



DREAM PROFESSION
Actor Yami Gautam says her job gives her ample scope to travel and explore places as much as she would love
LEISURE P2



SMOG RAISES FEARS
Delhi residents are enduring one of the worst spells of air pollution in years, raising risks posed by the coronavirus
TWO STATES P7



CHINA FACES ALIENATION
Xi Jinping appears to be worried over the adverse fallout of his belligerent foreign policy
INTERNATIONAL P10

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

ELECTION RESULTS

So, who's going to fool us for the next five years?

China, Russia refuse to endorse Biden win

AGENCIES

Beijing, Nov 9: China and Russia Monday declined to congratulate Joe Biden as the winner of the US presidential election, saying the outcome of the American polls should be determined by the country's laws and procedures.

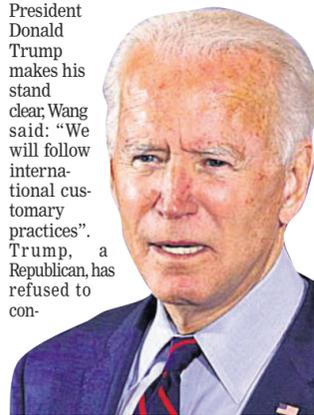
Russian President Vladimir Putin won't congratulate President-elect Joe Biden until legal challenges to the US election are resolved and the result is official, the Kremlin announced Monday.

When Trump won in 2016, Putin was prompt in offering congratulations. Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters Monday that this year is different. The leaders of China, Brazil and Turkey also are holdouts in offering congratulations. And Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador said he would wait to comment until the legal challenges over the vote were resolved.

China has not yet come out with an official reaction to Biden and Kamala Harris' victory in the November 3 presidential election even though official media here are carrying out commentaries on their election.

When pointed out that China is one of the few countries which has not yet made a statement on the US presidential election results, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said: "We have noticed that Biden declared he is the winner of the election".

"Our understanding is that the outcome of the election will be determined in accordance with US laws and procedures," he said. Asked when will China make its statement or will it wait until



Biden gets down to work; Trump digs in

WASHINGTON: US President-elect Joe Biden took the first steps towards moving into the White House in 73 days, as Donald Trump again refused to admit defeat and tried to sow doubt about the election results. Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris received a joint briefing Monday in Wilmington, Delaware from their transition Covid-19 advisory team. Joe Biden would then deliver remarks on coronavirus and economic recovery. They also launched a transition website, BuildBackBetter.com, and a Twitter feed, @Transition46.

Meanwhile, Trump played golf at his course near Washington, the same place where he was Saturday when news broke that Biden had secured enough Electoral College votes for victory. "Since when does the Lamestream Media call who our next President will be?" Trump complained in a tweet Sunday.

Laxmipur BDO seeks money on DM's behalf; audio viral

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jeypore, Nov 9: In a bizarre development, Laxmipur block development officer (BDO) in Koraput district allegedly demanded money from local sarpanches and executive officers under Jeypore block limits Sunday.

According to an audio clip that has gone viral, the officer, Dillip Patnaik, demanded ₹30,000 from sarpanches and executive officers, saying the amount would be given to District Collector.



The incident came to the fore after the audio clip went viral on social media. A woman sarpanch could be heard in the telephonic conversation with Patnaik, enquiring about the money to be collected from sarpanches.

On being contacted, District Collector Madhusudan Mishra refuted the charge and expressed ignorance about the audio clip. He condemned such activities, saying strong action will be taken on receipt of a written complaint along with evidence. "I have not received any complaint from anybody and came to know from the project director (PD) regarding such allegations. Action will be taken after receiving a written complaint," Mishra asserted.

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Tirtol and Balasore bypoll results today

Bhubaneswar, Nov 9: All arrangements are in place for counting of votes polled in the Balasore and Tirtol Assembly by-elections amid strict adherence to COVID-19 guidelines, officials said Monday. The counting of votes for the Balasore by-polls will be held at the campus of the District Collector's office, while in Tirtol, it will be held at the SVM College premises in Jagatsinghpur, Chief Electoral Officer SK Lohani said.

The counting at both the places will start at 8 am Tuesday, he said. Three-tier security has been arranged at the counting venues with the Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) personnel guarding the inner circle, Lohani said. Jawans of the Odisha State Armed Police (OSAP) will guard the middle tier and the local police will be in charge of the outer cordon, he added. In each of the two venues, counting will be held simultaneously at seven tables in two halls, he said. Three counting halls have been set up in each of the centres, he said. By-elections in the two constituencies were held November 3.

SHORT TAKES

Sensex, Nifty soar to lifetime highs

Mumbai: Indian benchmark indices surged to record highs Monday, mirroring a rally in global markets as investors wagered on improved trade relations and more fiscal stimulus under a Joe Biden presidency in the US. Rising for the sixth straight session, the BSE Sensex vaulted 704.37 points or 1.68% to close at its lifetime peak of 42,597.43. Intra-day, it touched its all-time high level of 42,645.33. The broader NSE Nifty climbed 197.50 points or 1.61%.

Bombay HC denies interim bail to Arnab

Mumbai: The Bombay High Court Monday refused to grant interim bail to Republic TV Editor-in-Chief Arnab Goswami and two others in a 2018 case of abetment of suicide of an interior designer, and said the accused have the remedy of seeking bail from the sessions court concerned. A division bench of Justices SS Shinde and MS Karnik while rejecting the interim bail pleas of Goswami and the two other accused Feroze Shaikh and Nitish Sarada said "no case has been made out for us (court) to exercise our extraordinary jurisdiction". With the HC refusing bail, Goswami's stay at the Talajoji jail will be extended.

Pfizer, BioNTech vax 90% effective against Covid



AGENCIES

New York, Nov 9: Taking a big jump towards delivering an effective vaccine to fight the pandemic, US-based pharmaceutical major Pfizer and German biotech firm BioNTech Monday said their vaccine candidate was found to be more than 90 per cent effective in preventing Covid-19 in first interim analysis of data from Phase-3 trial.

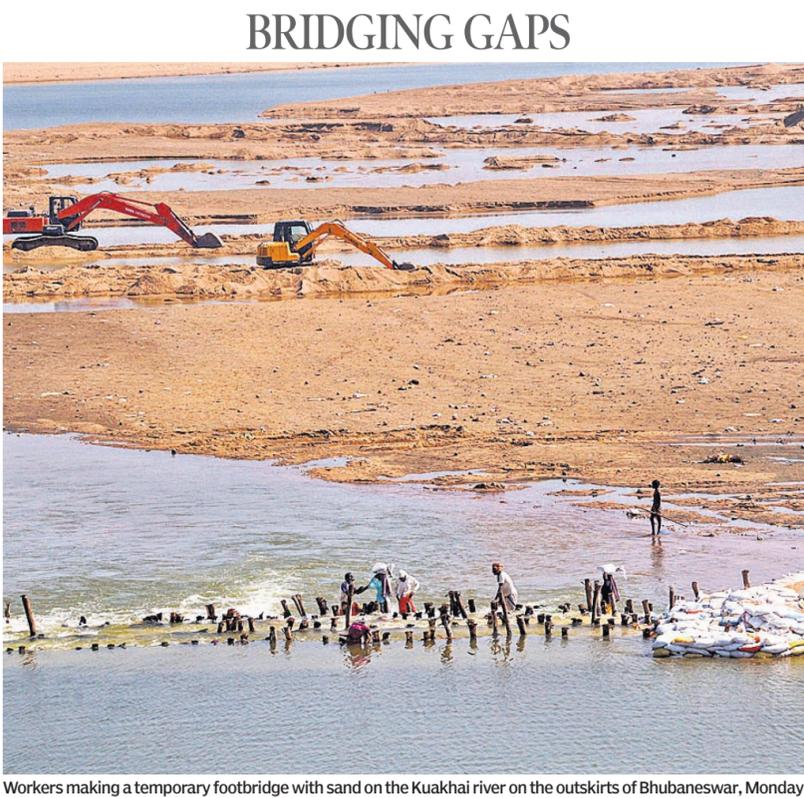
Pfizer Chairman and CEO Albert Bourla called the development "a great day for science and humanity". The two companies said that their mRNA-based vaccine candidate, BNT162b2 has demonstrated evidence of efficacy against Covid-19 in participants without prior evidence of SARS-CoV-2 infection. The analysis was conducted Sunday by an external, independ-

ent Data Monitoring Committee (DMC) from the Phase-3 clinical study. The case split between vaccinated individuals and those who received the placebo indicates a vaccine efficacy rate above 90 per cent, at seven days after the second dose, the two companies said.

This means that protection is achieved 28 days after the initiation of the vaccination, which consists of a two-dose schedule. The DMC has not reported any serious safety concerns and recommends that the study continue to collect additional safety and efficacy data as planned. The data will be discussed with regulatory authorities worldwide, Pfizer and BioNTech said.

"Today is a great day for science and humanity. The first set of results from our Phase-3 Covid-19 vaccine trial provides the initial evidence of our vaccine's ability to prevent Covid-19," Pfizer Chairman said.

The company is reaching this critical milestone in its vaccine development programme at a time when the world needs it most with infection rates setting new records, hospitals nearing over-capacity and economies struggling to reopen.



Workers making a temporary footbridge with sand on the Kuakhai river on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar, Monday

BRIDGING GAPS

CM unveils app to help farmers lodge complaints

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 9: As part of the 5T initiative, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Monday launched four online services of the water resources department.

Naveen launched Secha Samadhan mobile app developed by the Odisha Computer Application Centre to redress the grievances of farmers on irrigation issues. Farmers can now lodge grievances through the mobile app by uploading photos and videos on irrigation issues directly to the water resources department. The status of the grievances will be informed to concerned farmers through SMSes.

Naveen said farmers are the biggest beneficiaries of the water resources department and therefore, the online service will be immensely helpful in addressing their grievances and help the department provide more responsible and transparent services through the use of technology.

He also launched a portal for online submission of applications for community lift irrigation projects under the Biju Krushak Kalyan Yojana (BKKY).

The CM rolled out online allocation of water to industries through Go Swift portal and allocationod.nic.in website for other commercial establishments.

He hoped that online services provided to industries and other business establishments would also be useful for them and that it would help in meeting the target of providing government services to people at their door steps.

He directed the water resources department to expedite the preparation of the digital master roll.

Among others, Water Resources Minister Raghunandan Das, Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy, Development Commissioner Suresh Mohapatra, department secretary Anu Gang and secretary to CM (5T) VK Pandian attended the event.

BigBasket puts 2 crore customers' details up for sale

AGENCIES

Bangalore, Nov 9: Leading online food and grocery store BigBasket Sunday admitted to a potential breach of its customer data and that it was assessing the extent.

"We have lodged a complaint with the Bangalore Cyber Crime Cell and intend to pursue it to bring the culprits to book," said the city-based company in a statement to IANS.

The Cyber Cell, however, did not confirm receiving the complaint. According to cyber intelligence firm Cyble, data belonging to the grocery e-commerce platform has been put on sale for

DARK SIDE OF E-COM

- The retailer provides services in 25 cities and towns across India, offering to deliver 18,000 products from 1,000 brands
- The firm is funded by Alibaba group, the Mirae Asset-Naver Asia Growth Fund, and the UK gov-owned CDC group
- Cyber intelligence firm Cyble said data belonging to the grocery e-commerce platform has been put on sale for ₹30 lakh
- They include names, email IDs, passwords, contact numbers, addresses, date of birth, location, and IP addresses of login

Asset-Naver Asia Growth Fund, CDC group. "As confidentiality of customers

is priority, we do not store their financial data, including credit card numbers and are confident that it (data) is secure," the firm said.

Claiming that it has a robust information security framework, the company said it maintained only email ids, phone numbers, order details and address, which could have been accessed.

US-based third-party cyber intelligence firm Cyble claimed in its official blog Saturday that though the alleged breach occurred October 14, it detected it October 30, validated it October 31 and informed BigBasket November 1.

BigBasket provides services in 25 cities and towns across the coun-

BigBasket puts 2 crore customers' details up for sale

leisure



PARSONS FEELS HIS SEXUALITY MADE HIM A BETTER ACTOR

The *Big Bang Theory* actor Jim Parsons says his sexuality has made him a better actor. "I realised that being gay and growing up around people and in a culture where that wasn't celebrated had an impact on me," said the actor.

BELL SHARES GEORGE BUSH'S LETTER LEFT FOR BILL CLINTON

Actress Kirsten Bell took to Instagram and posted the image of a handwritten letter George HW Bush wrote, as outgoing President of the United States, to his successor Bill Clinton. Bell cited the letter to say: "How it's done. Class. Grace. Dignity. Respect. Humanity."



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Today, you will focus your lens on the one you've taken a fancy to! You are high on energy, but low on commitment to work. It won't be surprising if your bosses are miffed. But still, says Ganesh, it's a day of flowers and love notes.

TAURUS
There ain't no mountain high enough and there ain't no valley deep! Today, you will find yourself on an invincible run. You might be your own worst enemy today, if you waste your effort and energy for unproductive purposes.

GEMINI
Today, your emotions will cloud your ability to reason. You may try to find a refuge in devotional and spiritual activities. A visit to a couple of religious places may help you restore your peace of mind. A laid-back mindset will work wonders for you today.

CANCER
Today is a fabulous day for your love life. Your happiness may make a few people go green with envy, but they can do you or your relationship no harm, so ignore them. However, it may be important for you to make sure that you safeguard your reputation.

LEO
The thing with skills is that they are not static; they are as dynamic as anything else. It is akin to being on a treadmill - you need to continuously keep moving just to stay in the same place, says Ganesh. So keep refreshing yourself by learning new things in order to sustain your progress.

VIRGO
Get out of your self today, for a change, and try to look at things from a loved one's perspective. It's good to be confident, but over confidence is a different matter altogether, reminds Ganesh. Listening to others, absorbing their expressions and viewing things differently shall do you and your loved ones a world of good.

LIBRA
Today promises to be a joy ride for your hidden gourmand side. Relish what you eat, and thank God for the good luck. Career wise, however, you may find yourself standing at a crossroads. But, the good part about that is there shall be many paths to choose from.

SCORPIO
Today promises to be a joy ride for your hidden gourmand side. Relish what you eat, and thank God for the good luck. Career wise, however, you may find yourself standing at a crossroads. But, the good part about that is there shall be many paths to choose from.

SAGITTARIUS
Your dedication to work is set to shift to the top gear. Find yourself swamped by excess of workload in the forenoon. Things, however, will lighten as the afternoon progresses. Expect a fun-filled, exciting evening.

CAPRICORN
Opportunities are rare, and good opportunities rarer still. Today, you will run to grab an opportunity and will make the most of it, says Ganesh. This move will yield instant results, and place you better in comparison with your opponents. Rivals, in fact, will try to do you down but will fail miserably in their attempt. Your social standing, on the other hand, will grow manifold and all because of your extraordinary traits.

AQUARIUS
You roar with absolute bliss today! Simplicity is your new avatar, and naturally, friends and acquaintances are mystified. You may wish to commune with the higher spirit and will seek solace in a quiet temple. Ganesh approves and predicts peace in plenty.

PISCES
Staying afloat needs about as much effort as swimming. Cryptic as this may sound, what it means is you need to constantly reinvent yourself if you wish to keep going. You will shine in your profession only if it is also your passion, says Ganesh.



B-town urges fans to go local for Diwali

Mumbai: Cine celebrities Monday urged people to respond positively to the government appeal to promote local businesses during the festival of Diwali.

Filmmaker Karan Johar tweeted: "This Diwali, we urge you to join hands and show some festive support on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. Take a picture of your favourite article and tag the person you purchase it from and go #LocalDiwali."

Actress Sonali Bendre tweeted, "This Diwali, let's celebrate and support local products and brands."

Actress Mouni Roy wrote on Instagram: "I feel most like myself in Indian outfits! I love em! I have bought some beautiful diyas from a local shop and shopped for a lovely ethnic wear designed by an extremely talented local designer and now it's your turn to go #LocalDiwali."

Riteish Deshmukh tweeted from his verified account: "Let's celebrate a Cracker Free Diwali - Diwali is Deepotsav." Sayani Gupta posted on Twitter: "This Diwali, instead of bursting a firecracker, use that 5, 20, 200, 2000 rupees, in buying a mithai or a dabba of sweets for someone who can't afford to buy it." IANS



'My job gives me opportunity to explore places'

Mumbai: Actress Yami Gautam, who is currently in Dalhousie to shoot for her upcoming film *Bhoot Police*, says her job gives her ample opportunity to travel and explore places as much as she would love.

Yami posted a picture on Instagram, where she is seen at a temple with her team.

"My job gives me ample of opportunity to travel & explore places as much as I would love! Apart from all the touristy spots etc, the one place I make it a point to visit is any holy shrine!" she wrote as caption.

"I believe in spirituality and apart from faith, there is something mystical about the strength & energy certain shrines hold PS. thnx to my amazing team who accompanied me to this not so easy trek, but absolutely worth & made it a memorable day," she added.

Directed by Pawan Kripalani, *Bhoot Police* also stars Saif Ali Khan, Jacqueline Fernandez and Arjun Kapoor. IANS



Armaan bags maiden MTV Europe Music Award

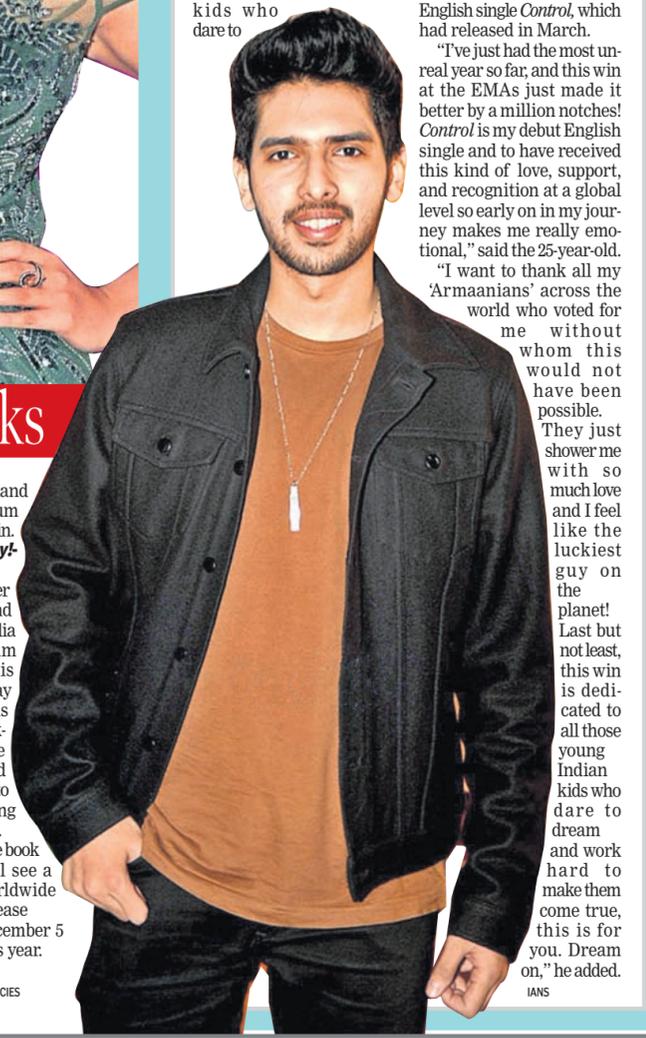
Mumbai: Singer Armaan Malik won his first MTV Europe Music Award, which he has dedicated to Indian kids who dare to

dream and work hard to make it come true.

Armaan won the Best India Act award for his first English single *Control*, which had released in March.

"I've just had the most unreal year so far, and this win at the EMAs just made it better by a million notches! *Control* is my debut English single and to have received this kind of love, support, and recognition at a global level so early on in my journey makes me really emotional," said the 25-year-old.

"I want to thank all my 'Armaanians' across the world who voted for me without whom this would not have been possible. They just shower me with so much love and I feel like the luckiest guy on the planet! Last but not least, this win is dedicated to all those young Indian kids who dare to dream and work hard to make them come true. This is for you. Dream on," he added. IANS



Cine celebs turn authors, announce new books

Along with actor Priyanka Chopra's memoir *Unfinished*, which is slated for a 2021 launch, more celebrities from the world of Indian cinema have turned authors and announced new books. Here are some reads to look forward to.

