will begin December 1.

We want to make Nagaland the off-road capital of the world. Sturgis, a city in the USA, generates a revenue of USD 800 million and sustains the livelihoods of 10,000 people through a 10-day motorcycle festival. We are going to do a similar thing here

I KITTO ZHIMOMI | COMMISSIONER AND SECRETARY TOURISM NAGALAND

national

of the day quote

First it (BJP) attacked the PDP and created proxy parties here -- you know which ones and I do not have to take their names. Then they created a division within the NC (National Conference) in Jammu and made those leaders join the BJP

MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PDP PRESIDENT

The new variant has been reported in South Africa, Hong Kong and Botswana. The World Health Organization has also issued an alert about the new strain of the virus. However, no cases of the new strain has been reported in Karnataka

BASAVARAJ BOMMAI | KARNATAKA CHIEF MINISTER

Cooperation as the only way through which the country can move towards development

AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME AND COOPERATION MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Vivek Johri appointed as CBIC chairman

New Delhi: Senior bureaucrat Vivek Johri has been appointed as the chairman of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), an order issued Sunday by the personnel ministry said. Johri, a 1985-batch Indian Revenue Service (Customs and Indirect Taxes) officer, is currently working as the member in the board. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Johri as the chairman of the CBIC, it said.

Gang of auto thieves busted

New Delhi: A gang of auto thieves has been busted by the Delhi Police and 8 stolen high-end cars and two motorcycles recovered from the Delhi-NCR area and elsewhere, an official said Sunday. According to the official, information was received November 20 that three auto thieves, identified as Siraj, Guddu and Yamin, who commit vehicle thefts in the area of Delhi-NCR, would come to commit a crime.

Huge cache of arms seized

Imphal: An RPG launcher and shell, an M-16 UBGL and various AK variants were among a huge cache of arms and ammunition seized in Manipur's Imphal East district Sunday, police said.

Strict rules for Magh Mela '22

Prayagraj: Amidst reports of resurgence of Covid cases, the Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh has decided that only fully vaccinated devotees would be allowed to attend the annual Magh Mela in January 2022. SDM Prayagraj Mela Authority, Sant Kumar Srivastava, said: "In the meeting, the Chief Minister has made it very clear that only those devotees, who have taken both the doses of coronavirus vaccine would be allowed to enter the Magh Mela area. Besides, we have been told to follow all the protocols that were followed last year and not to take things lightly."

Step-dad allegedly rapes minor girl

New Delhi: A minor girl was allegedly raped by her step-father in the national capital, an official said here Sunday. The official said that a complaint was received at the Malviya Nagar Police Station Saturday (November 27) regarding the heinous crime with a minor girl, a resident of Dehradun.



Do whatever is needed to prevent the new deadly variant of COVID-19. Get started without waiting for central government's directives

UDDHAV THACKERAY | MAHARASHTRA CHIEF MINISTER

55 FULLY VACCINATED PEOPLE TEST COVID +VE

Fifty-five fully vaccinated inmates of an old age home in Maharashtra's Thane district and seven others have tested positive for coronavirus and all of them have been admitted to a civil hospital here, officials said Sunday



'FASTEST' CONVICTION IN RAPE CASE

MAN GETS LIFE TERM IN ONE DAY'S PROCEEDINGS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Araria (Bihar), Nov 28: In one of the fastest trials ever, a POCSO court in Bihar's Araria district has sentenced a man in just one day's proceedings to life imprisonment for raping an eight-year-old girl. The verdict is possibly the fastest delivered by any POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) court in the country. POCSO Court Special Judge Shashi Kant Rai also

imposed a fine of Rs 50,000 on the convict and directed him to pay a compensation of Rs 7 lakh for the survivor's rehabilitation.

Though the order was passed October 4, the order sheet pertaining to the case was made available November 26. The girl was raped July 22 this year and an FIR was lodged the next day. The case was supervised by Araria women's police station in-charge Rita Kumari.



Talking to reporters, POSCO Public Prosecutor Shyamal Yadav

The case in Araria was the speediest trial of a rape case in the country. It beat the record of a court in Madhya Pradesh's Datia district that wrapped up in three days a rape trial in August 2018.

The court fast-tracked the proceedings by recording witnesses, arguments, and counter-arguments; convicting the accused, and issuing the judgement in just one day.

Reacting to the verdict, the Directorate of Prosecution of Bihar

government's Home Department issued a statement saying, "This is perhaps the first case in which punishment has been given in a single day of trial in the country."

"Before it, in Datia (MP) district, a court had delivered a verdict after three days of trial on 8 August 2018. Bihar has now made a national record by conducting a trial in a single day by giving a life sentence to the convict till his last breath," it added.

Kisan mahapanchayat calls for BJP's defeat

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Nov 28: The kisan mahapanchayat organised here Sunday called for the defeat of BJP in all the upcoming assembly elections and vowed to continue the fight for a law guaranteeing the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for crops and other demands including the withdrawal of the Electricity Amendment bill and the arrest of Union minister Ajay Mishra over the Lakhimpur Khairi incident.

Addressing the mahapanchayat or mega conclave of farmers held under the banner of Samyukta Shetkari Kamgar Morcha (SSKM) at Azad Maidan in south Mumbai on the eve of the beginning of the Parliament session, Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) leader Rakesh Tikait said Prime Minister Narendra Modi was a supporter of the MSP when he was the chief minister of Gujarat and wanted a nationwide law to ensure that farmers' interests were guaranteed.

Tikait accused the Modi government of running away from a debate over the issue. Tikait also demanded that financial aid be given to the kin of farmers who died in the year-long protest against the Centre's three agri marketing laws. The mahapanchayat, held on the occasion of the death anniversary of social reformer Jyotiba



The Centre should bring a law to guarantee MSP to farmers. There are several issues related to the agriculture and labour sectors that need attention and we will travel all over the country to highlight them

RAKESH TIKAIT | BKU LEADER

Phule, hailed the farmers' victory over the Centre withdrawing the three farm laws and vowed to fight for remaining demands, a press release said.

Peasants, workers, agricultural labourers, women, youth and students of all religions and castes from all over Maharashtra attended this conclave, it said.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 28: The winter session of Parliament, which is likely to commence from Monday (November 29) to December 23, is set to witness uproar over a wide range of issues, including withdrawal of farm laws, Assembly polls in five states, 'revelations' of Congress leader Manish Tewari's book, among others.

The opposition is formulating a strategy to corner the ruling BJP over farmers' issues, national security, economy, while the BJP is all set to counter the attacks.

The Opposition will gherao the government over China's "intrusion" into the country and situation in Jammu and Kashmir while the Union government will attack the leadership of the grand old party over the "confession" in Tewari's book regarding 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks.