Sach Kahun Toh - Neena Gupta
Award-winning actor Neena Gupta's memoir, *Sach Kahun Toh* will be published by Penguin Random House India. This deeply intimate account of her extraordinary personal and professional journey will be published in the summer of 2021. It will chronicle her childhood days in Delhi's Karol Bagh, through her time at the National School of Drama, moving to

Bombay in the 1980s and dealing with the struggles to find work.

Actually... I Met Them: A Memoir - Gulzar

A new book by renowned Indian poet, lyricist and film director Gulzar is set to be published by Penguin Random House India in 2021. According to the publisher, in this book, the working title for which is *Actually... I Met Them: A Memoir*, the author will recount his encounters with the stalwarts of Indian cinema, art, literature and music. In this fascinating book, Gulzar shares candid anecdotes from his association with some of the most eminent people he had known and worked with over a long period of time. The au-

thor of the book, Gulzar Saab, says, "Memories don't dry up really. They keep floating somewhere between the conscious and the subconscious mind."

Sameera Reddy's debut book

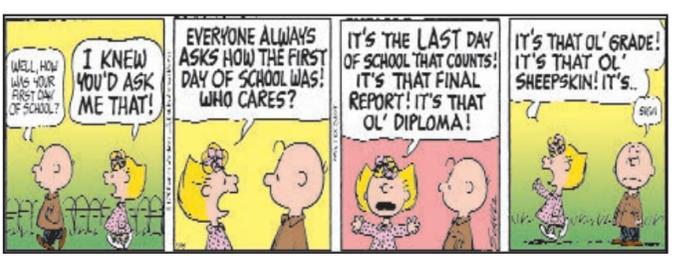
Indian actress Sameera Reddy's debut book was announced by Westland Publications (an Amazon company) in November 2020. As per the publisher, Reddy's book will be an honest dialogue on how to go about reaching a place where one is comfortable being 'imperfectly perfect', where one can be kind to oneself and ready to feel happiness. In this book, Sameera chronicles her journey as an insecure teenager; her struggles during her modelling

life. The book will see a worldwide release December 5 this year.

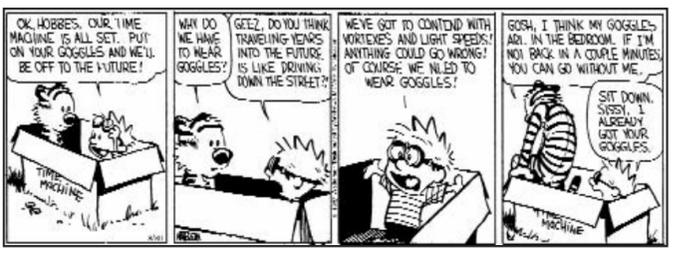
Your Best Day Is Today! - Anupam Kher

Celebrated actor, former Chairman of the Film and Television Institute of India and an author, Anupam Kher has announced his third book - *Your Best Day Is Today!* Known for his diverse professional background, Kher would be penning down lessons and unfurling secrets for one to lead a simple and fulfilling life. The book will see a worldwide release December 5 this year. AGENCIES

PEANUTS



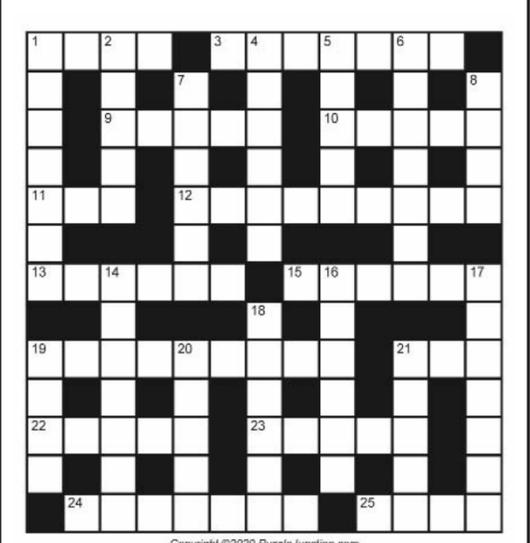
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



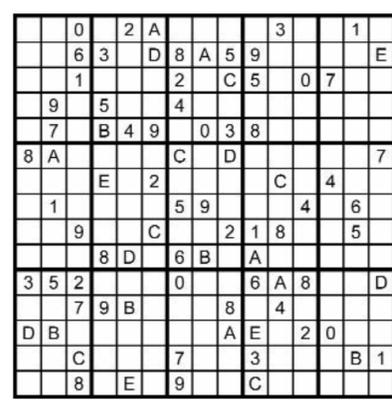
FUN post CROSSWORD



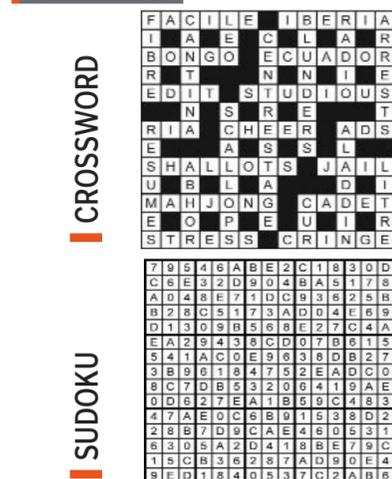
- Across**
- 1 Pitfall
 - 3 Bed and breakfast items?
 - 9 Portion
 - 10 Lassitude
 - 11 Merino mother
 - 12 Cast out
 - 13 Rhino relatives
 - 15 Snapper
 - 19 Wife of King Arthur
 - 21 Pickle container
 - 22 Peruvian beast
 - 23 Liability's opposite
 - 24 Hot spots
 - 25 Combustible heap
 - 6 One who knows the drill
 - 7 Steam
 - 8 Food staple
 - 14 Anthropoid
 - 16 Restless
 - 17 On the way (2,5)
 - 18 Pour
 - 19 Hcarty party
 - 20 Clear the boards
 - 21 Scawall
- Down**
- 1 Storm
 - 2 Grocery section
 - 4 Magician's word
 - 5 Swelling

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



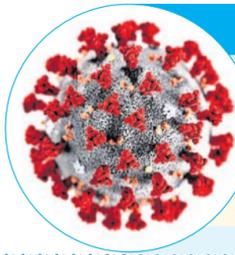
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



VISIBILITY QUOTIENT

A traffic personnel removes tinted film from a four-wheeler near Rajmahal Square in Bhubaneswar, Monday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	5,09,22,185	3,58,97,852	12,64,540
India	85,55,109	79,15,767	1,26,671
Odisha	3,02,793	2,88,168	1,441

Jail staffers to have body cams soon

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 9: The state government is mulling over a proposal of Odisha Prisons directorate to supply body-worn cameras to the jail and correctional home staffers to deal with the allegations like custodial torture and illegal activities on these premises.

Speaking on the issue, Director General (DG), Prisons, Santosh Upadhyay revealed that the directorate is coordinating with the state Home department to implement the scheme soon in some prominent jails of the state on a pilot basis. The department would procure body-worn cameras after the Home department's nod in this regard.

Upadhyay also informed Orissa POST that the Prison DGs of various states held an elaborate discussion on the issue of body cameras for jail employees at a meeting held recently.

The Bureau of Police Research

UNDER LENS

State Prisons directorate is coordinating with the Home dept to implement the scheme soon in some prominent jails of the state on a pilot basis

The Home dept would procure body-worn cameras after the Home department's nod in this regard

The Bureau of Police Research and Development has also released a model Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the implementation of the scheme in states

The Prisons directorates have been instructed to impart special training to jail staffers for proper use of the cameras attached to their uniforms



and Development (BPRD) has also released a model Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the implementation of the scheme in states.

As per the SOP, the cameras should be worn by all the prison staffers, including Executive, Medical, Correctional, and Ministerial, who have regularly

been coming in contact with the inmates. The Prisons directorates have been instructed to impart special training to jail staffers for proper use of the cameras attached to their uniforms.

The SOP also advised the officials to set up a separate control room inside the prisons for 'monitoring, recording, storage of the recorded data'. A senior officer would also be assigned to analyse the data recorded through the cameras on a regular basis. The data would be kept at least for seven days at the control room for examination.

The move holds significance as the relatives of inmates, who are found dead inside the jails, often allege torture by the jail staffers.

Notably, body-worn cameras are being utilised in India mainly by the traffic personnel and police deployed to maintain law and order so as to counter allegations of police highhandedness.

₹497cr to be spent on irrigation in command areas

FILLIP TO AGRICULTURE



Water Resources department has prepared a detailed proposal with an estimated ₹497 crore to be spent during 2020-21 and 2023-24

₹425.17 crore will be spent by the department while ₹71.92 crore had been earmarked as its MGNREGA component

FOR THE CURRENT YEAR, PROVISION OF ONLY ₹24 CRORE HAS BEEN PROPOSED WHILE THE STATE GOVERNMENT WILL SPEND ₹163.55 CRORE DURING 2021-22, ₹162.25 CRORE IN 2022-23 AND ₹146.73 CRORE IN 2023-24

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 9: The state government has prepared a detailed plan to spend Rs 497 crore on boosting the irrigation potential of the state.

Even though the Centre had launched the Command Area Development and Water Management (CAD&WM) programme in 1976-77 to enhance farm output and productivity, the scheme was limited to only eight major and medium irrigation projects in Odisha.

As the Union government is not taking up new projects under the scheme, the state government has decided to take up the scheme further from its own fund.

The Water Resource department has prepared a detailed proposal with an estimated Rs 497 crore to be spent during 2020-21 and 2023-24 and submitted it to the Finance department for its approval.

Out of the total, Rs 425.17 crore will be spent by the Water Resources department while Rs 71.92 crore had been earmarked as its MGNREGA component.

For the current year, provision of only Rs 24 crore has been proposed while the state government

will spend Rs 163.55 crore during 2021-22, Rs 162.25 crore in 2022-23 and Rs 146.73 crore in 2023-24. Administrative expenses will be around Rs 50 lakh.

Under the scheme, the government will strengthen the distribution network in irrigated areas so that water will be available for the field. It will also help in judicious and equitable distribution of the available water with active involvement of farmers through participatory irrigation management.

Awareness will be created among farmers for better management of water and crop diversification so as to increase agricultural production and productivity.

The Water Resource department has set a target to construct field level channels for 1,37,000 hectares and micro irrigation projects for 1500 hectares. The field drain work will be taken up with convergence of MGNREGA.

The government will not do any land acquisition for construction of the projects. It will take land from farmers as contribution through Pani Panchayats. After creation of assets, it will be handed over to concerned Pani Panchayats as per the Orissa Pani Panchayat Act 2002.

House panel nod to jail term for buying paddy below MSP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar: Provision of seven-year jail term for those procuring paddy from farmers below the Minimum Support Price (MSP) was recommended to the state government Monday by the state Assembly's Standing Committee for Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare.

The committee, chaired by Congress Legislature Party leader Narasingha Mishra, also recommended installing CCTV cameras in all the mandis to protect the interest of the farmers.



The committee, chaired by Congress Legislature Party leader Narasingha Mishra, recommended installation of CCTV cameras in the mandis to protect the interest of the farmers

"We have recommended the state government to make provision of seven-year jail term for the people who purchase paddy below the MSP" Mishra said after a meeting of the committee.

The committee also denounced certain provisions in the three farm bills recently passed in Parliament. The committee, while discussing different issues related to farmers and paddy procurement, came down on authorities responsible for putting cultivators in trouble. The members of the committee, belonging to different parties, joined the meeting through video links.

MAN FALLS OFF FLYOVER, DIES

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 9: A 38-year-old pillion rider died after he fell off the flyover near Fire Station Square under Nayapalli police limits here late Sunday night.

The deceased was identified as Alia Mahakuda of Jagannath Prasad in Ganjam. Alia was working at a ceramics tile shop in Mancheswar area.

According to sources, the deceased along with the owner of the shop, Shashi Bhusan Mohanty, was returning to Macheswar from Baramunda when a speeding truck overtook them by driving rashly. Mohanty lost control over the motorcycle and hit the guard wall of the flyover. Though Mohanty managed to stay on the flyover, he sustained severe injuries.

PCR van of the Nayapalli police rushed the duo to Capital hospital where doctors declared Alia brought dead. Police handed over the body of Alia to his family members, Monday.

CLAY CRAFT



An artisan shapes a terracotta figurine as a kid looks on at the annual terracotta expo at Exhibition Ground in Bhubaneswar, Monday

Two bird hunters nabbed near Chilika

POST NEWS NETWORK

Khurda, Nov 9: Two poachers were arrested Monday on charges of hunting migratory birds in Chilika Lake. The carcasses of 13 birds were also seized from their possession.

Tangi wildlife division officials were on a regular patrolling in Bhusandpur area close to the lake Monday when they came across two persons who evoked suspicion. The officials grilled them and the beans spilled out. Thirteen carcasses were recovered from them and they could not produce any valid reason as to how they got those.

Large numbers of different species of migratory birds from places like Caspian region, Siberia, Kazakh, Lake Baikal and Russia have started flocking to the lagoon as winter is setting in. Hence, the number of bird hunters has also increased around the largest brackish water lagoon in Asia.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 9: Protesting the new farm laws enacted by the Centre, the Congress kicked off its 'Kheti Bachao Yatra' in the state, Monday.

Hundreds of Congress workers led by party's Odisha in-charge A Chellakumar held a rally from Congress Bhawan here to Cuttack. Senior leaders including OPMC president Niranjan Patnaik, MLA Taraprasad Bahinipati and Jatni MLA Suresh Routray joined the rally.

The agitators were, however, stopped midway near Gopalpur and not allowed to enter Cuttack as they had not taken the permission from the administration. Later, some vehicles were allowed to proceed towards Cuttack.

Former president of All India Congress Committee (AICC) Rahul Gandhi has started the historic 'Kheti Bachao Yatra' through public meetings in Punjab and Haryana

by visiting the mandis against the anti-farmer laws passed by the Central government.

Terming the newly enacted three laws as anti-farmer, the Congress party is demanding immediate withdrawal of the laws.

"Both the BJP and BJD are exploiting the innocent farmers and common people of the country. The Congress will definitely explain and educate them on the negative impacts of the farm Bills," Chellakumar said.

Stating that the Congress government had brought green and white revolutions in India to make it self-reliant, Chellakumar said, "Almost all major irrigation projects were constructed in Odisha during the regime of Congress government. It is unfortunate that the present government has not implemented a single irrigation project so far."

OPMC president Niranjan Patnaik said, "If the state government has any sympathy for farmers, will it

KHETI BACHAO YATRA



Congress leaders A Chellakumar and Niranjan Patnaik during the rally

follow the Chhattisgarh government, which has raised the mini-

mum support price (MSP) of paddy to Rs 2,500 per quintal?" Similarly,

According to OPMC president Niranjan Patnaik, the agriculture Bills, which were passed in an undemocratic manner in Parliament, don't have any provision of MSP

the agriculture Bills, which were passed in an undemocratic manner in Parliament, don't have any provision of MSP, he said.

Replying to the charge by Congress, BJD vice-president Debi Prasad Mishra said, "The BJD will oppose any move or Bill, which is against the interest of farmers."

BJP general secretary Prithviraj Harichandan said the Congress party is misleading the people in the name of contract farming. But, people know the truth, he said.

During the monsoon session of

Parliament, three new agriculture Bills were passed, before they got President Ram Nath Kovind's assent September 27.

The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020, seeks to give freedom to farmers to sell their produce outside of the notified Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) market yards.

The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020, gives farmers the right to enter into a contract with agribusiness firms, processors, wholesalers, exporters, or large retailers for the sale of future farming produce at a pre-agreed price.

The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020, is meant to remove commodities like cereals, pulses, oilseeds, onion, and potato from the list of essential commodities and do away with the imposition of stock holding limits.

Bakul plans green gifts to stay safe this Deepavali

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 9: Even as the state government has banned sale and bursting of firecrackers this Deepavali because of Covid-19, a city-based outfit has renewed its campaign to gift plants apparently to ward off respiratory diseases by increasing greenery.

It's a fact that bursting of crackers would increase the pollution level and make people vulnerable to respiratory diseases. It has been a major concern across the world, not only in Odisha, that the incidence of Covid-19 would increase in winter.

This is because wintry weather aggravates respiratory diseases and Covid-19 is also known as SARS-CoV-2 (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome). This risk is higher in urban areas where the pollution is more but ventilation



It's scientifically claimed that an average tree sequesters about 1 tonne of carbon in its lifetime. But in winter, they become less effective as they shed leaves. There have been significant researches establishing the role of trees in reducing respiratory diseases.

Trees and natural greenery have an important role as they sequester carbon and other pollutants and release oxygen. It is scientifically claimed that

an average tree sequesters about 1 tonne of carbon in its lifetime. But in winter, they become less effective as they shed leaves. There have been significant researches establishing the role of trees in reducing respiratory diseases.

A study proved conclusively that trees make the cities healthier let alone address climate change and provide us shade. Therefore, this Deepavali, in the midst of this pandemic, Bakul Foundation has renewed its 11-year-old campaign to gift plants with greater urgency.

"We give gifts to show that we care for the other person, and there cannot be a better way to show we care during this pandemic than by gifting a plant", said Sujit Mahapatra, the founder of Bakul Foundation.

With its creative team of volunteers, the outfit has come up with attractive packaging for the

plants in cane baskets and jute bags, and one could choose from flowering plants like the ixora or tonia, medicinal plants such as ram tulsi, insulin and ayappan or tree growing plants such as the Bakul, the jackfruit and jamun. There are indoor plants such as spider plant and syngonium as well.

There is a complimentary gift hamper with hand-painted diyas (earthen lamps) and handmade chocolates in a basket that comes with each plant for this festival of lights, and the entire package is priced at Rs 300.

Bakul has been trying to motivate people to gift plants. It started the enterprise of packaged gift plants after 6 years of the campaign when it realized that even if people want to gift plants, they did not have any options to buy packaged gift plants, said the outfit.

Eminent painter Siba Panigrahi dies

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Cuttack, Nov 9: Renowned painter and former president of Odisha Lalit Kala Akademi, Siba Panigrahi, died at his residence here Monday, family sources said. He was 78.

He is survived by a son and a daughter.

His son Raj Panigrahi said that his father suffered a cardiac arrest while having his meal. He was immediately rushed to the SCB Medical College and Hospital, where doctors declared him brought dead.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik mourned Panigrahi's demise and said that the artist will always be

remembered for his significant contribution to the world of art.

The mortal remains of Panigrahi were consigned to flames at the Sati Choura crematorium here in the city. "He had wished to be cremated here, close to our house," his family members said.

Born in March 1943 at Baripada in Mayurbhanj district, Panigrahi had obtained a degree in fine arts from Bibhuti Kanungo College of Art and Craft in Khallikote in 1962 and pursued higher education from the Visva Bharati at Santiniketan.

He had received several awards, and participated in numerous art exhibitions, both national and international, during his career spanning over four decades.



Covid death toll at 1,441

Odisha's coronavirus tally mounts to 3,02,793 with 1,219 new cases

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Nov 9: For the first time in at least three months, fresh Covid-19 cases in Khurda dropped to double digits as 92 persons tested positive for the viral infection in the past 24 hours, giving a long-awaited breather to the district administration and the frontline workers, an official said Monday.

As many as 1,219 people tested positive for the infection, taking Odisha's Covid-19 tally to 3,02,793, while 16 fresh fatalities pushed the coastal state's death toll to 1,441, a senior official of Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said.

As many as 708 new cases were reported in quarantine centres, while 511 fresh infections were detected during contact tracing exercise, the official said.

"Sundargarh and Balasore districts reported the highest number of new cases at 107 each, followed by Cuttack (106). Khurda district, under which Bhubaneswar falls, reported 92 new cases. It registered less than 100 fresh infections after a long time," the official said.