Training guns on the Congress, BJP national president JP Nadra said the saffron party had been saying all along that the stance of the then Manmohan Singh government on the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks showed the UPA's weakness due to which the country had to face all that, but now Tewari has also accepted the same in his book.

The BJP will try to put the



Congress in dock by comparing UPA's restraint after 2008 Mumbai terror attacks with surgical strikes during the Modi government.

The Congress will target the Modi government over Rafale deal, while the BJP will counterattack with French media Mediapart's report and question the grand old party's leadership on who took the Rs 65 crore commission for 36 Rafale jets during 2007 to 2012.

On farm issues, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had already made it clear that the government had brought the three farm laws for the welfare of 80 per cent small farmers, but the government was unable to make few of them understand the legislations.

On the first day of the Monsoon session, Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar will move the Farm Laws Repeal Bill, 2021

in the Lok Sabha. The government wants this Bill to get passed the same day after discussion.

The Opposition will try to corner the government over rising prices of petrol and diesel, and "poor" management of Covid-19 pandemic, the BJP will revert with historic vaccination coverage in the country.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who is trying to widen Trinamool's footprint in the country and establish the party as an option to the Congress in the national politics, will attack the government over the Tripura violence, while the BJP will flag up the issue of "killings" of the saffron party activists after the West Bengal Assembly polls. The Union government is likely to introduce 26 Bills in the winter session and hold discussion on three other Bills.

NDA ally NPP calls for repeal of CAA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 28: The BJP's ally National People's Party leader Agatha Sangma Sunday demanded the repeal of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) at a meeting of constituents of the ruling NDA as well as at the all-party meeting convened ahead of the Winter Session of Parliament.

Sangma, the MP from Tura in Meghalaya, urged the government that as it has repealed farm laws keeping in mind the sentiments of the people, the CAA should also be repealed.

Sangma made the demand at the all-party meeting called by the government as well as at a meeting of the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in the presence of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Union ministers Pralhad Joshi and Piyush Goyal. "Since the farm laws have been repealed and this was done primarily keeping in



Agatha Sangma

mind the sentiments of the people, therefore, I requested the government to repeal the CAA keeping in mind the same sort of sentiments of the people from the Northeast," she told PTI after the NDA meeting here. There was no response from the government but it has taken detail notes of the demands made by the floor leaders of all parties, Sangma said.

When asked whether other parties from the Northeast which are part of NDA also share the same sentiments, she said, "I made this demand on behalf of my party

and people from the Northeast. I know a few others who also share the same view." The CAA, which facilitates granting of Indian citizenship to persecuted non-Muslim minorities of Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan, was passed by Parliament in 2019 and had led to protests in different parts of the country. The President had given his assent to the legislation on December 12, 2019.

The objective of the CAA is to grant Indian citizenship to persecuted minorities -- Hindu, Sikh, Jain, Buddhist, Parsi and Christian -- from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. People from these communities who had come to India till December 31, 2014 due to religious persecution in these countries will not be treated as illegal immigrants but be given Indian citizenship.

After the CAA was passed by Parliament, widespread protests were witnessed in the country.

TOUGH COMPETITION



Villagers participate in a rowing competition on the Hooghly river in Nadia, West Bengal

PTI PHOTO

'Nearly all ultras involved in civilian killings neutralised'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 28: Nearly all the terrorists involved in the killings of civilians in Jammu and Kashmir last month have been neutralised and the armed forces are now focussing on intelligence-based "surgical operations" involving smaller teams to deal with terror activities in the Union Territory, sources in the security establishment said Sunday.

They said a "refined" approach to deal with terrorism has been put in place under a more nuanced framework of better coordination among the Jammu and Kashmir police, the intelligence agencies and the Army with an aim to minimise collateral damage. After a spell of relative calm, Jammu and Kashmir witnessed a spate of killings of innocent civilians last month, triggering apprehensions of an intense cycle of violence



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

and turmoil in the region. The sources said a major focus of the anti-terror drill has been to achieve "zero loss" of innocent lives and all wings of the security forces have been trying to achieve it. That is

why the focus has been on "intelligence-based surgical operations" involving smaller teams, with a focus on drawing support from the local population to such actions, they added.

They said 24 civilians were killed and 49 injured in various counter-terror operations in 2018.

Over the past three years, the security forces undertook a series of measures to ensure minimum collateral damage and as a result of such efforts, only two civilians were killed and two received minor injuries in 2021, the sources said.

Asked about the encounter in Srinagar's Hyderabad, they said a certain section is focussing on it to occupy "lost space".

The sources said the security forces have been getting support, including actionable intelligence, from the locals in several parts of Jammu and Kashmir as they have rejected the "false propaganda" unleashed by Pakistan.

The sources claimed that the situation in Jammu and Kashmir has been under control and pointed out that compared to the 318 ter-

Sisodia's poser to Punjab counterpart on best schools

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chandigarh, Nov 28: Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia Sunday released a list of 250 Delhi government schools up to Class 12, as part of the challenge posed to Punjab Education Minister Pargat Singh to compare the condition and entire education system of the Punjab and Delhi government schools.

The AAP leader also sought a list of such schools from the Punjab government. Sisodia, who holds the Education portfolio, released the list of government schools that have improved in the field of education reforms, infrastructure, training, and results. He said it was a matter of happiness that now education was becoming an issue in the politics of the country, especially in electoral politics.

"In the last five years, the work that has been done in the government schools in the field of education in Delhi; it has forced other parties to talk about it," he said in a statement.

He said recently Delhi Chief Minister and AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal had made several announcements for teachers in Punjab and in regard to this, the Congress claimed that they had done a lot of work in the field of education and that no work was done in Delhi.

Gambhir receives another e-mail from ISIS-K

New Delhi: Former cricketer and BJP MP Gautam Gambhir has received another e-mail from ISIS-Kashmir, just days after he received death threat from the same e-mail ID. This time, the mail accessed by IANS, read: "Delhi Police and IPS Shweta can't uproot anything. Our spies are also present in the police." IPS Shweta Chauhan is currently serving as DCP at the Central District of the national capital. The mail, which was received at 1.37 a.m. Sunday, further read that all information about the East Delhi BJP MP is being received.

international



The Islamic Emirate wants to have good relations, economic ties and co-exist with all countries. Afghanistan will not interfere in the internal affairs of any country, it is not our policy
MULLAH HASSAN AKHUND | ACTING PM, AFGHANISTAN'S CARETAKER GOVERNMENT

EX CAMBODIAN PREMIER NO MORE
Cambodian former PM Prince Norodom Ranariddh, the current king's half-brother who spent his later years in the political shadow of his one-time rival PM Hun Sen, has died in France. He was 77. Information Minister Khieu Kanharith said he had received information from the royal palace that Ranariddh had died in Paris



of the day quote

The elections are the last stone in the building process of a modern state. For now, we will tackle economic challenges within democracy, freedom and with legitimate institutions chosen by the people



ABDELMADJID TEBBOUNE | PRESIDENT, ALGERIA

It must stop. Now of course we can't just do it on our own, we do need the cooperation of the French... I hope the French will... work with us



SAJID JAVID | HEALTH MINISTER, UK

We can have no doubts that Lukashenko's regime and the powers that support it will continue to test the western world's unity and their ability to react and repel the hybrid attacks



GITANAS NAUSEDA | PRESIDENT, LITHUANIA

Nations panic as Omicron threat grows

Omicron is potentially more contagious than previous variants, although experts do not know yet if it will cause more or less severe Covid-19 compared to other strains

AGENCIES

London/Amsterdam, Nov 28: The new Omicron coronavirus variant kept spreading around the world Sunday, with 13 cases found in the Netherlands and two each in Denmark and Australia, even as more countries tried to seal themselves off by imposing travel restrictions.

Dutch health authorities announced that the 13 cases of the variant were found among passengers who were on flights from South Africa that arrived in Amsterdam Friday. Authorities had tested all of the more than 600 passengers on those two flights and had found 61 cases for the new variant.

"It is not unlikely more cases will appear in the Netherlands," Health Minister Hugo de Jonge told a news conference in Rotterdam. "This could possibly be the tip of the iceberg."

Denmark's infectious disease authority said Sunday it has reg-



istered two cases of the variant in travelers from South Africa.

Health officials in Australia's most populous state, New South Wales, said two passengers who arrived in Sydney from southern Africa Saturday evening had tested positive for the variant.

Strict restrictions

In the most far-reaching effort to keep the variant at bay, Israel announced late Saturday it would

- Thirteen cases found in the Netherlands
- Two cases detected in Australia, two in Denmark
- Israel announces it is barring foreigners for two weeks
- The new variant has also thrown a spotlight on huge disparities in vaccination rates around the globe
- First discovered in South Africa, the variant has now been detected in Britain, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Denmark, Belgium, Botswana, Israel, Australia and Hong Kong

ban the entry of all foreigners and reintroduce counter-terrorism phone-tracking technology to contain the spread of the variant.

Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said the ban, pending government approval, would last 14 days. Officials hope that within that period there will be more information on how effective vaccines are against Omicron.

Even as many developed countries are giving third-dose boosters, less than 7% of people in low-income countries have received their first Covid-19 shot, according to medical and human rights groups.

Masks must in England shops, transport

London: Face coverings will become a compulsory requirement in shops and public transport in England from Tuesday, the UK government said Sunday as part of the tighter Covid-19 curbs being enforced in response to two cases of the new Omicron variant detected in the country. Health Secretary Sajid Javid said the requirement of compulsory PCR tests to be taken by all overseas arrivals into the UK will also be enforced "as soon as possible". The minister asserted that he expects all the new measures, being introduced to give scientists more time to analyse the infectiousness and vaccine-resistance levels of Omicron, to be lifted again within weeks. In other parts of the United Kingdom - Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland - face coverings are already mandatory on public transport and many indoor settings.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

Several thousand rally in Belgrade

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Belgrade, Nov 28: Several thousand people rallied in Belgrade Sunday in another environmental protest, a day after demonstrators blocked bridges and roads in different parts of Serbia and scuffled with riot police who formed cordons to try to stop them.

The rally Sunday was called in protest at alarming levels of air pollution in Serbia produced by coal-fueled power plants, lack of proper air-filtering protection in mines and factories, old cars and bad fuel for home heating.

The protesters, carrying banners reading "The Air Is Dangerous" and "You Are Suffocating Us," marched through downtown Belgrade, blowing whistles and chanting anti-government slogans.

"We don't have to measure the pollution, we can see it and feel it," said Bojan Simic, from the Eko Straza the environmental group that is behind the protest. "It is killing our children, I don't want my children to be forced to flee the country because of the pollution."

Serbia is one of the most polluted states in Europe with activists accusing the populist authorities of allowing foreign investors mostly from China to further hurt the Balkan nation's environment.

Oz to unmask online trolls

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Sydney, Nov 28: Australia's government said Sunday it will introduce legislation to unmask online trolls, and hold social media giants like Facebook and Twitter responsible for identifying them.



Prime Minister Scott Morrison, whose conservative coalition government faces an election in the first half of 2022, said the law would protect Australians from online abuse and harassment.

Attorney General Michaelia Cash said the legislation, reportedly to be introduced to parliament by early that 2022, was needed to clarify that the social media platforms, and not the users, were responsible for defamatory comments by other people.

"Confusion had been sown by a High Court ruling in September that found Australian media, as users managing their own pages on a social network, could be held liable for defamatory third-party

comments posted on their pages," Cash said. "Under the planned Australian legislation, the social media companies themselves would be responsible for such defamatory content, not the users," she said. It would also aim to stop people making defamatory comments without being identified, she said.

SCOTT MORRISON | PM, AUSTRALIA

People would also be able to apply to the High Court for an information disclosure order demanding a social media service provide details to unmask the troll, the attorney general said.

Josephine Baker, 1st Black woman honoured in French Pantheon

IN ADDITION TO HONOURING AN EXCEPTIONAL FIGURE IN FRENCH HISTORY, THE MOVE IS MEANT TO SEND A MESSAGE AGAINST RACISM AND CELEBRATE US-FRENCH CONNECTIONS

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris, Nov 28: France is inducting Josephine Baker — Missouri-born cabaret dancer, French World War II spy and civil rights activist — into its Pantheon, the first Black woman honoured in the final resting place of France's

most revered luminaries.

On Tuesday, a coffin carrying soils from the US, France and Monaco — places where Baker made her mark — will be deposited inside the domed Pantheon monument overlooking the Left Bank of Paris. Her body will stay in Monaco, at the request of her family.

French President Emmanuel Macron decided on her entry into the Pantheon, responding to a petition lobbying for her "pantheonisation." "She embodies, before anything, women's freedom," Laurent Kupferman, the author of the petition for the move, told The Associated Press.

Baker was born in 1906, in St Louis, Missouri. At 19, having already divorced twice, had relationships with men and women, and started a performing career; she moved to France following a job opportunity. "She arrives in France in 1925, she's an emancipated woman, taking her life in her hands,



in a country of which she doesn't even speak the language," Kupferman said.

She met immediate success on the Theatre des Champs-Elysees stage, where she appeared topless and wearing a famed banana belt. Her show, embodying the colonial time's racist stereotypes about African women, caused both condemnation and celebration.

China risks 'colossal' outbreak if it opens up like US: Study

Beijing: China could face more than 630,000 Covid-19 infections a day if it dropped its zero-tolerance policies by lifting travel curbs, according to a study by Peking University mathematicians. In the report published in China CDC Weekly by the Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, the mathematicians said China could not afford to lift travel restrictions without more efficient vaccinations or specific treatments. Using data for August from the United States, Britain, Spain, France and Israel, the mathematicians assessed the potential results if China adopted the same pandemic control tactics as those countries.