Three fresh fatalities each were reported in Khurda and Keonjhar, two in Sambalpur, and one each in Balasore, Bargarh, Boudh, Cuttack, Jajpur, Mayurbhanj, Nayagarh and Sundargarh

STATE OF AFFAIRS IN ODISHA



THE STATE HAS SO FAR TESTED OVER 49.84 LAKH SAMPLES, INCLUDING 45,160 SUNDAY

Sundargarh and Balasore reported the highest number of new cases at 107 each, followed by Cuttack (106). Khurda reported 92 new cases

Three fresh fatalities each were reported in Khurda and Keonjhar, two in Sambalpur, and one each in Balasore, Bargarh, Boudh, Cuttack, Jajpur, Mayurbhanj, Nayagarh and Sundargarh

Khurda has so far reported the highest number of coronavirus fatalities at 251, followed by Ganjam at 232 and Cuttack at 120

THE POSITIVITY RATE STANDS AT 6.07

districts, said the official.

As many as 53 coronavirus patients have died so far due to comorbidities, the official said.

Khurda district has so far reported the highest number of coronavirus fatalities at 251, followed by Ganjam (232) and Cuttack (120).

Khurda till date has registered the highest number of 49,979 Covid cases followed by Cuttack (26,892),

Ganjam (21,395) and Puri (13,021).

Official sources said six districts such as Khurda, Cuttack, Ganjam, Puri, Balasore and Sundargarh together have so far reported 1,34,058 (44.27 per cent) and 840 Covid deaths (58.29 per cent).

The state has so far tested over 49.84 lakh samples, including 45,160 Sunday, said the official, adding the positivity rate stands at 6.07.

CP arrests five thieves, seize multiple items

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 9: The Commissionerate Police Monday arrested five thieves in three separate cases of house burglaries under Khandagiri police limits here during the last couple of days. The police also seized huge cache of stolen mobile phones, laptops, gold ornaments from the possession of the accused.

The accused have been identified as Sheikh Suraj, 24, of Lakhsara, Bihar, Sk. Mabud, 28, of Purba Medinipur, West Bengal, Soumya Ranjan Parija alias Tiki, 20, of Sarakantara and Taushif



Mohammad, 27 of Jadupur in Khandagiri area, Raghava Sahoo alias Dunga, 22, of Chiringipada, under Buguda police limits in Ganjam. Both the accused persons Suraj and Mabud have been staying at Masjid Colony in Kharavela Nagar area here.

The accused allegedly involved in three break-in incidents at houses in Dumduma and Gandamunda area under Khandagiri police limits Sunday night. The accused were sent to judicial custody by court Monday.

ROAD SAFETY



MPs Bharti Mahabadi and Subhash Chandra Singh, and Cuttack Collector Bhabani Shankar Chayani among others at the 1st MP's Road Safety Committee Meeting at the Collector's conference hall in the Silver City, Monday

530gm contraband recovered in 2 days

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, Nov 9: At least five persons, including a woman, were arrested after 257 kilogram worth brown sugar was recovered from their possession, a senior Kumbharpada police official said here Monday.

According to the official, the crackdown came during a regular vehicle inspection drive near Mangala Sahi Devi Ghat here Sunday morning.

"We spotted a speeding four-

wheeler approaching from Jatiabaji Square and a two-wheeler escorting it. Upon suspicion, we waylaid the vehicles to find a transparent plastic pouch containing the contraband. While two accused were on the motorcycle, other three including the woman were in the car. They were taken into custody after recovering the contraband and vehicles from their possession," the senior police official said.

The accused were Ramini Mallik, Rabi Charan Mohanty and his wife

Laxmi Dei of Narendrakona Mangala Sahi in the Holy City, and Sibananda Behera of Ganjam and Sangram Bisoi of Buguda. A case (304/20) has been registered in this regard.

Earlier Saturday the Chandanpur police here had arrested four persons after recovering around 273gram of brown sugar from their possession. Puri police have recovered around 530grom of the contraband in the past two days, said the official.

Allow artistes to perform: AOPA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 9: Almost all performing artistes of the state suffered greatly due to the pandemic which forced them out of work for eight months.

These artistes include dancers and performers of various folk dance forms such as Sambalpuri, Ghoda nacha, Chhau dance, Ranapa nacha, Jodi Sankha Gotipua, Paika and classical dance Odissi. Without any events, these talented individuals are virtually out of work.

With gradual reopening of all businesses, it was expected that these artistes would get some relief. However, that was not the



case as events are still not being organised in the state. Owing to this, members of Odisha Performing Artists Association demanded organizing events with guidelines here Monday.

Basudev Nath, secretary of the association, said, "We demand that the government allow performance by artistes. The organisers can be instructed to follow Covid-19 guidelines."

Pratibha Panda, chairman of the association, said, "Life must go forward. The government must allow artistes to perform."

Ramadevi exam controller shifted

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 9: Higher education department Monday transferred Ramadevi Women University examination controller Braja Kishore to English department of Vikram Deb (Auto) College in Jeypore as Assistant Professor Monday.

Recently, students of Ramadevi Women University alleged irregularities in exam paper checking and delay in toppers' list and demanded action.

Mercury dips below 10°C in two places

POST NEWS NETWORK



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 9: Minimum temperature has come down below 10 degrees Celsius mark at Sonapur and Daringibadi Monday. The Met department predicts cold wave like situation in many places of the state during next two days.

Lowest minimum temperature of 9.4 degrees Celsius was recorded at Sonapur while it was 9.5 degrees at Daringibadi and 10 degrees at Phulbani.

Angul was recorded a night temperature of 11 degrees whereas the temperature at Koraput was 11.2

degrees, Bhawanipatna—11.4, Jharsuguda—13.4, Talcher—13.5, Bolangir—14 and Malkangiri—14.5. The minimum temperature is likely to be below normal by 3-5 degrees C at many places over the districts of Odisha during next two days, the Met department said.

BMC to focus on single-use plastic

FOLLOWING A STATE GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION IN OCTOBER LAST YEAR, THE BMC HAD BANNED SINGLE-USE PLASTIC

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 9: Observing the increasing presence of plastic being circulated in the market, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), Monday, stated that it will resume its enforcement activities to contain and penalise against single use plastics in the state capital.

Following a state government notification in October last year, the BMC had banned single-use plastic under its jurisdictions. However, with the spread of COVID, the civic authority had shifted its focus on controlling of infection in city. While COVID-induced lockdown had significantly reduced plastic usage, it resurfaced after resumption of economic activities gradually.

"As COVID in the city has receded significantly, we are now concentrating on other issues. For plastic control we have already begun with awareness drives in three zones. Three dedicated vehicles are doing awareness in different market places. This will be followed by



With the spread of COVID, the civic authority had shifted its focus on controlling the infection rate of the Capital

formation of enforcement squads that will inspect and fine establishments and vendors involved in promotion of plastic," stated BMC Commissioner, Prem Chandra Chaudhary.

It needs to be mentioned here that days before the state went into lockdown in March, the BMC had launched polythene-free city drive at Bapuji Nagar here. Up until February, the civic body here had collected about 5,100 kg of plastic and about Rs. 15 lakhs as fines.

However, BMC records showed that no plastic or revenue was recovered from March to October.

"We had severe shortage of manpower during the period. Since there was no need for enforcement during lockdown period our squads later told to focus in enforcing COVID norms. Hence, they focused on penalising people for not wearing masks, maintaining social distance and other regulations which was our priority," a senior BMC official said.

MAN ARRESTED FOR ABDUCTION, RAPE OF SISTER-IN-LAW

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 9: Airfield police arrested a person from Kargil Basti in Bhubaneswar under the POCSO Act Sunday evening over abduction and rape of his minor sister-in-law.

The accused was identified as Silu Swain of Jagatsinghpur district. Silu had been residing for the last few years at Kargil Basti in Bhubaneswar along with his wife, children and his minor sister-in-law. The accused was a construction worker.

Allegedly, Silu had an illicit affair with his sister-in-law which gave rise to a family feud. After knowing about their illicit relationship, the elder sister of Silu's wife residing in the same area took her minor sister away from Silu's house, Airfield police station sources informed.

Later, Silu managed to elope with the minor girl. Acting on an FIR lodged by the elder sister against Silu, the Airfield police arrested him. The accused and the minor girl had returned home after 15 days.

A medical examination of the minor girl was conducted.

OPTICAL ILLUSION



A mirage on PMG Road in Bhubaneswar on a fine sunny day, Monday

OP PHOTO

Webinar on eco-villages held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 9: A webinar on 'Eco-village development in tribal areas' was organised by Orissa Environmental Society here Monday.

Natural ecosystems in tribal localities have been brought to steady degradation by modern market forces, while these were earlier used to be self-sustained and self-managed for generations said Sundara Narayan Patro, President of OES.

As a consequence of environmental degradation, natural resource base and management have been weakened resulting in downward spiral of production and income. The impacts culminate in poverty and hunger, distress and death, displacement and distress migration, and degradation in the quality of life Patro said.

In such a scenario, implementation of the eco-village model of development, which is based on Gandhian ideology of Gram Swaraj and which pays emphasis on agro-ecological principles such as organic manures, organic pesticides, indigenous and local seeds, and biodiversity conservation, holds a lot of promise for the tribal people.

ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION



As a consequence of environmental degradation, natural resource base and management have been weakened resulting in downward spiral of production and income

The impacts culminate in poverty and hunger, distress and death, displacement and distress migration, and degradation in the quality of life

The concept of participatory management of natural resources like land, water and forests with the involvement of local communities will ensure sustainable livelihoods and improved standard of living.

On the occasion Achyut Das, a development activist, focused on establishment of family farms and seed-cum-grain banks, development of village commons by women, production of organic manures, pesticides and other inputs, formation and strengthening of women groups, training and capacity building of farmers, leaders and mobilizers.

He stressed that these will ensure food, nutritional and livelihood securities for marginalized

communities affected by displacement, distress migration and chronic poverty.

The objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals can thus be achieved through this model. Narrating his forty years of experience with tribal communities under various projects in different districts, Das emphasized on social, economic, political and ecological sustainability for their holistic development.

Jaya Krushna Panigrahi environmental scientist and secretary of OES underlined the importance of environmental conservation and participatory management of natural resources by local stakeholders.

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3 yrs on, fishing jetty construction in doldrums

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, Nov 9: Even as three years have passed since the announcement for construction of a fishing jetty in between Bada Aryapalli and Sana Aryapalli villages under this block in Ganjam district, the project is yet to take off, a report said.

As no steps are being taken for construction of the jetty, fishermen are facing difficulties in moving their boats into the sea as the fishing jetty build 30 years back has buried. As a result, fishermen in this district are migrating to other states for livelihood.

The jetty was proposed to be built on 23 acres at an expenditure of ₹100 crore. The jetty is proposed to have anchoring facilities for 1000 fishing boats. Over 50,000 fishermen hailing from 10 villages are dependent on the old fishing jetty.

The fishermen in the seaside villages of this district migrate to states like Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Goa and Maharashtra.



Moreover, many fishermen are forced to leave their traditional occupation and work as labourers at construction sites.

The old fishing jetty which functions from Gopalpur port premises was constructed 30 years back when late Biju Patnaik was the Chief Minister. The jetty started getting buried from 2007 and with the passage of time it has almost lost its existence. Moreover, its presence has become a matter of concern for the security of Gopalpur port.

The construction of the new fishing jetty first came up for discussion

in the office of the then minister for fisheries and animal resources development department April 21, 2016.

Later, the state government decided in favour of a new fishing jetty following which a high-level technical team from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras visited the place and conducted a feasibility study.

Later, a team from the Central Institute of Coastal Engineering for Fishery visited the spot and submitted a report to the state government recommending construction of a jetty. The submission of the reports brightened hopes that the new fishing jetty will soon be constructed. However, the project is yet to see the light of day. Local fishermen have demanded the state government to intervene and start the jetty construction.

Livelihood matters

The jetty was proposed to be built on 23 acres at an expenditure of ₹100 crore. The jetty is proposed to have anchoring facilities for 1000 fishing boats

The old fishing jetty which functions from Gopalpur port premises was constructed 30 years back when late Biju Patnaik was the Chief Minister

The construction of the new fishing jetty first came up for discussion in the office of the then minister for fisheries and animal resources development dept April 21, 2016

BEATING THE CHILL



Villagers in a tribal pocket in Keonjhar district warm themselves around a bonfire, Monday

OP PHOTO

Inebriated man murders wife

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jeypore/Koraput, Nov 9: In a shocking incident, a man killed his wife by slitting her throat at Dhaudapadar under Sadar police limits in Koraput district late Sunday night.

The deceased was identified as Parvati (24). Her husband Kartik Takrari (28) was arrested. Police said Kartik committed the crime under the influence of alcohol.

According to a source, Kartik came home Monday night in an inebriated state. The couple often fought over Kartik's coming home drunk. Sunday night was no different. They entered into a verbal duel. Later, the scene turned uglier as Kartik lost his cool, picked up a sharp-edged weapon and slit her throat.

On hearing her cries, neighbours rushed to Kartik's house only to find Parvati lying in a pool of blood. Police seized the body for post-mortem and started an investigation.

Minor girl injured in elephant attack

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Nov 9: A minor girl suffered serious injuries and the house in which she was staying was damaged in an elephant attack in the wee hours of Monday.

The elephant which has unleashed a reign of terror in Kuntapada village under Telkoi range in Keonjhar district has been giving sleepless nights to the villagers.

Sources said that the elephant which has separated from its herd has turned rogue. It attacked the house of Arun Mukhi. Due to the attack, the wall of the house collapsed on the five sleeping members. Luckily they managed to evade the wrath of the pachyderm.

Family members took the minor to the district headquarters hospital where she is currently undergoing treatment.

Following the attack, the locals contacted forest department officials and requested them to chase the elephant away from the village. They also alleged that proper steps were not being taken to prevent man-animal conflict.

BLB disease adds to farmers' worries



POST NEWS NETWORK

Balia, Nov 9: Damage to standing paddy crop due to the bacterial leaf blight (BLB) disease in a few areas in Balia block of Jagatsinghpur district has emerged as a cause of concern for farmers.

Field officer of Agriculture Department in Balia block Rudranaryan Mohanty said that standing paddy crop in more than 10 panchayats of the block has been affected due to the disease.

"We had given pesticides to the farmers to control the disease. However, the pesticide had no effect on the bacteria," Mohanty added.

The officer said, "We have urged the state government to provide some effective pesticides to the farmers so that they will work properly to control the disease."

According to farmers, high yield, hybrid and local varieties of paddy have been cultivated over 100 acres

of farmland in the block. The farmers have spent more than ₹20,000 per acre.

The farmers alleged that they had borrowed from money lenders for the 2020 rabi season. How they will repay the loans to the money lenders is their main concern now, lamented Naryan Parida, a farmer.

Some other farmers of the area said that they had lost 50 per cent of their crop after the bacteria attack. Hopes of a good harvest this year are gradually vanishing, the farmers said.

The farmers demanded compensation from the state government for the rabi crop loss.

Locals protest against drinking water scarcity

POST NEWS NETWORK

Muniguda, Nov 9: Residents of Patraguda under Muniguda block in Rayagada district Monday demonstrated in front of the panchayat office protesting against the persisting problem of drinking water scarcity. They placed empty pots on the road in front of the office thereby obstructing the movement of traffic on the national highway.

Earlier the villagers had urged the Rural Water Supply Sanitation (RWSS) department to look into their problem. They had written to the executive engineer of the department and the BDO regarding the supply of clean drinking water and repairing of drains. However, all their requests have fallen on deaf ears, alleged the villagers.

The villagers said that the government had constructed an overhead tank at Bhurusukhuma near



the village. However, even that has not solved their problem and they are facing acute drinking water scarcity for the last six years. They said that there are only two tube-wells in the village. However, the

wells produce muddy water. Many villagers have fallen sick after drinking the water. They said that unless their grievances were addressed, their protests would continue.

The protest was called off after

the panchayat officials assured them to install more tube-wells in the village.

They also said supply of drinking water will be done in tankers until the overhead tank is repaired.

Cattle-laden vehicles seized, 5 arrested

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasure, Nov 9: Khantapada police seized five vehicles near the Seragad tollgate on National Highway-16 in the district Monday for smuggling cattle.

Police arrested five persons in this connection. According to a source, police had been tipped off about the illegal transportation of the cattle from Bhadrak to West Bengal. Locals informed the police that five containers laden with cattle were moving from Bhadrak and that the



vehicles would cross Seragad tollgate in the wee hours.

A police team reached the spot before

trying to intercept the vehicles at Bhadrak town. However, the vehicles managed to give them a slip. Finally they managed to stop the pick-up vans at around 5:00 am a few kilometers away from the Seragada tollgate.

Police rescued hundreds of cattle from the vehicles and arrested five persons in this connection. The rescued cattle have been kept at Balasure Gaushala.

Police are interrogating the five accused to find out about others involved in this illegal cattle trade.

3 jawans critically hurt as fire breaks out in barracks

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhadrak, Nov 9: In a fire mishap, three Odisha Special Armed Police (OSAP) jawans were critically injured in Bhadrak district Monday.

The injured jawans - Manoranjan Ghadei, Sangaram Tudu and Ganesh Nayak - are undergoing treatment at the Bhadrak district headquarters hospital (DHH).

They are stated to be in critical condition and at any moment they can be shifted to SCB Medical College and Hospital.

Taking to his Twitter handle, Bhadrak District Collector Gyana Das said the CDMO has been requested support for treatment.

"We are attending to them at DHH. CDMO has been requested for all support for treatment. We wish them speedy recovery," read the tweet. According to a source, the injured jawans belonged to the OSAP 5th Battalion, Baripada. They were on duty at the Puruna Bazaar Police Station in Bhadrak district. It was when they were asleep in the barracks that the mishap occurred early in the morning. Preliminary investigation revealed that a mosquito net had caught fire from a burning mosquito repellent coil that the jawans had placed nearby.

TAKING STOCK



Collector K Sudarshan Chakravarty and district officials reviewing the security and other arrangements on the eve of the counting of votes for by-election to Balasure Assembly segment at the Balasure Collectorate, Monday

OP PHOTO

Bengal's bid to occupy rural forest in Bhograi foiled

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhograi, Nov 9: After a hiatus of two and a half years, border dispute Odisha and neighbouring West Bengal cropped up again as an outfit in the border state tried to occupy a rural forest at Sahabajipur last week. Locals of Sahabajipur strongly opposed the attempt.

Meanwhile, the local unit of the Congress in a press conference warned of a fast unto death protest if the border dispute is not resolved at the earliest.

Ashis Kumar Patra, Congress block president, Santosh Kumar Jena, general secretary, Gopabandhu Mohapatra, vice-president, blamed the state government for the impasse in resolving the border dispute.

The party leaders said talks between the chief ministers or at the secretary level can resolve the impasse. Members of Digha-Shankarpur Unnayan

Parishad of East Medinapore district had attempted to occupy Sahabajipur rural jungle. The outfit was found using earthmovers to level the rural forest in Sahabajipur late Friday night. Locals took up the issue with the administration Saturday. Later, members of the outfit fled the spot along with their JCB machines.

MLA Ananta Das, tehsildar Kamalakant Panda, Talasari marine police visited the spot and apprised the Collector of the issue.

Park turns happy hunting ground for anti-socials

POST NEWS NETWORK

Angul, Nov 9: The Eco Park in Angul town, a dream project of the district administration, has been out of bounds for people since the outbreak of the pandemic.

The administration recently turned down the denizens' request to allow them to go for morning walk inside the park.

The park has presently become a happy hunting ground for anti-social elements and drunkards. They have been visiting the park regularly and indulging in booze sessions and picnics. This has raised many eyebrows.

The park houses several facilities including a gymnasium and boating facility.

It has been designed to attract people from outside of the district. The administration insists that the park will be opened when the pandemic situation improves.

But the fact that the park has turned into a den for anti-social elements has baffled many.



According to some local people, most evenings they see people carrying liquor bottles and polythene bags entering into the park and coming out at night.

At the canteen inside the park, there are utensils and all the items required for picnics. Empty liquor bottles and paper plates can be found lying here

and there inside the park on any day. According to Radhakant Mohanty, a senior citizen, common people have been denied entry into the park. Even those who have availed membership for a year have not been allowed inside.

"But, we came to know that people are regularly enjoying picnics inside the park. This is pathetic and the of-

ficers who are in charge of the park are responsible for this. The administration should take immediate action against those involved," Mohanty said.

When contacted, the authorities of a private organisation that is managing the park on a contractual basis said that there are some employees who are taking care of the park. Food is being cooked at the canteen for them. The organisation did not have any satisfactory answers regarding the liquor bottles.