China's daily new cases would reach at least 637,155 if it adopted the United States' pandemic strategy, the report said. And daily cases would hit 275,793 if China took the same approach as Britain and 454,198 if it imitated France, it said. The estimates revealed the real possibility of a colossal outbreak which would almost certainly induce an unaffordable burden on the medical system, the report said.



Seth Berkley, CEO of the GAVI Vaccine Alliance that with the WHO co-leads the COVAX initiative to push for equitable distribution of vaccines, said this was essential to ward off the emergence of more coronavirus variants.

Iran N-talks head towards oblivion

AGENCIES

Paris, Nov 28: World powers and Iran return to Vienna Monday for a last ditch effort to salvage a 2015 nuclear deal, but few expect a breakthrough as Tehran's atomic activities rumble on in an apparent bid to gain leverage against the West. Six rounds of indirect talks were held between April and June. The new round begins after a hiatus triggered by the election of a new Iranian president, Ebrahim Raisi, a hardline cleric.

Tehran's new negotiating team has set out demands that US and European diplomats consider unrealistic. They are insisting that all US and EU sanctions imposed since 2017, including those unrelated to its nuclear programme, be dropped.

In parallel, Tehran's conflicts with the UN atomic watchdog, which monitors the nuclear programme, have festered. Iran has pressed ahead with its uranium enrichment programme and the IAEA says its inspectors have been treated roughly and refused access to re-install monitoring cameras at a site it deems essential to reviving the deal.

"They are doing enough technically so they can change their basic relationship with the West to be able to have a more equal dialogue in the future, said a Western diplomat involved in the talks.

Western diplomats say they will head to Monday's talks on the premise that they resume where they left off in June. They have warned that if Iran continues with its maximalist positions and fails to restore its cooperation with the IAEA then they will have to quickly review their options. Iran's top ne-



Several diplomats said Iran was now between four to six weeks away from the breakout time it needs to amass enough fissile material for a single nuclear weapon

gotiator and foreign minister both repeated Friday that full sanctions lifting would be the only thing on the table in Vienna.

"If this is the position that Iran continues to hold on Monday, then I don't see a negotiated solution," said one of the European diplomats.

"Should the talks collapse, the likelihood is the United States and its allies will initially confront Iran at the IAEA next month by calling for an emergency meeting."

However, they will also want to try to keep Russia, which has political influence on Iran, and China, which provides economic breathing space to Tehran through oil purchases, on side as they initially seek alternative diplomatic options.

BEYOND BORDERS



Members of a migrants' association hold a huge banner made with world's flags as Pope Francis delivers the Angelus prayer in St Peters Square at the Vatican, Sunday

Taiwan scrambles to see off Chinese air force

AGENCIES

Taipei, Nov 28: Taiwan's air force scrambled again Sunday to warn away 27 Chinese aircraft that entered its air defence zone, Taiwan's defence ministry said, the latest increase in tensions across the Taiwan Strait as China's president met his top generals.

Chinese-claimed Taiwan has complained for a year or more of repeated missions by China's air force near the democratically governed island, often in the southwestern

XI MEETS TOP BRASS

part of its air defence identification zone, or ADIZ, close to the Taiwan-controlled Pratas Islands.

Taiwan calls China's repeated nearby military activities grey zone warfare, designed to both wear out Taiwan's forces by making them re-

peatedly scramble, and also to test Taiwan's responses.

Over a four-day period beginning Oct 1, when China marked its national day, Taiwan said that nearly 150 PLA military aircraft entered its ADIZ, not territorial air space but a broader area Taiwan monitors and patrols that acts to give it more time to respond to any threats.

The latest Chinese mission included 18 fighters jets plus five nuclear-capable H-6 bombers, as well as, unusually, a Y-20 aerial refuelling aircraft, the Taiwan ministry said.

of the day quote

I would like to suggest 5 focus areas for strengthening India-Bangladesh relationship: Trade, Technology, Connectivity, Entrepreneurship, Health & Tourism

PYUSH GOVAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

STL is taking leadership in India in building end-to-end 5G technologies. We have already partnered with companies like Facebook as part of Evenstar program to build 5G macro radios

ANKIT AGARWAL | MD, STERILITE TECHNOLOGIES

What we are seeking from the government is very simple thing, that yes, let us have some reduction in import duties, but only for limited time or limited quantities

VIKRAM PAWAH | PRESIDENT AND CEO, BMW GROUP INDIA

SHORT TAKES

Haryana slashes VAT on jet fuel

New Delhi: Haryana has slashed the value added tax on aviation turbine fuel to 1 per cent, making it the fifth state to reduce the levy on the fuel. In a series of tweets, Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia Sunday expressed his gratitude to Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar for the prompt action on reducing the VAT on jet fuel to 1 per cent and said the move will also set an example for other states to follow.

PNB puts up sale of two companies

New Delhi: State-owned Punjab National Bank (PNB) has put up a Madhya Pradesh-based steel and agriculture company for sale to recover its outstanding of nearly ₹200 crore. The National Steel and Agro Industries Ltd has a balance outstanding of ₹199.90 crore to the bank. "We intend to place the account for sale to ARCs/NBFCs/other banks/FIs, on the terms and conditions stipulated in the bank's policy, in line with the regulatory guidelines," PNB said in an auction notification.

'H-Social Creator' program for youth

New Delhi: Hyundai Motor India Foundation (HMIF), the CSR arm of Hyundai Motor India, announced the 3rd edition of globally renowned 'H-Social Creator', a youth contact CSR program. The 3rd edition will encourage young minds to deliver innovation in areas of road safety, environment, clean India, and healthcare. HMIF aims to reach over three lakh students across 150 colleges and will award a seed capital of ₹15 lakh to the winning idea.

Truecaller launches latest Version 12

Bhubaneswar: Truecaller announced the introduction of Truecaller Version 12, an all-new redesign with several user-focused enhancements. It all adds up to the best version of Truecaller yet with all the features our community has been clamoring for. The app still includes all useful features like call alerts, call reason, full screen caller id, inbox cleaner, smart sms, a powerful dialer and support for 46 languages along with video caller id, a redesigned interface, call recording, ghost call and call announce.

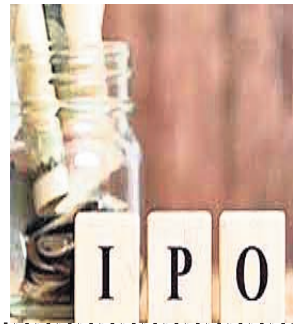


These days we hear all around us, start-up, start-up, start-up. It is true that this is the era of start-ups and it is also true that in the field of start-ups, in a way, India is leading the world

NARENDRA MODI | PM

TWO IPOs TO HIT MARKET NEXT WEEK

Two companies Star Health and Allied Insurance Company and Tega Industries are set to float their initial public offerings (IPOs) next week to cumulatively raise ₹7,868 crore. The three-day initial share-sale of Star Health will open November 30 and conclude December 2, while that of Tega Industries will be open for public subscription during December 1-3



Crypto exchange Coinstore enters India despite crackdown

COINSTORE IS THE SECOND GLOBAL EXCHANGE TO ENTER INDIA IN RECENT MONTHS

Mumbai, Nov 28: Singapore-based virtual currency exchange Coinstore has begun operations in India at a time when the Indian government is preparing legislation to effectively bar most private cryptocurrencies.

Coinstore has launched its web and app platform and plans branches in Bangalore, New Delhi and Mumbai which will act as its base in India for future expansion,

its management said. Asked why Coinstore was launching India despite the pending clampdown on cryptocurrencies, Charles Tan, head of marketing at Coinstore said, "There have been policy flip-flops but we hope things are going to be positive and we are optimistic that the Indian government will come out with a healthy framework for cryptocurrencies."

The New Delhi government is planning to discourage trading in cryptocurrencies by imposing hefty



With nearly a quarter of our total active users coming from India, it made sense for us to expand into the market

CHARLES TAN | HEAD OF MARKETING, COINSTORE

capital gains and other taxes, two sources told agencies earlier this month.

It has said that it will allow only certain cryptocurrencies to promote the underlying technology

and its uses, according to a legislative agenda for the winter session that is set to start later this month.

Tan said Coinstore plans to recruit about 100 employees in India and spend \$20 million for marketing, hiring and development of crypto-related products and services for the Indian market.

Coinstore is the second global exchange to enter India in recent months, following in the footsteps of CrossTower which launched its

local unit in September.

The price of the world's biggest cryptocurrency, Bitcoin, has more than doubled since the start of this year, attracting hordes of Indian investors.

Industry estimates suggest there are 15 million to 20 million crypto investors in India, with total crypto holdings of around ₹400 billion (\$5.33 billion).

Coinstore also plans to expand into Japan, Korea, Indonesian and Vietnam, according to Tan.

Visa complains to US govt

'INDIA BACKING RUPAY'

New Delhi, Nov 28: Visa Inc has complained to the US government that India's informal and formal promotion of domestic payments rival RuPay hurts the US giant in a key market, memos seen by agencies show.

In public Visa has downplayed concerns about the rise of RuPay, which has been supported by public lobbying from Prime Minister Narendra Modi that has included likening the use of local cards to national service.

But US government memos show Visa raised concerns about a level playing field in India during an Aug 9 meeting between US Trade Representative (USTR) Katherine Tai and company executives, including CEO Alfred Kelly.

Visa remains concerned about India's informal and formal policies that appear to favour the business of National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), the non-profit that runs RuPay, over other domestic and foreign electronic payments companies, said a USTR memo prepared for Tai ahead of the meeting.

Modi has promoted homegrown



RuPay for years, posing a challenge to Visa and Mastercard in the fast-growing payments market. RuPay accounted for 63% of India's 952 million debit and credit cards as of November 2020, according to the most recent regulatory data on the company, up from just 15% in 2017.

Publicly, Kelly said in May that for years there was a lot of concern that the likes of RuPay could be potentially problematic for Visa, but he stressed that his company remained India's market leader.

"That's going to be something we're going to continually deal with and have dealt with for years.

So there's nothing new there," he told an industry event.

'NOT SO SUBTLE PRESSURE'

Modi, in a 2018 speech, portrayed the use of RuPay as patriotic, saying that since everyone cannot go to the border to protect the country, we can use RuPay card to serve the nation.

When Visa raised its concerns during the USTR gathering Aug 9, it cited the Indian leader's speech where he basically called on India to use RuPay as a show of service to the country, according to an email US officials exchanged on the meeting's readout.

INDIA'S RUPAY DOMINATES NUMBER OF ISSUED CARDS
PRIME MINISTER MODI, OTHER OFFICIALS PROMOTE USE OF RUPAY
VISA TOLD US GOVT MODI'S LINKED RUPAY USE TO NATIONAL SERVICE
MASTERCARD INC HAS RAISED SIMILAR CONCERNS PRIVATELY WITH THE USTR

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said last year that RuPay is the only card banks should promote. The government has also promoted a RuPay-based card for public transportation payments.

Visa told the US government it was concerned India's push to use transit cards linked to RuPay and the not so subtle pressure on banks to issue RuPay cards, the USTR email showed.

Mastercard and Visa count India as a key growth market, but have been jolted by a 2018 central bank directive for them to store payments data only in India for unfettered supervisory access.

FPIs net buyers in Nov; invest ₹5,319cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 28: Foreign portfolio investors (FPI) have pumped in a net sum of ₹5,319 crore in Indian capital markets despite a massive correction seen in equities over the last fortnight.

As per depositories data, overseas investors put in a net ₹1,400 crore into equities and ₹3,919 crore into the debt segment between November 1-26. This translated into total net investment of ₹5,319 crore.

"Since FPIs have been holding large quantity of banking stocks, they have been major sellers in this segment. Sustained selling has made banking stocks attractive from the valuation perspective," said VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services.

He further noted that sharp correction in the market on 26th November has been mainly triggered by concerns arising out of the new strain of the virus spotted in South Africa, Botswana and Hong Kong.

"Despite recent correction, the markets continue to be at elevated levels and hence FPIs would have booked profits," said



In October, they were net sellers to the tune of ₹12,437 crore

Himanshu Srivastava, Associate Director - Manager Research, Morningstar India.

FPIs would be closely watching the spread of the new coronavirus variant and its possible impact on the growth globally. Higher valuation is also a concern, which may continue to trigger profit booking at regular intervals, he said.

"Future of FPI flows is expected to remain volatile given key events such as upcoming state elections, expectation of rise in interest rates and concerns a new Covid variant will prompt fresh mobility restrictions, hindering economic recovery," said Shrikant Chouhan, Head - Equity Research (Retail), Kotak Securities.

JIO HIKES TARIFFS BY 21%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 28: After Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea, India's largest mobile operator Reliance Jio Sunday announced up to 21 per cent hike in its prepaid tariffs from the next month.

Despite the increase in rates, Jio has kept the price of plans lower than Airtel and Vodafone Idea's which is expected to continue pricing competition in the industry. The company still has kept its lowest rate for 28 days validity plan at ₹91 for Jiophone users which is the

lowest among private telecom operators. Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea have increased the entry level plan with 28 days validity to ₹99. The tariff hikes entail JioPhone Plan, Unlimited Plans, and data add on, and range between 19.6 per cent and 21.3 per cent.