In this regard, former chairman, Angul municipality, Akshay Kumar Samant said that the allegations should be investigated.

When contacted, executive officer, Angul municipality, Binod Chandra Panda, said that he would visit the park to see for himself if people are enjoying themselves inside. If any proof found, action will be taken against the contractual firm that is in charge of the park's management. If required, higher authorities will be informed for cancellation of the firm's license, Panda added.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
BARGARH CANAL DIVISION, BARGARH
E-mail ID: eebargarh-eicwr.od@nic.in
CANCELLATION OF BID IDENTIFICATION No.
CDT-03/2020-21 (ONLINE) Dated 29.10.2020
No. 4518 Dated: 09.11.2020
No. A-286: The tender invited by the undersigned vide Bid Identification No. CDT-03/2020-21 (Online) Dt.29.10.2020 is hereby cancelled.

Sd./- Executive Engineer
Bargarh Canal Division, Bargarh
OIPR-32008/11/0003/2021

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER No. O-530
RURAL WORKS DIVISION No. - I, KEONJHAR
"e" Procurement Notice for Road Works
Identification No. Online NCB - 04/2020-21

- Name of the Work : As per Annexure in Website
- Total Number of Work : As per Annexure in Website
- Estimated Cost : As per Annexure in Website
- Class of Contractor : As per Annexure in Website
- Period of Completion : As per Annexure in Website

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender Online for Bidding		Last date & time of seeking tender Clarification	Date & time of Opening of Tender in O/o. the E.E., R.W. Division - I, Keonjhar	Date & Time of Lottery (in case need to be conducted)
		From	To			
Executive Engineer, R.W. Division-I, Keonjhar	Road Works N.C.B. No.- 04/2020-21	Dt.11.11.2020 at 11.00 A.M.	Dt.24.11.2020 upto 5.00 P.M.	Dt.23.11.2020 at 5.00 P.M.	Dt.25.11.2020 at 11.00 A.M.	Dt.02.12.2020 at 11.00 A.M.

Further details can be seen from the website www.tenderorissa.gov.in. Executive Engineer, R.W. Division, Keonjhar OIPR-25110/11/0006/2021

FOCUS INDO-US RELATIONS

ECONOMY TO DECIDE TIES



It is only India's economic strength, its growing middle class with increasing purchasing power which will induce America to deepen collaboration. Of course, India is also seen as a countervailing force to China, a factor which is certainly in America's strategic calculations

and is now closing in to \$3 trillion.

Bilateral trade with USA is more than \$100 billion dollars presently. The rising and sizeable middle class is attractive to both investors as well as American consumer companies. On its part India's software industry has played a crucial role in the American economy. These exports are about \$120 billion and growing. Owing to these services exports, India enjoys a trade surplus of nearly \$30 billion with the US. This is in sharp contrast to the \$45 billion trade deficit with China, which is mostly about manufactured goods.

It is only India's economic strength, its growing middle class with increasing purchasing power which will induce America to deepen collaboration. Of course, India is also seen as a countervailing force to China, a factor which is certainly in America's strategic calculations. For its part India has started importing crude oil from the US. It has also promised to import \$40 billion worth of liquefied natural gas from the US in the coming year. The feasibility of higher imports from the US depends on stronger domestic growth in India. Only then can it have the leverage to ask for a higher quota of H1B visas needed for software exports. As such the incoming administration of Biden-Harris will be bogged down in battling Covid-19, and reviving the economy. It will continue the somewhat hostile stance with China. As such, since early 2018 the Americans have turned much more protectionist, raising tariffs on all kinds of imports, which have affected India's exports too. Hence an increased and deeper relationship with India is contingent more on India's own domestic economic performance. Only stronger growth, more openness and economic reforms will get the Americans more favourably disposed towards India.

The author is an economist and Senior Fellow, Takshashila Institution
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Kamala Harris will become the first ever Vice President of America to have Indian ancestry. Senator Harris' mother Shyamala Gopalan arrived in the United States at the age of 19 to do her PhD in nutrition and endocrinology at the University of California in Berkeley. Harris has maintained her links with her maternal grandparents and other Indian relatives.

In her short speech accepting the people's verdict, she paid a tribute to her mother, and spoke of her with deep gratitude. Her ascent to the Vice Presidency is extraordinary for many reasons, not least because she will be the first woman and a woman of Colour to occupy that office. It's a matter of great pride for immigrants from India to see a second generation child rise to such great heights in American society. Harris already had an impressive track record, having been twice elected Attorney General of the largest State of the country, i.e. California. Along with President-elect Biden she is sure to leave a lasting influence on the next administration and policies of the US. Does her Indian ancestry mean that Indo-American ties will be closer?

Of course not. She is first of all an American citizen, and will always act in the best interests of her country. She may, in fact, be under pressure to lean the other way lest she be accused of bestowing undue favours on India. The prospects for closer Indo-American ties will not depend so much on Harris' ancestry, as on India's own economic strength and growth. These ties got an unexpected boost with the signing of the Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement in March 2006.

The background work for such cooperation dates back to the hectic diplomatic exchanges that followed the Pokhran nuclear test of 1998.

The team under Prime Minister Vajpayee worked strenuously to persuade the major powers of the world that India would never be a maverick nuclear power, would use nuclear power only for peace-

ful purposes, and would be pledged to the no-first-use doctrine. It is a testimony to their hectic diplomacy and persuasion, that after barely 22 months of strict sanctions against India by most of the Western economies, the President of the US made an official five-day visit to India. That visit of President Bill Clinton was to set up the conditions for a dynamic and lasting relationship with India, encompassing all aspects of trade and investments even in military areas. It was the precursor to a strategic alliance, and closer business ties. This happened despite the US being unable to persuade India to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Incidentally India recently, before the Biden-Harris result was announced, signed the last of the four foundational military agreements with the United States. This was the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA). The other three agreements had been signed in 2002, 2016 and 2018. Together these military agreements increased the "embrace" of the two countries, provided for the sharing of sensitive intelligence and

data including satellite and geospatial, geo-magnetic and geodetic data, and also aided in interoperability of forces. Of course, much of the details of these agreements remain classified. But suffice to say, that the latest agreement is a culmination of a process which began two decades ago. India has already increased its military purchases and to date has bought hardware worth \$20 billion from the United States in the past 13 years.

The biggest boost of course was the signing of the nuclear deal. India was "brought in from the cold", from being a nuclear pariah, and from being denied uranium fuel by the Nuclear Suppliers Group. It was due to the insistence and championing of India's cause by the US that the NSG made an exception for India, to be supplied nuclear fuel despite not being a signatory to NPT. How much the signing of the nuclear deal has been beneficial to the US is beyond the scope of this column. But the main point to note is that the US saw an opportunity in engaging with India due to its rising economic clout. India's economic size reached \$1 trillion in 2006, \$2 trillion in 2014



Ajit Ranade

DOES KAMALA HARRIS' INDIAN ANCESTRY MEAN THAT INDO-AMERICAN TIES WILL BE CLOSER? OF COURSE NOT. SHE IS FIRST OF ALL AN AMERICAN CITIZEN, AND WILL ALWAYS ACT IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF HER COUNTRY

Obstinate Trump and Trumpism

The path is long, but self-surrender makes it short; the way is difficult, but perfect trust makes it easy.

THE MOTHER



The obduracy of US President Donald Trump, who refuses to accept the poll results sealing his fate for a second term in office and heralding Joe Biden as the new President, is sending wrong signals to the institution of democracy and giving a fillip to right wing autocrats and 'nationalists' the world over to emulate his example. This is, indeed, an ominous lesson of the current US Presidential poll. The list of such friends and followers of Trump prepared by the Washington Post includes Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The others make an unenviable picture gallery: Brazil's far-right President Jair Bolsonaro, Hungary's anti-immigrant Prime Minister Viktor Orban, Polish President Andrzej Duda, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Philippines' Rodrigo Duterte.

The paper published an article on the international implications of Trump's obstinacy not to follow the rules of democratic electoral process. It says though Trump is gone, 'Trumpism' survives beyond the borders of the USA. "With President Trump's narrow election defeat, the globe's right-wing autocrats and nationalistic movements face a new challenge: how to navigate a world where the most powerful man on Earth is no longer in their corner. Around the globe, Trump's style is inspiring imitators and unleashing dark impulses. Few are predicting an end to global Trumpism, the nation-first, people-dividing style of governance with a hint of authoritarianism that began to gain traction in Europe and Asia well before Trump's 2016 election," Washington Post article states. It goes on to assert that President-elect Joe Biden's tight victory could even embolden Trump's global allies to project his strong showing as anything but a rejection of their arch-conservative populist ideals.

Biden has described Hungary and Poland as rising "totalitarian regimes" and implied that its leaders were "thugs." On the other hand, Trump welcomed Poland's Duda in July as the first world leader to visit the White House following the initial wave of the coronavirus pandemic, giving his re-election campaign a boost just days before the poll.

Interestingly, according to a CNN report which was sourced from reliable sources, Trump's son-in-law and senior adviser, Jared Kushner, has approached the US President about conceding the election to Biden. Trump's assertion in a statement from his campaign that Biden was "rushing to falsely pose as the winner" and that the race is "far from over" prompted Kushner to offer the advice. He reportedly told his close circles that Trump should accept the outcome "even if he won't come to terms with how it was reached."

But, Trump is in no mood to relent or heed his son-in-law's advice as is clear from his resolve: "I will not rest until the American People have the honest vote count they deserve and that Democracy demands." Trump's statement also announced the campaign's legal battle will begin Monday.

However, leaders of Trump's own Republican Party are sharply divided on the issue of accepting or not accepting the poll results. Notable among them is former President George W. Bush, who, in a written statement, has said, "I extended my warm congratulations to Mr. Biden and thanked him for the patriotic message he delivered last night." Bush's statement was released after he spoke with Biden over telephone. "I also called Kamala Harris to congratulate her on her historic election to the vice presidency. Though we have political differences, I know Joe Biden to be a good man who has won his opportunity to lead and unify our country. The American people can have confidence that this election was fundamentally fair. Its integrity will be upheld, and its outcome is clear," Bush categorically stated.

On the other hand, Republican leaders such as Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky have refused to publicly acknowledge Biden's victory, though they have stopped short of endorsing Trump's wild allegation of electoral fraud. Many others in the party have suggested Trump should be permitted to file any lawsuits or call for recounting under the laws. Only a few well-known Republicans such as Senators Mitt Romney of Utah and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska have congratulated Biden.

Trump's dogged refusal to concede defeat could serve as a model for right wing autocrats and their clones how to handle their own political challenges at home. The precedent of a sitting US President refusing to honour a free and fair vote, it is being widely feared, could encourage these others when political defeat stares them in the face to make similar attempts to cling to power or at least challenge the legitimacy of their opponents' electoral victory.

This would be a great challenge to the various institutions of democracy and it is in such a time that their resilience would get tested.

Border on the boil

Prim Minister Narendra Modi will come face to face with Chinese President Xi Jinping, albeit virtually, for the first time since the deadly clash in Galwan Valley in May in which 20 Indian soldiers were killed. PM Modi is scheduled to share screen-time with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Pakistan PM Imran Khan during the virtual summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) on Tuesday.

Since coming to power in 2014, Modi gave new momentum to India-China ties. He travelled to the Chinese city of Wuhan in April 2018 for the first Informal Summit with the President Xi.

The two leaders agreed to push forward bilateral trade and investment in a balanced and sustainable manner by taking advantage of complementarities between the two economies. They also discussed ways to promote greater cultural and people-to-people exchanges and agreed to explore establishing new mechanisms in this direction.

The Wuhan Summit was followed by the second informal summit in Mamallapuram near Chennai where the two leaders announced a 'new era of cooperation' between the two countries. However, with the deadly Galwan Valley clash and the border standoff that followed, the ties between the two countries have come to a standstill.

In the aftermath of the border clash, China moved thousands of soldiers and equipment close to the LAC and even intruded into Indian territory at Pangong Tso, Galwan Valley, Hot Springs Area, Gogra Post and Depsang Plains. While the Chinese have withdrawn from the Indian territory of Galwan Valley, they remain in strength at all the other places.

India, too, has gone in for mirror deployment and inducted over 30,000 additional troops and equipment at eastern Ladakh. India, it is being said, has put the services - Army and IAF - on full operational alert.

Despite several rounds of dialogue, the situation at the border remains tense, with both sides set to deploy soldiers in Ladakh's forward areas through the region's bitter winter, something that has never been done before.

India's Defence Minister Rajnath Singh met his Chinese counterpart General Wei Fenghe in Russia in September, marking the first direct face-to-face talks between the political leadership in New Delhi and Beijing since border tensions began early May.

The foreign ministers of SCO met in person in Moscow, where External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar held a meeting with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi to discuss the border standoff.

However, these meetings seem to have failed to achieve any major breakthrough and our soldiers are freezing at minus 20 degrees Celsius altitude because of failed military and political leadership that has taken upon itself the task of sorting out matters through dialogue.

In the meanwhile, India retaliated by banning a few Chinese apps and announced a series of measures to prevent the harsh takeover of Indian firms by the Chinese and checkmate Chinese investments in the country. Tensions between New Delhi and Beijing are already having economic impact for India. It is necessary that the SCO be used as a zone of convergence that, hopefully, pulls India and China back from the brink of conflict. However, current political trends, as is seen in the recent utterance by India's Chief of Defense Services Rawat, point in the opposite direction.

SPECTRUM ELECTRICITY ACT AMENDMENT

Journey towards a sustainable future

SK Nag

THE NEW ELECTRICITY (AMENDMENT) BILL 2020 HAS BEEN DESIGNED TO ELIMINATE MANY MENACES CRIPPLING THE POWER SECTOR

The new Electricity (Amendment) Bill 2020 has been designed to eliminate many menaces, crippling the power sector. This Bill is intended to reduce subsidies at the outset, but it will also eliminate many other issues distressing and holding back this sector's growth. Although a dichotomy exists between CERC and the Power Ministry, this is needed to restructure the whole ecosystem.

The cascading efficiency of the whole ecosystem (generation to consumption) is around 87%. But power producers in some states are operating at 50% efficiency, resulting in 1 unit at consumers' doorstep, costing the Discoms to procure two units of power. However, this loss is coming down. In FY 2019-20, this loss came down to 18.19% from 23.96% in 3 years, indicating a 24.08% improvement. This loss must come down further.

In 1990, all electricity boards were unbundled to three separate companies (Generation Company: GenCo, Transmission company and Distribution Company: Discom), assigning transparent and independent business accountability. The GenCos have fixed customers. They are not allowed to sell power other than with whom they have agreed to sell through long-term PPA. Therefore, if Discoms fail to

pay them on time as per consumption, the GenCos have no other customer to deal with, making this a typical monopsony market (customer monopoly). Discom, on the other hand, is at the mercy of state governments. Due to political compulsion, the state cannot afford to allow Discom to charge consumers with the actual cost of power. They are suffering from high input costs coupled with huge AT&C (aggregate technical & commercial) loss resulting in the power being costly. Besides, their billing and collection efficiency is inferior due to age-old practice. Although smart metering, prepaid metering might reduce billing and collection inefficiency, such smart metering installation for a broader consumer base will take time. India, with a 1.3 billion population, installing 25 crore smart meters is a big challenge.

The fixed assets created to produce power are charged to each unit of power purchased by Discom under fixed charges. Variable costs are designed to cover the major coal expense (or other fossil fuel) and plant operational costs. The coal pricing strategy also affects the cost of power disproportionately. On account of clean energy tax, coal price has gone up exorbitantly from 2010 to 2016, from ₹50 to ₹400 per ton. This is a tax which the Central government has levied

under international pressure. Although the increase in variable cost is undeniable, the Coal Ministry must bring operational efficiency to reduce the final landed cost of coal to GenCos. Otherwise, the costly input power to Discom may not provide a level playing field to create fair market competition through commoditisation of power.

The ACP (actual cost of power) and ARR (average revenue realised) are two key factors that decide the fate of the Discoms. Power is highly subsidized for most Discom consumers. The subsidy burden has been increasing as the major industrial consumers are migrating to open access power purchase arrangements. Therefore, increasing cross-subsidy is charged to commercial consumers below 1MWh, not having access to open access power. The interest burden has been reduced by taking over a part of their loan liability by the respective state governments (Rs 2.08 lakh crore) having financed through UDAY (Ujwal Discom Assurance Yojana) scheme. However, the effectiveness of their financial health improvement is still a question.

The scenario in the cost of power in urban and rural areas is highly different. Reverse pricing mechanisms considering customer WTP (willing to pay) might show a possible solution because the current

pricing strategy could not find a reliable answer to this ecosystem. Backward calculation will highlight the inefficiencies in the whole system needing immediate attention. Internal and external (including Coal India) inefficiencies need attention in this Bill. Currently, coal tariff is decided through a bidding process at every six months window. All stakeholders of power sectors representing the price of non-coking coal used for power generation are significantly different from non-coking coal used for other purposes. Power producers predominantly use coal of grades G10 to G14. Therefore, a more focused pricing mechanism is required to have perfect competition. Otherwise, the GenCos and Discoms will bleed forever.

The renewable energy contribution should go up to 45% (by 2030), complying with the international mandate. As per the 19th EPS (Electrical Power Survey), the energy need will go up by 6.18% (CAGR), which will increase the power demand to 1,566 billion units by FY22. The addition of a new captive generation using fossil fuel should be re-looked at.

The writer is a MSME strategist and mentor, Energy Expert (BEE) at IIM (Indore) and NTU (SGP) alumnus.

Victim of the system

Sir, Few days ago we read the news regarding proprietor Kanta Prasad of "Baba Ka Dhaba" and philanthropist Gaurav Wasan. An Instagram influencer and YouTuber, Wasan's social media post helped Kanta Prasad come out of penury and also become known nationwide. To everyone's surprise, Kanta Prasad has now lodged a foul play case against Wasan alleging that the latter deliberately provided his and his relatives' bank details and mobile numbers to the donors without informing him and collected huge amounts of money. Wasan's act is a manifestation of what an individual can do to overcome her/his financial distress. In this case, Wasan's financial crunch compelled him to follow the unethical ways. Financial crunch is the gift of this system which compels the people to earn money through unethical means. Today, crores of unemployed youths are adopting unethical and dishonest ways to earn money just to overcome their financial crunch caused by the inept fiscal policies of the government. Hence, Wasan can't be called a culprit; he is simply a victim of the system.

Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR

Writing on the wall

Sir, It appears that the writing is on the wall is clear for the Nitish Kumar government in Bihar. The exit polls have unanimously predicted a clear edge for the Mahagathbandhan led by Rashtriya Janata Dal's Tejashwi Yadav. Three out of seven exit polls also indicated that the RJD would call the shots and its leader will emerge as the Chief Minister in the 243-member Assembly. But the BJP is likely to retain its 2015 tally, with some polls predicting it could even make a few inroads. The counting of votes will begin November 10, and the people of Bihar could see a new dawn.

NJ Ravi Chander, EMAIL

Dangerous bore wells

Sir, It is a matter of grave concern that a four-year-old boy Prahlad, who fell in a bore well in Niwari district of Madhya Pradesh, eventually lost the battle for life November 8, despite a relentless rescue operation that lasted 90 hours. Such incidents happen in various states and very often. They also reveal the callous negligence of bore well owners because they leave the bore wells open by not fitting the lids on it. Such shortcomings cause many children to lose their lives every year. The concerned authorities must initiate strong action against such erring bore well owners and ensure that every bore well is completely safe for everyone.

Amit Singh Kushwaha, EMAIL

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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Smog raises fears for Covid patients

Pollution and the virus are back with a vengeance in the national capital; doctors and researchers have reported a link between pollution and deaths in patients whose lungs are weakened by coronavirus

REUTERS

New Delhi, Nov 9: Residents of the Indian capital are enduring one of the worst spells of air pollution in years, data released Monday showed, raising the risks to city residents posed by the novel coronavirus, doctors said.

Pollution in New Delhi had almost disappeared earlier this year, when the government imposed a nationwide lockdown to stop the coronavirus. But the curbs have been lifted and the pollution, and the virus, are back with a vengeance. Delhi's overall air quality index (AQI), which includes the concentration of PM2.5 particles as well as bigger pollutants, has stayed above 400, on a scale of 500, for five consecutive days, government data showed. The tiny PM2.5 particles can cause cardiovascular and respiratory diseases including lung cancer, and pose a particular risk for people with COVID 19.