"In line with its commitment to further strengthen a sustainable telecom industry, where every Indian is empowered with a true digital life, Jio today announced its new unlimited plans," said Reliance Jio.

The new unlimited plans will go-live on December 1, 2021.

FOR BRIEF PERIOD

BMW backs lower import duties on EVs

The company, which has been manufacturing locally many of its vehicles sold in India for the last 15 years, considers creating demand is key to localisation of manufacturing



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 28: German luxury car maker BMW believes that reduction in import duties on electric vehicles (EV) for a limited time or for a limited number of units will help create demand in order to help manufacturing of such vehicles in India and bring new technologies quicker to the country, according to a senior company official.

"What we always do is we create demand for a model and then lo-

calise it. We believe these new technologies also have a potential to be localised in future but you need to create a mass demand for that critical mass (for local manufacturing to be viable)," BMW Group India President and CEO Vikram Pawah told PTI.

The only way to do that, according to him, is to fast track it, create the demand before the infrastructure develops or create the demand which will create the infrastructure.

"Then we can localise by that time these technologies which are

mature and then we can apply it into the country," he added.

Pawah further said, "For that what we are seeking from the government is very simple thing, that yes, let us have some reduction in import duties, but only for limited time or limited quantities."

The rationale behind such a demand, according to him is "it will allow us achieve both the objectives. We will be able to keep manufacturing into India, and we will be able to bring these technologies quicker into India." Reiterating that the company has consistently maintained this stand, Pawah said, "That is what our consistency has been always that at any point any new technologies we should do that. It will allow even safety technologies, environment, green technologies to come into India faster."

Currently, India imposes 100 per cent import duty on fully imported cars with CIF (Cost, Insurance and Freight) value more than \$40,000 and 60 per cent on those costing less than the amount.

CIL's coal supply to power sector ups 23% in Apr-Oct

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 28: The dispatch of coal to the power sector by state-owned CIL rose 22.7 per cent to 291.72 million tonne (MT) in the first seven months of the ongoing fiscal year.

Coal India Ltd (CIL) had dispatched 237.75 MT of coal to the power sector in April-October period of 2020-21, according to monthly summary for the Cabinet for October.

The supply of coal to the power sector by CIL during the last month also increased 21.7 per cent to 47.67 MT, over 39.17 MT in the year-ago period, it said.



The fuel supply by Singareni Collieries Company Ltd (SCLL) to the sector in the seven months increased 66 per cent to 30.67 MT as against 18.47 MT in the year-ago period.

The coal supply by SCLL to the power sector during last month increased 41.7 per cent to 4.71 MT from 3.32 MT in the corresponding month of the previous fiscal year.

Coal India accounts for over 80 per cent of the domestic coal output. The company, which is eyeing one billion tonne of fuel output by 2023-24, will pump over ₹1.22 lakh crore in projects related to coal evacuation, exploration and clean coal technologies by 2023-24.

Out of this proposed spend, CIL has planned to invest ₹32,636 crore on coal evacuation, ₹25,117 crore on mine infrastructure and ₹29,461 crore on project development by 2023-24.

The company will also invest ₹32,199 crore on diversification and clean coal technologies, ₹1,495 crore on social infrastructure and ₹1,893 crore on exploration works.

The investment of ₹1.22 lakh crore will be utilised to fund a total of 500 projects.

Overseas dignitaries attend meet by TRIFED, MEA

These initiatives will help recognise and promote age-old tribal traditions and methods that is in danger of being lost due to urbanisation and industrialisation, said an official

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Nov 28: In line with the Prime Minister's vision of 'Vocal for Local' and building a self-reliant India, and to introduce the rich tribal heritage to international audiences, a Tribes India Conclave was organised in association with the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India at Tribes India Aadi Mahotsav Saturday 27th November 2021, as per government sources.

The event was attended by around 100 diplomats from more than 20 foreign missions in India besides senior officials from the Ministry of External Affairs and other ministries.

The dignitaries included diplomats from over 20 countries such as Poland, Kiribati, South Korea, Mexico, Thailand, Laos, Switzerland, Bangladesh, Maldives, US and Brazil to name a few. There were delegates from international organizations such as United Nations as well.

The dignitaries took a look at the stalls of the tribal artisans from across the country and showed their keenness to learn more about the unique handicrafts and traditions, said an official. With about 200 stalls on display which showcase products ranging from traditional weaves to jewellery and paintings and toys, the dignitaries were given a glimpse into tribal

AADI MAHOTSAV



arts and crafts.

On the occasion, there was also a presentation by TRIFED (Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India), wherein the TRIFED officials welcomed the delegates to the Aadi Mahotsav and said, "This is a mini tribal India in one place where you can buy the best of tribal handicrafts and produce and sample the

best of tribal cuisine and culture. TRIFED is working to bring these tribal artisans and forest dwellers into the mainstream and provide them access to larger markets. 500 such events are organised in an year - some on a smaller scale."

According to the officials, a special show on tribal handicrafts, handlooms and accessories curated by Gramin Vikas Chethan

Santhan, Badmer has been scheduled for tomorrow evening.

A separate GI store which features renowned, exquisite items such as Rajasthan's blue pottery, the Kota Doriya fabric, Madhya Pradesh's Chanderi and Maheshwari silk, Bagh print, Odisha's Pattachitra, Karnataka's Bidriware, Banarasi silk from Uttar Pradesh, Darjeeling tea from West Bengal, Kala jeera from Himachal Pradesh, the extremely spicy Naga chilli, and the large cardamom from the North-east can also be visited in the Aadi Mahotsav.

Depending on the requirements and budget, these products can be customised into gift hampers. Packaged in premium organic, recyclable, sustainable packing material, designed by renowned designer Ms Rina Dhaka exclusively for Tribes India, these make for ideal gifts for any occasion, as per government officials.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Batra misses out on historic medal

Houston: Star India paddler Manika Batra missed out on a historic medal at the World Table Tennis Championships after crashing out in the quarterfinals of the mixed and women's doubles events here. Batra and G Sathiyar lost to Japan's Tomakazu Harimoto and Hina Hayata 1-3 (5-11, 2-11, 11-7, 9-11) in mixed doubles. Then in women's doubles, Batra and Archana Kamath went down 1-11, 6-11, 8-11 to the Luxembourg duo of Sarah De Nutte and Ni Xia Lin.

Maiden gold

New Delhi: Rajasthan's Bhavesh Shekhawat sealed his first title by winning the men's 25m rapid fire pistol gold at the ongoing 64th Shooting Nationals, even as 2012 Olympic silver medallist comeback-man Vijay Kumar finished fourth here Sunday. Haryana's Anish Bhanwala, who was third in the men's event, also claimed gold in the junior rapid fire competition, strengthening his state's firm grip at the top of the medals tally.