RV Asokan, the honorary secretary-general of the Indian Medical Association that represents 350,000 doctors, told Reuters the air pollu-



tion made people more susceptible to coronavirus infection.

"The PM2.5 particles break the nasal passage barrier, weaken the inner lining of lungs, facilitating the spread of the coronavirus infection," Asokan said.

Doctors and researchers around the world have also reported a link between pollution and deaths in patients whose lungs are weakened

by the novel coronavirus.

PM2.5 levels were 20 times the World Health Organization's safe limit on Monday, official data showed. The five days with an AQI above the 400 level is the longest spell of such heavy pollution in November since 2016. November is usually the worst month for pollution across north India as farmers burn off stubble in their fields

and the cooler weather can trap the pollution.

Doctors in Delhi, which has reported a sharp increase in respiratory infections due to the pollution, are fearing another jump after the Diwali festival Sunday, which is celebrated with blizzards of smoky firecrackers, even though fireworks have been banned this year.

India's main environment court, the National Green Tribunal, forbid the sale and use of firecrackers in the city of 20 million people, and neighbouring cities, from Monday to December 1, but some people will inevitably ignore the order.

The court also told authorities to contain air pollution from all sources "in view of potential aggravation of COVID-19."

As well as the stubble burning, Delhi's pollution woes are compounded by factories, vehicles and rubbish burning.

The neighbouring state of Punjab has recorded at least 50,000 crop waste fires this year, unchanged from a year ago, despite a campaign to encourage farmers to use other methods to clear stubble.

Wife of Kerala scribe held by UP cops seeks Vijayan's intervention

SIDDIQUE KAPPAN WAS ARRESTED BY UP POLICE A MONTH AGO WHILE ON HIS WAY TO HATHRAS AND WAS CHARGED WITH SEDITION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, Nov 9: The wife of Siddique Kappan, the Kerala journalist who was arrested by the Uttar Pradesh Police a month ago while on his way to Hathras, Monday sought the intervention of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and said she had not spoken to her husband since the arrest and was worried about his health.

Kappan and three others were booked by the Uttar Pradesh police on sedition and other serious charges at Maant police station in Mathura last month. They were arrested October 5 while they were heading to Hathras to meet the family of a 19-year-old Dalit woman who died after being allegedly gangraped.

"It's been 36 days since I spoke to



They have charged him under the UAPA for going to report the death of a 19-year-old. It seems like a political plot against my husband. I will fight till justice is served

REAIHEANATH

Kappan. I have no idea where he is. Even our lawyers were not allowed to meet him. He is diabetic and we have no idea about his health condition...the chief minister must intervene in the matter," Reaiheanath, wife of Kappan, told the media here.

A Mathura court recently remanded the four accused, including Kappan, in STF custody. Kappan

has not moved bail in any court so far, according to his wife.

"The Supreme Court granted permission to my husband to speak to his mother after we moved a petition. But I could not speak to him so far. Our lawyers were unable to meet him. Without getting his signature we cannot file a bail application. We are really concerned about his health," she said.

Mother of three children, Reaiheanath is running from pillar to post seeking justice for Kappan and her family. "We heard certain news reports that Kappan received Rs one crore from somewhere. But those spreading rumours ignore the fact that our house has been under construction for the last eight years. We used to save from his salary and the construction has now been halted," Reaiheanath said.

She said she believes in the judicial system and wants the truth to come out.

"They have charged him under the UAPA for going to report the death of a 19-year-old. It seems like a political plot against my husband. I will fight till justice is served. He is the sole breadwinner of my family. We don't know what all charges will be added now," she said.

BLOOMING BUSINESS



Vendors sell flowers at the Ghazipur wholesale flower market, in New Delhi, Monday.

PTI PHOTO

Delhi overtakes Maha as Covid capital

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 9: Seventy-nine per cent of the 45,903 new COVID-19 cases are from 10 states and UTs, with Delhi overtaking Maharashtra and Kerala by reporting 7,745 infections in a span of 24 hours to become the largest contributor to the single-day infections, the Union Health Ministry said Monday.

Delhi had earlier overtaken Maharashtra and Kerala November 7 also. The city has reported the highest daily new cases, also its highest tally so far with 7,745 new cases. The national capital is followed by Maharashtra with 5,585 cases and Kerala with 5,585 cases, the ministry said.

"New daily cases continue to trend downwards with the success of Jan-Andolan promoting COVID appropriate behaviour," the ministry said. The trend of recoveries outnumbering new cases has continued for the 37th day with 48,405 cases recovering in a span of 24 hours as against 45,903 infections being reported during the same period.

"This trend has continued to



shrink the active caseload of India which presently stands at 5,09,673 which comprises 5.96 per cent of the total COVID-19 cases," the ministry underlined.

India's cumulative COVID-19 positivity rate has also declined as new cases decline but focus on testing remains a prime commitment of the Centre and the State and UT governments. India's cumulative posi-

itivity rate has dropped to 7.19 per cent as on date.

The COVID-19 recovery rate has also been boosted with the trend of recoveries exceeding new cases and presently stands at 92.56 per cent. Total recoveries have surged to 79,17,373 and exceed active cases by 74,07,700. India's cumulative COVID-19 positivity rate has also declined as new cases decline but

focus on testing remains a prime commitment of the Centre and the State and UT governments. India's cumulative positivity rate has dropped to 7.19 per cent as on date. The ministry said that 79 per cent of the new recovered cases are observed to be concentrated in 10 states and UTs.

Maharashtra has reported the maximum number of single-day recoveries with 8,232 newly recovered cases. 6,853 people recovered in Kerala followed by 6,069 in Maharashtra.

Seventy-nine per cent of the new cases are from 10 states and UTs - Delhi, Maharashtra, Kerala, West Bengal, Karnataka, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan.

As many as 490 case fatalities have been reported in a day. Fatalities have continued to decrease with less than 500 fatalities reported in the last 24 hours, the ministry added.

India's COVID-19 caseload rose to 85,53,657 with 45,903 infections being reported in a day, while the death toll climbed to 1,26,611 with 490 new fatalities, the data updated at 8 am showed.

Violators of firecracker ban can face jail term up to 6 yrs



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 9: Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai Monday said action will be taken against those not complying with the ban on firecrackers under the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act which invites a jail term of up to six years and a fine of up to Rs 1 lakh.

Rai discussed the standard operating procedures to implement the ban at a meeting with district magistrates and senior officials of the Delhi Police and the environment and revenue departments.

"As per the discussion, police can register an FIR and prosecute those violating the ban on firecrackers under the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act," he told reporters.

"An offence can invite a fine and a jail term of minimum one and a half years and maximum of six years," the minister said.

Rai said that according to experts, the smoke from farm fires is expected to keep the national capital's air quality in the "severe"

zone till Diwali.

The DPCC asked the implementing agencies and departments to sensitize NGOs and resident welfare associations to stop bursting of all kinds of firecrackers. The Delhi Police and the revenue department have been directed to constitute patrolling teams to check violations. "PCR vans may be used for making announcements about the ban," it said. The force had also been asked to maintain strict vigil on the inventory of firecracker sellers and all related entities which were given licences for sale and storage before the ban came into effect.

The Delhi government had last week imposed a complete ban on the sale and bursting of all types of firecrackers from November 7 to November 30.

The National Green Tribunal Monday imposed a total ban on sale or use of all kinds of firecrackers in the National Capital Region (NCR) from November 9 midnight to November 30 midnight, saying "celebration by crackers is for happiness and not to celebrate deaths and diseases."

Mask as campaign tool in local body polls

Amid the pandemic, masks have become one of the most sought-after campaign materials in Kerala

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, Nov 9: You may feel some difficulty to speak while wearing a mask but that small piece of cloth will 'speak' more in the upcoming local body elections in Kerala, the first to be held in the southern state adhering to COVID-19 protocols.

The local body polls in the state would be held in three phases from December 8.

Cloth masks, with party symbols and messages requesting vote, are wooing voters as the campaign for the three-phased polls is catching up in the state.

As restrictions are imposed on marches and mass gatherings and the number of people accompanying candidates for house visits is strictly regulated in the wake of the pandemic, various political parties are exploring novel ways to reach out to voters.

Besides social media platforms, masks have become one of the most sought-after campaign materials in the state.

As the date of election is impending, several printing presses are flooded with orders from candidates belonging to various political parties.

Thalassery-based CKP Printers, a leading service provider of printing services, has already come out with varieties of multi-colour masks including custom-made ones. "We have already got orders for more than 500 masks. Candidates from all parties are approaching us. As Thalassery is a Left bastion, the most number of candidates approaching us are from the Left Democratic Front," Muhammad Faizal, the owner of CKP Printers, told PTI.

More orders were expected after



As a mask is a must, no one can avoid it anyway. But, the voter cannot see the face of the candidate or recognise him as he wears the mask. So, if there is the photo of the candidate and the party symbol on the mask, the campaigning will be easy in this COVID-19 time

JAGADISH | CPI(M) ACTIVIST

the candidates lists of the United Democratic Front and BJP are announced, he said.

But, some candidates from the Congress and Indian Union Muslim League (IUML), who are sure about their seats, called up and placed the orders, he added.

Multi-colour cotton masks, with the party symbol on one side and the photo of the candidate on the other side, have huge demand.

Masks in plain white cloth with the party symbol on one side and appeal for vote on the other side also have many takers.

He said Rs 28 is charged for each multi-colour mask. "Besides masks, many candidates are demanding pocket-button-badge with party symbol and cloth keychains," he added.

As flex banners are banned, many printers have come out with eco-friendly cloth banners and posters.

As the price is a bit high, the number of orders is comparatively limited, sources said.

Unlike in the previous years, there are restrictions for the distributions for pamphlets and notices. Only five people including the candidates are permitted for house visits.

"So, candidates and their followers have to explore novel ways. Masks and social media platforms are seemed to be the most sought-

after tools in this election," he said.

The local body polls in the state are expected to be a dress rehearsal before the Assembly polls next year.

While the first phase December 8 will be held in five districts of Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Pathnamthitta, Alappuzha and Idukki, the second will be December 10 in Kottayam, Ernakulam, Thrissur, Palakkad and Wayanad. The third phase December 14 will be in the remaining four districts of Malappuram, Kozhikode, Kannur and Kasaragod.

State Election Commissioner V Bhaskaran had said that the election would be conducted strictly adhering to COVID-19 protocols. The commission would provide all officials on poll duty with masks, sanitisers and gloves, he added.

An electorate of over 2.71 crore will exercise their franchise to elect representatives to 941 gram panchayats, 152 block panchayats, 14 district panchayats, 86 municipalities and six municipal corporations.

Kerala minister Jaleel appears before Customs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kochi, Nov 9: Kerala Higher Education Minister KT Jaleel Monday appeared before the Customs in connection with the alleged violation in accepting consignments of Holy Quran imported by UAE consulate officials in Thiruvananthapuram for personal use, sources said.

Visuals aired by news channels showed the minister reaching the office of the Customs (Preventive) Commissionerate here in his official vehicle at around noon to appear before the sleuths probing the case.

Last week, the Customs had summoned Jaleel to appear before it Monday as part of its investigation into the alleged violation in accepting consignments of Quran imported by UAE Consulate officials in Thiruvananthapuram for their personal use through diplomatic channel.

Jaleel was earlier questioned by the NIA probing the terror angle in the Kerala gold smuggling case.

He was also questioned by the Enforcement Directorate in connection with the alleged violation of the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) in accepting consignments of Holy Quran brought from UAE through diplomatic channels.

The Customs department has registered two cases in connection with allegedly accepting consignments of the Holy Quran and thousands of kilograms of dates imported by the UAE consulate officials for their personal use through diplomatic channels.

national



Good governance should be the touchstone of the administrative processes at all levels in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir
MANOJ SINHA | J-K LG

GOA LISTS TIME SLOTS

The Goa government Monday announced a restricted schedule for bursting of firecrackers on Diwali, citing Supreme Court directives. Bursting of crackers will be allowed from 4.30 am to 5.30 am and from 7 pm to 8 pm strictly on November 14



of the day quote

Mr Modi (Prime Minister Narendra Modi) believes that he can win every election on Hindutva, Ram Temple, Pulwama, repeal of Art 370, CAA, and branding every opposition party and opposition leader as anti-national. I believe the people of Bihar will send a clear message that they are more concerned with jobs, food, healthcare, inflation, fair prices for farmers, infrastructure and industrial development. Will the PM hear their voices?

P CHIDAMBARAM | CONGRESS LEADER

The US and India stand on a strong bipartisan bilateral relationship based on the principles of democracy, mutual benefits and global peace. I am sure under the new leadership of Biden-Harris, US-India ties will continue to progress as strong as they have been

RAM MADHAV | BJP LEADER

I want to assure that the central government is with all of you. The Centre will ensure free and fair assembly elections in the state. The people will be able to exercise their democratic right without any fear

DILIP GHOSH | BJP'S WEST BENGAL UNIT PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

Army Major found dead

Jammu: An Army Major was found dead Monday under mysterious circumstances inside his camp in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district. Police sources said Major Vineet Gullia, Company Commander of 38 Rashtriya Rifles was found dead under mysterious circumstances inside the camp in Dhera Ki Gali in Rajouri district. "Inquest proceedings under 174 CrPc have been started. A police team rushed to the spot to start investigations into the death", sources said.

Girl raped

Jamshedpur (Jharkhand): A 3-year-old girl has been allegedly raped by a 12-year-old boy in Jharkhand's East Singhbhum district, police said Monday. The incident, that took place on November 4, came to light after the survivor's parents lodged a police complaint on Saturday evening, an officer said. As per the FIR, the child was raped by her neighbor while she was playing at her rented accommodation in Loco Colony in Parsudih police station area, he said.

7 killed in MP

Satna (Madhya Pradesh): Seven members of a family were killed Monday morning and four others injured when an SUV they were travelling in collided with a truck in Satna district. The victims were returning after attending a condolence meeting in Panna district when their Balero was hit by the speeding truck at the Rerua turn. Following the accident, the truck driver escaped after leaving the vehicle behind, the police said. Nagod police station incharge RP Singh said that all seven dead were residents of Rewa district. He said the four injured were rushed to a hospital.

Man arrested

Ballia (UP): A 21-year-old man was arrested for allegedly setting a minor girl on fire in the Dubhar area here, police said Monday. He set the girl (15) afire Friday night after she rejected his sexual advances, Station House Officer of Dubhar police station Anil Chandra Tiwari said. The victim was taken to a hospital in Ballia. However, when her situation turned critical, she was referred to a hospital in Varanasi, he said, adding her condition is now stable.

Winters, festivities may upend gains made against COVID: Vardhan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 9: Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan reviewed Monday the COVID-19 situation in nine states, including West Bengal, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala, and expressed concern that the winters and the festive season could potentially threaten the gains made against the viral infection.

Interacting with the state health ministers and principal secretaries or additional chief secretaries of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Telangana, Punjab, Haryana and Kerala, he stressed that India has the highest recovery rate and one of the lowest fatality rate, globally.

Vardhan informed the meeting that of the total active cases in the country, only 0.44 per cent were on ventilator support, 2.47 per cent in ICU and just 4.13 per cent occupied oxygen-supported beds, according to a Health Ministry statement.

He, however, said the nine states and some districts there have been reporting a rise in the number of COVID-19 cases, high average daily cases on a weekly average, decline in testing, high rate of mortality within the first 24 or 48 or 72 hours of hospitalisation, high doubling rate and higher death among the vulnerable population.



Vardhan said the trajectory of the disease was being monitored personally by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "The prime minister has held intense discussions with all chief ministers and Head of UTs. His latest address was only of 10 minutes but had the important message of continued adherence to COVID-appropriate behaviour and its transformation to a Jan Andolan (people's movement)."

Sharing the nation's journey in the fight against the pandemic, he said the number of laboratories increased from one in January to 2,074 now and the testing capacity has increased to 1.5 million daily.

The Union health minister also spoke about the increased number of general, oxygenated and ICU beds at each level of COVID care hierarchy. Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan requested all states to focus on 10 key areas to contain the infection and gain an upper hand over its trajectory.

These are increasing testing, targeted testing at market-places, work-

places, religious congregations which could have the potential to become super-spreaders, increasing the share of RT-PCR in testing, compulsory testing of symptomatic RAT negatives, completion of contact tracing within the first 72 hours, tracing of an average of 10-15 contacts per new case detected.

National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) Director Sujeet K Singh apprised everybody on the trajectory of the coronavirus disease and the public health response efforts in the states. The State Health Ministers shared a brief snapshot of the actions taken for containment, surveillance and treatment of COVID-19 cases.

Traffic resumes as blockade ends

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Aizawl, Nov 9: Movement of vehicles between Mizoram and Assam resumed Monday with the blockade on National Highway-306 being lifted after 12 days as the border tension between the two Northeastern states eased, officials said.

Mizoram's Deputy Inspector General of Police (Northern Range) Lalbiakthanga Kiangte said that 23 vehicles have entered the state from Assam with police escort till 4 pm. Thirty-one vehicles have crossed the border and entered Assam till the evening, while 19 more are on the way to leave Mizoram, he said.

Once all the 50 vehicles cross the Vairengte check-gate to enter Assam, vehicles stranded in Lailapur in Cachar district will be released by the Assam government, he added. Border Security Force (BSF) personnel were deployed in the disputed areas -- Vairengte and Saihapui 'V' villages in Mizoram's Kolasib district bordering Assam's Cachar district, and Thinglun village in west Mizoram's Mamit district along the Karimganj district in Assam, Kiangte said.

The situation on the inter-state border is normal as there was no fresh violence in the area, he said. Residents of Lailapur began the blockade on October 28, demanding the withdrawal of Mizoram forces from what they claimed as Assam's territory. Mizoram had refused to pull out, arguing that forces were deployed within its territory.

At a meeting, between the chief secretaries of Assam and Mizoram, it was decided that Mizoram will partly withdraw its forces from the border areas and the blockade on NH-306 on the Assam side will be lifted.

BIHAR POLLS

Cong spent more than ₹61L on FB ads

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Patna, Nov 9: Ahead of Bihar Assembly election results Tuesday, it has emerged that the grand old Congress Party invested more than others in reaching out to voters through the popular social media platform Facebook in the last one month.

Congress page alone.

A Facebook page of Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) president Chirag Paswan was also one of the top spenders in the last 30 days. This page spent ₹14.5 lakh in the past 30 days, according to Facebook.

The data suggest that the Bihar Congress page accelerated spend-

According to data from Facebook Ad Library, the Indian National Congress (INC) Bihar page spent ₹61.5 lakh on 1,268 ads on Facebook between October 8 and November 6. Compared to this, the spending on Facebook ads by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Bihar page was less than half of Congress during the same period.



The BJP Bihar page spent ₹26.9 lakh, while the Janata Dal (United) spent ₹24.1 lakh during the period. Thus in terms of Facebook ad spend in the past one month, the combined spending of the ruling Janata Dal (United)-Bharatiya Janata Party (JDU-BJP) coalition did not match that of the Bihar

ing on Facebook ads between November 1 and 7. During this period the page spent ₹27.8 lakh compared to just ₹4.8 lakh spent by the Bihar unit of the BJP.

Various other Facebook pages in support of one political party or the other or their leaders also became active in the run up to the Bihar Assembly election. Some exit polls Saturday predicted a thumping victory for the Mahagathabandhan (Grand Alliance) comprising the Rashtriya Janata Dal, the Congress and the Left parties, dislodging the Nitish Kumar-led NDA government with more than two-third majority in the 243-member Bihar Assembly.

GIVE POWER TO STATES: MAMATA



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Nov 9: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Monday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to urgently intervene to control hoarding, increase supplies and bring down the skyrocketing prices of essential commodities.

She also urged the prime minister to restore the states' power to control prices of essential food items like potato and onion. "In the view of the seriousness of the matter, I would urge the Central Government to urgently step in to control hoarding, to increase supply and to bring down the rising prices of essential commodities, as public is facing acute crisis. Otherwise, the power of the state government be restored for exercising control over the production, supply, distribution and sale of agricultural commodities," she wrote in a four-page letter to PM. Banerjee urged Modi to permit the states to bring about an appropriate legislation in regard to their exercising control over the production, supply, distribution and sale of the agricultural commodities. "The state governments being devoid of its powers cannot be expected to remain a silent spectator to the ongoing sufferings of the common people," the letter said.

Telangana student ends life

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, Nov 9: A 19-year-old student of the Lady Shri Ram (LSR) College for Women in Delhi from Telangana has allegedly died by suicide worried about pursuing education in view of the poor financial condition of her family, police and parents said Monday.

Aishwarya, an IAS aspirant, was found hanging at her house in Shadnagar in neighbouring Ranga Reddy district on November 2. She was rushed to a hospital by her parents but declared brought dead, police said, quoting a complaint filed by her father, a vehicle mechanic.



A second-year BSc (Honours) in Mathematics student, she had returned from Delhi in March this year after those staying in hostel were asked to go home by the college authorities in view of the COVID-19 pandemic. In a suicide note purportedly written by her, the teenager said she did not want

to burden her parents with her educational expenses, police said.

According to her father G Srinivas Reddy, his daughter was worried over continuing her education due to financial problems and was thinking over it for the past several days. She had secured a good rank in intermediate second year and got a seat in the LSR. He took loan and admitted her in the college, Reddy said. To support Aishwarya's ambitions, he had discontinued his younger daughter's education, he said.

"I am a mechanic, but my work is also not doing well. She was worried about next year's college fee," he said here Monday.

REINVENTING DIWALI WITH SEED CRACKERS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 9: When the skies turn hazy with pollutants and millions gasp for breath, it's time for a Diwali rethink on how to combine celebration with caution. And some innovators are ready with at least one answer - 'seed crackers' that burst not with sound and light but flowers, fruits and vegetables.

So imagine, not crackers exploding into a thousand ephemeral stars in the night sky or bursting on the ground with a deafening boom but 'rockets' blooming into marigolds, 'anaars' sprouting into amaltas or a 'charkha' releasing an onion sapling.

It's a paradigm shift from the de-regure firecrackers but 'seed crackers' are the perfect solution, particularly in a pandemic year when the high levels of pollutants pose a severe threat to coronavirus patients, entrepreneurs said as the National Green Tribunal on Monday imposed a total ban on firecrackers across the Delhi-NCR region till November 30. Roshan Ray founder of Seed Paper India, is among those experimenting with seed crackers, eco-friendly if a little pricey.

After reading about continuously spiking air pollution post-Diwali year after year and the respiratory problems caused by it, Ray decided that a change of mindset was required and went back to the drawing board to reinvent Diwali. "When people think of firecrackers they associate it with burning and smoke and sound. So we need to change people's mindset that crackers don't need to be burst but they can be grown into different plants. We need to understand that we can celebrate without harming the environment," the Bangalore-based Ray said. Ray's 'rockets' turn into marigold flowers, 'bijli bombs' into medicinal tulsi plants and 'hydrogen bombs' into juicy tomatoes. "They are shaped like the usual firecrackers including 'sutli bomb', 'hydrogen bomb', and 'anaar' for the sake of a nostalgic feel, but the seed crackers don't burst. They grow into various vegetable plants," the 36-year-old green entrepreneur said.



They are shaped like the usual firecrackers including 'sutli bomb', 'hydrogen bomb', and 'anaar' for the sake of a nostalgic feel, but the seed crackers don't burst. They grow into various vegetable plants," the 36-year-old green entrepreneur said.

It's a nascent business but growing, slowly and steadily. From a barely countable number in 2018 to an odd 500 the next year, Ray has managed to sell over 7,000 boxes so far this year. Each box contains seven different types of seed crackers.

"It feels good that people are taking interest in the concept. I know we cannot replace a habit with another just like that. It takes time. I am happy about the progress," he added.

The seed crackers are made by using plantable seed paper or containing a seed ball inside the cracker, which is usually made by recycled paper.



Hunar Haat has become a credible brand of rare exquisite indigenous handmade products
MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI | MINORITY AFFAIRS MINISTER

BIG RELIEF

In a big relief for employees of the Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC), the state government Monday decided to disburse their pending salaries for two months before Diwali festival, beginning later this week



of the day quote

Time to flush out extraconstitutional authorities and illegal intruders in power corridors to protect democracy. Only escape route for violators is to dump the political hat and serve as per the law

JAGDEEP DHANKHAR | WEST BENGAL GOVERNOR

Irrespective of political differences no one should be reducing the political discourse to the level of a street fight or the language of a common thug. What makes it worse is that the head of the BJP state unit resorting to this

JITIN PRASADA | CONGRESS LEADER

What's worse is that the BJP is not even concerned about our soldiers in Ladakh and Kashmir who are waiting desperately for critical supplies before the onset of snow, which would block them off completely from the rest of the country for the winter months

AMARINDER SINGH | PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER

'Need to strictly enforce laws to minimize pollution'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 9: The newly-constituted Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas Monday stressed on the need for enforcing existing laws, directions and standard operating procedures to minimize air pollution on an emergency basis.

As the blanket of smog over Delhi-NCR thickened Monday, reducing visibility at many places to just 600 metres, the commission held a review meeting and asked the public to minimise use of personal transport, to work from home and restrict travel unless absolutely necessary.

Air quality in the national capital and the adjoining NCR cities was recorded in the "severe" category with calm wind speed exacerbating the effect of stubble burning. The panel also called for encouraging "coal-using industries in NCR to minimize the use of coal in the coming months".

It called for strict implementation of extant rules, court and tribunal orders regarding stubble burning



and use of firecrackers and encouraging industries in NCR to minimize the use of coal in the coming months. "Future action will necessitate consultation with various stakeholders. However, at this stage, the commission stresses on the need to strictly enforce existing laws, rules, guidelines, directions and standard operating procedures in NCR to minimize air pollution on an emergency basis," the commission said in a statement.

The panel was of the view that active public involvement was "crit-

ical in the abatement of air pollution" and sought co-operation from civil society to report air pollution incidents on the Sameer App of the Central Pollution Control Board, according to the statement. Major immediate measures suggested by the commission include strict enforcement of laws and rules regarding dust control measures, including at construction sites, and burning of municipal solid waste and biomass.

It suggested the implementing agencies to intensify water sprinkling, particularly in dust-prone areas, and use anti-smog guns at pollution hotspots, especially at construction sites. Delhi's air quality index (AQI) stood at 477 Monday, the highest since November 3 last year when it was 494, according to Central Pollution Control Board data. Its 24-hour average AQI was 416 on Sunday, 427 Saturday, 406 Friday and 450 Thursday.

The neighbouring cities of Faridabad (456), Ghaziabad (482), Noida (477), Greater Noida (478), and Gurgaon (482) also recorded "severe" air quality.

DIWALI COMING



A woman paints earthen lamps ahead of Diwali festival in Jammu, Monday

UNI PHOTO

DRUG CASE

NCB searches Rampal's home

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

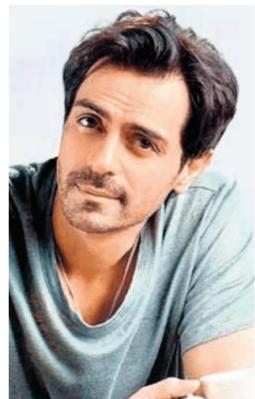
Mumbai, Nov 9: The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) Monday carried out a search at the residence of actor Arjun Rampal here as part of its probe into alleged drug use in Hindi film industry and also asked him to appear before the agency November 11, an official said.

Electronic gadgets were seized during the search at the house of the 47-year-old actor in suburban Bandra, said the central agency official. Summons was also issued to Rampal, asking him to appear before the drug law enforcement agency November 11, he said.

The NCB also questioned the driver of the model-turned-actor for several hours Monday, the official said. Meanwhile, Bollywood producer Firoz Nadiadwala, whose wife was arrested Sunday for alleged drug possession, appeared before the NCB Monday to record his statement, he said. Nadiadwala reached the NCB office in the afternoon for questioning, the official said. He was summoned by the anti-drugs agency Sunday, but he failed to appear.

The NCB arrested Nadiadwala's wife after ganja was allegedly found at their residence in suburban Juhu. On Sunday, a team of NCB sleuths searched the residence of the Nadiadwalas and seized 10 grams of ganja, officials said, adding the contraband was procured from one Wahid Abdul Kadir Sheikh alias Sultan who was arrested earlier.

"We have arrested Firoz Nadiadwala's wife under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic



Substances (NDPS) Act. Further investigation is on," an official said Sunday.

The NCB has so far arrested five persons, including Nadiadwala's wife, during its latest crackdown on drug peddlers and their clients. A total of 727.1 gram ganja, 74.1 gram charas, 95.1 gram MD and ₹3,58,610 in cash have been seized till now from the accused, the official added.

The NCB started its probe into alleged drug use in Bollywood after the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput in June on the basis of WhatsApp chats involving drugs.

The central agency had earlier arrested Rajput's girlfriend, actress Rhea Chakraborty, her brother Showik, some employees of the late filmstar and a few others under various sections of the NDPS Act. Rhea Chakraborty and some other accused are currently out on bail.

Will hold Tricolour, J&K flag together: Mehbooba

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, Nov 9: PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti Monday asserted that she will hold the tricolour and the flag of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir together, saying as an MLA she had reaffirmed her faith in the J&K Constitution and the sovereignty and integrity of India as both are inseparable.

The former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister had last month said that she was not interested in contesting elections or holding the national flag till the constitutional changes enforced August 5 last year were rolled back, sparking protests in Jammu.

"We are the people, especially in the Kashmir Valley, who upheld the tricolour high over the years at the cost of thousands of our work-



ers who were martyred," Mufti told reporters here at the end of her five-day visit to Jammu - her first after release from over one-year-long detention under the Public Safety Act (PSA).

Launching a scathing attack on the BJP, besides the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) without naming it, she said, "Those

moving with half pants and where their leader sits do not hoist the tricolour (at their headquarters) and they are giving us lessons on the national flag."

She said her father Mufti Mohammad Sayeed picked up the national flag when they were being dismissed as 'insects of filthy drain' and subjected to social boycott.

"We, including the BJP members, have taken an oath (in the assembly and council) that we will affirm our faith in the Constitution of J&K and will uphold the sovereignty and integrity of India. First, it was the J&K Constitution and then the sovereignty and integrity of the country. How is it, they cut one finger and leave the other, it is not right," she said in a statement.

Asked whether she will hold the tricolour, Mufti said, "I had already

replied that I have taken an oath of the J&K Constitution when I became the MLA for the first time and I affirm my faith to the Constitution of J&K and uphold the sovereignty and integrity of India - both of which are interlinked. J&K flag and Indian flag, I will hold both these flags together."

She accused the BJP of "breaking the relations" of Jammu and Kashmir with the country by its last year's decision of abrogating the special status of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 and bifurcating it into union territories.

Accusing the BJP of being the "most corrupt" party in the country, she said it would sell all the resources of the country before it goes out of the power.

SHORT TAKES

Mild tremors in Palghar

Palghar: Two mild earthquakes were recorded Monday morning in Maharashtra's Palghar district, officials said. There was no report of any casualty or damage to property due to the tremors which took place at 5:31am and 4:17pm, they said. Both tremors were of 3.4 magnitude and were located in Talasari taluka of the district, the officials informed.

4 kids killed in mudslide

Bhopal: Three girls and a boy died and two other children were injured Monday in a mudslide near a drain here, police said. Seven children, aged between seven and 12 years, had gone near the nullah to dig out yellow mud to colour homes for Diwali, Bhopal Zone-2 Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Rajesh Singh Badhoriya said.

UP Cong, BSP leaders join SP

Lucknow: Opposition parties Congress and the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) in Uttar Pradesh appear to be losing their key leaders to rival Samajwadi Party (SP). Former MP Bal Kumar Patel, who had been nominated to the UP Congress Outreach Committee in September, quit the party and joined the SP Monday.

Leopard shot dead

Pithoragarh: A seven-year-old "man-eater" leopard, which was suspected to have mauled a child to death last month, was shot dead in Berinag subdivision of Pithoragarh district Monday. The leopard was shot dead by professional hunter Joy Hukil hired by the Forest Department for the purpose. The leopard was supposed to have killed a six-year-old girl outside her home in Bhattigaon village in Berinag subdivision October 7.

₹14-cr cash seized

New Delhi: The Income-Tax Department has seized about ₹14 crore cash as part of its searches against a Kerala-based self-styled evangelist and his group who allegedly 'siphoned off' tax exempted funds and donations received from abroad for the poor, and pumped them into real estate and personal investments, official sources said Monday.

TERROR HIDEOUT BUSTED IN POONCH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, Nov 9: Security forces busted a terrorist hideout and recovered a huge cache of arms and ammunition in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district Monday, officials said.

Based on a specific input, a joint search operation was launched by the special operations group (SoG) of the J-K Police and the 10 Assam Rifles of the Army in the general area of Kirni sector in Poonch early Monday, Senior Superintendent of Police, Poonch, Ramesh Angral said. During the search, he said, a huge bag carrying arms and ammunition and hidden under boulders near the Line of Control was found. The arms and ammunition included four AK-56 rifles, 4 AK magazines, 141 AK rounds, two AGL grenades, two hand-grenades, diaries, one camel bag besides AK accessories and one rucksack, Mr Angral added.

ACTION AGAINST THOSE POLLUTING GANGA IN UP

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Nov 9: The Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh has started taking stringent action against people and units polluting the Ganga in the state.

In the biggest strike against those polluting the holy river, the Namami Ganga department has slapped a fine of ₹3 crore on a Varanasi-based company for callousness in running a sewage treatment plant (STP).

Teams of Namami Ganga are raiding at least 12 places across the state, checking the parameters and quality of STPs.

To ensure scaling up work on 'Clean And Flowing Ganga Mission', the state government



has scaled up action and monitoring and checking of the parameters and quality of STPs, both government and private.

A total of nine teams have been constituted and they are conducting surprise inspections and investigating sewage disposal.

According to the official sources, the first action was taken in Varanasi where the Ramana STP was found not operating at the fixed parameters.

BMC BANS FIRECRACKERS AHEAD OF DIWALI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 9: The Shiv Sena-led Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) Monday announced a ban on use of firecrackers and fireworks in the city, ahead of Diwali, saying the step was being taken to check coronavirus spread.

The civic body has, however, permitted the use of 'mild firecrackers' on Laxmi Pujan (November 14), saying Mumbaiers can use 'anar' (cracker known for a sparkling display and showers of coloured sparks upwards) and fulzadi (sparklers) at their private premises on that day.

In a circular, the civic body said firecrackers cannot be burst on the premises of hotels, clubs, gymkhanas, organisations, and on commercial campuses. Similarly, fireworks display events cannot be organised.

"Let us strive to have a cracker-free Diwali festival this year to save our great city of Mumbai from a possible second wave of COVID-19," said BMC commissioner Iqbal Singh Chahal. The circular stated the ban will come into effect immediately.

"COVID-19 patients face breathing problems and their oxygen level could go down. Considering this possibility they could suffer due to the smoke of crackers. Hence to avoid any trouble to COVID-19 patients, the ban will come to effect now," it said.

The BMC also appealed citizens to celebrate the festival of lights with due precaution and by following COVID-19 protocol. Ward officers of all 24 civic wards in Mumbai have been directed to take strict action under the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897, the Disaster Management Act, 2005, and other laws against violators of the ban, it said.

Saffron bowl may now extend to northeast

SAFFRON PRODUCTION HAS LONG BEEN RESTRICTED TO A LIMITED GEOGRAPHICAL AREA IN THE UNION TERRITORY OF J&K

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 9: The saffron bowl, which has so far been confined to Kashmir, may now expand to the northeast as well.

The Northeast Centre for Technology Application and Reach (NECTAR), a body under the Department of Science and Technology, supported a pilot project to explore the feasibility of growing saffron in the northeast region of the country with same quality and in higher quantity.

The Botany and Horticulture department of Sikkim Central University carried out tests to understand the soil condition of Yangyang of Sikkim and found it comparable to the saffron-growing places of Kashmir. "Saffron seed/corms were purchased and air



transported from Kashmir to Yangyang site by the department.

One saffron grower was engaged and stationed to look after the

complete growing process, along with the faculty of the university," the DST said in a statement.

The corms were irrigated during September and October, which ensured timely sprouting and good flower yields. "The matching of climatic and geographical conditions between Pampore (Kashmir) and Yangyang (Sikkim) led to the successful sample farming of saffron in Yangyang," the DST said.

The project also focused on post-harvest management and value addition of saffron so that quality saffron drying and efficient post-harvest processing can improve saffron recovery, thereby improving its production, it added. Further, detailed analysis and testing of all parameters, including soil testing, quality, quantity and possible value addition are planned for

immediate results and extrapolation of the project to other parts of the northeast region along with micro food enterprises, the department said.

Saffron production has long been restricted to a limited geographical area in the Union territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

Pampore region, in India, commonly known as the saffron bowl of Kashmir, is the main contributor to saffron production, followed by Budgam, Srinagar, and Kishtwar districts. As saffron growing was confined to very specific areas in Kashmir, its production remained limited. Though the National Mission on Saffron focused on several measures to improve its farming, the measures were still limited to the specified areas of Kashmir, the DST added.

international



Trump's damaging policy has been opposed ... by the American people. The next US administration should use the opportunity to make up for past mistakes
HASSAN ROUHANI | IRANIAN PRESIDENT

VIRGIN HYPERLOOP TESTS FIRST HUMAN RIDE
Richard Branson's Virgin Hyperloop has completed the world's first passenger ride on a super high-speed levitating pod system, a key safety test for technology that will transform human and cargo transportation



of the day quote

The fact that so many of our fellow citizens participated in this election is a positive sign of the health of America's democracy and a reminder to the world of its strength
GEORGE W BUSH | FORMER US PRESIDENT

America is and remains our most important ally. But it expects us, and rightly so, to make stronger efforts to take care of our security and to stand up for our convictions in the world
ANGELA MERKEL | GERMAN CHANCELLOR

I'll tell you what my theory is. You know, Christmas time, he heads to Mar-a-Lago, and I don't believe he comes back to Washington. I think he stays at Mar-a-Lago all the way through the inauguration
MICHAEL COHEN | US PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP'S FORMER PERSONAL LAWYER

Biden gets down to work, but Trump still not budging

AS BIDEN TAKES FIRST STEPS TO MOVE INTO WHITE HOUSE, DONALD TRUMP ONCE AGAIN REFUSED TO ADMIT DEFEAT



AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Washington, Nov 9: US President-elect Joe Biden took the first steps towards moving into the White House in 73 days, as Donald Trump again refused to admit defeat and tried to sow doubt about the election results. With congratulations pouring in from world leaders and supporters nursing hangovers after a night of celebrations, Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris received a joint briefing Monday in Wilmington, Delaware from their transition Covid-19 advisory team. Joe Biden would then deliver remarks on coronavirus and economic recovery. They also launched a transition website, BuildBackBetter.com, and a Twitter feed, @Transition46. Meanwhile, Trump played golf at his course near Washington, the same place where he was Saturday when news broke that Biden had secured enough Electoral College votes for victory. "Since when does the Lamestream Media call who our next President will be?" Trump complained in a tweet Sunday. Trump, who has no public events scheduled for Monday, plans to file

a string of lawsuits in the coming week, according to his lawyer Rudy Giuliani, who said he had "a lot of evidence" of fraud. But former president George W. Bush said the "outcome is clear" and added that he had called "President-elect" Biden and Harris to extend his congratulations. Bush said in a statement that "the American people can have confidence that this election was fundamentally fair... We must come together for the sake of our families and neighbors, and for our nation and its future." Biden's transition website lists four priorities: Covid-19, economic recovery, racial equity and climate change. "The team being assembled will meet these challenges on Day One," it said in a reference to January 20, 2021, when Biden will be sworn in as the 46th President of the United States. Biden, who turns 78 November 20, is the oldest person ever elected to the White House. Harris, 56, a senator from California, is the first woman, first Black person and first South Asian person to be elected vice president. Biden plans to name a task force Monday to tackle the coronavirus

Dr Vivek Murthy in nCoV task-force

WASHINGTON: Indian-American physician Dr Vivek Murthy Monday was named one of the three co-chairs of the Covid-19 task-force that will guide President-elect Joe Biden on dealing with the coronavirus pandemic that has claimed over 2,36,000 lives in the country. Dr Murthy, 43, a former US Surgeon General, along with two other co-chairs - Dr David Kessler and Dr Marcella Nunez-Smith - would lead a team of leading public health experts who will advise Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris on the deadly virus. The US is currently the world's worst-hit nation from the pandemic.



pandemic, which has left more than 237,000 people dead in the United States and is surging across the country. He has also announced plans to rejoin the Paris climate accord and will reportedly issue an executive order on his first day in office reversing Trump's travel ban on mostly Muslim countries. Biden has vowed to name a Cabinet that reflects the diversity of the country, although he may have trouble gaining approval for more progressive appointees if Republicans retain control of the Senate - an outcome that will depend on two runoff races in Georgia in January.