WTA concerned

Washington: Steve Simon, the head of the WTA said he remains 'deeply concerned' about the whereabouts of Chinese tennis player Peng Shuai and her ability to 'communicate freely, openly and directly' after allegations that a powerful politician forced her to have sex. "Steve Simon has reached out to Peng Shuai via various communication channels," the WTA said in a statement Sunday. "He has sent her two emails, to which it was clear her responses were influenced by others. He remains deeply concerned that Peng is not free from censorship or coercion," it added.

Ram's 1st title

Manama (Bahrain): Ramkumar Ramanathan won his maiden Challenger level singles title Sunday, 12 years after turning a pro, when he outplayed Evgeny Karlovskiy in the summit clash of the ATP80 Manama event, here. The 27-year-old Ramkumar, who had lost six Challenger finals in his career before, beat his Russian rival 6-1, 6-4 in 68 minutes. Ramkumar, seeded sixth and ranked 222 in the world, sealed the first set when the Russian's backhand return sailed over the baseline.

Impressive feat

Tbilisi (Georgia): Paramjeet Kumar became the first Indian para-powerlifter to clinch a medal in the World Para Powerlifting Championships here Sunday. Paramjeet, competing in the 49kg category, lifted 158kg to grab the bronze medal while Omar Shami Qarada of Egypt won the gold after lifting 174kg. "History created for India in Para @Powerlifting by Paramjit Kumar of Punjab as he wins #bronze at the ongoing World Para Powerlifting Championship in Tbilisi, Georgia. Paramjit's 158KG lift has created history! Cheer for @Paralymplndia team," president of the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI), Deepa Malik tweeted.

Aditi shines

Marbella (Spain): India's Aditi Ashok and Tvesa Malik made noticeable upward movements to be placed tied 14th and tied 36th respectively after the third round of the Andalucia Costa del Sol Open de España golf tournament here Sunday. Aditi shot one-under 71 while Tvesa carded two-under 70 in the third round. Home favourite Carlota Ciganda continued her good form and leads by three shots heading into the final day. Aditi had one birdie and one bogey on the front nine.

Messi fashions win

Saint-Etienne (France): Lionel Messi had three assists Sunday in a 3-1 win over 10-man Saint-Etienne. The victory helped Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) extend their lead atop the French league standings to 14 points but the victory was marred by a Neymar injury. The Brazil striker was stretched off in the 87th after twisting his ankle under an awkward challenge from Yvann Macon. The goals for PSG were scored by Marquinhos (two) and Angel di Maria while Saint-Etienne had opened the scoring through Denis Bouanga.

IYER, SAHA PROP INDIA

New Zealand stumble as they lose Young chasing 284 runs for victory

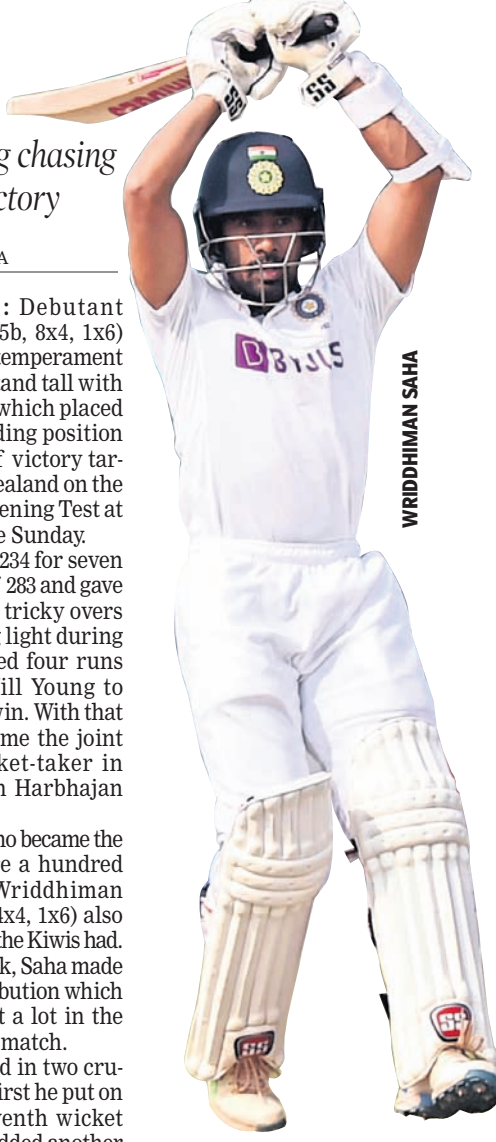
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kanpur, Nov 28: Debutant Shreyas Iyer (65, 15b, 8x4, 1x6) showed his ice-cool temperament under pressure to stand tall with a fine half century which placed India in a commanding position as they set up a stiff victory target of 284 for New Zealand on the fourth day of the opening Test at the Green Park here Sunday.

India declared at 234 for seven for an overall lead of 283 and gave the Black Caps four tricky overs to face under fading light during which they managed four runs and lost opener Will Young to Ravichandran Ashwin. With that scalp, Ashwin became the joint third highest wicket-taker in Indian cricket with Harbhajan Singh (417 wickets).

Along with Iyer, who became the first Indian to score a hundred and 50 on debut, Wriddhiman Saha (61 n o, 126b, 4x4, 1x6) also foiled any hopes that the Kiwis had. In spite of a stiff neck, Saha made an invaluable contribution which will certainly count a lot in the final context of the match.

Saha was involved in two crucial partnerships. First he put on 64 runs for the seventh wicket with Iyer and then added another



WRIDDHIMAN SAHA

67 runs for the eighth wicket with Axar Patel (28 n o, 67b, 2x4, 1x6) to take the game away from New Zealand. When India were 51 for five in the morning session, it was Iyer, Saha, Patel and Ashwin (32, 62b, 5x4) who rescued the side. This is certainly an innings which will give Saha's Test career a new lease of life.

For the Kiwis, Tim Southee (3/75) and Kyle Jamieson (3/40) were the most successful bowlers on an unresponsive track.

If the morning belonged to New Zealand's bowlers, who decided to prolong Cheteshwar Pujara (22) and Ajinkya Rahane's (4) bat patch, the remainder of the two sessions belonged to India for which the credit certainly goes to Iyer. He once again displayed

steely temperament with some fine shots including huge six over long-off against Will Somerville. His best shot, however, was an inside out lofted drive off left-arm spinner Ajaz Patel. It was a difficult shot that was perfectly executed.

Credit should also be given to Saha as he batted with an open-



SHREYAS IYER

1ST INDIAN TO GET CENTURY, 50 ON DEBUT

Shreyas defends late declaration



Teammates congratulate Ravichandran Ashwin after the dismissal of Will Young at the Green Park in Kanpur, Sunday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kanpur, Nov 28: The declaration may have come a tad too late owing to the team management's assessment of the Green Park pitch as unresponsive but debutant Shreyas Iyer backed his spinners to secure an Indian victory on the final day of the opening Test.