Pro-democracy lawmakers in HK threaten to resign

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hong Kong, Nov 9: Hong Kong's pro-democracy lawmakers said Monday that they would resign en masse from the city's legislative council if the central Chinese government in Beijing disqualifies any of them. The announcement from the 19 Opposition lawmakers came amid unconfirmed reports that China's National People's Congress Standing Committee, which will meet Tuesday and Wednesday, was preparing to disqualify four legislators. Media reports in Hong Kong, including from the South China Morning Post, said that the four lawmakers would be accused of filibustering meetings and violating their oaths of office. The convener of the pro-democracy camp, Wu Chi-wai, said that any move by Beijing to disqualify the legislators and prevent them from doing their duties would be "ridiculous." "It reflects they are ruthless, and they disrespect the Basic Law," he said, referring to the mini-constitution that governs the semi-autonomous territory of Hong Kong after the former British colony was handed back to China in 1997. Lawmaker Dennis Kwok said that disqualifications would be a "serious departure" from the original spirit of the "one country, two systems" framework under which Hong Kong enjoys freedoms not found in mainland China. "It seems like those in power cannot tolerate opposition anymore," said Kwok. "They're adamant in getting rid of all opposition in the Legislative Council, and they are adamant in getting rid of all Democrats." The four legislators who are said to be on the verge of disqualification were barred from seeking reelection earlier this year. After the legislative election was postponed, the four had decided to stay on as lawmakers for another year.

How and when will Trump leave office



REUTERS

Washington, Nov 9: The United States has a long history of peaceful transfers of power that is likely to continue despite President Donald Trump's attacks on the legitimacy of the election result, national security experts said. Here is what to expect in the weeks and months to come. DOES TRUMP FACE A DEADLINE? Yes. The US presidential election is not formally over. Electors - party loyalists who typically pledge to support the candidate who gets the most votes in their state - will convene December 14 to formally cast their votes. The newly seated Congress accepts the results from the Electoral College January 6. If Biden wins the Electoral College vote, he will be sworn in at noon January 20 - a date set in the Constitution. WILL TRUMP'S OBJECTIONS HOLD? No. Trump has only so much power to slow Biden's transition. A law called the Presidential Transition Act of 1963 makes career civil servants vital to the transfer of power. They face deadlines for providing data and access to incoming officials. Under the law, the transition process will shift into high gear once a federal agency called the US General Services Administration (GSA), names an apparent winner of the election. At that point, the incoming President's team can obtain briefing books, tap into funds, and send representatives to visit government agencies. On Sunday, experts in transitions sent a letter to the GSA's administrator, Emily Murphy, urging her to recognise Biden as the winner. "While there will be legal disputes requiring adjudication, the outcome is sufficiently clear that the transition process must now begin," the letter from the Center for Presidential Transition said. The GSA said in a statement Saturday it "ascertains the apparent successful candidate once a winner is clear based on the process laid out in the Constitution." WILL THE MILITARY INTERVENE? Two US army veterans raised the possibility of the military forcefully removing Trump in an "open letter" to the top US General, Mark Milley, in August. "If Donald Trump refuses to leave office at the expiration of his constitutional term, the United States military must remove him by force, and you must give that order," stated the letter, published in Defense One and written by John Nagl, a retired Army officer, and Paul Yingling, a retired US Army lieutenant colonel. But others have said such a move would be better left to the US Secret Service, citing a bedrock US legal principle that military personnel should stay out of domestic law enforcement matters.

SHORT TAKES

4 US soldiers killed in Syria

Damascus: Four US soldiers were killed by an explosive device in Syria's Hasakah province, according to a state media report. On Sunday, explosive device tore through a US military vehicle in the village of Markadeh on the Hasakah-Deir al-Zour road, the report said, adding that a translator was among the slain soldiers. Following the explosion, the US forces cordoned off the area. The slain soldiers were taken to a US base in the Shaddadi area in the Hasakah countryside.

4 killed in IS attack near Baghdad

Baghdad: Four people were killed and three others injured in an Islamic State (IS) attack near Baghdad, the Iraqi military said Monday. The attack took place late Sunday night when four IS militants attacked a military position manned by a government-backed paramilitary Sunni group known as Sahwa in the al-Radwanayah area. Xinhua news agency quoted the media office of the Joint Operations Command (JOC) as saying in a statement.

30 injured in Afghan blast

Kabul: At least 30 people, including 10 civilians, were injured in a car bomb explosion in Afghanistan's Kandahar province, officials said Monday. The explosion took place near the police headquarters in Maiwand district of the province at around 8 p.m. Sunday.

TROPICAL STORM ETA KILLS 26 IN HONDURAS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Teguchigalpa, Nov 9: Tropical storm Eta, which ravaged Central America and has now moved towards Cuba, left 26 dead in Honduras, while four others were still reported missing, the country's disaster relief agency said. Eta moved over Honduras on November 6 as a tropical depression weakened from a Category 4 hurricane that slammed into Nicaragua, reports Xinhua news agency. After the storm exited Honduran territory the night of November 6, recovery teams have been working to rescue people from flooding, said the Permanent Contingency Commission, adding that more than 1.7 million people were affected. So far, 26,795 people have been rescued in Honduras, 65,912 people cut off in 68 communities, and 57,258 people evacuated to 175 shelters, it said.

A husband-and-wife team realises 'dream'

REUTERS

Frankfurt, Nov 9: Positive data on BioNTech and US partner Pfizer Inc's Covid-19 vaccine is an unlikely success for the married couple behind the German biotech firm, who have devoted their lives to harnessing the immune system against cancer. Pfizer said Monday its experimental vaccine was more than 90% effective in preventing COVID-19 based on initial data from a large study. Pfizer and BioNTech are the first drugmakers to show successful data from a large-scale clinical trial of a coronavirus vaccine. The companies said they have so far found no serious safety concerns and expect to seek US emergency use authorization later this month. From humble roots as the son of a Turkish immigrant working at a Ford factory in Cologne, BioNTech Chief Executive Ugur Sahin, 55, now figures among the 100 richest Germans, together with his wife and fellow board member Oezlem Tuerceli, 53, according to weekly

PFIZER VACCINE



Oezlem Tuerceli

Welt am Sonntag. "Despite his achievements, he never changed from being incredibly humble and personable," said Matthias Kromayer, board member of venture capital firm MIG AG, whose funds have backed BioNTech since its inception in 2008. He added Sahin would typically walk into business meetings wearing jeans and carrying his



Ugur Sahin

signature bicycle helmet and backpack with him. Doggedly pursuing his childhood dream of studying medicine and becoming a physician, Sahin worked at teaching hospitals in Cologne and the southwestern city of Homburg, where he met Tuerceli during his early academic career. Medical research and oncology became a shared passion.

Tuerceli, the daughter of a Turkish physician who had migrated to Germany said in a media interview that even on the day of their wedding, both made time for lab work. Together they honed in on the immune system as a potential ally in the fight against cancer and tried to address the unique genetic makeup of each tumour. Life as entrepreneurs started in 2001 when they set up Ganymed Pharmaceuticals to develop cancer-fighting antibodies, but Sahin - by then a professor at Mainz University - never gave up academic research and teaching. They won funding from MIG AG as well as from Thomas and Andreas Struengmann, who sold their generic drugs business Hexal to Novartis in 2005. That venture was sold to Japan's Astellas in 2016 for up to \$1.4 billion. By then, the team behind Ganymed was already busy building BioNTech, founded in 2008, to pursue a much broader range of cancer immunotherapy tools.

UK, EU make one more push for Brexit trade deal

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Nov 9: Negotiators from Britain and the European Union were meeting Monday to seek a breakthrough in gridlocked trade talks, with just days until a deadline to strike a post-Brexit deal. EU chief negotiator Michel Barnier is due to meet his British counterpart, David Frost, in London, after both sides warned there is little time to bridge big differences between them. Barnier tweeted that he was "Happy to be back in London today, redoubling our efforts to reach agreement on the future (EU-UK) partnership." Although Prime Minister Boris Johnson said Sunday that a deal is "there to be done" before the two sides' mid-November deadline, obstacles remain over fishing rights and competition rules. On top of that, controversial legislation from Johnson's government threatens to derail a deal. Johnson has infuriated the EU with a bill that breaches parts of the legally binding withdrawal agreement that allowed for Britain's exit from the bloc in January. The Internal Market Bill gives the UK power to override sections of the agreement dealing with Northern Ireland trade. The UK acknowledges that the bill breaches international law, and the legislation has been condemned by the EU, US President-elect Joe Biden and scores of British lawmakers, including many from Johnson's Conservative Party. On Monday Parliament's upper chamber, the House of Lords, is set to remove the law-breaking clauses from the legislation. The government says it will restore them when the bill returns to the House of Commons in the coming weeks. Environment Secretary George Eustice said that fears the bill could lead to border checks between Northern Ireland and EU member Ireland - something that could undermine Northern Ireland peace - were unfounded.

Aggressive China faces alienation from world fraternity

SEVERAL MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES ARE ALSO CHALKING OUT PLANS TO PULL OUT INVESTMENTS FROM CHINA WHICH WOULD SLOW DOWN BOTH GROWTH AND ACCESS TO THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 9: Chinese President Xi Jinping has been talking tough and flexing military muscle on the international stage in recent months but now he appears to be worried over the adverse fallout of his belligerent foreign policy on the economic front. The US ban on hi-tech components such as processor chips to leading companies like Huawei has had a crippling effect on the Chinese economy. Several multinational companies are also chalking out plans to pull out investments from China which would slow down both growth and access to the latest technology for the Communist country. Addressing the International Import Expo in Shanghai this week,

Xi said: "China wanted to make its market the world's market as it moved towards a new dual circulation' economic model. It will reduce the country's import restrictions, treat all companies registered in China equally and sign more trade agreements with other countries." A Reuters report from Shanghai quoted him as saying that the world needed to work together, stand against unilateralism and not "throw punches" at each other as the global economy faced many challenges, especially with the pandemic. This concern also came to the fore at the four-day meeting in Beijing of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party headed by Xi himself, which concluded in the last week of October. China will promote "technological self-reliance" under the latest five-year development plan but will open further to trade, Han Wenxiu, a key adviser to Xi, said at a news conference after the meeting.



"China will provide countries around the world with larger markets and more opportunities," an AP report from Beijing had quoted Han as saying. Xi's "internal circulation" strat-

The comments reflect the serious concern in China's top leadership as other countries are following the US in taking steps to disengage with the Chinese economy. An isolated China wants to attract more foreign investment in high-end manufacturing and is desperate to prevent the exodus of multinational companies. China has developed good technology and industrial base of its own through unscrupulous industrial espionage and reverse engineering in brazen violation of international laws on intellectual property rights. However, the country still lags in crucial areas such as processor chips. The democratic world is hitting back by cutting off this supply chain.

egy discussed at the central committee meeting aims to depend mainly on the domestic market for the country's development, but at the same time it says this will be supported by "external circulation". He wants to leave the door open for much-needed foreign investment and overseas markets to fuel China's economic growth. However, analysts opine this is not likely to happen as matters have gone too far and China stands alienated in the world. With the US decoupling from the Chinese economy, other countries have also stepped up their plans to scale down economic engagement with the dragon. Japan, for instance, has started offering subsidies to its companies to shift their production lines out of China.

business



CII appreciates the revenue constraints faced by the government and its impact on the widening fiscal deficit. This intervention, similar to what has been done for the MSMEs will be a win-win for all

CHANDRAJIT BANERJEE | DIRECTOR GENERAL, CII

IMC TO BE HELD FROM DEC 8-10

The government-supported telecom sector event India Mobile Congress (IMC) will be held through virtual mode between December 8-10. Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) Director General Lt Gen SP Kochhar, while announcing the dates at a curtain raiser for IMC, said the event is likely to see huge participation



of the day quote

In Q1, we came across a one of its kind situation, everything was shut. As things have started to open up, we have seen things becoming better. Looking at the situation, all indications point out that things will move up in Q3 and Q4



GOPAL MAHADEVAN | CFO, ASHOK LEYLAND

In this IoT-enabled future of connected and autonomous vehicles, technology will disrupt the entire automobile value chain and software is going to greatly influence the future of the automobile industry



SRIKANTH CHAKKILAM | CEO, CIGNITI TECHNOLOGIES

As the food delivery business makes a steady recovery and the future continues to look promising, we want to reward our team that has worked relentlessly over the last many months with a meaningful wealth creation opportunity through an ESOP liquidity program



GIRISH MENON | HR-VP, SWIGGY

SHORT TAKES

Gold rises for 4th straight day

New Delhi: Gold prices rose for the fourth consecutive day Monday, gaining ₹277 to ₹52,183 per 10 gram in the national capital on a strong global trend, according to HDFC Securities. In the previous trade, the yellow metal had closed at ₹51,906 per 10 gram. Silver prices also jumped ₹694 to ₹65,699 per kilogram from ₹65,005 per kilogram in the previous trade. In the international market, gold was quoting with gains at \$1,960 per ounce.

RailTel gets Sebi's go-ahead

New Delhi: State-owned RailTel Corporation of India Ltd has received capital markets regulator Sebi's go-ahead to raise ₹700 crore through an initial share-sale. The initial public offer (IPO) is entirely an offer-for-sale through which the government will offload 8.66 crore equity shares, according to draft papers filed with Sebi. The company, which filed its IPO papers in October, obtained the regulator's observation November 6, an update with Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) showed Monday.

CAI estimates cotton output

Mumbai: The Cotton Association of India (CAI) Monday projected the total production of cotton at 356 lakh bales for the crop year 2020-21, which is 4 lakh bales less than the year ago period. During the 2019-20 crop year, the total cotton production stood at 360 lakh bales, CAI said in a statement. Crop year begins from October 1. The crop output is estimated to reduce during the current season on account of damage reported in some pockets due to the excess rains, CAI added.

Air India Express gets new CEO

Kochi: The new CEO of Air India Express Alok Singh took charge Monday at the airlines corporate headquarters here. He brings three decades of diverse experience in air transport and travel with leadership roles in Air India, Alliance Air and a Gulf-based national carrier, a press release said. Before taking on the current assignment at Air India Express, he was associated with an aviation advisory and consulting firm in New Delhi.

COMMERCIAL COAL MINING

Auctioned blocks to generate ₹7K cr annual revenue

During the auctions, it was expected that investors related to mining, power and clean coal sectors would explore opportunities. However, the bidding process also saw players from sectors like real estate, infrastructure and pharma

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 9: The auction of coal mines for commercial mining witnessed "fierce competition" and the 19 blocks that went under the hammer can generate total revenues of around ₹7,000 crore per annum and create more than 69,000 jobs once they are operationalised, Coal Minister Pralhad Joshi said Monday.

The auction of blocks for commercial mining has opened the coal sector to the private players.

"With a combined peak-rated capacity reaching 51 MT per annum, it is expected that these 19 mines will generate a total revenue of nearly about ₹7,000 crore," the minister said while briefing the media here.

The auction of these mines witnessed fierce competition and companies have offered great premiums, he said.



"Out of 38 mines put on auction, 19 mines were successfully auctioned. The success of the auction is 50 per cent," he said.

"I appeal to the state governments to cooperate with the bidders. The sooner these coal blocks are operationalised, the sooner the state governments will get revenue from these blocks," he added.

The minister further said except coking coal, all other coal imports should be stopped in the coming

years. While launching the auctions, it was broadly expected that investors related to mining, power and clean coal sectors would explore opportunities. However, the bidding process also saw players from sectors like real estate, infrastructure and pharma, Joshi said.

"As a testimony to the positive sentiment shared by the industry, when we decided to remove 'end user' criteria from the bidding process, almost 65 per cent bidders were from

the 'non-end user' category," he said. Joshi said 42 companies participated in the auction, out of which 40 were private players.

Total 76 bids were received for 23 mines, wherein 19 mines had received two or more bids and were found eligible for opening of technical bids. "This is a very good response according to me," he said.

For three mines, there were single bids. "Keeping that as the base price, immediately we are going for the re-auction of those mines," he added. The results of these auctions have been historic and this clearly proves that opening up the coal sector was a step in the right direction, he emphasised.

"I am happy to note that two PSUs have also participated in the bidding process and hope that in the coming time, we will continue to see more participation from the PSUs," he added.

Hiring activities see uptick in Oct: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 9: With economic activities gathering pace post easing of lockdowns across the country, hiring activities in most sectors have shown significant recovery in October over the previous month, says a report

On yearly basis, however, the overall hiring was down by 17 per cent in October, according to the Naukri JobSpeak Index for October 2020.

The Naukri JobSpeak is a monthly Index that calculates and records hiring activities based on the job listings on Naukri.com website month on month.

IT-software and services sector grew 7 per cent in October over the previous month as the pandemic pushes for a virtual and digitally enabled world, the report said.

Hospitality, travel and retail sectors, which were reeling under the impact of lockdowns, have started showing recovery with a 33 per cent and 12 per cent growth over last month on the back of festive cheer, it said.



ON THE RECOVERY PATH

Overall hiring was down by 17% in October

IT-software and services sector grew 7% in October over the previous month

Hospitality, travel and retail sectors have started showing recovery with a 33% and 12% growth over last month

"With consumption on the rise in the market, we also see an uptick in the hiring activities in consumer durables (4 per cent) and advertising and PR (14 per cent) sectors. Key industries that declined marginally in hiring include BPO (5 per cent) and BFSI (4 per cent); while the education and teaching and auto and ancillary sectors were flat versus last month," the report added.

The demand for professionals in the ticketing, travel, airlines and hospitality sectors saw an incline of 35 per cent and 28 per cent, respectively in October versus last

month. Additionally, hiring for professionals in the entertainment business especially TV and film production (17 per cent) as well as web and graphic designers (17 per cent), finance (7 per cent) and sales and business development (6 per cent) roles saw an uptick sequentially, the report stated.

Bangalore (8 per cent) and Chennai (6 per cent) led the sequential recovery amongst key cities followed by Kochi (9 per cent) and Coimbatore (5 per cent from the tier-II city cluster; while Kolkata (4 per cent) and Ahmedabad (6 per

cent) declined in hiring in October versus last month.

"October sees slight improvement in year-on-year hiring activities due to lower bases last year on account of festivity. Interestingly, key sectors such as IT, BPO/ITES and BFSI are showing improvements in hiring sequentially.

"Sectors like travel and hospitality (33 per cent) and retail (13 per cent) have also shown positive signs of growth sequentially given the festive cheer and better Covid recovery rates," Naukri.com Chief Business Officer Pawan Goyal said.

Net outflows from equity MFs at over ₹2,700 cr in Oct

New Delhi: Equity mutual fund schemes saw an outflow of ₹2,724.95 crore in October, showed data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) Monday. According to the data, the net outflow stood at ₹2,724.95 crore in October compared with an outflow of ₹734.40 crore in September.

The outflow had stood at ₹4,000 crore in August. In July, the net outflows stood at ₹2,480.35 crore. Contributions through systematic investment remained flat at ₹7,788 crore over the previous month in September.

'State's wireless subscriber base drops by 1.08% in Q1'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 9: The number of total wireless subscribers in Odisha decreased from 33.33 million at the end of March, 2020 to 32.97 million at the end of June, 2020, thereby showing a quarterly decline rate of 1.08 per cent, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) report said.

According to TRAI's data, that released Monday, said, during the quarter, net decline of 0.36 million wireless subscribers has been

recorded in the state. The total wireless subscriber base recorded a Y-o-Y growth rate was 0.12 per cent in quarter end of June, 2019.

The quarterly growth rates of both rural and urban wireless subscriptions in Odisha are 66.94 per cent in quarter end of June, 2020. About 32.97 million subscribers from rural and urban were added in first quarter of current fiscal. Out of total, 22.07 millions were from rural areas and 10.90 from urban, revealed TRAI's circular.

According to available data in the

TRAI website, telecom operator Voda-Idea added around 26,51,006 subscribers in first quarter of FY'21 while Bharti Airtel added 1,07,70,115. Similarly, state's owned BSNL added 63,54,332 and Reliance Jio added 1,29,95,977 subscribers in the same period.

Meanwhile, total wireless subscribers dropped from 1,157.75 million at the end of March, 2020 to 1,140.71 million at the end of June, 2020. The quarterly decline rate was 1.47%. Net decline of 17.04 million wireless subscribers has been recorded during the quarter.

Tata Steel partners POSCO to develop hyperloop tubes

AGENCIES

London, Nov 9: Tata Steel Europe and South Korea's POSCO will collaborate to develop steel tubes needed for high-speed hyperloop transportation systems, the companies said Monday.

Richard Branson's Virgin Hyperloop Sunday completed the world's first passenger ride on their levitating pod system, which it hopes will transform human and cargo transportation while slashing carbon emissions.

Tata Steel Europe, a unit of India's Tata Steel, said in a joint statement with the world's fifth biggest steelmaker POSCO that they would develop high-quality steel grades needed for the huge vacuum tubes that allow high-speed transport using very little energy.

"POSCO has been conducting hyperloop related research such as feasibility design and structural optimisation of various types of steel tubes for more than 10 years," said Duk-Lak Lee, head of technical research laboratories at POSCO.

The steel tubes not only need to allow a vehicle to travel in a low-pressure environment, where air is removed to cut resistance, but retain straightness over very long distances, the companies said.

They neither gave a time frame nor financial details for their hyperloop project. In a hyperloop system, which uses magnetic levitation to allow near-silent travel, a trip between New York and Washington would take just 30 minutes. That would be twice as fast as a commercial jet flight and four times faster than a high-speed train.



Festivals give sequential push to Oct auto retail sales

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 9: India's automobile retail sales rose 5.11 per cent in October on a sequential basis, industry data showed Monday. However, sales remained in the red on a year-on-year basis. The Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations data showed that vehicle registration in October rose to 14,13,549 units from 13,44,866 units sold in September.

Nevertheless, on a Y-o-Y basis, October retail sales declined by 27.99 per cent to 18,59,709 units from 13,44,866 units off-take during the like month of last year.

"October continues to see positive momentum on monthly basis but on a yearly basis, the negative slide continues to increase. The 9 day Navratri period witnessed robust vehicle registrations but could not save October from going in red as compared to last year when both Navratri and Diwali were in the same month," FADA President Vinkesh Gulati said.

"While new launches continued to be in demand in passenger vehicle segment, entry level motorcycles witnessed a lean demand in 2-wheeler segment. With supply side mismatch, most of the passenger vehicle dealers ended with limited stock of



October continues to see positive momentum on monthly basis but on a yearly basis, the negative slide continues to increase

VINKESH GULATI | PRESIDENT, FADA

high selling items and odd variants which did not attract much demand. This coupled with lower discounts, compared to last festivals also played a spoilsport."

According to Gulati, small commercial vehicles are seeing robust demand due to local goods transportation back to pre-Covid levels, whereas, the medium and heavy commercial vehicles segment continued to bleed.

"FADA urges the government to urgently announce an attractive incentive based 'Scrapage Policy'. It also requests the government to release funds for infrastructure projects which it has awarded as this will help demand generation and will lead to higher production of vehicles."

On a yearly comparison, passenger vehicles retail sales declined by 8.80 per cent to 2,49,860 units

from 2,73,980 units off-take during the like month of last year.

Similarly, two-wheeler sales decreased by (-) 26.82 per cent to 10,41,682 units from 14,23,394 units sold during October 2019. The commercial vehicle sales decreased by (-) 30.32 per cent to 44,480 units from 63,837 units sold during October 2019. On the other hand, tractor sales grew by 55.53 per cent to 55,146 units from 35,456 units sold during October 2019.

In its outlook, FADA said: "As we enter the last leg of festivals and with Covid getting into its 3rd wave in many cities, there is a sense of cautiousness amongst customers. Due to the lockdown announced in few European countries, procurement of spares will also be a cause of hinderance for smooth supply of vehicles in Indian markets."

15th Finance Commission submits report to Prez

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 9: The 15th Finance Commission on Monday submitted its recommendations on the ratio in which taxes are to be divided between the Centre and states over the next five years.

The panel, headed by former bureaucrat N K Singh, submitted its report titled 'Finance Commission in Covid Times' to President Ram Nath Kovind, an official statement said.

Finance Commission is a constitutional body that gives suggestions on Centre-state financial relations.

The 15th Finance Commission submitted two reports - the first report consisted of recommendations for financial year 2020-21 and the final report - submitted on Monday - with recommendations for 2021-26.

While the 14th Finance Commission had recommended that states be given 42 per cent of all taxes, the present Commission had for 2020-21 recommended a total devolution of ₹8,55,176 crore to states, which is 41 per cent of the divisible pool of taxes.

The recommendations of the 15th Finance Commission for period 2021-22 to 2025-26 haven't been disclosed as the report is yet to be tabled in Parliament.

MIGHTY MUMBAI LOOK FOR 'HIGH 5' WHILE, CAPITALS EYE THE 'SPECIAL ONE'

IPL set for a desert storm

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Nov 9: The unmatched legacy and hegemony created by the 'galacticos' of Mumbai Indians will be thoroughly challenged by a young Mumbai Shreyas Iyer, who will lead a passionate but unpredictable Delhi Capitals in a cracker of an IPL final here Tuesday.

After 52 days of the most closely-contested and widely-watched editions played on alien land in the backdrop of the raging COVID-19 pandemic, the BCCI can pat itself for pulling off a near flawless tournament that gave people a chance to withdraw from prime time negativity that dominated the air space.

And now, it's the coronation time with IPL's most successful skipper Rohit Sharma itching to win his fifth title amid a stormy couple of weeks.

On the other hand, the Capitals, a team that had flattered to deceive for a dozen editions, will finally realise its potential on the grand stage of T20 cricket.

There haven't been too many editions where the two most deserving teams squared off in a summit clash unlike this edition where Mumbai reached the finals winning 10 out of their 15 games while Capitals, despite a slump, managed to triumph in nine out of their 16 games.

There haven't been too many teams that have shown the flair and balance of Mumbai Indians, an envy for any opposition.

Sample this scary piece of statistic and one can gauge the might of Mumbai Indians. In all, their players have hit 130 sixes compared to Capitals' 84.

Quinton de Kock's panache has a foil in Rohit Sharma's style although proving a point to all and sundry about his hamstring injury would also be on the Indian's mind.

Suryakumar Yadav's (60 boundaries and 10 sixes) epic 'I am there' gesture after a league game against RCB is now a part of the MI folklore and the elegant way of handling fast bowlers has only exponentially increased his fan-base.

Ishan Kishan, in his five and half feet frame, has

managed to hit an astounding 29 sixes while Kieron Pollard is a bonafide legend with 190 plus strike-rate.

If Kagiso Rabada (29 wickets) and Anrich Nortje (20 wickets) get rid of this lot, DC will have to deal with the Pandya brothers – the cool Krunal and the flamboyant Hardik – both of whom are imposing and capable of striking muscular hits.

Shikhar Dhawan (603 runs), who has enjoyed his best IPL, will have to do something out of the ordinary to tackle the yorkers

from Jasprit Bumrah and those vicious incoming deliveries from Trent Boult, which will tail in at the last moment.

In the three contests this season, Mumbai Indians have blown away Capitals in one-sided affairs but all will come to a naught if Iyer, a quintessential Mumbaier, can ensure that his team are fourth time lucky.

The second qualifier showed that they have somewhat found their ideal combination with Marcus Stoinis' all-round game (352 runs and 12 wickets) and ability to open the innings bringing in the required balance.

Shimron Hetmyer's six-hitting prowess will also be required considering that Iyer and Rishabh Pant haven't exactly fired for the better part of the tournament.

Another big factor for the Capitals could be Ravichandran Ashwin's quality as a Powerplay operator. A crafty Ashwin can always alter the length and check how much of an impact his bowling would have on Rohit's hamstring if he tries to dance down the track.

The sub-plots and little battles within are going to be enticing. These include a young captain Iyer trying to show his wares, Ricky Ponting stamping his credentials as an astute tactician, and Suryakumar ensuring that chairman of selectors Sunil Joshi eats a humble pie. IPL final will grab all eyeballs but possibly miss that man from Jharkhand who has been a regular feature in the finals since 2017. MS Dhoni will be missed in an IPL final but then cricket just like life will go on at its own pace.



TRAILBLAZERS END SUPERNOVAS REIGN



AGENCIES

Sharjah, Nov 9: Trailblazers claimed their maiden Women's T20 Challenge title making an end to Supernovas' two-year dominance in the tournament as the Smriti Mandhana-led side registered a 16-run win in a low-scoring final here, Monday.

Harmanpreet Kaur-led Supernovas had won the opening two editions of the tournament in 2018 and 2019. However, Trailblazers dashed Supernovas' hopes of a hat-trick of titles restricting them to 102/7 after posting 118/8 on the board.

Chasing 119 on a tricky track, Supernovas dealt with a huge blow when Sophie Ecclestone (1/26) removed the most reliable and in-form opener Sri Lankan Chamari Athapaththu (6) in the second over.

Jemimah Rodriguez (13), Taniya Bhatia (14), skipper Harmanpreet (30) and Shashikala Siriwardene (19) got starts, but couldn't convert

into big ones.

Harmanpreet was going good, but she was castled by Salma Khatun (3/18) in the 19th over to dash all the hopes of Supernovas. Besides Khatun, Deepti Sharma (2/9) and veteran Jhulan Goswami (0/17) also bowled superbly.

Earlier, Mandhana (68) struck an elegant half century before Radha Yadav (5/16) scripted a remarkable comeback for Supernovas with a five-wicket haul to restrict Trailblazers to 118/8.

Mandhana in full flow is always a treat to watch and it was no different in the title clash after opposition skipper Harmanpreet Kaur put the Trailblazers in to bat.

However, her effort was the only bright spot for the Trailblazers in what turned out to be an ordinary batting effort after they were 71 for no loss in 11 overs. They lost their last nine wickets in 18 runs.

Mandhana's cover drives were as delightful as her three straight sixes and it seemed she was batting

on a different surface. Her opening partner Deandra Dottin (20) got a start but struggled to find the boundaries.

Mandhana was happy to bat first and at 56 for no loss in seven overs, the Trailblazers looked like on course for a 150-plus total.

However, runs dried up after the powerplay with the ball getting older. The experienced spin duo of Poonam Yadav and Shashikala Siriwardene cut the flow of runs with their accurate spells, picking up a wicket each in the process.

Mandhana got stumped off Siriwardene in the 15th over and after that, it was all downhill for her team. Yadav ran through the opposition batting line-up with three wickets in the 20th over.

BRIEF SCORES

Trailblazers 118/8 (Smriti Mandhana 68; Radha Yadav 5/16) **beat Supernovas 102/7** (Harmanpreet Kaur 30; Salma Khatun 3/18, Deepti Sharma 2/9, Sophie Ecclestone 1/26) by 16 runs.

OFC launch new kits



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar Nov 9: Odisha FC announced the launch of their new kits Monday for the seventh edition of Indian Super League, starting November 20 in Goa. The jersey designs are based on the art and culture of the eastern Indian state and celebrate the pure Odia spirit.

Odisha is a state which has faced many devastating natural calamities but has always recovered from those and marched ahead in the path of development and success. Now, it has become the 'Sports Capital' of India.

The club launched the new kits on their social media handles along with a video which is based on the same theme and features the first team support staff who work day in and day out to ensure that the

players recover in time and take the team ahead on the field. In the new kit designs, the club pays its tribute to the history, culture, tradition and the very essence of Odisha.

"Our kit this year is very special. We wanted to have our kit to have a connection to Odisha and exemplify the culture of the state, so every time a player or fan wears the kit there is a connection to Odisha," said OFC president Rohan Sharma.

"This year our kit is inspired by the beautiful artistic culture of Odisha and that beauty is interwoven on our kits. At the behest of our fans the color purple is incorporated into both our kits and will be a part of our kits going forward," he added.

The Bhubaneswar-based side will play their first game against Hyderabad FC November 23.

Medvedev beats Zverev; clinches 3rd Masters title

REUTERS

Paris, Nov 9: Russian Daniil Medvedev came from a set down to outclass German Alexander Zverev 5-7, 6-4, 6-1 in the Paris final Sunday to claim his third Masters title.

The third seed, who also defeated Zverev in the Shanghai final last year, returned strongly throughout the match to take his first title of the year. Medvedev had already won Shanghai and Cincinnati Masters titles last year.



Medvedev, 24, had more energy in the deciding set and made the most of his opportunities against an inconsistent Zverev, who had won five of their six previous meetings. A double fault earned the Russian his eighth ATP title after two hours and seven minutes.

Rohit included for Australia Tests

VIRAT TO RETURN HOME AFTER FIRST TEST; NATARAJAN REPLACES CHAKRAVARTHY IN T20Is

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 9: India captain Virat Kohli was Monday granted paternity leave by the BCCI after the first Test against Australia next month, while his limited-overs' deputy Rohit Sharma was added to the red-ball squad after being initially left out due to a hamstring injury.

Kohli will miss three Test matches in Australia to be with his actor wife Anushka Sharma as the couple welcomes its first child in early January.

"...Mr Virat Kohli had informed the BCCI about his plans to return to India after the first Test in Adelaide. The BCCI has granted paternity leave to the Indian captain. He will return after the first Test against Australia in Adelaide," Board secretary Jay Shah stated in a press release.

India's tour of Australia comprises three ODIs, as many T20Is and four Tests. The series begins November 27. The Tests start December 17 in Adelaide.

Shah also gave an update on Rohit's fitness and said he will miss the ODI and T20 series. "The BCCI Medical Team has been monitoring



Rohit Sharma's fitness and has briefed All-India Senior Selection Committee on the same.

"In consultation with Mr Sharma, it has been decided to rest him for the ODIs and T20Is in Australia to regain full fitness and he has been included in India's Test squad for the Border-Gavaskar Trophy."

The BCCI also informed that

Ishant Sharma will be added to the Test squad subject to fitness while mystery spinner Varun Chakravarthy, who had allegedly hid his shoulder injury, has been ruled out of the T20 Internationals.

Sanju Samson, who was earlier only included in the T20 squad, has been added to the ODI line-up as an additional keeper.

The revised squads

T20Is: Virat Kohli (C), Shikhar Dhawan, Mayank Agarwal, KL Rahul (VC & WK), Shreyas Iyer, Manish Pandey, Hardik Pandya, Sanju Samson (WK), Ravindra Jadeja, Washington Sundar, Yuzvendra Chahal, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohd. Shami, Navdeep Saini, Deepak Chahar & T Natarajan;

ODIs: Virat Kohli (C), Shikhar Dhawan, Shubman Gill, KL Rahul (VC & WK), Shreyas Iyer, Manish Pandey, Hardik Pandya, Mayank Agarwal, Ravindra Jadeja, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohd. Shami, Navdeep Saini, Shardul Thakur & Sanju Samson (WK);

TESTS: Virat Kohli (C), Rohit Sharma, Mayank Agarwal, Prithvi Shaw, KL Rahul, Cheteshwar Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane (VC), Hanuma Vihari, Shubman Gill, Wriddhiman Saha (WK), Rishabh Pant (WK), Jasprit Bumrah, Mohd. Shami, Umesh Yadav, Navdeep Saini, Kuldeep Yadav, Ravindra Jadeja, R Ashwin & Mohd. Siraj.

City held by Reds; Arsenal stunned

AGENCIES

Manchester, Nov 9: Manchester City's Kevin De Bruyne missed a potentially match-winning penalty as Pep Guardiola's side were held to a 1-1 draw at home by Liverpool in the Premier League Sunday.

Both goals, a Mohamed Salah spot-kick for Liverpool and a fine turn and finish from Gabriel Jesus for City, and the missed penalty came in a pulsating opening 45 minutes in which the last two league champions produced some exciting football.

Yet the quality and entertainment faded badly after the break and the game finished in a draw that left Liverpool third on 17 points after eight games with 11th-placed City on 12, having played a game fewer.

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp was the happier with the result, given his side had lost their last three visits to the Etihad stadium in the league and they retain a five-point advantage over City.

Klopp answered the question of whether to replace Roberto Firmino with the in-form Diogo Jota by picking both players in a very attacking lineup and unsurprisingly his side began positively.

The visitors took the lead in the 13th minute when Sadio Mane turned sharply in the box and went



Kevin de Bruyne and Alisson (in yellow) react (inset) after the former hit the spot-kick wide of the post against Liverpool, Sunday

fore the interval, when De Bruyne missed a penalty – awarded after his cross struck the arm of Joe Gomez and referee Craig Pawson gave the spot-kick after checking the pitch-side monitor. The Belgian placed his kick well wide of the post to ensure the sides entered halftime still on level-terms.

In London, Ollie Watkins scored twice in three minutes as Aston Villa stunned Arsenal 3-0, leaving the London club with four losses from eight Premier League games.

The second-half goals from Watkins added to Bukayo Saka's own-goal in the 25th minute. Villa took the lead after Jack Grealish and Ross Barkley

MILESTONE MAN KANE LIFTS SPURS

WEST BROMWICH: Tottenham Hotspur striker Harry Kane chalked off yet another milestone as his 150th Premier League goal earned his side a 1-0 win at struggling West Bromwich Albion Sunday to send them top of the table – albeit for a couple of hours. It looked as though West Brom had successfully stifled Tottenham's formidable front trio of Kane, Gareth Bale and Son Heung-min, starting together in the league for the first time, but Kane headed home in the 88th minute. Kane's 150 came up in his 218th EPL appearance with only Alan Shearer (212) and Sergio Aguero (217) reaching that total in less games.

combined to free Matt Targett, whose low cross was turned into his own net at the back post by Saka.

Villa killed off the game in a scintillating three-minute spell. Douglas Luiz's fine pass picked out Barkley, whose cross was headed in by Watkins from close range in the 72nd minute.

It could have been worse for the hosts had Dani Ceballos not been in the right place to clear Grealish's strike off the line. But it would prove only a short respite as Watkins finished coolly past Lenno after more good work from Grealish.

Soler spot-kick treble sinks Real

REUTERS

Valencia, Nov 9: Valencia forward Carlos Soler scored a hat-trick of penalties as his side beat La Liga champions Real Madrid 4-1 at home in an extraordinary match Sunday.

Karim Benzema put Madrid ahead with a scorching strike from outside the area but Valencia replied with Soler's penalties and a bizarre own goal from Raphael Varane, inflicting a second defeat on Madrid this season and their heaviest league defeat since losing 1-5 to Barcelona in October 2018.

Madrid are fourth in the standings on 16 points after eight games, while Real Sociedad are top with 20 after nine games.

Valencia meanwhile recorded their third win of a tumultuous campaign on and off the pitch to climb up to ninth.

Real's preparations for the trip to Mestalla, where they had only won one of their previous six visits, were disrupted by Casemiro and Eden Hazard testing positive for COVID-19 the day before, while they lost Benzema to a muscle injury late on.

Benzema had got Zinedine Zidane's side off to a strong start with his thumping strike from distance in the 23rd minute but Valencia pulled level with the first of Soler's three penalties after a



A DREAM NIGHT OUT: Carlos Soler rejoices after scoring one of his three spot-kicks against Real Madrid, Sunday

most unusual turn of events.

Soler saw his spot-kick saved by Thibaut Courtois and then hit the post on the rebound, while teammate Yunus Musah netted the loose ball, only to see the goal ruled out after a VAR review showed him encroaching in the area. A re-take was ordered and Soler made no mistake at the second attempt.

Valencia took the lead before halftime through a freak own goal from Varane, who unwittingly sent

the ball flying over his head and just over the line, the goal being awarded several minutes later following another VAR review.

The home side kept up the momentum though and won two further penalties, for a foul by Marcelo on Maxi Gomez then a handball by Sergio Ramos.

Soler converted each time, becoming only the third player in the history of La Liga to score three penalties in a single match.