"To be honest, there wasn't much happening on the wicket. We needed to get to a competitive total, maybe around 275-280," Iyer said at the end of the day's play.

"The talk was to get to a competitive total and I feel that it's a really good total. We have real spin power, so hopefully we can get the job done tomorrow (Monday). We have to keep faith in our spinners and I know they can really put them (New Zealand) under pressure on the final day. (Ravichandran) Ashwin and Axar (Patel) have shown what they can

do on the track," Iyer added. The Mumbai batter though added that the team would have been content with anything above 250.

"I thought 250-odd including the lead was more than enough on this wicket, and fortunately we got some more," Iyer asserted.

Iyer's innings bailed the team out from 51 for five in the second innings. He had faced a similar situation during a make-or-break Ranji fixture against UP at the same venue seven years ago. He had prevailed then, and he prevailed Sunday, too.

"I have been in these situations before, but not with the Indian team. I used to do this in Ranji Trophy games. The idea was to play session by session. I was aware I am the first Indian to score a century and a fifty on debut. But the most important thing for me would be to win the match," Iyer pointed out.

The mindset was to play session by session and play as many balls as possible. I wasn't thinking too far ahead
SHREYAS IYER

Have faced skin colour abuse many times: Siva

AGENCIES

Kanpur, Nov 28: Former India leg-spinner Laxman Sivaramakrishnan has alleged that he has been 'colour discriminated' all his life, including in his own country. He played nine Tests and 16 ODIs for India. Siva has opened up about his experience with discrimination in the wake of the racism scandal that has rocked English cricket.

"I have been criticised and colour discriminated all my life, so it doesn't bother me anymore. This unfortunately happens in our own country," Sivaramakrishnan wrote on his Twitter handle. He was reacting to a Twitter post that hinted at online trolling faced by commentators.

Sivaramakrishnan is not the only India player to have spoken about being discriminated against. Tamil Nadu opener Abhinav Mukund had also raised this issue on social media in 2017.

Mukund, who played seven Tests for India has also posted a statement on his Twitter page. "I have been travelling a lot within and out-

side our country since I was 15. Ever since I was young, people's obsession with my skin colour has always been a mystery to me," Mukund wrote.

"Anyone who follows cricket would understand the obvious. I have played and trained day in and day out in the sun and not even once have I regretted the fact that I have tanned or lost a couple of shades. It is simply because I love what I do and I have been able to achieve certain things only because I have spent hours outdoors. I come from Chennai probably one of the hottest places in the country and I have gladly spent most of my adult life in the cricket ground," Mukund added.

Last year, former India and Karnataka pacer Dooda Ganesh, too, had opened up about his experience of racial discrimination, he faced during his career.

English cricket recently found itself at the centre of a storm as former Yorkshire player Azeem Rafiq testified about the racial discrimination that he faced at a parliamentary hearing.

I have been criticised and colour discriminated all my life, so it doesn't bother me anymore. This unfortunately happens in our own country
SIVARAMAKRISHNAN

City quash West Ham threat

AGENCIES

Manchester, Nov 28: Ilkay Gundogan and Fernandinho made all the difference as Manchester City overcame a spirited challenge by West Ham 2-1 in an early evening game played here Sunday. The strikes helped second-placed City get all three points against fourth-placed West Ham.

Gundogan's goal came 12 minutes before the breather. Riyad Marhez did most of the running as left behind two West Ham defenders with speed before finding Gundogan who hit the target with precision. Marhez, who had a goal turned down earlier due to offside, could have doubled the score a few minutes before the interval, but was unlucky to see the ball rebound off the post.

In the second half also City could have added to the tally, had not Gabriel Jesus missed a couple of sitters. However, City were not to be denied a second as Fernandinho hit the target in added on time. Manuel Lanzini got a goal back for West Ham immediately after, but it was too late to change the complexion of the game.

Earlier in a game played late Saturday evening Liverpool crushed Southampton 4-0. Diogo Jota scored twice for Jurgen Klopp's side to warm the Anfield faithful on a bitterly cold day. The third



Manchester City players celebrate after Ilkay Gundogan's goal against West Ham at the Etihad, Sunday

consecutive victory for the Reds in all competitions since losing at West Ham temporarily moved them into second place in the Premier League points table. However, with City winning Sunday, the Reds again went down a rung below to third place.

Liverpool needed just two min-

utes to take the lead when Sadio Mane played in Andrew Robertson and the Scot's cross was perfectly weighted for Jota to finish from close range. He netted again in the 32nd minute with a simple finish from Mohamed Salah's pass for his eighth club goal this term.

Thiago Alcantara had ended a

lengthy goal drought in the mid-week Champions League win over Porto and the Spain midfielder was back on the scoresheet in the 37th minute when his shot deflected in off Lyanco. Virgil van Dijk bagged Liverpool's fourth in the 52nd minute, the Dutch defender volleying his first goal in 14 months.

BFC, KBFC share points

IN A MATTER OF MINUTES BFC'S ASHIQUE TURNS VILLAIN FROM HERO



FAIR RESULT: Players of BFC (in blue) and Kerala Blasters shake hands after the end of their ISL game played Sunday

AGENCIES

Bambolim (Goa), Nov 28: In a matter of four minutes, Ashique Kuruniyan turned hero to villain as his goals at either end led to Bengaluru FC (BFC) and Kerala Blasters FC (KBFC) sharing points in their ISL game played here Sunday. Kuruniyan (84th and 88th)

first scored for the Blues and then put the ball in his own net as BFC were deprived of a win. BFC now have four points from three games while KBFC, who are winless still, have two points from an identical number of games.

BFC coach Marco Pezzauoli, on the back of the 1-3 defeat at the hands of Odisha FC, brought in

more creativity with Iman Basafa slotting into midfield. Cleiton Silva returned to lead the forward line. Blasters too had a couple of changes. Putea featured alongside Jeakson Singh in a double-pivot role as Alvaro Vazquez replaced Jorge Pereyra Diaz.

The last 10 minutes were the most exciting part of the game. Ashique found the ball on the edge of the box. After beating Harmanjot Singh Khabra's challenge, he shot from an angle. It was a weak shot but KBFC goalie Albino Gomes failed to grip the ball properly and it rolled into goal.

Minutes later, it was anti-climax. A cross from the left saw Leskovic pip the ball goalwards but Ashique, in his attempt to clear the ball ballooned it into his own net.

BFC were the better side with superior ball possession early on but Blasters had Jeakson Singh almost create a favourable chance within two minutes. Ashique's pace kept former teammate Khabra on check with Basafa looking settled in dictating play from the centre.

INSPIRING LOCAL TALENT



Legendary Indian player and coach, Pullela Gopichand (in red shirt) poses Sunday with promising shuttlers and support staff at the Odisha Badminton Academy in Bhubaneswar